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Southwestern revival spreads
into surrounding community

By Bob Murdaugh

Baptist Press
3/7/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Some faculty and administrators at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary say the sudden outpour of confessions of sins at the seminary March 1 was characteristic of revivals at several educational institutions in the past 40 to 50 years. They contrasted the March 1 occurrence to the revival Southwestern experienced in March 1970.

Roy Fish, distinguished professor of evangelism, and Jack Gray, professor of missions emeritus, said two commonalities among Southwestern's revival March 1 and its 1970 revival are the widespread prayer and revival testimonies that encouraged them.

The March 1 revival followed Howard Payne University students' testimonies in a few classes at Southwestern and some churches in the surrounding Fort Worth, Texas, area.

In 1970, immediately preceding the campus revival, students from Asbury College and Asbury Seminary in Kentucky spoke on Asbury's spiritual renewal in several Southwestern classes and area churches.

According to Fish and Gray, seminary officials' assurance that students wouldn't be penalized for missing classes allowed more freedom in the March 1 revival than people in the 1970 revival had.

"Both revivals were public demonstrations of a mighty work of God in the hearts of people, and both were expressions of conviction, confession, reconciliation and miraculous conversions," Gray said.

The 1970 revival followed a decade of great decadence in society, Gray noted. "Interest was down in everything Christian and there was great discontentment on the seminary campus. In open forum chapels, students would vent their spleens by calling out the names of faculty and administrators they hated."

The societal decadence of the 1960s dissipated somewhat into the 1970s and 1980s. Near the end of the 1980s, decadence began to set in again, Gray said, adding, "Now is surely a time for change!"

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One of Fish's evangelism classes Feb. 28 experienced what he said "had all of the marks of a revival. It was just a matter of Howard Payne students reporting the spiritual awakening on their campus and the students in my class responding to the Holy Spirit. One Southwestern student was possibly saved."

Some ministers of Fort Worth churches report their congregations have experienced or are close to experiencing great movements of God like the one during the March 1 chapel at Southwestern.

One supernatural event was an hour-long youth meeting at Southwayside Baptist Church on the evening of March 1 that turned into a three-hour time of confession, according to youth worker and Southwestern student Bobby Miller. The outpour followed Miller's and other Southwestern students' testimonies of how God touched them in the seminary chapel.

"I've never been in a meeting where youth were as open with their confessions as they were then," Miller said. One teen-ager reportedly made a profession of faith."

Another movement of God occurred at Southcliff Baptist Church in Fort Worth soon after pastor Charles Stewart shared about the March 1 chapel and supernatural happenings in Brownwood. The invitation time in Southcliff's 11 a.m. service lasted two hours as several church members publicly sought forgiveness for sins and gathered at the altar for prayer.

Michael Dean, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, also attended the March 1 chapel at Southwestern at Fish's invitation. Dean described the service as "a refreshing movement of the Lord. I genuinely sensed the presence of the Holy Spirit.

"For the last seven weeks, Travis Avenue Baptist Church has been experiencing the rumblings of a great movement of God," Dean said. "The March 1 chapel at Southwestern was a confirmation for me that God wants to do something great in Fort Worth."

The seminary's spiritual renewal March 1 followed Southwestern graduate John Avant's report of supernatural happenings in his Brownwood, Texas, church, Howard Payne University there and the surrounding community. The Southwestern outpour started about 11 a.m. and lasted into the late evening. "God is shaking us -- something no person could do," Avant said.

What happened at Southwestern was as unexplainable as what is happening in Brownwood, Avant said. "My hope was that God wanted to use what he's doing at Howard Payne University in Brownwood in a deeper way. I thought my chapel message at Southwestern would be preparatory. I had no idea of the readiness for revival," Avant said.

Like several Southwestern students and other pastors who attended the March 1 chapel, Avant said he witnessed deep, gut-level and spontaneous confessions of sins. "I saw a lot of brokenness and some genuine healing," he said. "I was amazed by the comradery among the students. Someone would share and immediately five or six people would stand around them and pray. One of the most moving experiences was when a white man admitted racism and two or three black guys almost carried him off the stage hugging him."

Avant said Southwestern professors such as Fish and Malcom McDow first gave him a love for revival while he was a student on campus. "To see revival occur at Southwestern, it doesn't seem like the same place."

Southwestern student Bobby Miller was surprised at the wide range of sins confessed by fellow seminarians March 1. "It's scary because most of them are prominent leaders of churches. Their confessions made me realize how much more I've got to have my act together, especially with youth. You hurt a teen-ager by setting a bad example, and you have the potential of scarring them for life."

Avant spoke in chapel at the invitations of Fish and Southwestern President Ken Hemphill. Hemphill expressed disagreement with some student and faculty skepticism over whether the March 1 occurrence was a genuine movement of God.

"There will always be those who are skeptical when there is a moving of the Spirit," Hemphill said. "This can sometimes be compounded in an academic environment where we tend to analyze everything. You must rely on the inner witness of the Spirit and the confirmation of God's Word.

"I, for one, experienced a genuine touch of the Spirit, and he is continuing to do a work in my life," Hemphill said. "A genuine touch of the Spirit will bring humility, not arrogance. Don't judge a brother or sister who may not have had a similar experience."

Hemphill emphasized that revival is an ongoing process. "Revival will intensify your hunger for the Word and for prayer. It will be evidenced in your lifestyle, language, witness, joy and discipline. For seminarians, it should produce a great zeal to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed," Hemphill said.

Fish was away from the seminary on business March 1. He said he "feels cheated" he could not attend chapel.

"From the testimonies of students and faculty, I have no question that what happened in chapel March 1 was basically of God, though I'm not saying everything was genuine," Fish said. "I am hearing about a new freedom on the part of many people who were touched by God."

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Medical missions needs
on FMB's critical list

By Mark Kelly

Baptist Press
3/7/95

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Medical missionaries are needed more than ever, but fewer health care professionals are making it to fields of overseas service.

Requests for medical professionals on Southern Baptist foreign mission fields hit a 10-year high of 72 this year -- the third year of dramatically higher requests and twice the number of 1992.

But only eight medical missionaries went overseas in 1994, barely one-10th the number requested. Three went in 1993 in response to 65 requests.

"So few medical candidates are in process that if things don't pick up, we'll have critical needs unmet," said Jim Riddell, associate director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's personnel selection department.

Medical missionaries always have played a strategic role in Southern Baptist missions. The first one, J. Sexton James, was appointed to China in 1846. After World War II, however, Southern Baptists began a campaign to open hospitals and clinics overseas, and medical needs multiplied.

The strategic importance of medical missionaries increases as more countries admit only professionals who can assist in national development.

"Christian health care professionals can be in places where we never could get an evangelist," said Van Williams, a physician who directs the FMB's missionary health department. "They not only enjoy the satisfaction of caring for hurting people when others don't, but knowing their witness to God's love -- in word and deed -- may be the only one many will ever hear."

Medical professionals who sense God's call to missions must overcome formidable obstacles, Williams noted. All know they will make sacrifices in income, but they also must grapple with concerns about one day re-entering the super-specialized high-tech field of medicine in the United States.

Many young medical professionals also must deal with massive school debt, which can run \$50,000 or more. One effort to help them is Project MedSend, a Christian Medical and Dental Society program that raises funds to pay school loans for health care workers while they serve on mission fields.

Obstacles can be discouraging but not insurmountable, Williams said. Hindrances are overcome as health care professionals see the world's needs and sense God's call to service.

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"And there's no greater reward than seeing your ministry make a tremendous impact on people's lives, reaching large numbers of people and seeing how grateful they are for what you have done," he said.

Most kinds of medical expertise can be used overseas, Riddell said. Opportunities include roles for doctors, dentists and nurses, but also for pharmacists, veterinarians, administrators and technicians.

The types of service available vary just as widely, he added. Critical needs exist in traditional hospital and clinic settings, while new positions have opened up in community health, where the strategy is to prevent common diseases that maim and kill large numbers of people in developing nations.

The fields of service include both long-established Southern Baptist missions, such as Nigeria, Macao and Brazil, and countries only recently open to foreign assistance, such as Mongolia, Vietnam and Kyrgyzstan. Terms of service range from two weeks to a lifetime.

Dozens of opportunities also exist through Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist aid organization. Medical projects have played an important role in opening doors to countries closed to traditional missionaries and to groups of people that have not heard the gospel, according to CSI Associate Director James Hampton.

Short-term volunteer projects range from two weeks to four months and include requests for virtually every type of health care worker in countries from Southeast Asia to the former republics of the Soviet Union, Hampton said. Similar opportunities exist for longer-term service in new areas.

Equally important, however, are some critical needs in countries where Southern Baptists can point to a long history of productive mission service.

In Nigeria, for example, Southern Baptist missionaries have served for 145 years. The Nigeria Baptist Convention is a perennial leader in baptisms and church starts. The need for medical missionaries, however, is critical.

The Baptist hospital in Eku has long needed an obstetrician and gynecologist for its staff, said Betty Kay Yamaoka, associate director of Southern Baptist work in western Africa. The missionary there has stayed well past retirement because no one has stepped forward to take up the work.

In three western Africa countries, fully equipped dental clinics stand empty, she said. A Baptist hospital in Ghana urgently needs an administrator, and new areas and new people groups are waiting for people to respond to God's call to work in community health projects.

In Macao, an island nation off the southeastern coast of China, medical missions has been a main avenue of contact for evangelism, said Christine Hailey, associate director for work in eastern Asia. Medical missions will be a primary strategy for ongoing work after the country comes under control of the People's Republic of China in 1999, she said.

Keith Morgan's ministry at Hope Medical Clinic in Macao has opened many opportunities that result in conversions and new preaching points, Hailey said. The clinic needs three new doctors to maintain its ministry.

"The Foreign Mission Board takes a comprehensive approach to missions," said Lloyd Atkinson, director of the FMB's personnel selection department. "Many methods are employed in bringing the world to saving faith in Christ. Medical missions has always been one of the more effective means of accomplishing that task. That's as true today as in the past.

"Southern Baptist missionaries around the world are sending in a growing number of requests for health care professionals to serve as missionaries," Atkinson added. "The majority of these needs are going unmet.

"God is calling some to medical missions who haven't yet understood that call. We stand ready to help anyone open to exploring God's call."

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(BP) photo (vertical) mailed March 7 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet News Room.

**WMU calls Baptists to prayer,
study of proposed SBC changes** **By Teresa Dickens**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--While Woman's Missionary Union does not plan to make a formal response to the Program and Structure Study Committee's recommendations for changing the Southern Baptist Convention's structure, WMU officials are encouraging WMU members and others to understand the committee's report.

WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien said the reason WMU does not have plans to make an immediate formal response to the PSSC's report is because WMU's executive board is not scheduled to meet again until June 16-17. The board meets twice each year -- in January and just prior to the WMU and SBC annual meetings.

"However, we do encourage those who have called us, and would encourage all Southern Baptists, to do several things," O'Brien said:

1) "Pray for the leadership of the Holy Spirit in interpreting and understanding the report. We have great confidence that the intelligent, informed members and friends of WMU can be trusted to seek God's leadership and act on it."

2) "Study the report well. I am pleased that it will be well distributed, giving our membership the opportunity to study the proposals."

3) "Read your state paper."

4) "If you have questions, ask the right people. Letters to state papers, to your state's representative(s) on the Executive Committee, to members of the Program and Structure Study Committee and to the presidents of the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission will yield further information."

5) "Go to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Atlanta and vote your conscience."

The seven-member PSSC submitted its report to the SBC Executive Committee in February, proposing a new North American Mission Board to combine the efforts of the Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission. The PSSC also recommended the end of the Historical, Education and Stewardship commissions and that primary responsibility for promoting the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions reside with the renamed International Mission Board (formerly Foreign Mission Board) and North American Mission Board, instead of WMU.

The Executive Committee approved the PSSC's recommendations, forwarding them to the SBC for votes in two consecutive annual meetings. Approval by a majority of messengers each time will enact the recommendations.

O'Brien outlined answers to three questions she and other WMU staff members have been asked repeatedly since the unveiling of the PSSC's report.

1) To whom do the Lottie Moon Christmas and Annie Armstrong Easter offerings belong? Can they be given away?

"Legal counsel to the Executive Committee has said, from the standpoint of the recipients, the FMB and HMB are the beneficiaries of the offerings. It is the clearest example of a charity; every cent has always gone to the mission boards, with none being retained by WMU. Thus, it might be argued that from this standpoint, the mission boards are the owners of the offerings.

"Another argument could be made, however, that historical and emotional ownership belongs to WMU. For many years, these were women's offerings and gifts from men were returned to the donor. With time, WMU leadership deemed it wise to make them church-wide offerings. In addition, the allocation of the offerings was given to the mission board leadership who knew where the most urgent needs existed.

"Did we give the offerings away? Perhaps so, in the interest of wider involvement and increased giving to missions. We have no regret for this. But while WMU has involved the mission boards and Brotherhood in the promotion of the offerings in these later years, we have continued to be the primary agents in the work. Even within the state, untold hours and dollars are willingly spent by state WMU offices in the distribution of materials and promotion of the offerings.

"Both Larry Lewis and Jerry Rankin have affirmed our contributions and request d our ongoing participation in the promotion of the mission offerings."

2) Why has WMU chosen to remain an auxiliary instead of becoming an agency of the SBC?

"The dictionary defines auxiliary as 'offering or providing help.' By being an auxiliary WMU has been able to be a helper to the convention and all its causes. WMU has shared in every large undertaking of Southern Baptists without losing the major emphasis on home or foreign missions.

"Another reason for remaining an auxiliary is that the women elect their own leaders. At the state level, WMU members elect a president. The state president then becomes an officer of the national WMU executive board. This means that women know WMU work on every level and they are well able to represent the women in their states. The WMU executive board works with the national WMU staff in developing the plans and materials which are presented to churches.

"Another unique feature about WMU as an auxiliary is that a meeting of the members is held annually.

"By design WMU has sought to encourage church members to give as much money as possible to missions; thus WMU generates its own operating expenses. WMU, SBC does not receive money from the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or from the Cooperative Program. This allows more money to be used for SBC causes.

"WMU continues to be dedicated to the God-given task of proclaiming the good news to all the world and we can best do it as an auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention."

3) What does it mean for Brotherhood in the new North American Mission Board to be given responsibility for missions education?

"The report does recommend that the 'focus upon the mobilization of volunteers for mission, disaster ministries, and the missions education' for the church be assigned to the current Brotherhood Commission.

"We would not, however, speak to the purpose of the committee who made this designation. Jim Williams, president of the Brotherhood Commission, has stated publicly that he would hope that WMU would continue to be involved as it has been in the past with gender specific missions education organizations.

"As for WMU, we are moving 'full speed ahead' to the beginning of our organizational changes, which include new organizations and magazines. These changes are scheduled for October 1995.

"We have been in the process of forming new options and entry points for all Southern Baptist women in the church for many months now. Training sessions are in progress nationally and on the state level. Excitement is growing; we have no intention of slowing it down.

"WMU has never feared change. We have been involved in massive changes ourselves in recent years. Structures and formats may change, but the need for an organization that will sensitize Christians to the need of the world for Christ and that will provide them with models and opportunities for praying, going and giving to share the good news will endure. We intend to continue to provide those for Southern Baptists."

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Pornography battles to increase
in U.S. churches, observers say By Clay Renick

Baptist Press
3/7/95

CINCINNATI (BP)--The magazines were more than a habit when Gene McConnell tried to rape a woman.

"I had to get help," he recalled. "I'm convinced that I would have taken that woman's life."

McConnell grew up as a pastor's son. But an older boy molested him at church camp.

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"At the time I didn't have an idea of the impact," he said.

Later McConnell found a collection of pornographic magazines at an uncle's house.

"It was like a drug was injected in my vein," he said.

The interest went from his imagination to behavior. McConnell molested his own sister at 16.

"I was so ashamed," he explained. "It required more graphic (material) ... to keep obtaining the same high."

The addiction worsened. McConnell went to Bible college, got married and started a roofing company. But he also went to massage parlors and prostitutes.

"Each time I repented," he said. "I honestly wanted to follow God."

One night he drove to a racquet ball court and saw a woman in a car. He grabbed her by the throat and was about to rape her.

"When I saw the fear in her eyes, I said, 'I've made a serious mistake here,'" he explained.

The woman got his license number. And McConnell went to jail for assault. He later got help from a counselor and now works for the National Coalition Against Pornography based in Cincinnati.

"God's healed our marriage," McConnell said. "He's healed my life. This is an issue you can't fool with."

The fight against pornography has entered Southern Baptist churches. And some congregations struggle for answers.

"There's so many pastors who aren't able to handle this type of addiction," said Monique Nelson.

That includes confusion over the numbers involved or the right approach in counseling.

"They say, 'Let's just pray about it and it will go away.' But it doesn't go away," said Nelson, director of California's "Enough Is Enough!" campaign. Enough is Enough! is an independent group working to underscore the damage of porn on women and children.

"Where are you going to get help if there's so much denial?" Nelson asked.

Pornography is a \$10 billion industry in the United States. That would cost each man, woman and child approximately \$38 a year.

"We get calls on a regular basis from churches interested in doing something in their community," said Lamar Cooper of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"Southern Baptists will be more and more involved in these issues," Cooper predicted.

Archibald Hart recently studied the sexual habits of 600 Christian men. Hart is dean of the graduate psychology department at Fuller Theological Seminary in California.

He found an increasing number of Christian men using pornography on a regular basis.

"Our culture as a whole ... does not see it as a problem," he said about pornography. "I see men in our Christian subculture moving more and more toward a secular mind-set with regard to sexuality."

The problem comes with shame. Men involved don't want others to know.

"We fear what our fellow Christians will think or say," Hart said. "Churches need to stop ignoring the problem."

According to the U.S. Justice Department, there are approximately 4 million child molesters in the country. And many started with soft porn but found a greater need for graphic material.

The addiction is progressive. But church leaders can fight obscenity if they understand the process.

"Often there will be several pastors who will preach against the problem in their community," said Bruce Taylor.

"It raises the awareness."

Taylor is president of the National Law Center for Children and Families. He said some pornography is not protected under the constitution if it violates community standards.

"Preachers exposing it becomes a way to establish community standards," he added.

Southern Baptists in Rogers, Ark., took on the issue in their association. They heard that teen-age boys could rent X-rated movies from area video stores. And each tape came with an address for material that was more graphic.

"We analyzed our problem," recounted Joe Atchison, director of missions for the Northwest Baptist Association.

"We found that 95 percent of the stuff is sexual perversion," he explained. "It includes bestiality, homosexuality, incest. ... It gets progressively worse."

Atchison organized a community meeting and 250 attended from several denominations.

The group showed their findings to the district attorney. Then they ran ads to explain the harm with hard-core pornography. Most of the video stores agreed to remove the movies.

"I get calls in the middle of the night," said Atchison. "They let out a lot of cussing or they hang up."

"It's spiritual warfare, no doubt about it," he added. "There's many people in our churches that are caught up in it."

Meanwhile, the victims of pornography need compassion.

That's the message of Donna Ferguson, who was molested as a child and later wrote "The Someday Kid" and "The Assault on America's Children."

She recommends churches use support groups for men with sexual addiction and women who were abused.

"The damage that is done from molestation is known only to the victims," she said. "If God doesn't enter the healing process, there is no healing."

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Congregation preaches
to each other with tract

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
3/7/95

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry let members of his congregation preach to each other Feb. 26.

To kick off their participation in "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," people attending First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., were given a gospel tract with their bulletin that morning.

During the sermon, Henry asked people to read the tract to the person sitting next to them. They used the Home Mission Board's tract designed as a road map to lead a person from points of despair and hopeless to abundant and eternal life with Jesus Christ.

One church member said he overheard two young men sitting in front of him say, "I didn't know that," and "That's really neat," as the tract was read. One of the young men made a profession of faith during the service.

"Our members thought (reading the tract during the sermon) was fabulous," said Bill Mitchell, minister of evangelism and missions. "Most of them said they didn't realize it could be so simple" to present the gospel.

The church is conducting its 60 days of personal witnessing emphasis from March 5 to May 6, followed by a four-day revival. The convention-wide simultaneous witnessing effort was Jan. 9 to March 9, but Home Mission Board evangelism leaders have urged churches to plan a personal witnessing thrust that fits their schedule.

The 60-day emphasis at First Baptist, Orlando, will include praying for the salvation of non-Christians, witness training and times of prayer and fasting, Mitchell said.

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**Driven 'Type A' personality
takes Here's Hope challenge**

By Sarah Zimmerman

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--As a self-described "Type A" personality, Linda Olson says, "When I commit to something, I do it or die."

Last December the pastor at First Southern Baptist Church, Fountain Valley, Calif., asked members to participate in "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now."

Olson hesitated.

She likes a challenge, but she wasn't sure she could find 60 non-Christians to witness to in 60 days. After all, she moved to California from Phoenix less than a year ago; she hadn't even met all her neighbors yet.

Then one of those neighbors invited Olson to a gourmet food show in her home.

"I began talking about the First Place (nutrition and discipleship) program at my church and how it had gotten me back to reading the Bible," Olson said. "All of a sudden everyone in the entire room was looking at me." Olson continued to share her faith.

"The Lord said, 'I provided you with 30 people. All you had to do was talk.'" Afterwards, Olson signed up for "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now."

Olson found opportunities to share Christ with the clerk at the grocery store, co-workers when she serves as a substitute teacher, other parents at her daughters volleyball games, members of their bowling league and people in the medical community because her husband is a doctor.

"I thought I would have to manufacture the experience," Olson said, "but the Holy Spirit goes before you. He just knocks on the door and says, 'Excuse me. It's time.'"

No one Olson shared Christ with made a profession of faith -- yet. She said she will continue to follow the Holy Spirit's leadership and pray for people to become Christians.

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Nobles moved to Missouri

after release from hospital By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist Press

3/7/95

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (BP)--Former Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles was transferred March 2 from San Francisco to a Missouri facility to undergo tests that will determine whether he can stand trial on charges that he diverted for personal use portions of \$3 million in missing donations at the Baptist-affiliated college.

Nobles, 70, was transported by air ambulance to the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Mo., after being released by doctors at St. Francis Hospital in San Francisco, where he spent 35 days after apparently swallowing poison in a hotel room Jan. 26 while being arrested by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Nobles underwent two emergency surgeries at St. Francis to repair damage to his stomach and esophagus, and he suffered a stroke while hospitalized that left him partially paralyzed.

Jackson television station WLBT broadcast videotape footage March 2 that showed Nobles' stretcher being loaded into the air ambulance in San Francisco during a driving rainstorm. He appeared to be awake and alert.

FBI agents tracked Nobles to San Francisco's Grand Hyatt Hotel after he skipped a pretrial hearing Jan. 26 in Jackson, during which he was expected to plead guilty to at least some of the charges under a plea bargain.

U.S. Attorney Brad Pigott of Jackson would not confirm or deny an agreement had been finalized, citing his policy of not commenting on ongoing plea bargain negotiations.

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Nobles faced a Feb. 7 trial date on a 20-count federal indictment that included charges of fraud, money laundering, income tax evasion and illegal interstate acts of immorality, but U.S. District Judge William Barbour of Jackson ordered a psychiatric evaluation of Nobles after he fled to San Francisco.

A spokesman for the U.S. Marshal Service said Nobles could turn out to be one of the federal agency's most expensive prisoners.

Jim Sullivan, chief deputy U.S. marshal in San Francisco, told The Clarion-Ledger newspaper in Jackson March 3 the cost of guarding Nobles around the clock and then transporting him to Missouri cost taxpayers about \$47,000.

The tab for the air ambulance -- a specially equipped Lear jet with a two-member flight crew, a nurse and two deputy marshals -- was \$15,000, according to Sullivan.

He said he is hopeful Nobles' medical bill from St. Francis, estimated at more than \$100,000, will be covered by private insurance or Medicare, but he admitted the Marshal Service will ultimately pay any remaining charges.

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Paper's expanded religion coverage
may signal trend for 21st century By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
3/7/95

DALLAS (BP)--Some observers of religion in the culture hope the expanded religion section launched by the Dallas Morning News last December can serve as a model for other metropolitan daily newspapers in the 21st century.

"It is a wonderful improvement over the meager space offered by most newspapers," evangelist Billy Graham wrote in a recently published letter to the newspaper. "I realize a lot of work and decisions went on behind-the-scenes before this came into being."

Indeed, the section grew largely out of "behind-the-scenes" work by the management of the newspaper and its parent organization, the A.H. Belo Corporation; dozens of Dallas-area religious leaders; and the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

Jimmy Allen, former Southern Baptist Convention president and denominational agency executive, along with veteran religion reporter John Dart researched and wrote a 1993 report for the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, "Bridging the Gap: Religion and the News."

Their recommendations to news organizations included:

- Recognize religion is a beat worth prime news space, competent staffing and consistent coverage.

- Broaden the appeal of the religion beat to include subjects such as ethics, morality, faith and spirituality.

- Tailor religion coverage to the variety of worshipers in your community.

Editors at the Dallas Morning News took those suggestions to heart, and they met with Allen to discuss how they might implement them, according to Bob Mong, managing editor.

"Allen looked to us as the kind of paper that could help figure out how to do religion coverage differently," Mong said.

Long before her retirement in 1992, veteran religion editor Helen Parmley had encouraged the newspaper to devote more space to religion news. In fact, the paper had made a tentative commitment to a religion section in 1984, but expansion in other areas took precedence.

"We concentrated on developing the rest of the paper, but we had a strong, lingering feeling that we needed to do something about an institutional commitment to religion news coverage," Mong said.

"We've always had good individuals reporting about religion, but there needed to be an institutional commitment in terms of resources and staff." Parmley's successor, Dan Cattau, lobbied hard for a more comprehensive look at the subject of religion and its impact on society.

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"Then a readership poll conducted in early 1994 confirmed our suspicions about the importance of religion and the need for religion coverage," Mong said.

During the first half of 1994, the editors at the Dallas Morning News met informally with about 50 religious leaders in the community, from independent evangelicals to inclusive ecumenicists, to discuss gaps in coverage of religion news.

Allen worked as coordinating consultant in helping the paper develop its new religion section. Last summer, he met with more than 60 Dallas clergy from across the theological spectrum on several occasions to let them critique specific articles in the newspaper.

Once a prototype of an expanded religion section was developed, these religious leaders met again to offer suggestions, and they met again in February to discuss further development of the finished product.

In terms of personnel, the newspaper moved three reporters onto the religion beat, and they assigned a designer, copy editor and section editor to oversee work on the weekly edition.

"Ours is now the only paper in the country with a weekly religion section that is not a makeover of another section," said section editor Sharon Grigsby, a 15-year employee of the Dallas Morning News who has worked as political editor and as editor of the entertainment section.

"Religion," "Spirituality" and "Values" are the headings for the six-page Section G in each Saturday's Dallas Morning News. In its first three months, front-page articles in the section have dealt with "trends" stories such as religious marketing, Christian romance novels, reaching Generation X and religious expressions of environmentalism, as well as an examination of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary titled "Life After Dilday."

Regular features include "Good Works," a page highlighting faith in action and listing volunteer opportunities; "Community of Faith," devoted to a calendar of upcoming religion-related events and a weekly spotlight on one place of worship; "Voices," which includes guest columns and letters from readers; and "Views and Reviews," providing an arts calendar and a listing of religion's best sellers, in addition to book, theater and music reviews.

Response to the new religion section has been overwhelmingly positive, Mong said.

"It's not all it could be, but we're committed to trying to nurture it and bring it along," Mong said. "Our readers are just encouraging us to make it better and better. Even when some have been critical, it's been very constructive criticism."

Allen said the expanded religion coverage in the Dallas paper is "heartening," adding, "The Morning News has made a pacesetting change in its coverage of religion news, offering a model for other newspapers across the nation to follow."

Some have been concerned religion news will be consigned to a Saturday morning "ghetto," but the paper's editors are convinced that won't happen.

"We're not trying to compartmentalize religion coverage into the section. The paper has a continuing commitment to religion news coverage on page 1 when it is page 1 news," Grigsby said.

Just as sports and business news gained easier access to page 1 of the Dallas Morning News after those sections were expanded, Mong said he believes religion news will gain even higher visibility as the expanded religion section gains a following.

"As we concentrate more seriously on a subject, we develop more stories for the whole paper," he said.

"I believe this leads us to think more about the spiritual component of news events. We're missing an important part of the story if we don't do that."

**Former religion editor finds
real story behind Billy Graham** **By Jon Walker**

ATLANTA (BP)--It took 21 years for reporter Colleen Kelly to dig up the truth behind evangelist Billy Graham, but she finally unearthed the answer and is prepared to reveal it to the world: Kelly discovered the truth is Jesus Christ.

Kelly's investigation of Graham began in 1973 when the evangelist held a crusade in Atlanta. Then the religion editor for the Atlanta Constitution, Kelly spent a week with the evangelist attempting to find the "real story: 'the evangelist gone bad.' I wanted to know where all the money was going, but as I spent time with Graham, I trusted him and came to respect him."

In the meantime, Graham used their time together to witness to Kelly: "He talked to me about coming forward. At that time in my life, I was sure of myself and confident in my career. I had my life under control and didn't see any need to give it over to Christ."

Kelly, who went on to become the top-ranked female editor at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, eventually left reporting to start a marketing company. This past year her marriage ended, and Kelly said it brought her to her knees. On June 22, 1994, the night before her wedding anniversary, Kelly surrendered her life to God, 21 years after Billy Graham showed her how.

"I had heard of people surrendering their lives to God, and I always took it as a sign of weakness," Kelly said. "Since surrendering to God, I've found it's the hardest thing I've ever had to do. It takes more strength than I thought, and it means doing it every single day."

She turned to the Bible given to her by Billy Graham after the 1973 crusade. "I'd never even taken it out of the box," Kelly said. She remembered Graham had written something in the front of it, and wondering what the evangelist had been trying to tell her two decades before, Kelly pulled the leather-bound Living Bible out of the box. "May this book become a part of your life. Philippians 1:6," Graham had written.

Flipping the Bible's pages to the verse reference, Kelly read: "I'm sure that the God who began a good work within you will keep right on helping you grow in his grace until his task within you is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns."

Kelly said, "I was an unfinished work. Now I am looking at what task I am to do."

During Graham's 1994 Atlanta Crusade, Kelly went forward, reaffirming her commitment to Christ. "I really hadn't planned to do it," she said. "I had always thought that religion was a personal thing -- but I've come to realize that it's a very public decision. Dr. Graham had talked to me about coming forward, and I felt it was important to publicly say, 'Yes, I am a Christian.'"

Kelly was also able to meet briefly with Graham during his latest Atlanta crusade, telling the evangelist of God's work in her heart two decades after their first meeting. "I told him I was slow, but I planned to be baptized the following Sunday night," Kelly said, referring to her immersion at Lanier Hills Baptist Church, Gainesville, Ga.

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**Quarterback follows God's call
to Southern Seminary, not NFL** **By Mary Ellen Price**

**Baptist Press
3/7/95**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--For Todd Burnett, coming to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary meant leaving the prospect of a professional football career. Although he chose not to follow that career, Burnett's new goal has him doing a lot more than sitting on the sidelines.

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The starting quarterback for the University of North Carolina from 1988-92, Burnett sensed a call from God to prepare for a ministry in pastoral care and counseling and came to the Louisville, Ky., seminary in August 1994, enrolling in the master of divinity/pastoral care and counseling program.

Although the NFL and the Canadian and World leagues were luring him, Burnett speaks confidently of his purpose and calling to ministry. "I know why I'm here," he says. "This is where my heart is. This is where I can make the best contribution."

Burnett was so sure of his calling that invitations from Atlanta, San Diego, Phoenix and New England, to name a few, could not redirect his inner sense of God's call.

The son of a retired army chaplain and grandson of a pastor, Burnett was born in Hawaii, the youngest of five children. He grew up in Alexandria, Va., where he lived from age 9 until he graduated from Lake Braddock High School. In the high school of 5,000 students, Burnett excelled in football and track.

Like many teen-agers, Burnett's high school days were marked by a rebellious period fueled by keeping company with the wrong crowd. A dual focus on faith and football helped put the troublesome days behind him. Although baptized at the age of 7, Burnett says he was not converted until his junior year in high school. Meanwhile, he began to take more seriously his football fortunes. "I started to succeed in football to escape the trouble I was in," he recalls.

As it turned out, Burnett did more than simply succeed. As a high school junior, he was named All-Metro and as a senior he was named All-State.

As the time for college approached, approximately 1,000 schools contacted him about playing football. The University of North Carolina eventually signed him, and he started playing the fourth game of his freshman year and lettered all four years.

Burnett acknowledges it was difficult adjusting to the life of a major college starting quarterback. "The media attention was difficult," he says. "I found that people wanted to be around me for the wrong reasons."

Burnett shied away from the attention initially. "It was hard to separate what people say about you with who you are," says Burnett. "If a reporter writes that you're great, the tendency is to think you're greater than you are. If someone says you're terrible, it affects your self-worth. The biggest struggle was not the media attention, it was what people assumed based on what they read."

Burnett eventually came to see the media attention provided a unique opportunity. He used his football stardom to share his testimony both in churches and in student organizations such as InterVarsity and Athletes in Action, where he was asked to speak on numerous occasions.

"Football clarified my goal," he says. "The more I shared my faith, the more I understood how much it meant to me. Football was my podium."

When Burnett graduated from UNC in 1992 with a major in psychology, seminary seemed the next step. In anticipation of a career as a marriage and family counselor, he visited several seminaries but strongly felt called to Southern. He cites the credibility of the counseling program as having a great impact on his decision. In addition, his grandfather is a Southern grad (Paul James, Th.M., 1933) and his uncle attended Southern.

Going to seminary wasn't a surprise to the football friends with whom Burnett associated. "My friends knew my faith was important to me."

Burnett looks forward to the one-on-one personal ministry of being a marriage and family counselor. Although his role will be quite different from the limelight of a football quarterback, Burnett says he has never been a particularly public person despite all of the attention he received playing football. "My family was the team and my focus," he says.

"A football career was alluring," he says. "It would have given me financial freedom. However, I'm doing what God wants me to do."

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Price is director of communications at Southern Seminary. (BP) photo available upon request from Southern Seminary.

Classic books by Baptist leaders
to be re-published as a series By Keith Hinson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--For Southern Baptists, the old is new again as a series of books by leaders throughout its 150-year history is being reprinted by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Consisting of 12 volumes, "The Library of Christian Classics" will feature hardback books by well-known personalities from Baptist history and contemporary life. The series is being launched as Southern Baptists celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of their denomination in 1845.

Timothy George, general editor of the series and dean of the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., described the books as "some of the great classic works that have proven their value over the years and which we think still speak with power and relevance to the life of the church today."

The first volume, scheduled for release in March, contains several sermons by R.G. Lee, the late pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., and three-term president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Entitled "Payday Someday" after Lee's best-known sermon, the book has a new foreword, written by Bellevue's present pastor, Adrian Rogers.

George noted "Payday Someday" was a sermon "Dr. Lee preached nearly 1,500 times in his life -- probably the most famous Baptist sermon of modern times. I can't think of one that would be a close second."

Other books in the series will include volumes on Baptist history, missions and doctrine -- written by such authors as B.H. Carroll, Bertha Smith, J.M. Frost, E.Y. Mullins, Jesse C. Fletcher, John A. Broadus, A.T. Robertson, W.A. Criswell and Basil Manly Jr.

George said the volumes can be used in churches to help members gain a better understanding of Baptist history and doctrine. Each book will contain learning aids designed by George's wife, Denise, a widely published writer and former BSSB women's ministry consultant, who is also a general editor of the series.

"The study questions for each volume would make it possible to use as a Bible study or small-group study discussion," George said. "The series is targeted to pastors, Sunday school teachers and lay leaders, as well as to seminary and theological students and people who are committed to missions and evangelism."

In addition to a new foreword, each volume will contain an introduction that "places the volume in historical context and talks about its theological value and particularly about the role it has played in shaping Southern Baptist identity," George said.

"We've tried to present the text of each volume in a very reader-friendly kind of way -- pulling out quotations, doing some subdivisions, that kind of thing -- in a very clear, readable type," he said.

Why republish books that are out of print? For George, it's an opportunity to educate Baptists who have forgotten or never learned their history.

"As we think about forging a faithful future under the lordship of Jesus Christ, I don't think we can do that if we simply begin from scratch. We've come out of a history and a context and a heritage," he said.

The idea for the series came from Al Jackson, pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church, Auburn, Ala., and a BSSB trustee. Jackson sees the series as spiritually beneficial to Christians today.

"I think when a person comes in contact with outstanding thinking on the part of Bible-believing theologians -- and he is challenged to think about God, Christ, man, sin, salvation and the church -- it makes a positive impact on his own thinking, spirituality, walk with Christ and his own ministry as well," Jackson said.

Jackson expressed appreciation for modern Christian authors but called it a "tragedy that often today we only want to read what contemporary writers are saying. I believe God has spoken to previous generations as well. We can learn from those who have gone before us and whose works have stood the test of time."

Jackson said the series also can remind Southern Baptists of their historic beliefs, including a high view of Scripture, which he noted is at the heart of the second book in the series, "Why I Preach That The Bible Is Literally True." The book, originally published by Broadman Press in 1969, is by W.A. Criswell, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, and a former SBC president.

It will be re-released in May. Criswell's book was a best seller and "had a great influence in recalling Baptists back to our biblical and evangelical foundations," George said.

Other volumes to be released in 1995 are "Baptists and Their Doctrines" by B.H. Carroll, "Go Home and Tell" by Bertha Smith and "Baptist Why and Why Not" edited by J.M. Frost. Six volumes will be released in 1996 and the final volume in January 1997.

George expects the books to have wide appeal since "many were best sellers when they first came out. We think that they can still speak to a new generation of Southern Baptists today with something of that same kind of power."

More than 50 books were considered for the series, but only 12 could be chosen, George noted. "We wanted to choose some representative volumes, but the series is by no means comprehensive or exhaustive. We could go on and on listing other works that would deserve inclusion in this kind of series," he said.

"We wanted works that had a proven value -- track records, so to speak, as classic books that had really made an impact in their time and their day, and (books) that really spoke to a certain dimension of Southern Baptist identity," George said.

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A list of the books, authors, writers of forwards, release dates and purchasing information is posted in the SBCNet News Room. File name is books.txt.

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