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**Charles Stanley relinquishes administration,
continues preaching; son resigns as associate**
By Martin King

**Baptist Press
8/15/95**

ATLANTA (BP)--Charles Stanley, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, has relinquished all administrative responsibilities for the 14,000-member congregation in order to deal with his marital problems.

Stanley told a four-hour, standing-room-only, called business meeting Aug. 13 he will continue as pastor but his "only responsibility will be to teach and preach the Word of God."

Upon Stanley's recommendation, the church appointed a committee to oversee administration of the church. The committee will "recommend to the church the time at which (Stanley's) administrative oversight would resume."

Stanley and his wife, Anna, have been separated since she filed for divorce in 1993.

"I have worked and waited two years, hoping and praying my marriage would be healed," Stanley told the estimated 4,000 members gathered in the auditorium and around closed circuit television sets throughout the downtown facility. "I am not divorced. I do not want a divorce. My wife does not want a divorce. We are trusting God will put it back together."

However, Stanley announced for the first time Sunday night, "If my wife divorces me, I would resign as pastor immediately."

Stanley, who has led First Baptist 26 years, also announced he would take a previously planned vacation during the month of September to "seek the Lord and his definite direction for my life."

Meanwhile, Stanley's son, Andy, resigned as the church's associate pastor Aug. 6, apparently in disagreement with his father's decision to remain as pastor.

In a statement read to the church, Andy, who was not in attendance at the meeting, strongly affirmed his love and admiration for his father, but said, "I believe my father should step down as pastor because of the issue of leadership, not preaching." However, he said he was committed to a model relationship with both his parents.

The church also approved creation of a committee to study "qualifications of pastors and deacons in relation to separation and divorce and to recommend a position for our church to adopt."

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Stanley, who preaches to millions in the United States and around the world on the broadcast ministry called In Touch, often preaches against divorce and the devastation it brings to families. Several members asked if the church did not already have a policy in keeping with that teaching. Stanley said the staff had dealt with the issue of divorce, however the issue of separation had never come up.

"We do not have a written policy that is clear on separation and divorce or we would not be here tonight," Stanley said.

The study committee will be chaired by Dennis Mott, a First Baptist staff member, and will report to the church within 90 days.

The church created a third committee which will review the church's plan to leave Atlanta's downtown and relocate to a northern suburb. In preparation for the move, worship services were started two years ago in temporary facilities at the north location with Andy as the primary worship leader. The north location now has two morning worship services with an attendance of about 3,000.

Due to the growth at both locations, the committee will "study the feasibility of retaining the downtown location and constituting the north location as an autonomous church."

The business meeting was opened and closed in prayer by evangelical theologian Stephen Olford and was moderated by James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Olford, who preached both morning worship services at the church's north campus, read Psalm 133 emphasizing the result "when brothers live together in unity."

Draper told Baptist Press Stanley is a long-time friend who called him just days before the meeting asking him to preach in the morning services at the downtown location and then moderate the evening meeting.

A letter that was brought to the meeting, apparently from Anna Stanley to be read to the congregation, was ruled by Draper as personal in nature and not to be read at the meeting. His ruling was sustained by the congregation following an appeal.

Draper told FBC members he was there "as a friend of this church to help you do what you want to do as a body. I don't come with an agenda or to be part of the process." Following adjournment, the church gave Draper a standing ovation for his fair, even-handed service.

"All Southern Baptists need to be in prayer for First Baptist, for Dr. and Mrs. Stanley and for Andy during these very difficult days," Draper told Baptist Press.

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Charles Stanley's wife says
no possibility of reconciling

Baptist Press
8/15/95

ATLANTA (BP)--The wife of Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, says their marriage of 40 years cannot be salvaged, according to a statement released to news media Aug. 14.

A story in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution Aug. 15 quotes Anna Stanley's statement that "the time for, and the possibility of, reconciliation between Charles and me has passed."

Her statement contradicts, apparently, a statement Pastor Stanley made to a called meeting Aug. 13 of the church in which he said "I am not divorced. Secondly, I don't want a divorce. Thirdly, my wife doesn't want a divorce. I'm trusting God is going to put this back together."

Stanley and his wife have lived separately since 1992, according to a Cobb County divorce petition filed by Anna Stanley in 1993. She later amended the suit as a request for "separate maintenance" but refiled for divorce in March. According to the Atlanta paper, the case is pending.

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In the statement released to news media Aug 14, Anna Stanley said she has "earnestly tried to negotiate a legal separation" to avoid negative impact on First Baptist Church and on her husband's "In Touch" television ministry.

"Unfortunately and regrettably, no changes have occurred and the problems with our marriage go unresolved," the statement read.

The Atlanta paper quoted a spokesman for "In Touch" who said Stanley has not agreed to any legal separation because that's not his goal. The spokesman said Stanley loves his wife and has done everything he can to pursue healing.

Anna Stanley's statement also said "I have been dismayed at my husband's refusal to accept the critical state of our marriage. Instead, he has made repeated announcements from the pulpit that progress was being made toward reconciliation, when in fact, the very opposite was true. I do not choose to contribute to this charade."

At the Aug. 13 called meeting of the church, Stanley announced he would relinquish the administrative duties at the 14,000-member church beginning Sept. 1 but will continue to preach. He said he would step down as pastor if "my wife divorces me."

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Baseball great, Mickey Mantle,
dies at Baylor Medical Center'

By Laura Horne

Baptist Press
8/15/95

DALLAS (BP)--Baseball Hall of Famer Mickey Mantle, 63, died Aug. 13 at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, nine weeks after receiving a liver transplant at the Texas Baptist hospital.

More than 1,000 people were expected to attend the public services Aug. 15 at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Dallas. Mantle supported Promise House, a ministry of the church to runaways and homeless youth.

Mantle was admitted to Baylor May 28. On June 7, doctors announced Mantle had liver cancer and Hepatitis C, and he would not survive unless he received a transplant within the next few weeks.

On June 8, Mantle received a new liver. He was released from the hospital 20 days later, and Mantle enjoyed a few weeks of peace before doctors discovered cancer had spread from his liver to so many organs it could not be fought. He began chemotherapy treatments and was hospitalized again Aug. 4, where he stayed until his death.

One-third of the nearly 3,000 patients who have received donor organs or bone marrow transplants at Baylor were liver transplant recipients.

Critics maintained Mantle received preferential treatment since the average wait for a transplant organ is five months and Mantle waited one day. Others decried the fact Mantle died so soon after the transplant and the organ could have been given to someone with a better chance of surviving longer.

But hospital officials insist Mantle was simply the sickest one on the recipient list that matched the organ, and at the time, tests did not show any signs of cancer that could hinder the transplant.

"The sorrow of it for him (Mantle) and maybe for all of us is that he was having a chance to revisit life, and it looked like he had a new beginning that could be another turn at bat," said Robert Duncan, chaplain coordinator in Baylor's pastoral care center and minister to liver and kidney transplant patients and their families.

"He was ready to go to bat for organ transplantation. He was extremely grateful for the new shot at life."

Since Mantle's transplant, local organ-transplant officials say requests for organ donor cards have jumped from 15 a week to hundreds a week.

As one of Mantle's last wishes, the Mickey Mantle foundation was set up to promote the need for organ donors. Mantle chose the slogan "Be a hero. Be a donor."

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Duncan alluded to a press conference when Mantle said that throughout his life he had been a taker, but now he wanted to be a giver.

"Maybe through his encouragement to donate organs Mickey did return a bit of what he had taken."

The New York Yankee slugger was one of the major league's greatest switch-hitting sluggers in spite of a long history of alcoholism.

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Mickey Mantle was eager
for prayers with chaplains

By Laura Horne

Baptist Press
8/15/95

DALLAS (BP)--Baseball legend Mickey Mantle was eager for chaplains to visit and pray with him during his stay at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, according to a chaplaincy administrator at the Texas Baptist hospital.

"In that sense, I think that he had a sort of simple faith that God was going to be with him through this," said Robert Duncan, chaplain coordinator in the pastoral care center who works with liver and kidney transplant patients at Baylor Health Care System, Dallas.

Mantle, 63, died at Baylor Aug. 13 following a liver transplant on June 8 and a battle with liver cancer that spread to other organs.

Chaplains from Baylor's pastoral care center had several opportunities to visit with Mantle. While Mantle was at Baylor, strict security was maintained because people were so eager to meet him.

"He had a real desire for us to be interested in him and not in his notoriety and his fame. I think that's why he was as welcoming as he was. He enjoyed being treated as an ordinary person," Duncan said.

Duncan and other chaplains who visited with Mantle made themselves available, but did not push themselves on Mantle.

"A hospital room is like a person's home," said Duncan. "You enter only with permission and with a lot of respect for their beliefs and the boundaries they have."

"That's the kind of approach we take with anyone. We respect them and we respond with what they wish us to do."

At least three chaplains from the pastoral care center at Baylor visited with Mantle, but he took a particular liking to David Bachelor, a student at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. Bachelor is a summer intern at the pastoral care center through the Clinical Pastoral Education program.

"I think he came to trust me and have confidence that I was there and I was interested in him. I wasn't just there to talk baseball or sit in awe of him," said Bachelor.

Several days, Bachelor visited Mantle, talked with him, listened to him and prayed with him.

"I think he respected the fact that I didn't push anything on him. I treated him with respect and I got to know his family. Mickey could see that I really cared about his kids."

Mantle was grateful for the lease on life the liver transplant afforded him, and Duncan says even if it were just for a few weeks, the quality of life during those weeks was so much better than before the transplant.

"Mickey had an overwhelming sense of gratitude that someone would do that (donate an organ) for him."

"In transplantation, it takes a bit for a patient to begin to incorporate the new experience into their view of who they are. Patients in general are just absolutely overwhelmed with this gift of life they have received," Duncan said.

He compares the gift of an organ to the Christian doctrine of grace -- salvation is not by works, and it is a free gift that is undeserved.

He noted transplantation teaches patients how to say thank you for the gift of extended life and live in gratitude rather than a sense of obligation and indebtedness.

Baylor is one of seven hospital systems affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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**CLC supports Clinton's
teen anti-smoking fight****By Tom Strode**

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Bill Clinton's aggressive campaign to reduce the use of tobacco among young people deserves support, says a Southern Baptist medical ethics specialist.

The president announced recently he was authorizing the Food and Drug Administration to implement policies designed to block the sale and marketing of cigarettes and chewing tobacco to children under 18. Among the steps are: (1) Requiring proof of age with an identification card in a face-to-face transaction and banning purchases from vending machines; (2) a ban on outdoor advertising near schools and playgrounds; (3) black-and-white text only, with no images such as Joe Camel, on billboards and in-store ads, as well as publications with substantial youth readership; (4) prohibition of the use of brand names and logos on such items as T-shirts and gym bags and in the sponsorship of sporting events, and (5) requiring the tobacco industry to finance a \$150 million annual education program.

"This is the kind of health-care reform we can support," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "Tobacco is a public health hazard. Smoking kills 419,000 Americans each year. Reducing the number of smokers and, thus, tobacco-related illnesses, will save millions of dollars in medical costs.

"The president's fight to ban cigarette advertisements targeting teens is a great start."

Citing a pronounced increase in teenage smoking in the 1990s and a "massive marketing and lobbying campaign by cigarette companies aimed at our children," Clinton said he had "no alternative but to do everything I can to bring this assault to a halt.

"When Joe Camel tells young children that smoking is cool, when billboards tell teens that smoking will lead to true romance, when Virginia Slims tells adolescents that cigarettes may make them thin and glamorous, then our children need our wisdom, our guidance and our experience. We're their parents, and it is up to us to protect them."

The same day as Clinton's announcement, coalitions of cigarette and advertising companies filed separate suits seeking to block the regulations. The advertisers' suit charged the rules violated the First Amendment.

He does not "buy the First Amendment argument," Clinton said.

"It is illegal for children to smoke cigarettes," the president said. "How then can it be legal for people to advertise to children to get them to smoke cigarettes? And does anybody seriously doubt that a lot of this advertisement is designed to reach children so we get new customers for the tobacco companies as the old customers disappear?"

Mitchell endorsed even stricter proposals.

"We should take a cue from our northern neighbors in Canada," he said. "Warning labels should cover nearly the entire front and back of the cigarette pack. Taxes on tobacco products should be dramatically increased. All cigarette advertising should be banned, especially ads pitched at American youths."

The president's action is consistent with a 1984 resolution passed by the Southern Baptist Convention, Mitchell said.

The resolution encouraged churches and schools to provide information on the dangers of smoking, asked parents to teach by word and deed abstinence from tobacco, exhorted Southern Baptists who grow tobacco to cease doing so and encouraged Congress to eliminate all funding and subsidies for tobacco growers.

In a fact sheet released also Aug. 10, the White House said a study for the years 1991 to 1994 showed smoking increased among eighth graders by 30 percent and among 10th graders by 22 percent.

Each day, 3,000 more young people become regular smokers, according to the fact sheet. Nearly 1,000 of these young people eventually will die because of their smoking.

Cigarette smoking kills more Americans each year than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, illegal drugs and fires combined, according to the fact sheet.

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**BSSB announces restructuring,
job deletions in BT-R division**

**Baptist Press
8/15/95**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Further adjustments in the structure of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division will result in a reduction of eight positions, effective Oct. 1.

Six of the cuts -- including three vacant positions -- will be made in the ministry-leadership development department where two field service teams (pastor/general leadership and associational) are being merged into one (general leadership-associational). Two vacant positions also are being deleted in the youth-adult department.

Employees whose jobs are being deleted, all in the ministry-leadership development department field service section, include: Willie Beaty, general leadership consultant, and James Harvey, associational consultant, who will take early retirement; and pastor/general leadership team leader Tim Holcomb.

BT-R Division Director Bill Taylor said the restructuring is in response to "the need for positioning the Bible teaching-reaching division for the challenges ahead and financial concerns, not employee performance.

"Cutting jobs is never easy, especially when it involves people who have given so much of their time and talents to the Sunday School Board and its ministries," he said.

Beaty came to the BSSB in 1982. He had served eight years as associational director of the Sunday school department of the Florida Baptist Convention and was a minister of education at two Florida churches.

Harvey joined the board staff in 1987 after serving as pastor of churches in Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma. He also had served as an adjunct professor at Grand Canyon College in Phoenix and written for January Bible Study, VBS and both Bible Book and Life and Work series Sunday school curriculum.

Holcomb joined the board staff in 1983 after serving as minister of education at two Texas churches. He has held numerous positions at associational and SBC levels.

According to Billie Pate, associate director of the BT-R division, merging the two field service teams "will enable more efficient coordination of field services directed to Sunday school general officers, pastors, staff and associational leaders. A focused, coordinated field service effort is a priority of the newly designed BT-R organization."

Pate was referring to a new structure which will divide the BT-R division into three departments, effective Oct. 1: ministry-leadership development, led by Steve Cretin; youth-adult biblical studies, led by Louis Hanks; and preschool-children biblical studies, led by Cos Davis.

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**Marie Conner, pioneer missionary
to Taiwan, dies of stroke at 80** By Mary E. Speidel

**Baptist Press
8/15/95**

WAYCROSS, Ga. (BP)--Retired missionary Marie Conner, one of the first four Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to Taiwan, died Aug. 11 at a hospital in Waycross, Ga., after suffering a stroke at home. She was 80.

Since February she had lived at Baptist Village in Waycross, where she taught Sunday school to fellow residents the Sunday before her death. "She had made a place for herself (at the retirement center)." She was ministering to others the day before her death," said her sister, Jimmie Lee Chidester of Macon, Ga.

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Since retirement in 1980, Conner earlier lived in Milan, Ga., her hometown. She was a member of Milan Baptist Church there. She also had worked among Chinese people through Central Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Ga., her sister said.

Appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1944, Conner worked 36 years among Chinese people in China and Taiwan. After two years of language study, she taught in Baptist schools in Yangchow and Shanghai, China, living under the communist regime in Shanghai for more than a year.

In 1950 she transferred to Taiwan, joining legendary Southern Baptist missionary, Bertha Smith, who had begun working there alone in 1948. Smith died at age 99 in 1988. During Conner's years in Taiwan, she was an evangelist in Taipei, Tainan and Chiayi and did Woman's Missionary Union and religious education work.

"Marie lived for missions," her sister said.

Before becoming a missionary, Conner taught school in Georgia. She earned the bachelor of arts degree from Mercer University in Macon and the master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. She also attended Berry College in Mt. Berry, Ga.

Conner was preceded in death by her parents, a brother and a sister. Besides her sister, Chidester, she is survived by another sister, Helen Albritton of Sarasota, Fla., and 14 nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were scheduled for 10 a.m., Aug. 15, at Milan Baptist Church. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be sent to Georgia Baptist Foundation Inc., 2930 Flowers Road, South, Atlanta, Ga. 30341-5562 or the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230-0767.

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

CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Church's media library should be a family place," dated 8/10/95, please change the spelling of the speaker's name in the third paragraph and following to Cindy Lumpkin, not Lumkin as printed.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

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