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95-60

ILLINOIS--Confession, instruction mark Wheaton College revival.
TEXAS--Spring break outreach reports point to nationwide awakening.
BURUNDI--Burundi trauma, uncertainty influences Baptist work.
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Confession, instruction
mark Wheaton College revival

By Ferrell Foster

Baptist Press
4/10/95

WHEATON, Ill. (BP)--Word of a revival at Wheaton College last month has spread throughout the country, spawning similar experiences on at least four other campuses.

Wheaton College is a nondenominational, Christian liberal arts college in the suburbs of Chicago, and at least one Southern Baptist, Tim Beougher, has been involved in recent events. Beougher is assistant professor of evangelism at the Wheaton College Graduate School and associate director of the Billy Graham Institute of Evangelism.

Students who experienced the Wheaton revival and Beougher have gone to other campuses and seen revival in those places as well -- Northwestern College in Minneapolis, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School near Chicago and Gordon College and Eastern Nazarene College, both in Massachusetts.

The history of revivals has shown "God often uses an individual who has been deeply impacted by revival to become a spark" to bring revival in another place, Beougher told the Illinois Baptist newsjournal.

What happened at Wheaton?

On Sunday evening, March 19, two students from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, spoke during a weekly student-led worship service at Wheaton.

James Hahn and Brandi Maguire "shared what God had done in their lives" during recent times of revival at their campus and at other schools, Beougher said.

After they spoke, there was no exhortation or manipulation, the professor said. "There was no attempt to try and force a repeat experience of what had happened at Howard Payne."

But, "immediately students began to come up to the microphone and confess sin," Beougher said. "The confession was deep. It was painful. God really did a work of breaking people."

The service had begun at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. It did not end until 6 a.m. Monday.

Normally, about 400 students attend the service. That Sunday, about 700 came. It was difficult to know how many attended because many who were there "left and went back to get their roommates and friends," Beougher said.

The professor, who also is helping plant a new Southern Baptist church in the area, characterized the Sunday night gathering as "biblical," "sincere," "calm and orderly" and "God-focused and God-honoring." It involved emotion, but not "emotionalism." It did not contain some of the excesses associated with awakenings of the past, he added.

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The "beautiful thing" was that when a person would confess sin, 20 to 50 students would gather around the person and pray for him. "There was a real spirit of love and acceptance," Beougher said. "You could not point a finger at anyone else," because "all of us there had been stripped bare before the throne of God.

"What we're seeing here now is the body of Christ beginning to function as the body of Christ," he noted.

When the students broke up at 6 a.m., they agreed to meet again Monday night, March 20. They started at 9:30 that night and attendance climbed to more than a thousand. The seats of Pierce Chapel were filled, and students stood two and three deep along the walls, the professor said.

As on Sunday night, the service began with praise and worship. Then came more "deep confession," Beougher said.

Students were given an opportunity to throw away things "that were hindering your walk with God or that might trip you up in the future." Many went back to their rooms and returned with secular music discs, pornography, alcohol, credit cards and other items. One student even brought a rose, apparently symbolic of an unhealthy relationship.

The meeting lasted until 2 a.m.

The next night, a scheduling conflict at Pierce Chapel forced the students to move to College Church. About 1,350 students gathered in the church's 1,500-seat sanctuary.

After a time of praise and worship, confession of sin followed, with reading of Scripture interspersed. And again, it lasted until about 2 a.m.

On Wednesday, it was sensed there was a "need for instruction," Beougher said. Students had "emptied their lives," and that vacuum needed to be filled with the things of God.

Three school officials spoke that night. Wheaton President Duane Litfin gave his "full support and blessing and encouraged the group to keep their eyes on God," Beougher said.

Beougher then spoke on how to deal with temptation. He spoke of "keeping short accounts," which he had learned from the late Southern Baptist missionary Bertha Smith. It refers to not letting things "pile up in our ledger books" of sin. The believer, Beougher said, should confess, repent and be restored to fellowship immediately upon becoming aware of sin.

Lyle Dorsett, professor of educational ministries and evangelism, then encouraged students to stay in the Scriptures, pray and be accountable to someone.

Students who did not have an accountability group were asked to raise their hands, and others near them were asked to covenant with them, Beougher said. "I was struck ... that many of the people there were discovering the body of Christ for the first time." They realized how much they needed others.

On Thursday, it was time to celebrate. The students, 1,500 of them, held a "praise and worship service that raised the roof," the professor said. "It was glorious. ... It was a foretaste of what heaven is going to be like."

That night, 200 to 300 students committed themselves to full-time Christian service, following "the call of God to be involved in his work."

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Spring break outreach reports
point to nationwide awakening

By Mark Christie

Baptist Press
4/10/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Evidence of a national spiritual awakening is becoming even more convincing.

So says Dan Crawford, professor of evangelism and director of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Spring Evangelism Practicum program. More than 140 professions of faith were reported as a result of Spring Practicum students' ministries over this year's spring break.

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The number of reconciliations and confessions in churches exceeded previous years, Crawford said. He noted more than 274 public rededications were made in response to over 565 sermons given by the students.

"I think this is linked in God's sovereignty with what he is doing around the country. Usually, when these things happen, God revives his people and evangelism follows," Crawford said.

This year's 36th annual Spring Practicum focused on 25 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. All of the ministry sites were outside the Bible Belt.

Spring Practicum is sponsored by Southwestern's department of evangelism. Students assist small churches in revival meetings during the seminary recess.

Southwestern's participation this year was made possible by a \$20,000 gift from Joe Hayes of Traveler's Rest, S.C. Hayes is a family member of David Hayes, a May 1994 graduate of Southwestern.

"We don't try to prepare the students to send revival; we ask God to send revival," Crawford said.

Kevin Perrigan, a master of divinity student, described each day of his experience at Kalama Baptist Church in Washington state as "a new adventure."

Every night, Perrigan saw "people convicted, hearts softened and public commitments to God's service." He said the experience showed him the changes commitment brings in people's lives.

While Spring Practicum students were in revivals across the nation, 20 other Southwestern students were in intensive beach outreach at South Padre Island, Texas.

Darren Tipton, who directed the South Padre project, reported more than 280 professions of faith.

The Southwesterners were joined by more than 300 students from Baptist student ministries in Texas. Their task involved witnessing to vacationing college students while providing free transportation.

Each year, thousands of college students stream to South Padre Island during spring break, and each year the need for ministry seems more apparent, Tipton said.

"Every year there is more drinking, and more accidents occur. But, the student response is also greater," said Tipton, citing the South Padre outreach as proof "spur of the moment evangelism" still works.

The Southwestern students at South Padre reportedly distributed more than 60,000 "Bridge to Life" tracts during the week-long venture.

"When you see the hopelessness, you realize the message you have is an urgent message," Tipton said. "It is a great thing to have an evangelistic campaign in your church or a discipleship program, but if you don't go where the people are, who will?"

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(Mark Christie is a writer in the office of public relations at Southwestern Seminary.)

Burundi trauma, uncertainty
influences Baptist work

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
4/10/95

BUJUMBURA, Burundi (BP)--The tragedy waiting to happen in Burundi has Southern Baptist missionaries and the Foreign Mission Board's rapid response team wondering what to do and where.

That wonder grows against the backdrop of a new wave of ethnic killings in Burundi that has the potential of escalating into the genocide which occurred last year in neighboring Rwanda between the same ethnic groups, the Hutus and Tutsis.

The violence in Rwanda sent untold thousands fleeing as refugees and resulted in a million-dollar-plus relief effort on behalf of Southern Baptists by the Foreign Mission Board.

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The current feeling in Burundi is that short-term Baptists relief efforts should focus on refugee camps in Tanzania if the need arises, rather than try to operate in Burundi in the middle of what one observer calls "civil murder."

Meanwhile, career missionaries working to establish and strengthen churches and preaching the gospel in the central African nation are perplexed about their long and short term futures.

"We're supposed to leave for furlough in the United States in July but right now we don't know if we can leave our work in Burundi or what," missionary Cathy Brandon said April 9. "We'll just have to sit down and talk and pray about what to do."

Brandon is scheduled to return to Burundi April 11 to join her husband David at their home in Gitega in the northern part of the country. Both are from Elizabethtown, Ky.

Brandon and the only other SBC couple assigned to the Burundi, Steve and Tara Smith, from Orange, Texas, and Fort Worth, Texas, respectively, flew back to Burundi April 3. They were in Kenya for their mission meeting when the latest round of violence exploded in Bujumbura, Burundi, March 24. It left hundreds dead and sent tens of thousands of refugees surging across the nearby Zaire border.

The Foreign Mission Board survey team, scheduled to go to Burundi before the latest outbreak of killing, arrived April 6 to see what Southern Baptists should prepare to do if ethnic war escalates. It has been simmering for sometime. The United Nations reported extensive gunfire and exploding grenades around the capital both nights the survey team was there.

"On the surface, if you didn't know how things normally are you'd think Bujumbura was normal if you just drove through the city," said missionary Tad Tadlock, assigned to Uganda but deeply involved in working with Rwandan refugees in Zaire.

"But if you stop to talk to anyone you realize very quickly the deep levels of fear and tension," said Tadlock, from Lake Charles, La.

Entire neighborhoods and markets are abandoned in pockets of the city and foreigners are advised not to travel out of the capital and not to walk anywhere -- even a couple of blocks -- and to drive in convoys, not in individual vehicles.

The team visited with United States embassy officials and UNICEF and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). All told the Baptists they have reduced their presence to essential staff only and on any travel outside the city they do not take any Burundis with them, lest they provoke attacks.

Hutus, the ethnic majority, are abandoning Bujumbura in a solid stream while rural Tutsis are moving in, seeking the protection of the Tutsi-dominated army.

Brandon accepted the advice of the American embassy to cancel a planned trip into rural areas around Gitega and stayed home.

The Smiths, due to begin furlough in June, are busy planning with Burundi pastors and other Christians but also are trying to locate storage containers and a "safe" place to store their belongings.

The good news from the survey trip, according to Tadlock, is UNICEF expressed interest in working with Southern Baptists, possibly in delivering medicine to rural clinics, providing water in displaced person camps or cooperating in development projects with the Burundi government.

Also the UNHCR communications office agreed to issue the necessary paperwork to allow any Baptist relief teams to bring radios into the country and to operate on the UN frequencies.

"The bad news," he added, "is that everybody is very tense and nervous and alert. Everyone we talked to feels the situation is going downhill. The market is open only two hours a day. The Burundis are very frightened. It seems like a lot of people are on the streets until you realize that Burundi is now the most densely populated country in Africa and that there aren't nearly as many people walking around as there should be."

The Baptist Convention of Tanzania has invited Baptist relief efforts to work with them. There are already refugee camps from Hutus who fled Burundi last year before Rwanda exploded. If the Tanzania government heeds calls to open the border this time, hundreds of thousands of new refugees could spill into the neighboring country -- many of them Rwandans who fled to Burundi a year ago.

Tadlock admits the challenge of the situation is staggering.

"We can't change what they (the Tutsis and Hutus) are doing to each other, and we can't change the way they feel about each other," he said. "Only the Lord can do that."

Which is why the Smiths and the Brandons and the FMB rapid response team are praying about how best to share the love of God in the current situation.

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Ky. editor charges defamation
by Baptist Press news story

Baptist Press
4/10/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The editor of a Kentucky Baptist newsjournal has charged that he was defamed by a Baptist Press news story.

Marv Knox, editor of the Western Recorder, said in a memorandum to state Baptist newspaper editors he had consulted with legal counsel but will not press charges.

At issue is an April 7 Baptist Press story, "Southern trustee chairman counters editor's criticism of Mohler," reporting on an open-letter response by Richard White, chairman of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees, to a March 28 editorial by Knox decrying Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler's dismissal of Diana R. Garland as dean of the 117-student Carver School of Church Social Work.

"Legal counsel I have received leads me to believe any court would agree that the material as printed in the BP story is defamatory," Knox wrote to fellow editors.

Herb Hollinger, vice president for convention news (Baptist Press) for the SBC Executive Committee, said the story, written by Baptist Press editor Art Toalston, was one in a continuing series of stories on the seminary developments.

Hollinger said the story was "far from defamatory."

"The seminary trustee chairman has a right to respond to criticism in the editorial and we (Baptist Press) have a right and responsibility to report it," Hollinger said.

Knox complained that a paragraph in the story quoting White seemed to include him, Knox, as someone who opposes the seminary's efforts "to stand for biblical moral values and conservative theological positions."

White wrote: "There are those within the secular culture and even a few within our own denomination who do not want Southern Seminary to stand for biblical moral values and conservative theological positions. They have rightly perceived Dr. Mohler as one who opposes their efforts to transform our culture, and have attacked him at every opportunity for his faithful adherence to the values many of us hold sacred."

In the Baptist Press story, the paragraph appeared after paragraphs recounting:

-- four requirements for faculty nomination that a seminary administrator, David Dockery, vice president for academic administration, said reflect a strong consensus among trustees: 1) affirming women in ministry and their giftedness but restricting the role of women in the church from the office of senior pastor; 2) affirming the exclusiveness of salvation in Jesus Christ alone; 3) being clear that the Bible teaches that all homosexual behavior is sinful; and 4) acknowledging that the sanctity of life is pro-life and against abortion except in the most extreme circumstances.

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-- portions of Knox's editorial stating "Jesus couldn't teach church social work at Southern Seminary. He isn't orthodox enough;" implying Mohler could lose his support among trustees and be forced to leave the presidency "if, or when, accreditation is threatened, enrollment falls and contributions dry up;" and assessing that the Louisville, Ky., social work school's accreditation "is imperiled. Students are worried their degrees -- necessary for obtaining required licenses and getting social work jobs -- will be worthless. Faculty and student morale throughout the seminary is shot. Candidates for vacancies in other seminary schools are having second thoughts, if not backing out altogether. Alumni are recoiling in horror."

Baptist Press then cited White's comment.

Knox noted White's "insinuating sentence" in the open letter was "not similarly juxtaposed" to Knox's beliefs.

Knox stated he believes homosexual activity to be sinful; that life begins at conception and abortion is wrong; and he affirms the Baptist Faith and Message's assertion Scripture "has truth, without mixture of error, for its matter."

"I do indeed disagree with Dr. Mohler about women in ministry, but in so doing I stand alongside thousands upon thousands of Southern Baptists and many of the most committed conservative evangelical scholars of our day," Knox wrote.

With the Baptist Press story first mentioning the four specific issues, then quoting White, Knox contended the implication is "unseemly, malicious and a personal affront."

He said the story "meets several criteria for defamation," including inaccuracy; inconsistency with professional standards; distribution of information that "could prevent me from continuing my livelihood;" and no effort by Baptist Press to contact him "to confirm the veracity of the accusations," with the appearance that BP editors and Southern Seminary officials "have colluded maliciously with the express purpose of causing me personal harm."

The Baptist Press story quoted solely from White's letter and Knox's original editorial.

Knox's memorandum also explained why the open letter, originally intended as a full-page ad to be purchased by the seminary, would not appear in the April 11 issue, as seminary officials had expected.

The seminary missed a noon deadline April 7, Knox said.

The ad arrived at the Western Recorder at 12:20 p.m. after a courier was delayed by backed-up interstate traffic in Louisville, according to the seminary's public relations director, Michael Duduit.

Knox offered the seminary the opportunity for the open letter to appear in the April 18 issue either free of charge as an editorial op-ed piece or as a paid ad. The seminary chose Knox's offer of an op-ed piece.

Knox said the seminary had missed not only the April 7 deadline but two earlier deadlines after initially reserving the space; Duduit, however, said he was initially told the ad needed to be received either April 6 or 7, preferably April 6. When the seminary was informed of the noon deadline, Duduit said, efforts were in place to meet the deadline.

"The editor had the camera-ready ad in hand well in advance of publication and chose not to use it," Duduit said, noting the paper has received other ads as late as Monday.

Knox said the paper had to move ahead at noon that Friday, especially in light of the previous deadlines he said the seminary had missed, to avoid finding itself with an empty page at the last minute. The only ads received on Monday are those that are "verified, ready to go" and not having missed previous deadline-related requirements, he said.

CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Southern trustee chairman counters editor's criticism of Mohler," dated 4/7/95, please make two changes:

- 1) Replace the lead paragraph with the following: LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Richard White, chairman of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees, has issued an open-letter response to an editorial by Marv Knox, editor of Kentucky Baptists' Western Recorder.
- 2) Delete the 18th paragraph, regarding purchase of an ad.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

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