

(BP)

-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8919
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,17
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,17
NASHVILLE Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,17
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,17
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
HISTORY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

March 30, 1995

95-54

TEXAS--Revival at Southwestern stirs memories from 1970.
TEXAS--Swanberg's comedy calls ministers to laughter.
MEXICO CITY--Missionaries take '12 Steps' to Mexican Baptist churches.
MEXICO CITY--Mexican Baptists find serenity in Christian 'recovery' movement; photos.
MEXICO CITY--Missionary learns to 'let go' through '12-Step' recovery.
TEXAS--Oklahoman new president of Baptist foundations group.

Revival at Southwestern
stirs memories from 1970

By David E. Reid

Baptist Press
3/30/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Spontaneous spiritual revival in early March at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is rescuing from obscurity a similar event which shook the school 25 years ago.

The "1970 revival," as Southwesterners simply call it, is part of campus lore, along with stories about the seminary's founding president, B.H. Carroll; his successor, L.R. Scarborough; and Scarborough's nemesis, fundamentalist preacher J. Frank Norris.

But while current students have heard of it, few know the details of what Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern then and now, once called "a true spiritual bath."

Outside the seminary family, the revival is even more obscure. Nevertheless, it has affected thousands, perhaps millions, who are unaware it ever took place. Many who experienced it as students say it continues to impact their ministries to this day.

A number of parallels exist between the events of a generation ago and those of today, both of which occurred in March.

The 1970 revival was marked by "confession of sin, painful and humiliating pleas for forgiveness and earnest calls for help in prayer," wrote one professor who experienced it. A reporter described the revival as "a spontaneous movement of the Holy Spirit" and "an upsurge of spiritual power."

Similar words have been used to describe current events. And like this spring's awakening, which originated at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, the 1970 revival started on a college campus.

Fish brought to Southwestern three students from Asbury College and Seminary in Wilmore, Ky., schools which were already experiencing a widely publicized revival. The students spoke in chapel, in classes, at worship services in Fort Worth churches and in impromptu meetings on campus.

Prior word of the Asbury revival and the visit by those who had been intimately involved there became the catalyst for the awakening for which Southwestern students and faculty already had been praying.

(This spring's awakening erupted March 1 after a Brownwood pastor told a packed Southwestern chapel audience about the Howard Payne revival in late January, which has spilled over into his church and various parts of the country.)

--more--

Also like the current movement, the 1970 revival was marked by informal gatherings featuring spontaneous singing, confession, prayer and testimonies of how God had worked in people's lives.

Some students in 1970 admitted animosity toward instructors and each other, while others confessed cheating on class work. The wives of at least three students confessed they never had been born again and professed an authentic, newfound faith in Christ.

Long after the students settled back into their routines, the revival continued.

"For three years after, there was just a kind of spiritual freedom here," Fish said. "There was more of a sensitivity to spiritual things -- to sin and to the Lord and obedience to him and response to him."

For many, the 1970 revival remains a monument in their spiritual formation.

Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., then a student at Southwestern, describes the revival's influence on his ministry in these words:

"It ushered into my life an awareness that God's work moves on the basis of prayer," Elliff said. "From that moment on, I saw that God would do his greatest work as a result of prayer. I've never been able to shake that conviction since."

As students departed the campus, they carried the excitement of the revival with them. Elliff traveled to Buena Vista, Colo., and conducted a revival in a school gymnasium.

"The place was packed and when I gave the invitation, people flowed down the aisle to profess Christ," he said. "There are Bible studies in that town to this day that were started then."

Gary Maroney, former pastor of Scenic View Baptist Church, Portland, Ore., and director of the Portland Seamen's Ministry, also was a student at Southwestern in the spring of 1970.

"I remember hearing Billy Graham sharing about the revival at Asbury on his 'Hour of Decision' radio broadcast," Maroney said. "And I remember asking God to do something like that in my life."

He said when he heard the Asbury students were coming to Southwestern, he knew God would answer his prayer. Maroney's wife, whom he had assumed to be a Christian, was converted as a result of the revival.

Maroney describes one prayer meeting he attended which was typical of many which were meeting on campus:

"The presence of the Spirit of God was so strong it was like electricity going through the room. In the back, a woman stood up and asked, 'Would somebody please tell me how to be saved?'

"There came a real love on campus. People just were really loving and caring for each other."

Maroney said the experience prepared him for ministry in a way nothing else could. "I saw the power of what God can do if we will trust him and if we are right with him. It changed my outlook and vision and gave me a love for people I didn't have before."

Fish said one of the most telling impacts of the 1970 revival was the number of conversions registered during the seminary's Pioneer Penetration, held each spring break. Now known as Operation Penetration, the program sends out student teams to lead evangelistic services in small churches where Southern Baptist work is less developed.

"Up until the revival, we'd been having about 200 people saved each year in Pioneer Penetration," Fish said. "The first year -- the spring of 1970 -- it jumped to about 380. Then in 1971 we had 561 professions of faith."

With Fish on sabbatical the following year and no one to direct a greatly reduced number of participants, the student evangelists still recorded 360 professions of faith. Then in 1973, with a full complement of teams, Pioneer Participation recorded 672 professions of faith.

"After 1973, most of the students who had known revival had graduated and the conversions declined," he said.

Fish attributes the 1970 revival to a number of factors, many of which also have been present on Southwestern's campus this spring.

"The hunger for revival was here and there were small groups praying for revival," he said. "And we needed to hear about revival going on elsewhere -- the catalyst in 1970 undeniably was the Asbury revival."

Is this year's awakening the start of a revival which will have as great an impact as that of 25 years ago? Could the events of a generation repeat themselves?

Fish cautions against attempting to remake 1970. However, he doesn't rule out the possibility of an awakening of similar significance.

"Revival is not the kind of thing you manufacture -- there is an aspect of God's sovereignty in revival," Fish said.

"But if there is a hunger that leads to personal humility before God and a brokenness and repentance, if there is a movement toward prayer with revival as a major object of prayer -- I'm not saying it will happen again, but it will not happen without these things."

--30--

Swanberg's comedy calls
ministers to laughter

By Mike Hooker

Baptist Press
3/30/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary recently hosted a star-studded extravaganza during one of its chapel services.

Tim Conway, Don Knotts, Muhammad Ali, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Stewart, Ross Perot and Billy Graham highlighted the event, holding their audience at bay with comedy for more than a half hour, with guffaws often rising into the rafters.

Actually, these mega-names were not on the same stage together, nor were they at the same chapel service. They were not even in person at Southwestern, but their voices were present. All of them were encased in the body of Dennis Swanberg, the seminary's new special assistant to the president for seminary relations.

In his first address to the students and faculty en masse, Swanberg grabbed the audience's attention almost immediately with his comedic fervor, imitating the Barney Fife character's "Nip it. Nip it in the bud."

Swanberg's Billy Graham imitation was so close to the original that it produced an eerie sensation, almost making hair stand on end. With the Graham impersonation, the chapel atmosphere suddenly took on a feeling of holiness, of awe and admiration, causing an abrupt hush of the audience, then a punch line and instantly more laughter.

Pastor of First Baptist Church of West Monroe, La., before coming to his leadership role at Southwestern, Swanberg joked about the air of distinction some preachers take on when they remove their eyeglasses during sermons and stare into the distance as if contemplating the world's greatest problems. "I learned to take my glasses off when I preach, and they think, 'What a man of God, a scholar, a man of intellect,' ... and all I'm trying to do is remember if the Cowboys come on at 12 or 3."

The laughter-filled chapel at Southwestern suddenly became hushed as Swanberg revealed his central message -- that ministers do not laugh enough. He said that various ministers' wives have approached him after speaking engagements to report that they had not seen their husbands laugh so much in a long time. He has heard, "Since before he went into the ministry, he hasn't laughed like that."

Swanberg commented, "There ought to be a joy that filters through every aspect of our lives because of Christ -- real joy." He said happiness depends on circumstances, but joy is a choice.

Swanberg said that many times, ministers do things out of duty or obedience, not out of joy. "He (Christ) did it for us with joy, and for joy because we are his joy. He didn't allow the cross or the shame to rob him of his joy."

People should not allow their circumstances to determine their joy, Swanberg said. Seminary, work, serving and ministering, and dealing with people in general can rob people of joy. The only way to do these things with joy is to choose to do them with joy, he said.

--30--

**Missionaries take '12 Steps'
to Mexican Baptist churches**

By Mary Speidel

MEXICO CITY (BP)--As a Southern Baptist teen-ager, Laura Reagan lived three different lives.

One was the "shining star" who excelled at school and extracurricular activities. Another was the church youth group member growing as a Christian.

But there was one Laura most people didn't know. She attended Alanon's Ala-teen meetings, based on the "12 Steps" of recovery developed by Alcoholics Anonymous. There, other teen-agers understood her shame: they, too, were children of alcoholics.

Each of those "lives" played a part in her call to foreign missions.

She developed a strong Christian faith early. "I remember lying in bed at night praying during fights (between her parents). Praying was truly my lifeline," says Laura, the daughter of a recovering alcoholic.

At the same time, she was learning about missions. In the early stages of her father's alcoholism, he was a lay preacher in a pioneer mission setting. Several relatives also were involved in missions.

And growing up in Texas' Rio Grande Valley exposed her to another culture. "I remember studying Spanish in second grade and looking at pictures of Mexico City," she says. "I had a clear sense I'd live there someday."

"Someday" arrived in 1991 for her and her husband, Dan, also from the Rio Grande Valley area. That year they were appointed missionaries to Mexico City by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

There, she now leads a Mexican Baptist ministry to alcoholics, other addicts and their families. Her husband is a church planter in Mexico City's northeast sector.

"We operate two different ministries, but we're very involved in each other's work," Dan says. That includes sharing equally the care of their 6-year-old daughter, Hope.

The Reagans started dating when Laura was 15, already active in Ala-teen. Dan supported her recovery but at first didn't see alcoholism as a disease.

"I thought it was simply a (lifestyle) choice," he says. "But when I got out of denial and started looking at some of my own compulsions, the idea of recovery from a disease began to make sense." Dan has attended "12 Step" meetings himself. After arriving in Mexico City, the Reagans led a seminar on alcoholism in the city's Jardines de Morelos neighborhood. They've since planted a mission congregation there. Sergio Carrillo, pastor of the mission's mother church, supports their view that the "12 Steps" have a place in Baptist churches.

"The 'Steps' are a defined path of growth with a biblical base," says Carrillo, an ophthalmologist. "The first step is really the same thing as recognizing our sin. And the other steps can be applied to Christians to help them grow as disciples.

"Alcoholics meet with their friends in the bar because they feel accepted in their hurt," he adds. "They don't go for the pleasure of alcohol, but because somebody's there."

A former substance abuse counselor in the New Orleans area, Laura helps Mexican Baptists learn to "be there" for alcoholics and their families. She leads seminars on alcoholism in churches across the country.

When church leaders are interested, she helps them start a Christ-centered, "12 Step" support group called "Vencedores," Spanish for "Overcomers." The groups use the Bible and literature from Alanon. Laura and missionary colleague Judy Garrett also plan to write some Christian recovery materials geared to Mexican culture.

After Laura's seminars, "People always come up and say, 'I'm so glad we're finally talking about this,'" she says.

It's a problem that needs to be addressed. Alcoholism is Mexico's ninth leading cause of death, says Jesus Medrano, a public health expert in epidemics in Mexico City. Nationally, 15 percent of all illnesses and accidents and 75 percent of suicides are related to alcohol. In the part of the city where Medrano works, the third highest cause of death is cirrhosis of the liver.

"But our statistics aren't exact because of the denial of the disease -- both the alcoholic's and the family's," he says.

Mexican Baptist layman Fausto Anaya Aguilar understands that denial. He couldn't admit his own alcoholism until his son developed a drug addiction. That led Anaya and his wife to a secular "12-Step" program. But they wanted to get that "12-Step" support in a Christian context.

That's when they met Laura at an alcoholism seminar she led at Mexico City's Good Shepherd Baptist Church. The couple now leads an "Overcomers" group through that church. Several group members have accepted Christ as Savior through the program.

Laura also has started an informal support group for Mexican "yuppies" who are learning English at a school run by Mexican Baptist Claudia Rivera. After some of her students confided struggles with addictions and dysfunctional families, Rivera invited Laura to speak about "12-Step" recovery.

The group offers students a chance to practice their English. And it gives the missionary a chance to share her faith in a way that isn't "preachy."

"I feel like I was born for this," Laura says.

That's a long way from the days when she hid her family's "secret." "Now I openly talk about my background first, then I share my faith," she says.

--30--

Mexican Baptists find serenity
in Christian 'recovery' movement By Mary Speidel

Baptist Press
3/30/95

MEXICO CITY (BP)--There's lots of laughter in the home of Fausto Anaya Aguilar, a recovering alcoholic.

But it hasn't always been that way.

Anaya, a Baptist layman in Mexico City, remembers when his life was "full of anguish and problems."

"People put the stamp of 'drunk' on me. I withdrew socially because people didn't accept me," says Anaya. "I caused my family financial problems by missing work and by wasting money on alcohol and night life."

At the same time, Anaya's alcoholism took an emotional toll on his family. "I felt very depressed, like I was 'on the floor,'" says his wife, Elena Garcia de Anaya. "I didn't want to live."

She had been a Christian for years, active in a Mexican Baptist church. For 14 years she'd prayed for her husband to change. But nothing happened.

"Finally I decided, 'This man's really hardheaded. God's never going to touch him,'" she recalls. "I just let go. I said, 'He's lost, and I'm not going to spend any more energy on him.'"

The family hit rock bottom when their son developed a drug addiction several years ago. "When I found out my son was using drugs, I felt like everything was falling in on top of me," says Mrs. Anaya.

But that crisis forced her husband to face his own disease.

Their son became psychotic because of the drug abuse. He entered a psychiatric hospital. Anaya saw medical workers restrain him with a straitjacket. That was the final blow.

"It broke my heart," says Anaya. "I felt so guilty. I felt the Lord was telling me, 'You made (your son) like this.' But God was speaking to me out of love, not out of punishment."

Anaya began secretly reading the Bible. Meanwhile, the couple had been attending a secular support group for dysfunctional families. The group is based on the "12 Steps" for recovery developed by Alcoholics Anonymous.

"When I first went to the meetings, I didn't like them," says Mrs. Anaya. "I didn't think I could find help there, because the people had the same problems we did, or worse."

Later they met Laura Reagan, a missionary in Mexico City with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. She came to their church to lead a seminar on alcoholism and the family.

--more--

Reagan understood the Anayas' struggles. She faced some of the same ones growing up in an alcoholic family and had worked as a substance abuse counselor in the New Orleans area before becoming a missionary.

"When we met Laura, we knew God brought her here," says Anaya. "She helped us to understand more deeply the '12 Steps,'" adds his wife.

Reagan helped start a Christian support group at the couple's church, Mexico City's Good Shepherd Baptist. The group -- called "Overcomers" -- offers Christ-centered support based on the 12 Steps.

Now, the Anayas lead the group, open to anyone struggling with addictions themselves or in their families. They use the Bible, Christian "recovery" material and literature from Alanon, a 12-Step group for families of alcoholics.

Several participants have accepted Jesus Christ through the group's witness. "We ask the Lord to strengthen and guide us in our ministry," says Anaya. "We're working with souls he wants to restore and save. God is using us to help people find the abundant life he promises."

At the same time, the group helps the Anayas realize they, too, still need restoring. "As we've gone about helping others, we've realized the depth of our own problems," says Mrs. Anaya.

But they've found serenity -- and joy -- in that process. "Even in the storm, we're fine," says Mrs. Anaya.

--30--

(BP) photos (three horizontals) mailed March 27 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

**Missionary learns to 'let go'
through '12-Step' recovery**

By Mary Speidel

**Baptist Press
3/30/95**

MEXICO CITY (BP)--"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" has long been missionary Judy Garrett's favorite hymn.

But she had to sink to the depths of despair to realize how wide.

It wasn't that she lacked commitment. She had accepted Christ as Savior at age 7, pledged her life to missions at 30 and served as a Foreign Mission Board missionary in Mexico City for more than a decade.

"But I could never turn my life over to God completely because God really wasn't someone that dependable to me," says Garrett.

She could easily tell others how much God loved them. But it was hard to believe God really felt that way about her.

For years God tried to show her otherwise. As a teen-ager in Brownwood, Texas, her right foot was severed in a car accident. The surgeon on call reattached it. Back then, that procedure wasn't done much, especially in a small-town hospital.

"(The surgeon) said later he couldn't stand the thought of a 16-year-old girl going through the rest of her life with only one foot," recalls Garrett.

The ordeal was "a real spiritual experience," she adds. "I really felt God was trying to tell me something. It was obvious he was protecting me."

At the same time her earthly father gave her another message. Just after the accident, he "coped" with the trauma by getting drunk. Garrett didn't know then he was an alcoholic.

Her road to coming to grips with his alcoholism began about four years ago. Just after she and her family crossed the border for a furlough in Texas, she began experiencing strange sensations -- heart palpitations, shoulder pains, intense anxiety. At first she didn't tell anyone -- not even her husband, Dick.

"I just kind of suffered through it. I now know I was in a really deep depression," says Garrett.

She later went to the doctor but got a clean bill of health. But after returning to Mexico she saw an article in the Baptist Standard, Texas Baptists' weekly newsjournal. The author, Texas Baptist pastor Tim Sledge, wrote about the fears and insecurities he experienced as an adult child of an alcoholic.

--more--

Sledge has also written "Making Peace With Your Past," used in Christian support groups for people from dysfunctional families. It's part of a series of support group materials -- called LIFE Support -- produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn.

When Garrett read Sledge's description of adult children of alcoholics, "I thought, 'Gosh, he's talking about me.' I couldn't believe it."

Garrett also became a charter member of a support group for Foreign Mission Board missionary women from alcoholic and dysfunctional families. The group was started by missionary Laura Reagan, a former substance abuse counselor in the New Orleans area and the daughter of a recovering alcoholic.

Even deeper into the "recovery" process, a Southern Baptist therapist helped Garrett see "how much my idea of God was tied up in who my dad was," she says. "He loved me very much, but he let me down so many times because of his alcoholism."

The missionary support group "gave me a forum where I could truly be me for the first time in my life," says Garrett. "It's been really good for me to see that other people who seemed so perfect" have problems, too.

In their meetings, the women use the Bible, the "12 Steps" of Alcoholics Anonymous and Alanon (for relatives of alcoholics) and materials from a growing Christian recovery movement. Several of the women -- including Garrett -- also participate in secular 12-Step meetings in Mexico City.

"I think I've become a lot more 'real' because of the 12-Step groups," she adds. "I've learned a lot about being honest, loving and taking care of myself and accepting myself as God made me. I gave lip service to all this before, but it really never had reached my heart."

Garrett has shared this "spiritual awakening" with her students at the Mexican Baptist seminary in Mexico City, where she and her husband teach. There, with Reagan's help, she started a Christian support group called "Vencedores," Spanish for "Overcomers."

Recently, Garrett's own 12-Step work helped her overcome some challenges she and her husband faced in work relationships at the seminary.

Finally, Garrett sees more clearly the "wideness of God's mercy."

"I'm a worrier, but for the first time in my life I've been able to 'let go,'" she says. "I have peace. ... I've been able to truly trust God because I see him in a different way now."

--30--

Oklahoman new president
of Baptist foundations group

Baptist Press
3/30/95

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (BP)--Robert L. Ross was elected president of the Association of Baptist Foundations (ABF), which met March 26-28 in San Antonio, Texas. Ross, president of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma since 1986, has served as president-elect for two years.

The theme for the ABF annual meeting and workshop, "Future Faith," focused on the vision and application of new technology available on the "information superhighway." Speakers dealt with potential accessibility to financial interactive databases and high-tech channels that will enhance foundation work. Some channels are already being used.

Brian L. Harbour, pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas, spoke at each session on "Times Change But People Don't." Fourteen different specialized conferences were conducted.

The ABF membership includes 32 state Baptist foundations, the Southern Baptist Foundation and the SBC Stewardship Commission. The annual meeting's 122 participants included representatives of the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign Mission boards. The mission boards are two of the eight SBC agencies whose financial officers have a fraternal link to the ABF. The ABF workshop is open to other Southern Baptist entities which have similar interests.

New ABF officers elected include president-elect George R. Borders, president of Florida Baptist Financial Services Inc., and secretary-treasurer Stephen E. Mathis, executive vice president of the Missouri Baptist Foundation.

--30--

(BP)

BAPTIST PRESS
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, TN 37234

F
I
R
S
T

C
L
A
S
S

Southern Baptist Library
and Archives