

# (BP)

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Proposed Texas CP cut raises  
foreign, home missions issues

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press  
8/24/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A proposed 2.5 percent reduction in Texas Baptist funding of Southern Baptist Convention national and international ministries raises two key questions:

- 1) Will it hurt Southern Baptist global missions efforts?
- 2) Is it in keeping with the home missions strategy central to the SBC-wide restructuring approved during the SBC sesquicentennial June 20-22 in Atlanta?

The SBC Foreign Mission Board could face an estimated \$750,000 yearly shortfall if Texas Baptists approve a recommendation to reduce the state's SBC Cooperative Program portion by 2.5 percent. The 2.5 percent cut would equal more than \$1.5 million yearly, half of which under the current SBC allocation would be designated for FMB work in more than 130 countries.

FMB officials could not give an immediate assessment as to what specific impact the loss of \$750,000 annually in CP gifts from Texas would mean to the board's current operations. The greatest impact, a spokesman said, would be a reduction in the board's ability to take advantage of the scores of new opportunities for missions expansion in areas of the world previously closed to the gospel. Rapid response in the immediate future is felt by the board to be strategically imperative.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas would rechannel the 2.5 percent primarily into starting 1,400 new churches in the state in the next five years, under a recommendation from a study committee already endorsed by the BGCT administrative committee. The proposal will be enacted if approved by the BGCT executive board Sept. 12 and the BGCT annual meeting Nov. 13-14 in San Antonio.

FMB President Jerry Rankin voiced regret that the "support of our missionaries serving overseas -- more of them coming from Texas than any other state -- will be weakened by this new proposal."

"Some churches have always justified weak support of global missions on the basis of the need to have a strong home base. It is disturbing that state conventions seem to be succumbing to this trend by keeping larger percentages of the CP for use in their states," Rankin noted.

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Citing "unprecedented opportunities around the world to fulfill the Great Commission," Rankin said, "Record numbers of missionaries are responding to God's call and are expecting Southern Baptists to faithfully channel CP dollars to the SBC and on to the FMB for their support. We already spend far more on the 'home base' than on global missions. The current Texas proposal only makes the situation worse."

Said Ronnie Floyd, chairman of the SBC Executive Committee and pastor of First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark.: "This move is an extreme departure from the historic tradition of cooperation in worldwide mission support that the Baptist General Convention of Texas has had for years with the Southern Baptist Convention."

According to Floyd, "It is difficult to believe that grassroots Southern Baptists would see the decreasing of 35.5 percent to 33 percent for the Southern Baptist Convention causes (from Texas churches' CP gifts channeled through the BGCT) as a step forward in joining the entire Southern Baptist Convention in reaching the world for Jesus Christ."

However, BGCT officials contend FMB work won't necessarily be harmed by the shift in CP funding.

"As a former foreign missionary, in no way do I want to decrease support for the Foreign Mission Board," said Mary Humphries of San Marcos, president of Woman's Missionary Union of Texas and a foreign missionary with her husband in Vietnam from 1966-1973.

"Our proposed 1996 Texas budget," she stated, "makes special provisions for the Foreign Mission Board by providing that one-half of all receipts over the giving goal will go to foreign missions."

The last year Texas Baptists met their CP goal was 1985, when they surpassed a \$57 million goal by 2.5 percent.

Humphries also said, "Our increased giving through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering also will reflect our continuing commitment to foreign missions."

She noted, "We must strengthen our mission efforts in Texas even to remain the strong mission state which we have always been."

Jerold McBride, BGCT president and pastor of First Baptist Church, San Angelo, said, "The committee went to a great deal of effort to assure that the Foreign Mission Board would receive no decrease, and in fact could receive increased funding. The proposal should guarantee no loss and could mean a possible gain for foreign missions funding."

McBride also commented, "Starting new churches takes money. But the bottom line is that more churches will mean an increase in dollars going to home and foreign missions. We don't start churches to raise offerings, but as we expand our mission base and Christian stewardship develops, it will mean an increase in giving for all missions causes."

William M. Pinson Jr., BGCT executive director, said, "Texas Baptist have always been supportive of foreign and home missions and give more than any other state Baptist body to these causes. There is no change in this commitment. Last year over \$41 million went to worldwide Baptist causes, the vast majority for the Foreign and Home Mission Boards. Next year we pray this amount will increase and it will as churches continue to give generously through the Cooperative Program and missions offerings."

Pinson added the BGCT "has also invested heavily in stewardship development and Cooperative Program promotion which benefits the Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board."

Concerning the SBC-wide restructuring, BGCT leaders said their funding shift reflected the home missions strategy central to the SBC Program and Structure Study Committee recommendations adopted by messengers to the denomination's sesquicentennial meeting this summer in Atlanta.

Ed Schmeltekopf, BGCT associate executive director and chairman of the BGCT study committee, explained the CP shift "was in part based on the action of the Southern Baptist Convention last June, approving the recommendation of the Program and Structure Committee that states such as Texas should assume more of the financial responsibility of home mission work in state and that Home Mission Board money should go elsewhere."

Said McBride, "We want to help the Home Mission Board accomplish its goal in terms of starting new churches and to follow their suggestion that state conventions assume more responsibility for funding. We're willing to pick up that responsibility and do it."

However, according to Floyd, one of the Program and Structure Committee's seven members, "The larger state conventions were encouraged in the report to take initiative in assessing more financial responsibility in their own states of doing mission work, without sacrificing world mission dollars. Let me make clear, our long-term objective in this was to free up more money for missions around the world; never was it to take money away from world missions."

Mark Brister, PSSC chairman and pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La., said of Schmeltekopf's PSSC statement: "The PSSC report, approved by messengers in Atlanta, in no way insinuates cutting missions. The opposite is true. The PSSC report suggests that states with strong Baptist population consider assuming more responsibility for their own mission funding in addition to support of the new North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board."

Brister added: "The question is simple; yet, critical: Will Texas Baptist churches support giving only pennies of every Cooperative Program dollar contribution to missions outside the Lone Star state?"

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The full text of various quotes used in (BP) Aug. 23 and 24 are posted in SBCNet News Room.

Bible teaching should be priority,  
BSSB president tells conferees

Baptist Press  
8/24/95

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Why have Southern Baptists remained strong as a denomination for 150 years?

Jimmy Draper doesn't hesitate when answering that question.

"We have remained strong as a denomination because we have magnified the Word of God," the Baptist Sunday School Board president told 340 ministers and church workers attending Small Sunday School Conference Aug. 21-25 at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. The theme for the conference was "Carry the Light: Live God's Word."

Draper said he is convinced "there will never be a great church that does not have great Bible teaching." An effective Bible study program, he added, is in line with a biblical pattern every New Testament church must follow:

"You must hear the truth, understand the truth and then communicate it to others," he explained. "Good news was never meant to be kept to yourself. There is nothing more important than studying the Word of God and passing on what we receive."

Draper conceded maintaining an effective Bible study program isn't easy, especially in today's increasingly complex and rapidly changing world. That means flexibility is a must.

"The church that is going to be (successful) in the 21st century is going to be the church that can adapt to change," he said. "The day that the church can say, 'If you don't come at this certain time, you've missed it,' may be over."

Draper offered six suggestions for maintaining an effective Bible study in the church:

- (1) Present the Bible as relevant and authoritative.
- (2) Provide instruction and resources that strengthen family.
- (3) Provide practical experiences that help people understand and appreciate the heritage of their faith.
- (4) Lead people to serve in the spirit of Christ.
- (5) Utilize the latest methods and techniques available without distorting the message of the Word of God.
- (6) Gain the support of your pastor.

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Draper said churches having trouble securing leaders and teachers for their Sunday school program may need to learn the distinction between "choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant."

"When you choose to be a servant, you relinquish control. You become accessible, available, vulnerable. ... I believe a commitment to servanthood is the distinguishing characteristic of the Christian faith. It will greatly assist us as we seek to build an army of workers to teach the word of God.

"I dream of the day and I dream of the church where the phone lines will be tied up with people volunteering to help."

In a morning Bible study session, James Harvey, general leadership growth consultant for the BSSB, shared with conferees six keys to profitable Bible study. In teaching others the Bible, he said we must help them understand:

- (1) the geography of the passage (Where it is taking place?);
- (2) the biography (Who wrote the passage?);
- (3) the chronology (When did it happen?);
- (4) the theology (What does the passage say about God?);
- (5) the "do-ology" (How should we respond/apply it to our lives?); and
- (6) the Christology (Help people understand only Christ can open the truths of scripture to us.)

Small Sunday School Conference was sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division.

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Brotherhood Commission prepares  
Men's Ministries launch in October By Ken Walker

Baptist Press  
8/24/95

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--When Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission President James D. Williams met recently with Dale Schlafer, Promise Keepers vice president for pastoral ministries, he offered this insight: "Don't expect our men to check their doctrine at the door (of PK rallies). We're unique and have beliefs we hold to and are going to keep lifting up."

Schlafer replied, "Jim, our stopping point is your starting point."

"The seventh promise of a Promise Keeper is to fulfill the Great Commission," Williams said. "We see our new program as a way of helping the mobilization of men into missions."

That program is Men's Ministries, which officially debuts in October. Commission officials say it complements the work of highly successful groups like PK and Dad the Family Shepherd. The Southern Baptist agency has cooperative agreements with both organizations, believing they can aid Brotherhood's goal of getting more men -- particularly younger men -- involved in missions.

The new thrust doesn't scrap the traditional Brotherhood mainstays of volunteer building and disaster relief. But it has more flexible approaches for involving men in outreach through the local church, according to Jim Burton, Men's Ministries director.

"We've never hesitated to challenge men," said Burton, former Missions Today magazine editor. "In the past, we put a hammer in a man's hand and said, 'Why don't you go build a church?' Now we're walking up, putting our arm around him and saying, 'What's going on in your life? What issues are you dealing with?'"

This approach is reflected in the seven ongoing, church-based options outlined in the new materials, Burton said. They include forming men's teams for teaching, prayer, mission action, evangelism, encouragement (accountability groups), career support or recovery ministries.

Resource materials are available for each option, as well as a 98-page manual, "Leading Men's Ministries." Brotherhood has expanded Missions Today from 24 to 32 pages and offers other brochures and books to help organize the various ministries.

Burton said the materials were designed as a result of focus groups held last year in seven states. In those meetings, commission personnel asked men what issues they faced and what kind of help they needed.

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"I feel we've done a good job of responding to grassroots concerns, not telling them what they should be doing," said Burton. "Men told us they wanted a simplified program and planning process, but more program options."

Following the model of "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God" by Henry Blackaby -- seeing where God is at work and joining him -- Burton advises churches to use a search-and-discovery process. After surveying community needs and praying, a church can fit its men's ministry to the Lord's direction, Burton said.

The beauty of this is a small congregation can start Men's Ministries with a two-man prayer team, he added. A church should not feel pressured to set up seven different teams. It is unlikely most will establish more than one or two, Burton said.

Williams acknowledged the new materials and the philosophy behind it are an admission "we have missed a whole generation in missions education because of our limited approaches to curriculum and methods. We were assuming a high degree of motivation on the part of the learner. We're not compromising, but we're recognizing there are other ways, developmentally, of helping people come to this level of commitment."

State Brotherhood directors around the nation support the new direction. Laddie Adams of Oklahoma already has seen the good accomplished through one of the new team options, career support.

His suburban Oklahoma City church organized an effort to counsel, encourage and pray for the dozens thrown out of work during the mid-1980s oil bust. Many have since found jobs and testified how encouraging it was to believe better days were ahead after finding themselves out of work in mid-career, he said.

The success of that effort ties into today's focus of supporting men so they will develop a stronger spiritual awareness and ultimately take action, Adams said.

"I think the emphasis has shifted," he continued, "and as a group, that they (see a need to get) involved in something more than coming to a meeting once a month."

Harry Black, who became Arkansas' director last January, said pastors, Brotherhood leaders and laymen around his state have reacted enthusiastically to the news.

"People I've talked with feel it's right on target with what God is doing today," he said. "It's not that the program wasn't flexible, it's how it was perceived. People got focused on the idea that Baptist Men meant just meeting and eating."

In Kentucky, veteran Brotherhood leader Bob Simpkins said he senses God at work in men's hearts. All kinds of men's ministries are seeing growth spurts, he said, which is strong evidence the Lord is moving.

"I think the heavenly Father has impressed on men a wake-up call and made them aware of their responsibility in reaching the lost for Christ," he said. "It is up to laymen as they express the gifts that God has given them."

Although Cecil Seagle is stepping aside as Brotherhood director in Florida Sept. 1 to take over as state missions director, he said new Brotherhood director Jim Brown believes the new emphasis will help develop men spiritually.

The Florida Baptist office already is working to develop men spiritually because "you can't get a carnal man to do spiritual work," Seagle said. Florida is organizing groups statewide around "ministry pods," men with common professional, vocational or lifestyle interests.

"We hope the results related to that will be more men on missions," he said. "Developing people spiritually and not allowing them to express their gifts is counter-productive. There's a tremendous corollary between spiritual development and the willingness to be involved in missions."

Maintaining such an outward vision is the most important factor as the commission works to establish men's ministries, Williams believes.

"One thing I've said repeatedly is that a number of men's movements have tended to turn inward," he said. "One difference we'd like to make as we work in Men's Ministries is to help men turn outward -- to a world that desperately needs the gospel of Jesus Christ."

The Brotherhood Commission's planned launch of Men's Ministries began more than a year ago, Burton said. The Southern Baptist Convention Program Study and Structure Committee, which presented a realignment of the denomination at the SBC annual meeting this summer in Atlanta, assigns Men's Ministries to the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. The recommendation passed.

"Our relationship with the Sunday School Board was solid before the PSSC announcements and remains so," Burton said. "We maintain close contact with them and have even adopted some of their curriculum into the new program. The encouragement we've received from the Sunday School Board, both before and after the Southern Baptist Convention, has been to continue with our plans.

"The churches have been asking for this kind of model for men's work," Burton said. "It's the responsibility of denominational agencies to service those needs as expediently as possible."

The commitment of both agencies has been to maintain a close, cooperative relationship concerning Men's Ministries, Burton said.

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Legacy Builders Retreats stir  
men to discover God's purpose

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press  
8/24/95

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--John LaNoue had finished leading the opening night of a Legacy Builders Retreat when a participant offered to drive him to an appointment. Wheeling down the highway, the man shared about the deep heartbreak in his family and concluded in tears, "Tonight I realized I'm the cause of it."

"It's not a program, it's the Holy Spirit moving in men's hearts," said Texas' associate Brotherhood director about the new retreat offered through the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. "It's exciting. It seems like someone has opened up the bottom of men's minds, and they're receiving what is said."

The Legacy Builders Retreat materials were written by Jim Burton, Brotherhood Commission Men's Ministries director. After field tests in several states, Burton and his staff will lead statewide Legacy Builders Retreats this fall in Alabama, Minnesota, California, North Carolina, Illinois and Maryland. Other states, including Texas, Tennessee, Missouri and Georgia, are scheduling retreats for associations and churches.

The Friday-night, Saturday-morning sessions teach the biblical basis of manhood and apply the principles of being God's man in the home, church and marketplace. Divided into four topics, a Legacy Builders Retreat includes small-group discussions and exercises.

Burton developed it over a year-long period after testing the concept at a men's meeting in New England in 1994. He knew God was at work when normally reserved men couldn't wait to stand up and share testimonies about what God was doing in their lives.

The biblically based material causes a man to take account of his life, said Burton, who said he believes males too often walk through life as victims of circumstance, lacking purpose and direction.

"One thing we have learned is that men struggle with feelings of significance. Men are asking if they really matter. Too many are floating through life with a dust-to-dust mentality, failing to appreciate the impact they have on their family and the world."

At retreats, Burton has seen men in their 70s with tears in their eyes. He said such elderly men realize the pain they may have caused, but know that God still has a plan for them and gives them an opportunity to have a godly legacy. Younger men have declared their plans to be an influence that honors God.

"Developing this material is the most meaningful thing I've ever been allowed to do," Burton said. "We want men to realize that God has a purpose for them. My prayer is that this retreat causes healing in families and in men's lives."

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Reports from the field indicate that is already happening. LaNoue said he has had more than one touching encounter in Texas. Another man told him, "When I got married, it was because of what it could do for me. Now I realize I'm responsible for what I can do for my wife and family."

LaNoue tells participants they will see their own child-rearing skills reflected in their grandchildren. The good habits they instilled in their children will be repeated, he said, and so will the bad.

Many today are products of spiritually passive fathers who taught them their only responsibilities were providing for their family's material and recreational needs, LaNoue said. But the Bible teaches that men influence their grandchildren and great grandchildren -- and their actions can either be a blessing or a curse, he said.

"Children never thank you for working that extra overtime," he said. "They come and thank you for things like coming to their first ball game. When he turned 21, my son wrote me a letter thanking me for loving his mother, saying it was one of the best gifts I could have given him."

At the close of Missouri's statewide Legacy Builders Retreat, a 24-year-old man came to the altar, weeping. State Brotherhood director Jim Albers, who knew him from previous missions projects, asked what was wrong.

"I don't know how to be a man," he sobbed, recalling how the deaths of his father and brother left him the only child of a possessive, domineering mother. "I don't know how to break away from that."

"He needed a small support group to model for him what was missing in his life," said Albers. "We were able to get him some help."

In addition, a Legacy Builders Retreat meets a man's needs by speaking directly to his needs, Albers said. "Once he knows who he is, who God is and the relationship between the two, God can speak to him about being a missionary at home."

The new retreat is proving so successful in Georgia that state Brotherhood director Ray Newman will lead up to three per month for the remainder of 1995. Moving testimonies have come there from men who stayed up long past midnight, discussing a spiritual vision for their families with their wives.

During the retreat, Newman also asks about the worst day of their life in the marketplace. Many recall the day they lost their jobs, including one man who was fired the day before he attended a Legacy Builders Retreat. He shared how he had first blamed God but realized he needed to work on issues in his own life and in his family's. Before the retreat ended, he had a job offer from another participant.

"Over and over men talk about how they want to develop a vision plan and be the husband and father God wants them to be," Newman said. "I get enthused and excited when I see men getting things like this together. This is different from the standard Baptist Men's retreat because of its focus in Scripture on what God requires of us as husbands and fathers."

The Legacy Builders Retreat Preparation Manual and Participant Workbook are available at Baptist Book Stores or by calling the Brotherhood Commission at 1-800-727-6466. To schedule a retreat, a church should contact its state Brotherhood office.

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Church workers learn new keys  
to growing youth Sunday schools      By Chip Alford

Baptist Press  
8/24/95

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Many teenagers "rust out" in their faith because it doesn't get used enough, Daryl Watts believes.

"That's why we have to find ways to challenge our youth, to get them involved in ministry," Watts, director of the youth ministries department for the California Southern Baptist Convention, said during an Aug. 23 seminar at Small Sunday School Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Youth Sunday schools that are alive and growing involve youth in the planning process, he said, adding one of the latest ministry methods uses "lead teams" composed of a youth worker (adult), a parent of a youth and a teenager.

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"You have to enable and equip others to do the ministry. You can't do it all yourselves," Watts told youth workers attending his seminar on tips for growing a youth Sunday school.

He shared the "10 Characteristics of Growing Youth Sunday Schools" drawn from the videocassette, "In Search of the Successful Youth Sunday School," produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board. Team planning is number one on the list. Other characteristics include:

- sharing your vision. "Develop a mission statement for your youth Sunday school," Watts said. "And remember, this isn't just for your youth and teachers; it is so those in your community will know what you're all about, what they can expect."

- implementing a constant improvement process. "Always look for opportunities for your leaders to learn, whether it's local church training or through your association, state convention or denominational agencies."

- practicing relevant, evangelistic teaching. "You have to teach to meet the felt needs of youth. They are going to ask, 'So what?' and you need to make sure they can answer that question by the end of the lesson."

- planning regular youth visitation. "Get to know people on their turf. Try creative approaches. One youth group gives out cans of Dr. Pepper to the youth they visit. They call it 'making house calls with the doctor.' You could use balloons or give them your youth newsletter, a Christian magazine or a brochure about your Sunday school."

- organizing to intentionally grow. "Don't wait until growth happens; plan ahead for it. Try to have a teacher for every six to eight youth. When you get more than that, create a new class."

- networking. "Work with other youth ministers, your association and state convention to plan events. Consider getting on SBCNet (the Southern Baptist forum on the CompuServe computer network) so you can 'conference' with other youth ministers to gain ideas."

- balancing big events with follow-up. "Use big events as a front door to your youth ministry. Don't forget to follow up with prospects."

- planning and responding with flexibility. "Respond to the changing needs and interests of teenagers. Adjust your teaching methods to meet different needs and learning styles."

- conducting a personal quiet time.

Sam Crouch, youth biblical studies designer for the Baptist Sunday School Board, emphasized the importance of the last characteristic in a separate seminar. He encouraged youth workers to model a lifestyle of personal worship for youth.

"If you and I are going to grow spiritually, then we need to have a daily quiet time or devotion with God," he said. "Set the example yourself; that's the best way you can teach youth that prayer and Bible study are important."

Crouch said having a daily quiet time will help teenagers better handle peer pressure, build a strong faith foundation and realize and experience God's love.

In a seminar titled, "Adding Pizazz to Youth Bible Study," BSSB youth consultant Michael Woolridge encouraged youth workers to try a variety of creative methods in teaching teenagers.

He and youth workers attending his seminar suggested:

- playing clips from music videos and audiocassettes that reinforce lesson truths;

- occasionally rearranging the seating arrangement in your classroom or redecorating with new posters and other visuals so the learning environment stays fresh;

- taking field trips that reinforce lesson truths;

- use contemporary illustrations (such as "EXTRA!" current event teaching helps provided weekly on SBCNet);

- using computer games or board games to reinforce Bible verses and lesson truths;

-- using video clips to illustrate topics covered in a lesson. "Youth Life Issues Video Clips, Vol. 1" which covers topics such as sex, dating, violence and religious liberty, is available from the BSSB.

Small Sunday School Conference was sponsored by the BSSB's Bible teaching-reaching division.

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**NOBTS starts new school year  
with Bible reading marathon**

**By Debbie Moore**

**Baptist Press  
8/24/95**

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary began its 78th academic year with a Bible reading marathon. More than 95 people from both the seminary family and the community participated in the four-day, three-night vigil to read the Bible through nonstop in the seminary's Roland Q. Leavell Chapel during the week before classes were set to begin.

Starting at 4:30 p.m. Aug. 16, participants, beginning with New Orleans Seminary interim president Landrum P. Leavell II, took turns standing behind the chapel pulpit to read through the Bible in 15-minute intervals, signing their names at the end of each passage read. The last passage was read at 7 p.m. Aug. 19., to conclude the marathon in a total of 74 1/2 hours. The finale of the event was a praise service in the chapel.

The Bible reading marathon was conducted during orientation and registration week before classes began Aug. 22 on the seminary's main campus.

Seminary family and community members who took part in the marathon experienced a range of emotions as they listened to the Bible being read straight through, said Becky Brown, director of student services at the seminary. "There were many times when the reader and everyone listening broke into tears," she said, especially during the recitation of Christ's death.

"It was impressive to see how many faculty, staff and students were involved with the venture since there were so many other things going on that week," said Brian Sanders, coordinator of the event.

"People were moving in, unpacking, registering," said Brown, who is responsible for assigning all campus housing. "But they still felt they needed to take the time to make God and his word a priority in their lives."

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(BP) photo available on request from New Orleans Seminary's office of public relations.

EDITORS' NOTE: Baptist Press will include in its Friday, Aug. 25, release articles on the upcoming United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. The conference, which has been criticized for its location and agenda, will be Sept. 4-15 in Beijing, China.

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