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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Georgian leaves \$1.25 million  
to Southern Baptist causes

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--A Georgia Baptist layman has bequeathed \$1.25 million to Southern Baptist causes including \$250,000 to the small, rural church of his boyhood.

E. Buford Seymour, longtime resident of Eatonton, Ga., died June 29 at the age of 85. His wife, Marie, died in April of this year.

According to his will, Seymour directed \$250,000 be given to Rehoboth Baptist Church in Bowman, Ga.; \$500,000 to the Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board; and \$500,000 to the "Executive Committee of the SBC for Cooperative Programs."

Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Executive Committee, said the \$500,000 for "Cooperative Programs" will be split between the Georgia Baptist Convention and the SBC. A 1979 directive of the SBC requires the Executive Committee to share estate gifts with states in the percentage split used by the states for undesignated gifts received from churches through the CP.

According to the Georgia percentage -- 54.87 to Georgia causes and 45.13 to SBC -- that would mean \$274,370 will be sent to Georgia and \$225,630 will be distributed by the Executive Committee to SBC agencies according to the SBC budget.

"This is a very generous gift by a couple who, obviously, loved and believed in Southern Baptist Convention mission causes," Chapman said. "It demonstrates in a very loving manner how Baptists can help spread the gospel around the world even after they have gone to be with the Lord."

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According to C.D. Seymour, a brother who also lives in the central Georgia town of Eatonton, the gift is reflective of his brother's wish to leave something for that which he loved. Buford Seymour was a retired businessman who, in his retirement, ventured into tree farming. The couple had no children.

Even though Seymour came to Eatonton when he was 25, his childhood was spent in the small northeast Georgia community of Bowman. His parents are buried in the cemetery owned by Rehoboth church, according to pastor Michael Sullivan.

"He was raised in this church," Sullivan said. Although the \$250,000 was "undesignated," Sullivan said the church has already set part of the gift aside to take care of the cemetery "perpetually." The church also decided to give 10 percent of the gift to the Cooperative Program and the local association.

The remaining amount will be placed with the Georgia Baptist Foundation, Sullivan said, with the church using the interest for other ministries yet to be decided. The church is located in a rural part of Elbert County with about 100 in worship services and 70 to 80 in Sunday school, Sullivan said.

The church plans a memorial plaque honoring the Seymours' gift and "his love for our church."

"We deeply appreciate and love the Seymour family for remembering the church in this special way," Sullivan said.

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Wife of retired SBC leader,  
Velma Scott Sullivan, dies

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Velma Scott Sullivan, 80, wife of James L. Sullivan, retired Baptist Sunday School Board president, died at her home in Nashville July 29 after a lengthy illness.

A native of Crystal Springs, Miss., she was married to Sullivan in 1935, having earned a bachelor's degree from Blue Mountain (Miss.) College the year before their marriage. For most of their married life, she filled the role of pastor's wife and supported Sullivan as corporate executive the 22 years (1953-75) he led the Sunday School Board.

Sullivan often said he knew his wife had been the right choice because she was "the only girl I ever dated," adding they had dated a grand total of five times. Mrs. Sullivan would counter, "we've been doing our courting since our marriage."

Sullivan said two of his wife's contributions were "to preschool children and young wives, helping build strong Christian homes."

Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church in Oklahoma City and a lifelong friend of the Sullivans, described Mrs. Sullivan as "one of the finest Christian women I ever knew. She was deeply spiritual and had a brilliant personality to go with it. I count it a blessing to have known her."

In addition to her husband, she is survived by their three children, Mary Beth Taylor of Nashville, an employee of the board; Martha Lynn Porch of Tullahoma, Tenn., wife of the executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention; and James David Sullivan of Oxford, Miss. She is also survived by seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Edith Wells of Columbus, Miss., and Bettye Fuselier of Pittsfield, Mass.

Funeral service plans are incomplete.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Worst of times, best of times  
expected in flooded areas

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

DAVENPORT, Iowa (BP)--Depending on your perspective, either the worst is yet to come or the best is in store for this year's flood victims.

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People who evacuated their homes are in for a shock when they return, said Ronnie O'Neal, volunteer coordinator at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Davenport, Iowa. The worst part for them will be realizing the extent of the flood's devastation and undertaking the cleanup process, he predicted.

O'Neal, associate Brotherhood director for Arkansas Southern Baptists, is working with 30 volunteers from Indiana, Illinois, North Carolina, Arkansas and Iowa. The volunteers, including local farmers who cannot plant or harvest crops because of the flood, work six days a week to remove mud and debris.

One of their projects is a homeless shelter in downtown Davenport that had four feet of water during the flood. By the time the cleanup crew arrived, the shelter "only had a couple of inches of water" on the floors, O'Neal said.

On a positive note, Larry Wartsbaugh, home missionary and director of missions in eastern Iowa, said he believes God will use the flood to "turn his people back to himself." During the flood he often heard people say, "All we can really do now is pray."

In Iowa, where Southern Baptists are less than 1 percent of the population, disaster relief projects give much-needed visibility, Wartsbaugh said. "People here speak well of Southern Baptists now. It's helped them understand that we are real people who care about their needs."

Cornerstone Baptist Church in Ankeny, Iowa, reported its "biggest and best" Vacation Bible School ever, partly due to disaster relief efforts. The church coordinated two water purification units donated by the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission.

Publicity from the units, plus a "marvelous job" by a volunteer youth team from Texas, resulted in an average VBS attendance of more than 100. Pastor Ronny Carroll said 133 people attended the VBS parents night, even though the church's auditorium only seats 125.

Providing water, at the rate of more than 12,000 gallons a week, created unique opportunities to witness, Carroll said.

The units are drawing water from a stream-fed lake at a community college. The college's horticulture department needed water without chlorine to keep its plants alive. Volunteers shut off the choline system in the purifiers to provide water for the plants.

Carroll said he shared his faith with the department supervisor as they waited for the units to produce 500 gallons of unchlorinated water.

One of the units has been moved to Alton, Ill., where the city's water purification system also was disabled by floodwaters, said Steve Melvin, home missionary and Brotherhood director for Iowa Southern Baptists. The unit remaining in Iowa is running smoothly and meeting the demands, Carroll said.

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Stewardship Commission ready  
for churches' flood needs

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission is ready to aid churches damaged by the Midwest's Flood of '93, according to Carl Hoffman, executive vice president.

"Hopefully, damage will be limited and covered by insurance," he said, not yet knowing of any churches that will need to raise capital funds for repairing flood damage.

"When natural disasters occur, the commission will do everything reasonable to provide superior service at an affordable cost," Hoffman noted. "Each church will be handled individually, and the commission will cooperate with state conventions so all needs will be met."

Hoffman added, "There are some new creative plans available" for churches needing to raise capital funds beyond the commission's flagship program "Together We Build."

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The commission can be called toll-free, 1-800-242-4220, he said.

The historic First Baptist Church of Charleston, S.C., built from 1819-21 but severely damaged by Hurricane Hugo in 1989, is an example of the commission's ability to assist after a natural disaster, Hoffman said.

Through a Together We Build program, church members committed \$430,000 -- 33 percent over their regular contributions for two years.

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No word yet whether  
Yeltsin has signed bill

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Religious liberty groups were unable to determine July 29 whether Russian President Boris Yeltsin had approved legislation to restrict religious freedom.

Yeltsin had 14 days to sign the new law after he received it from the Russian Parliament, which passed it July 14. It was uncertain when he actually received it. As of July 29, the law had not been published in the government's official legal publication, as is customary the day after a bill becomes law.

The law would require government licensing of all religious groups on Russian soil and exclude foreign missionaries without an invitation from a licensed religious group. If Yeltsin fails to sign it, Parliament might choose to reconsider it when members reconvene in the fall. The original bill passed with only one opposing vote, but many members of Parliament didn't vote.

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Baptists 'Lift the Light'  
at Olympic Festival '93

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--More than 1,000 volunteers from at least 40 Southern Baptist churches joined members of San Antonio Baptist Association churches in striving to "Lift the Light" of Jesus during the U.S. Olympic Festival '93, July 23-Aug. 1.

Baptist volunteers led worship services at an outdoor theater on San Antonio's scenic Riverwalk, staffed hospitality suites for visiting athletes, coaches and trainers, gave free snow cones and ice water to tourists at a downtown welcome center and distributed thousands of New Testaments.

Health care professionals from San Antonio Baptist churches also operated a first aid station at Canyon Lake -- one of 22 venues where 3,000 amateur athletes gained Olympic-style competitive experience during the 10-day festival.

And working through the "Dreams for Youth" program, San Antonio Association helped to secure 1,200 tickets to Olympic Festival events for underprivileged youth in the city and for young people at Baptist Children's Home at San Antonio and the Buckner South Texas Center.

"As Southern Baptists, we are just waking up to the witnessing opportunities present in special events, including sports," said Camille Simmons, coordinator of church missions ministries of the Baptist association.

"But we wanted this to be a ministry to the city itself, as well as to the athletes and visitors, and we wanted it to be a church-strengthening kind of ministry. We wanted to make a lasting impact on our city."

Throughout the summer, volunteers ministered not only to many of the half-million tourists visiting the Alamo City, but also conducted Backyard Bible Clubs, inner-city Vacation Bible Schools and other missions projects geared toward San Antonio residents.

About 100 of the 180 churches and missions in San Antonio Association participated in the "Lift the Light" summer ministries, according to Lewis Lee, associational director of missions. Prayer was the key to the entire process, he emphasized.

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"It is remarkable how God has opened doors every step of the way," Lee said. He noted, for example, how the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the American Bible Society were able to provide at no cost to the association 10,000 Contemporary English Version New Testaments.

The Scripture portions included the colorful "Lift the Light" logo on the cover, a letter from Lee to Olympic Festival-goers and a simple presentation of four steps to Christian salvation.

Jim Faulk, director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in San Antonio and a member of First Baptist Church, said God also opened the way for Christian groups to staff the hospitality suites for athletes -- "a first" for events sponsored by the U.S. Olympic Committee, Simmons said.

And when it came to enlisting someone to coordinate summer ministries for the association, Simmons insists God led her to Rebecca Short.

Short, whose husband served as a pastor in Georgia, worked with Lance Taylor, minister of youth at First Baptist and chairman of the summer ministries steering committee, in linking visiting church groups, Baptist Student Union teams, summer missionaries and individual volunteers with local San Antonio Baptist churches for ministry.

Through the Downtown Ministers Fellowship, Short -- now a member of Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio -- helped to plan interdenominational worship services on July 18 and 25 and Aug. 1 at the outdoor Arneson River Theater.

USA Missions Live, a touring group sponsored by the Home Mission Board, performed on July 18. Student groups from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, and Dallas Baptist University presented music and drama at the July 25 worship service.

Harry Lucenay, pastor of First Baptist in San Antonio, preached at the July 25 service, and Johnny Moore, former guard for the San Antonio Spurs, testified how faith in Christ sustained him during a disabling bout with meningitis.

"The Christian walk is a lot like the athletic pursuit of excellence," Moore said. "It comes down to what I call the ability to live in 3-D: dedication, discipline and devotion."

In addition to the worship services at the Arneson, Short also arranged for Christian singing groups to perform on river barges.

One group, "Glowing Hearts" from Dallas Baptist University, could not proceed as they had planned because they were unable to secure a generator for their electric equipment.

Instead of performing amplified music, the group quietly sang praise choruses and visited with their barge driver, Armando. They asked him about a cross he wore around his neck, and he told them it was a gift from his grandmother he wore for sentimental reasons.

The university students used the opportunity to explain what Jesus experienced on the cross to make possible the gift of salvation.

"I had heard you could ask Jesus into your heart, but I never believed it until tonight," Armando told them.

Although he was reluctant to make a lifetime commitment to Christ that night, Armando accepted a "Lift the Light" New Testament -- the first Bible he had ever owned -- and promised to stay in touch with the DBU students.

About 500 Baptist volunteers joined more than 62,000 other spectators for the lighting of the Olympic flame at the opening ceremonies, July 23 at San Antonio's Alamodome.

A torch had been carried nearly 4,700 miles by 4,000 runners -- including Bill McFarland, pastor of Brookhill Baptist Church in San Antonio -- before being passed to Olympic gold-medalists Pablo Morales and Kristi Yamaguchi and finally used to light the Olympic flame.

Offering the invocation at the opening event, Buckner Fanning, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio, asked the blessings of the one who is not only "the God of Mt. Olympus, but also the God of Mt. Calvary and the God of the eternal ages."

Fanning prayed the example of the Olympic-hopeful athletes would inspire others to such dedication they might "stand together as winners on the victor's stand of eternity and be awarded the laurel wreath of God's approval and hear his word, 'Well done.'"

The next day, Charlotte Anderson of Brookhill Baptist Church in San Antonio, introduced five people into that "winners circle" as she led them to faith in Christ at the San Antonio Association Olympic Festival welcome center.

Using a witnessing bracelet with colored beads that represent spiritual truths, she shared her faith with an entire family from Mexico.

At a youth rally on July 26, David Wood of the San Antonio Spurs challenged the youth to allow God's power to pour through them as they share their faith with others.

"Realize that God wants to use you," Wood said. "He wants to fill you with his power."

About 1,400 young people from more than 50 churches attended the "Lift the Light Youth Celebration" at First Baptist Church in San Antonio.

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Olympic Festival encounter turns  
pain into ministry opportunity

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--A Sunday morning encounter in downtown San Antonio allowed Rebecca Short, coordinator of summer ministries for San Antonio Baptist Association, an opportunity to turn personal pain into a pathway for ministry.

Short, a pastor's wife from Georgia, has worked the last seven months coordinating "Lift the Light" ministries related to the Olympic Festival '93 in San Antonio, including Sunday morning worship services at the outdoor Arneson River Theater.

Following the July 18 worship service along the city's Riverwalk, Short visited with a woman who was seated alone.

"She was wearing shorts and sandals, and I could smell liquor on her breath," Short recalled. "I asked her to tell me about herself, and she said she was far away from God."

The woman said her 18-year-old daughter had died about four months ago, and she was consumed with anger toward God and a nagging emptiness.

Short said her husband, Frank, had been diagnosed with inoperable cancer just five weeks before, and she described how God was helping her family through the ordeal.

"I told her about one time when even Jesus became so discouraged that God had to send angels to minister to him. I asked if she had ever been that depressed," Short said. The woman responded by showing her wrists, scarred by suicide attempts.

Asked if she owned a Bible, the woman told Short there was one at her house but it belonged to her daughter, and she had vowed never to open it.

Short gave her a "Lift the Light" New Testament, explaining the Christian plan of salvation printed on its inside back cover.

The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the American Bible Society made available to the San Antonio association 10,000 specially printed Contemporary English Version New Testaments for distribution during the Olympic Festival.

Before parting, the woman told Short, "My husband will never believe I spent the morning in a church service. He just knows I'm out drinking."

Indeed, the woman called Short later that day, asking her to verify her story to her husband. Several other calls followed, as the two women shared each other's grief.

"We've grown to be good friends, and she has ended up ministering to me," Short said. "There's a tremendous power when people get God's Word and do his word."

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Codependency: grown-up issues  
from dysfunctional childhood

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP)--Dale McCleskey started drinking at age 14. He was no wino who hung out in alleyways on Broad Street. He was an honor student through four years of high school. By the time he was a senior, there was never a day he was sober.

Johnny Jones is no stranger to the bottle. Yet, while it has been over a decade and a half since he's had a drink, he still battles the underlying problems that led to his alcoholism.

Both Jones and McCleskey acknowledge their alcoholism reaches deeper than into the bottom of a bottle. Dysfunctions in their early family years created adult issues that prove difficult to exorcise.

"I still have spiritual and emotional issues that God is working on in my life right now," Jones said.

Both men are able to use their past experiences with alcoholism and codependency every day in their jobs. As they work with LIFE Support materials in the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family adult department, these men impart their intrinsic knowledge of the drinking disease and its resulting issues to 15 million Southern Baptists -- or any Christian willing to take a closer look at his or her problems.

As self-described recovering alcoholics, McCleskey and Jones can relate similar backgrounds. Jones' parents didn't drink. McCleskey's dad drank very little. Both had trouble relating emotionally within their families. For Jones, lack of emotional nurture prompted him to look for acceptance in a group of drinking buddies. For McCleskey, adult issues arose out of lack of emotional nurture as a child. He also experienced the death of a father and a grieving single mother who criticized rather than praised her children.

Alcoholism is not the root problem in and of itself, McCleskey said. The disease's source usually reaches back to a dysfunctional and codependent childhood.

"In Alcoholics Anonymous, there is a common saying, 'I don't have a drinking problem, I have a living problem,'" he said.

In explaining the origin of the term codependency, McCleskey said, "Some diseases are named after the person who discovered the condition, others after a person who suffered from the condition. In the 1970s, a spiritual, emotional and psychological syndrome was identified among family members of chemical dependents. Because these feelings hinged on the chemically dependent household member, the syndrome was called codependency."

Some research estimates 70 to 90 percent of the population suffers the painful effects of codependency resulting from a dysfunctional upbringing, McCleskey said.

If alcoholism doesn't ring a familiar chord, perhaps other behaviors resulting from a codependency do, said Joe Richardson, personnel counselor at the Sunday School Board.

Were your parents overly religious?

Have you or others in your family experienced sexual, emotional or physical abuse?

Is there a compulsion such as gambling, eating disorders or sexual addiction lurking in your lineage?

Are you a perfectionist?

Do you feel compelled to control others' actions?

Do you find yourself wanting to please others at the expense of your own welfare?

Do you feel guilty or embarrassed for the actions of others?

Answering "yes" to one or more of these questions probably makes you a good candidate for self-study relating to codependency issues, Richardson said.

Codependents are people who are affected by the dysfunctional behaviors of one or more of their family members, he added.

"In other words, if your behavior is affected or dependent on a family member's behavior or emotions, then you are codependent," Richardson said. He gave as an example members of the alcoholic's family who must walk around the house speaking in whispers, avoiding conflict or dismissing the reality of the situation so as not to upset the one who is dysfunctional.

McCleskey said codependency is a "group of self-defeating, learned behaviors that result in a reduced capacity to participate in loving relationships" partially because one is afraid to be himself. "It usually results in us trying to base self-worth on personal performance," he added.

Richardson said the codependent person might be afraid to be honest for fear of hurting someone's feelings. He might be afraid to make decisions for fear of making the wrong one. He might be motivated by anger, guilt or shame. He might have an incredible need to please others.

It is important that one be able to identify behaviors that might keep him from establishing good work and personal relationships, McCleskey said.

"Very few people have worked through their own stuff and are comfortable with themselves," McCleskey said.

When he accepted Jesus just out of high school and stopped drinking entirely, McCleskey said he simply took on another compulsive behavior because he did nothing to address the problem underlying his alcoholism.

"When I had a spiritual experience, I stopped drinking but I was a dry drunk. I did nothing to change the underlying reasons why I drank in the first place. I went from being an alcohol addict to a control addict. I thought I was responsible for fixing everybody on the planet."

After tiring of trying to control the lives of those around him, McCleskey attended an Adult Children of Alcoholics support group and found some answers in the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous program.

This fall the Sunday School Board is releasing a Christ-centered 12-step program for recovering codependents, McCleskey said.

"Conquering Codependency: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process" aids Christians in a support group setting "to apply the 12-step process in making lasting life changes to their deeply ingrained habits of codependency," McCleskey said.

Richardson said people who begin to shed the codependent tendency will probably become happier and find relationships more satisfying.

He said as people emerge from codependency, they might become more assertive, be able to make better and more functional decisions while feeling better about them, learn to take responsibility for his or her feelings and the consequences of those feelings, take responsibility for their behavior, learn honesty in saying what they think and feel.

"Being an adult means we have to accept the responsibility for growing," Richardson said. "And we have to systematically work at it. We have to make our growth a matter of focus."

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Adapted from an article in the July/August issue of "The Circle," employee magazine of the Baptist Sunday School Board. A list of support group resources is available in SBC Newsroom from the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

Twelve steps help  
with codependency

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--To overcome effects of codependency, a 12-step process adapted from the program of Alcoholics Anonymous is suggested.

The 12 steps listed below are found in the "Conquering Codependency" workbook to be released this fall as a LIFE Support resource by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family adult department.

Step One -- We admit that our need to be needed and our compulsions to rescue others has made our lives unmanageable.

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Step Two -- We increasingly believe that Jesus Christ can restore us to spiritual, emotional and relational health.

Step Three -- We make a decision to turn our lives over to God through Jesus Christ.

Step Four -- We make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step Five -- We admit to ourselves, to God and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step Six -- We commit ourselves to obey God, desiring that he remove patterns of sin from our lives.

Step Seven -- We humbly ask God to renew our minds so that our codependent patterns can be transformed into patterns of righteousness.

Step Eight -- We make a list of all persons who have hurt us, and we choose to forgive them. Also, we make a list of all persons we have harmed, and we become willing to make amends to them all.

Step Nine -- We make direct amends to such people where possible, except when doing so will injure them or others.

Step Ten -- We continue to take personal inventory, and when we are wrong, promptly admit it.

Step Eleven -- We seek to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, meditation and obedience, praying for wisdom and power to carry out his will.

Step Twelve -- Having had a spiritual awakening, we try to carry the message of Christ's grace and power to others who struggle with codependency and to practice these principles in every aspect of our lives.

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Survey helps evaluate  
codependent behavior

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The following survey is designed for individual use in evaluating a tendency toward codependent behavior.

People who are interested should take as long as needed to respond honestly to the statements, circling agreement or disagreement. The survey appears in "Untangling Relationships: A Christian Perspective on Codependency" published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family adult department.

Respondents who circle agree more often than disagree have identified themselves with several codependent behaviors and feelings.

1. I often feel isolated and afraid of people, especially people with authority.  
Agree      Disagree
2. I typically depend on and seek the approval of others while discounting my inner sense of "a job well done."  
Agree      Disagree
3. I am overly frightened of angry people and personal criticism.  
Agree      Disagree
4. I often feel like a victim in personal and other important relationships.  
Agree      Disagree
5. I sometimes feel I have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility, that it is easier to be more concerned with others than with myself.  
Agree      Disagree
6. I feel guilty when I stand up for myself instead of giving in to others.  
Agree      Disagree
7. I mix up love with pity, and so I "love" people I can pity and rescue.  
Agree      Disagree
8. It is hard for me to identify how I feel.  
Agree      Disagree

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9. It is hard for me to feel or express feelings like joy, anger or fear.  
 Agree      Disagree
10. I am more a reactor than an initiator.  
 Agree      Disagree
11. I judge myself and my actions harshly.  
 Agree      Disagree
12. I often feel abandoned in the course of my relationships.  
 Agree      Disagree

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As traditional families change,  
 so does role of grandparenting

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press  
 7/29/93

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--The job of grandparenting has changed drastically from previous generations when grandmas taught granddaughters to sew and cook and grandpas taught grandsons to whistle and whittle.

The traditional family has become fodder for fairy tales, and as home lives shatter due to divorce, alcoholism, child abuse and stress, grandparents are needed to tack together the pieces, said Irene Endicott, author of a book that offers advice to a new generation of grandparents.

Endicott, speaker, writer, radio talk show host in Seattle, and author of "Grandparenting Redefined," led a conference in July during Discipleship and Family Development Conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center on Grandparenting in the '90s. She and Ferris Jordan, professor at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, are co-writing "Grandparenting by Grace," due to be released by the Sunday School Board in 1995.

"Grandparenting is the most important job we have left to do," said Endicott who is mother to seven and grandmother to 12.

"We are that stable, rock foundation in the family. We are non-judgmental. We are counselors of financial matters. We are soft shoulders in times of sorrow. We are encouragers of new beginnings. And we are partners with parents, helping our grandchildren grow in faith."

A member of Clear Creek Baptist Church in Seattle, Endicott said she wrote "Grandparenting Redefined" after her son went through a divorce, leaving two of her grandchildren devastated.

"I looked around for something to help me cope, and there was no one in the Christian community writing to grandparents."

So Endicott researched and wrote a book addressing needs and concerns of grandparents relative to today's society.

"In a nutshell, I say in my book, clearly the time has passed for grandparents to sit in rocking chairs on the sidelines," she said. "One of the reasons God has allowed us to grow older is to give us his wisdom."

"Our grandchildren are suffering because of the bad choices of our children," she said.

Those bad choices, Endicott said, include alcohol and drug abuse, divorce, neglect, abandonment and stress that comes with trying to keep up materialistically.

Endicott said 5 million to 7 million children are being reared by their grandparents today, and she predicts the numbers will rise to between 13 and 14 million by the year 2000.

"Thousands of grandparents are taking some members of broken families back into their homes," she observed. "Or they are providing financial assistance, transportation, food and other vital support to their children for the sake of their grandchildren."

Endicott said she is becoming intolerant of grandparents who smile and say, "Everything is fine," when asked about their families.

"It's time to start being honest with ourselves and others. Everything is not perfect. There is a lot of pain out there."

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Endicott said she believes sharing the pain with others who are also grandparents can bring healing faster.

"Contact between grandparent and grandchild has been broken due to divorce, remarriage or death of a young parent, and that can be very painful. Grandparents seeking visitation or custody of their grandchildren is a growing phenomenon in our country," she said.

Endicott said grandparents are responsible for keeping the lines of communication open between their children and grandchildren if at all possible.

She told the story of a grandmother who mails birthday and Christmas presents to a grandchild she has been forbidden to talk to or see. The presents are always returned. For years, the grandmother has been saving the presents, and she plans to contact the child when she comes of age and give her all the gifts.

"That child will then know, that no matter what anybody had been telling her, her grandmother was thinking of her all those years," Endicott said.

Another grandmother, forbidden to contact her grandchild, has written memoirs about her life and history, put them in a safe deposit box and willed them to her grandchild upon her death.

Endicott said grandparents can spend two types of time with their grandchildren -- Mountain Time or Standard Time.

"Standard Time is doing what we have to do, getting by as a grandparent. We enjoy our grandchildren when we see them. We do our duty because we have the job.

"Mountain Time is the highest quality time we can spend with our grandchildren. We can teach them what we know about our careers, our hobbies, anything.

"Grandparenting is a second chance to be a good parent."

Endicott will be talking about grandparenting on Focus on the Family National Radio Broadcast Sept. 12. Her book, "Grandparenting Redefined," can be purchased in Baptist Book Stores and LifeWay Christian Stores.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Hemphill book answers questions  
of creation, life purpose, evil By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--A recent article in Newsweek magazine reports a new theory of life's beginning -- bubbles of seawater.

Scientists gathered in Barcelona for the International Conference on the Origin of Life in July, according to the article. Evolutionist Carl Sagan was there, crediting organic molecules in the atmosphere of Saturn's moon; others reported how comets might have blasted the Earth with life.

One scientist postulated that "frothy, filmy, iridescent bubbles of seawater served as life's delivery room," the Newsweek article said.

In his new book, "LIFE Answers, Making Sense of Your World," Ken Hemphill counters various God-less scientific theories of creation with Scripture and a rational Christian worldview.

Hemphill, director of Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth for the Home Mission and Sunday School boards, was preacher for the BSSB's Discipleship and Family Development Conference, July 17-23. He taught from his new book, a LifeWay resource released in July through the BSSB.

"LIFE Answers" not only addresses the question of creation and systematically addresses various theories not biblical, it also speaks to purpose of life, the existence of evil and final destiny.

In 153 pages, Hemphill offers answers to questions Christians and non-Christians have been asking for years.

"This book was the hardest thing I've ever done," Hemphill said. "Each chapter could be a book in itself."

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Because he addresses so many areas of concern, Hemphill acknowledges the book is not exhaustive in any area. Thus, he added a bibliography at the back for further reading.

One of the main purposes of the book, Hemphill said, is to get Christians to think about their worldview.

"Christians need to understand how they view the world so they can comprehend life and death issues," he said. "They need to interpret that view in terms of their belief and faith in God.

"Most people don't even think about their worldview until a crisis comes," said Hemphill.

Holding a worldview gives substance to a Christian's faith, he said. "It unifies our thought and the way we live."

Christians who have thought about their views on religion in a time when ideologies run the gamut from atheism to biblical theism are not afraid to take their beliefs into the marketplace, he said.

"To have a Christian worldview would make you a more effective witness in the marketplace," said Hemphill, who said he believes the reason only four of 100 Christians witness is because they are afraid of the questions they will be asked and not be able to answer.

"Today perhaps as in no other time we are faced with more overt challenges from the secular world," Hemphill said.

Through his book, Hemphill said he has discovered a new way to witness. He no longer asks people he meets if they know where they are going when they die.

He asks them about their religious heritage. He said he then follows up that question with, "Has your religious heritage answered all of your questions?"

"That usually opens the door to talk about creation and purpose of life, or even why evil exists. I am then able to take my book and answer those questions from a Christian perspective."

Hemphill said his wife, Paula, is teaching the book to 11 unchurched youth in their home. He said it also could be used in outreach Bible study, and during youth, college or single adult retreats.

The leader's kit comes with a leader's guide, a video tape and Hemphill's six-chapter book. Also available are three, 60-minute audiocassettes featuring Hemphill discussing distinctives of the Christian worldview.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Baptist Supreme Court justice  
describes kidnapping ordeal By Michael J. Clingenpeel

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (BP)--Tuesday, April 26, proceeded like any other day for Hugo Picado Odio, one of 23 justices on Costa Rica's Supreme Court of Justice. He and 18 other justices convened in the early afternoon in their second-floor chamber in Costa Rica's justice building in downtown San Jose.

At 2 p.m. five heavily armed men burst into the windowless chamber where the justices, 17 men and two women, sat in high-backed, red leather chairs beneath the bronze seal of this democratic Latin American nation.

"Everyone down on the floor!" they shouted.

As he fell to the floor from his seat to the left of the court's president, Odio did not know what to think. "I first thought this must be some kind of joke. But who would do such a joke as this? Then I felt this must be like a drill of the security department, a simulation."

Only when the kidnapers, their faces covered, treated the justices in such a "gross, ill-mannered" way was Odio sure his court had been taken hostage -- the beginning of a five-day ordeal that ended peacefully.

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Odio, an evangelical Christian who grew up in First Baptist Church in San Jose, recalled the surprise he felt at the beginning of the five-day ordeal earlier this year: "Nobody would imagine such a thing in this country where everyone is peaceful."

Costa Rica is the most democratic and peaceful of Latin American nations. It has no army. Every Sunday the president of its Supreme Court of Justice joins thousands of his fellow citizens at the bustling farmer's market in downtown San Jose. He employs no bodyguards.

Last year, at a meeting of magistrates from Latin American countries, Odio saw judges from neighboring countries accompanied by bodyguards.

"We have the right to have civil guards but no magistrate takes advantage of this in Costa Rica. Until this we have never done anything to protect ourselves against this type of attack."

The kidnapers quickly seized control of the chamber, forcing the justices to lie facedown in the center of the room, hands tied behind their backs, without talking. The five demanded the building be evacuated and a radio and television be brought to the chamber so they could follow coverage of the event in the national media.

Calling themselves the "death commandoes," they announced they were "willing to die" unless they received \$20 billion, air transportation to escape to an undisclosed country and the release of several unnamed prisoners. "Your lives depend on how well you fulfill our demands," Odio remembered the leader of the kidnapers saying.

To prevent any attempt at a rescue or escape, the commandoes tied the justices to outside doors at both ends of the room and strapped explosives to their bodies. Repeatedly they threatened to execute the judges if anyone entered the building.

Odio had his first moment of encouragement on the first night as a hostage. Late that night a local television station played a recording of Psalm 23 at the end of their programming day.

"For me this was very uplifting -- a refreshing and revitalizing message. I prayed that my comrades would receive this message as well."

According to Odio, there were three moments when it appeared the hostage crisis would not end peacefully. The first came on Tuesday evening, April 27, when local television reported the identities of the kidnapers. Immediately the five reacted with uncontrollable anger, threatening to begin executing the judges one by one.

"In that moment I felt a tremendous spiritual battle. I had the conviction people were praying for us, lots of people calling to God. I could see in a subtle manner that God began to distract them (the kidnapers)."

A second crisis came when the Costa Rican government announced it would not pay ransom money for the judges' rescue. Again it appeared they would be executed, said Odio. "But once again the hand of God dissuaded them."

On Wednesday, April 28, the commandoes heard voices outside the chamber that convinced them a rescue attempt was imminent. "At that moment I was tied up to the door. We were waiting to hear the shot of the kidnapers behind us.

"Nevertheless I lived out one of the most sublime experiences of my life. I felt a profound peace and a joy that transcends any circumstance, a peace that passes all understanding. One of my friends asked why I was so at peace with the situation. Because this problem I've placed in the hands of God. The only thing I know in my heart is peace and tranquility."

On the fourth day of the hostage crisis, April 29, it became apparent that negotiations for their release were moving forward and within a few hours they would be freed.

Two of Odio's fellow judges came to him and suggested they have a prayer and give thanks to God. So the president of the court gained permission from the kidnapers for them to join hands in the center of the room and for Odio to lead the prayer time.

Remembering Psalm 23 from the first night of the ordeal, Odio delivered an extemporaneous meditation on the passage, particularly the phrases, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me," and "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

"It was very emotional, because we had lived in 'the valley of the shadow of death,' and in the midst of enemies God had set a table for us. I could see the expressions in the eyes of my companions. I was sure the Holy Spirit was moving in this group."

Later one of the justices told Odio he had seen a tear running down the cheek of one of the kidnapers as Odio led the meditation and prayer.

The next day the justices were released and the kidnapers were captured at the San Jose airport as they tried to escape.

Rather than being traumatized by the experience, Odio found it energizing: "Without a doubt, though I was physically tired, in spite of this, spiritually I left fortified because I could see the hand of God act in a great manner, giving to us joy and peace that Paul talked about and that the world can't understand."

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(BP) photo available from The Religious Herald, Virginia Baptists' newsjournal.

Former camp reject  
returns to lead youth

By Michael J. Clingenpeel

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (BP)--Nine years ago Gerardo Herrera, as a first-year student at the University of Costa Rica, smuggled cigarettes and beer into the Baptist camp at Alajuela. He and a friend named Rolando were caught serenading female campers at 2 a.m. The next morning the camp pastor kicked them out.

Last year Gerardo Herrera served as camp pastor.

Seated at a table in the Omar Khayaam Restaurant located one block from the University of Costa Rica in downtown San Jose, Gerardo recalled the events that produced this curious reversal of roles. Gerardo acknowledges the irony of recounting his testimony at the same table where nine years before he and Rolando drank together.

Nine years ago Gerardo and Rolando went to San Pedro Baptist Church, the oldest Baptist church in San Jose, every afternoon to play Ping Pong. The pastor's son, Jose David Guevara, invited them to the Baptist camp.

They went, not knowing what to expect. Gerardo was impressed with what he saw: "People had a good time in a way I did not know. I recognized a need to be like the others there."

Then came the incident which led to his untimely departure from camp.

Yet what Gerardo had experienced prior to his departure went with him: "I felt like I had something important in my grasp but was about to lose it."

The following Sunday evening Gerardo, yearning to talk with someone about his feelings, went to find the pastor's son at San Pedro church. He went in to the service and listened to the pastor, the same man who had sent him away from camp earlier in the week. When the pastor extended the invitation, Gerardo responded. "My heart was pounding so hard I thought I would die."

But the Lord was not through with Gerardo.

For three years he struggled with his new faith, trying to find acceptance from his Catholic family. He was troubled by his father's severe alcoholism. At camp he made a pact with God to start a Bible study with friends if the Lord could make his father stop drinking. "When I came home from camp my mother told me the strangest thing had happened that week while I was gone -- my father hadn't taken a drink. After that he never took another drink."

Gerardo thus began one Bible study -- and three others. At church he became president of the youth group and a Sunday school teacher. In the association of churches he was selected president of the youth organization. By 1990 he was in charge of the camp he once was asked to leave.

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Last August Gerardo agreed to donate 8,000 colonies, about \$50, to fix hymn books for a new congregation at Tres Rios, a suburb of San Jose. Three days before the opening service at the mission Gerardo, who was out of work, did not have the money. So troubled that he could not work, Gerardo went to talk with a Southern Baptist missionary co-worker.

One block from his destination, the Baptist center in the center of San Jose, a car passed Gerardo. In it was a former member of San Pedro church, now living in the United States. The man motioned Gerardo over to his car: "I want to give you this for the work in Tres Rios," said the man, handing him 8,000 colonies.

As Gerardo thanked his friend and turned to leave, the man called him back. "Listen, I want to give you something. I want you to use it for yourself, not for the mission." It was 3,000 colonies.

"By the time I got back to my office I was crying," recalls Gerardo. "Back in the office I began to pray, and this thought came to me -- if God takes care of the work, God will also take care of the worker. From that moment I dedicated myself fully to the Lord and his work."

Each morning Gerardo attends classes at the Baptist seminary in San Jose. Each afternoon he works at the Bilsa Company, a foam rubber company where in eight years he has risen from packer to manager of the computer center.

Every Sunday he preaches at San Pedro church, the same church where nine years ago he and Rolando spent afternoons playing Ping Pong.

And each Sunday Rolando, his former drinking buddy, plays the piano as part of his duties as the church's minister of music. They are still partners, but now it is the partnership of service to the powerful yet mysterious gospel where wanderers become workers.

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(BP) photo available from The Religious Herald, Virginia Baptists' newsjournal.

Rudolfo's miracle: a scrap  
of paper in the nick of time

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press  
7/29/93

PENJAMO, Mexico (BP)--Rudolfo Halcon had an appointment with death.

He fretted impatiently through the endless day, waiting for night to cloak Penjamo Jail, where he'd vegetated for two years without a trial.

That night the deadly combination of a sharp razor and an empty heart would end his life. Only a miracle could stop him.

Outside dogs announced the milkman and his clip-clopping burro, roosters crowed, children shrieked with joy, birds joined in chorus and street sweepers swished hand-tied brooms over cobblestone.

But Halcon -- fingering his razor and waiting -- could hear only self-loathing thoughts pound his brain until it throbbed.

Death, he felt, was too good for him -- a man of means whose greed had driven him to defraud elderly people, a man whose selfishness had left his wife, Socorro, and four children destitute while he rotted in jail.

Socorro and the children said they still loved him. How could they? No one could; he didn't deserve it. Only a miracle could make someone love him.

Night came and he made his way -- a regular shaving ritual -- to the shower room toilet in the Mexican jail. This night he would slit his throat and bleed to death in lonely seclusion. He lifted the razor. Morning finally filtered into Penjamo Jail and found Halcon -- not dead but lamenting his bad luck. A man interfered when he had finally worked up the courage to die. Sick and vomiting, he arrived as Halcon held the razor to his throat. Halcon lost his nerve and fled.

Now he'd have to endure another endless day and do his main daily chore -- sweep the jail courtyard clean of leaves, debris and scraps of paper.

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Halcon never read the scraps he swept up, but this particular day he did, according to "The Scrap-Paper Miracle," a book by Don Madaris, Southern Baptist representative to Mexico. The book was published by New Hope Press, a publishing arm of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

One particular scrap caught Halcon's eye. It spoke of death -- and of life, which would soon ebb away. Or would it? Only a real miracle could stop Rudolfo Halcon this time.

But he read and re-read the scrap: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

The scrap had more words, but those stopped him. Suddenly his mind was awash with memories from his days as a Catholic altar boy. Bits and pieces of catechism returned. But they meant little. He had rejected the church.

But the words about death and life nagged at him. So did the name of the writer of an article from which the scrap was torn -- Olivia S.D. de Lerin of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas. The scrap even included her address.

Thoughts of death fled as Halcon pondered what the words about life meant -- and how Lerin could know so much about it.

Halcon's heartfelt letter of inquiry overwhelmed Lerin.

It came from a place distant from a church, preacher or missionary. It was based on a scrap of an article she wrote a long time ago, and Halcon's questions showed he'd somehow absorbed the content of the whole article. How did the scrap even get there -- and on that particular day?

Lerin wiped away tears as she read Halcon's letter and resolved to answer it right away. But it took six weeks to get to Penjamo, Mexico, through mail slowed by an airline strike.

Only as he daily read and clutched that scrap of paper did Halcon manage to wait that long for Lerin's words of life.

But it was time enough for another miracle -- for his wife, Socorro Halcon. It came not from a scrap but from a Gideons' New Testament, thrust long ago into her hands in a marketplace by a little old man who scurried off into the crowd.

The New Testament had lain, forgotten, in her house. But somehow it turned up among the few items she grabbed when police confiscated her house and belongings and evicted her and the children after Halcon's arrest.

One day, when all else seemed hopeless, it caught her eye -- and the words in it led her to accept Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. She found peace and joy she had never known. But she feared to tell her husband, knowing he had little use for the church and wouldn't understand.

But Halcon would soon understand. Lerin's letter arrived the day he once more verged on hopelessness. Her explanations and materials that filled a thick envelope led him to understand that someone -- Jesus Christ -- did love him and could forgive him. He, too, accepted Jesus as his Savior.

Six more years would pass before Halcon would leave jail, but that was time enough for other miracles -- even before any Mexican or Southern Baptist mission worker met Halcon.

By the time they arrived, he had already begun winning fellow prisoners to Christ. That grew into a church inside Penjamo Jail.

Other miracles changed many lives through an unusual combination -- a Baptist publishing house, two Mexican Baptist churches, a Baptist hospital, Gideons International, a New Mexican Baptist Women's prayer group, a Mexican Baptist writer, and three Southern Baptist workers -- a nurse, a discipleship trainer and a volunteer student worker.

Miracles all -- but none more moving than the story of Cecilio, who also had a late-night appointment with death in the Penjamo Jail shower room toilet. Cecilio, supposedly alone, knotted a piece of sheet around his neck like a noose. It would take a miracle to stop him.

"You're not out here to wash your face, are you?" an unexpected voice asked. "What's it to you?" Cecilio spat back at Rudolfo Halcon.



Throughout a long and emotional night, Halcon explained just what it was to him. He explained that Cecilio -- in agony over murdering his children in a drunken rage -- also could receive forgiveness from God.

Morning finally filtered into Penjamo Jail and found Cecilio -- neither dead nor lamenting bad luck. He was celebrating a miracle. A man interfered when he had finally worked up the courage to die.

Instead of death, Halcon passed on words of life that led to Cecilio's acceptance of Jesus Christ and new hope for a new beginning.

It was just one more victory that began with a scrap of paper bearing the Word of God that came in the nick of time.

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Robert O'Brien wrote this story on assignment from WMU.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "In France, missionaries witness through football," dated 7/26/93, please substitute the following paragraphs for those that were fourth and third from the bottom of the original story:

Boatwright's parents put Mayere in touch with First Baptist Church of Atlanta and with students at the Baptist Student Center at Georgia Tech. Rich Attalla, a student at Tech, talked at length with Mayere, who was asking questions about Christianity because of his contacts with Boatwright.

One night, after reading in the gospels of Luke and John, Mayere came to a decision for Christ. "I said yes, yes, yes, I want to become a Christian," he remembers telling God that night. Later he discovered Attalla had prayed all night for him, as did many people from First Baptist of Atlanta.

Thanks,  
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