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-- BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 30, 1995

95-192

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Herschel Hobbs funeral
Dec. 2 in Oklahoma City

Baptist Press
11/30/95

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The funeral for Southern Baptist statesman Herschel H. Hobbs is Saturday, Dec. 2, at 10:30 a.m. in the chapel of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City. Hobbs, 88, died Nov. 28.

Eugene Garrison, Hobbs' successor as pastor at the church, will officiate.

Church officials said Hobbs had requested the service in the church's chapel which seats about 400. The funeral for Hobbs' wife, Frances, also was held in the small chapel in 1984 upon her request.

The dining room of the church will be used as an overflow for the service, church officials said, with a closed-circuit television. The dining room will hold about 500. An overflow crowd is expected.

The Hobbs family plans to allow guests an opportunity after the service to pay respects to the popular preacher-teacher who was pastor of the Oklahoma City congregation for 23 years. The church is located at N.W. 11th and Harvey.

Hobbs died following a heart attack at Baptist Medical Center where he had been hospitalized three times in recent weeks, suffering from congestive heart failure.

For many Southern Baptists, Hobbs was a legend. Pastor, writer, teacher, theologian and statesman were some of the titles Hobbs earned during a ministry of 69 years. A native of Alabama, Hobbs was first and foremost a pastor, according to his autobiography, "Herschel H. Hobbs: My Faith and Message," published in 1993.

"If I had 10,000 lives to live, I would want to be a pastor in every one of them," Hobbs said in his book.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute this story for one with the same headline in (BP) dated 11/29/95.

Friends of Herschel Hobbs
mourn; recall his life

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
11/30/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Herschel Hobbs's death Nov. 28 is a great loss to Southern Baptists. Many of his friends, Southern Baptist leaders themselves, mourned his death and spoke of their memories.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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"Our Southern Baptist Zion has lost one of its greatest stalwarts, one of its greatest preachers, one of its greatest biblical commentators and one of its greatest church leaders and builders," said W.A. Criswell, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Dallas, whose friendship with Hobbs began when they were students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"Dr. Hobbs is the Sunday School Board's most prolific writer," said James T. Draper Jr., BSSB president. "Through his quarterly Sunday school lesson commentary for adult teachers which he has written for 28 years, he has influenced the quality of Bible teaching and learning in thousands of classes."

For Criswell and James L. Sullivan, retired BSSB president, Hobbs was a longtime friend.

"Herschel Hobbs and I have referred to ourselves as 'the gold dust twins,' who were inseparable," Sullivan said. "This was not only because of our close and enduring friendship and associations, but also because we were both reared in the same geographical area, studied under the same professors and saw nearly everything alike when issues arose concerning theology or denominational loyalty. Our associations were many, and our affections for each other remained deep."

Hobbs and Sullivan were classmates at Southern Seminary from 1932-35 and Criswell was a year ahead of them. All three were working toward master's degrees at the time.

"I have known Dr. Hobbs for over half a century," Criswell said, "and every year has been filled with infinite gratitude to God for his faithfulness, for his scholarship and for his devotion to our Southern Baptist Convention."

The Southern Baptist Convention, Draper said, "will miss his booming voice, his brilliant mind, his wise counsel and his loyal friendship."

Added Criswell: "We can but pray that God will raise up other young men to take his place and to carry onward, forward and triumphantly the marvelous work to which he gave his many years of loving service. We shall miss him sorely and we shall be praying that God will bless the kingdom work to which he devoted his many years."

In a telegram to the Hobbs family from his home in Asheville, N.C., evangelist Billy Graham said, "... in many ways (Hobbs) was like a father in the ministry to me. He supported me from the earliest days of my ministry. I called on him many times for advice and counsel. When the bomb exploded in Oklahoma City this past year, he was the first one I called, asking him to express my love, condolences and sympathy to the families of those that had been killed and injured.

"He was one of the greatest pastors, evangelists and theologians in the Southern Baptist Convention. I shall greatly miss him, but will look forward to our reunion in Heaven. May God bless those thousands whose lives he touched, and may God especially bless his family."

Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee, said he was "deeply saddened by (Hobbs) death. He was greatly loved by Southern Baptists around the world, and he loved us."

"His stature as a Christian statesman was unsurpassed. He always had a quick smile and a humorous story," Chapman said. "He was a pastor preacher, author, leader, historian, scholar and theologian, but my wife, Jodi, and I will miss him most as a genuine friend with whom we laughed and from whom we learned." Jodi Chapman was a member of the SBC Peace Committee along with Hobbs during the mid-1980s.

SBC President Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., was traveling Nov. 30 and unavailable for comment.

Jesse C. Fletcher, chancellor of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, recently wrote a definitive history of the denomination, "The Southern Baptist Convention, A Sesquicentennial History," which included numerous references to Hobbs. He said Hobbs will be "both sorely missed and gratefully remembered."

"Few men in Southern Baptist history have had a more consistent and positive influence on the life of the convention than (Hobbs). His effective leadership has been felt at every level of our common life; the local church, the association, the state convention and the national body.

"While his role as president of the SBC during the convention tensions of 1961-63 and as chairman of the Baptist Faith and Message committee of 1963 will probably define his contribution, it will certainly not exhaust it. It can ultimately be measured only in the combined witness of the countless lives he has influenced for Christ both directly as a pastor and compelling pulpiteer and indirectly through his dedicated leadership of manifold Baptist causes.

"When disagreeing with a particular course of action, Hobbs courageously voiced his convictions, but whatever the outcome he consistently supported the Baptist majority. Whether criticized or commended he maintained a Christlike spirit."

Another peer and good friend, H. Franklin Paschall, retired longtime pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., said Hobbs's leadership in the denomination will be sorely missed.

"He was one of the outstanding Baptist leaders of all time," Paschall said. "He served his day and generation well, his writings are a fitting memorial." Paschall said Hobbs was a great "Baptist statesman."

Larry Lewis, president of the SBC Home Mission Board, spoke to state convention evangelism leaders from across the nation meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

"We would be hard pressed to find anyone who was more of a statesman and more of a leader over a longer period of time than Dr. Hobbs. He was a stalwart defender of the faith, a model of commitment to the faith and doctrines of the faith," Lewis said.

Hobbs spent a lifetime telling people about Jesus Christ.

Bob Norman, pastor of Clearview Baptist Church, Franklin, Tenn., recalled his first encounter with the Christian gospel occurred when he skated into a Baptist church in Birmingham, Ala., to get a drink of water. He was stopped by a large man in a black suit with a booming voice who asked him, "Son, do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior?"

Norman, whose family did not attend church, became a Christian in high school and only later learned the man he had encountered by the drinking fountain was Herschel Hobbs.

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\$5.25 million gift to boost
GGBTS intercultural studies

By Cameron Crabtree

Baptist Press
11/30/95

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., will begin a school of intercultural studies as the result of a \$5.25 million gift from southern California residents David and Faith Kim.

The gift includes \$2 million in "current multi-year gifts" and a \$3.25 million endowment through a charitable remainder unitrust. It is the largest gift ever received by the seminary.

"This allows Golden Gate Seminary to craft a thorough program of intercultural studies and training to help church leaders minister to people of all cultures, both in North America and abroad," said President William O. Crews. "Contemporary ministry demands cross-cultural ministry skills."

Seminary officials said long-term goals for the intercultural studies school include establishing it as a distinct school within the seminary's overall academic program, endowing at least five academic chairs and positions and designing new degree programs.

The school will encompass both existing programs and several new areas:

- training missionary candidates to serve abroad, using cross-cultural internships.
- training students to minister within specific cultural and generational contexts, with a primary focus on North American congregations and ministries.
- understanding the urban world as a place of cross-cultural encounter, evangelism, equipping and ministry; understanding competing global values, educational principles and practices; cross-cultural adjustments and conflict resolution processes; multi-cultural principles and practices of education.

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-- training students to develop "committed communities" in urban environments.
 -- programs aimed at churches with multilingual congregations and helping students minister to second and third generations in ethnic contexts.

"The school of intercultural studies has strategic importance for shaping effective Christian leaders in the 21st century," said Rodrick Durst, vice president for academic affairs. "Real world ministry in urban and suburban contexts means intercultural ministry. No church leader can be effective today without serious training in the understanding, penetration and assimilation of different cultures and generations into one congregation."

Said Crews, "David and Faith Kim came to the United States from Korea over 30 years ago and have realized the 'American dream' through using their God-given talents. I treasure them as personal friends. They live out the concept of Christian stewardship every day."

David Kim, a former trustee of the seminary, is an orthopedic surgeon. Faith Kim, a GGBTS doctor of ministry graduate, has taught at the seminary since 1991. She also directs the seminary's Los Angeles Korean Ethnic Leadership Development Center. The Kims serve on the seminary's Golden Gate Council, an advisory board of Christian business and professional leaders from across the United States. They are members of Korean Gospel First Baptist Church in Tustin, a Southern Baptist congregation that started in their home in 1979.

"As long-time supporters of Golden Gate, the Kims have always looked for specific needs and sought to meet those needs," noted Steve Thomas, vice president for institutional advancement. "They did so when they established the seminary's faculty development fund two years ago and have done so with this, the second-largest gift ever to a Southern Baptist Convention seminary.

"They have a love for the Lord and his church that strives for the unity of one church beyond many cultures and congregations," Thomas added. "Their sense of Christian stewardship is astounding. I am so pleased they, like the thousands of other friends and supporters of Golden Gate, are investing in its future as never before."

Golden Gate Seminary is one of six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries and the only SBC agency in the western United States. It operates regional campuses in Mill Valley and Brea, Calif., Portland, Ore.; Phoenix; and a teaching site in Albuquerque, N.M. A regional campus is slated to open in Denver next fall. In addition, the seminary operates more than 30 Ethnic Leadership Development Centers scattered across the western states and in Russia.

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David Dockery is president
 nominee for Union University

Baptist Press
 11/30/95

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP)--David G. Dockery, vice president for academic administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is the nominee for president of Union University, Jackson, Tenn.

Dockery, 43, is also dean of the Louisville, Ky., seminary's theology school, joining the seminary staff in 1992.

A Union spokesman confirmed news reports of Dockery's candidacy and that he will be voted on at the full board of trustees meeting Dec. 8. Dockery would not comment on the matter and no further details were made available by Union officials. Union is a 3,800-student school affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention and is the oldest school in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dockery would succeed Hyran Barefoot who retires May 31, 1996.

Previously, Dockery had been general editor of the New American Commentary series being published by Broadman & Holman, the publishing arm of the Baptist Sunday School Board. He also has taught New Testament at Southern Seminary and Criswell College in Dallas and was pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., from 1982-84.

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He holds the doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Texas at Arlington, master's degrees from Texas Christian University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, both Fort Worth, Texas, and Grace Theological Seminary, as well as a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham.

He has edited or authored numerous books, most recently "Christian Scripture: An Evangelical Perspective on Inspiration, Authority and Interpretation."

He and his wife, Lanese, have three teenage sons.

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ANALYSIS

Movie theaters offering
holiday hits and misses

By Phil Boatwright

Baptist Press
11/30/95

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. (BP)--Holiday hits and misses abound in the nation's movie theaters as Hollywood offers its yearly array of new movies that bank on the goodwill of the Christmas season.

This column does not condone the new films, but offers a synopsis and review of content so you can decide if they are suitable for your family. Video alternatives also are listed, suggesting films with the same theme or style, but without the objectionable material.

TOY STORY. Disney's first completely computerized animated movie features the voices of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, Don Rickles and Annie Potts. Rated G, I found nothing offensive in this family adventure, but beware of a few scary moments. It's best that Mom or Dad are there to reassure when the sadistic boy tortures and blows up neighborhood toys.

The premise to this clever endeavor: When children leave the room, their toys come to life. It's a great family find, with lessons for the little ones about friendship and the evils of selfishness and jealousy. Gets my vote for best family film of the year. At last, amusing entertainment for the entire family that neither blasphemes nor condescends.

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT. Michael Douglas, Annette Bening, Martin Sheen, Michael J. Fox. Columbia Pictures. PG-13 (Several uses of Christ's name as a mere expletive; lots of obscenity throughout; implied premarital sex; a one-sided political viewpoint from the filmmakers).

A widowed Chief Executive must fend off those nasty 'ol right-wingers while developing a romantic relationship with an environmental lobbyist.

Filled with both charming performances and some of the most erudite and lively dialogue I have found in recent movies, this could have been the feel-good film of the year, proving romance can still be portrayed on celluloid. Unfortunately, director Rob Reiner's political stance against conservatives (especially Bob Dole) ruins the film for those who don't adhere to the picture's philosophy that the ACLU's only agenda is to back up the Bill of Rights, or that it is the right of Americans to burn the flag as an expression of their freedom, or that to decrease crime we must turn over our handguns to the government.

Certainly, filmmakers have the right to express their ideals, but it is a dangerous precedent when the artist uses this medium as a forum, losing objectivity in his work. Keep in mind, Hollywood is not renown for presenting truth. It merely sells propaganda.

Video alternative: MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON.

GOLDENEYE. Pierce Brosnan. United Artists. PG-13 (2 or 3 expletives, the misuse of God's name; some suggestive sexual remarks and situations, but far less than past films in this series; nude dancers silhouetted behind the film credits; cartoonish carnage).

Once upon a time, the James Bond films were considered risque, now they are perhaps the tamest of action pictures. Ian Fleming's hero was suave, debonair and witty -- a gentleman even when scheming. Today's actioneer is less cultured, more representative of the darker side and completely ignorant of men's fashions.

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The newest entry in this hugely profitable spy series has the lead in the same plot as the previous productions, a nut wants to dominate the world by stealing some secret weapon. (People obviously don't go to these films for the deep message). Brosnan is serviceable as Her Majesty's secret servant, but he's no Sean Connery.

Video alternative: THE IPCRESS FILE a serious spy thriller starring Michael Caine and lacking the abusive language or blood-letting of other flicks in this genre.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS. Holly Hunter, Robert Downey Jr. and Anne Bancroft head an all-star cast. Paramount Pictures. PG-13 (Lots of profanity & obscenity throughout; crud and offensive humor; drug use; sexual situations and conversations; homosexuality). Just fired and suffering from a head cold, the heroine goes home to a dysfunctional Thanksgiving gathering. The family, which represents the same moronic lifestyle as TV sitcoms, "Married With Children" and "Roseanne," consists of a nagging mother who befuddles her husband, a homosexual prankster brother who likes to take unexpected nude photos of his sister and several other warped friends and relatives.

More obnoxious than amusing.

Video alternative: YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU, also about an eccentric family, but much more uplifting.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY. Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant. Columbia Pictures. PG (No profanity, no sexual situations, no violence -- just great storytelling). An engrossing screenplay by the film's star, Emma Thompson, from the Jane Austen romance novel about two sisters discovering the joys and tribulations of young love. Set in prim and proper 18th-century England, the beautifully photographed and splendidly acted melodrama is full of humor, wit and passion. Women may have to drag their significant other to this one (alas, men, nothing explodes) but trust me, guys, it's a great date movie).

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Steven Curtis Chapman records
1st Christmas album of career

By Tim Ellsworth

Baptist Press
11/30/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--In December 1984, newlyweds Steven Curtis and Mary Beth Chapman didn't have what most people might consider a merry Christmas.

"We got married in October and had \$50 in our bank account," Steven said. "I was in school at Belmont, and she was working to put me through school. We couldn't believe how much it cost to have a Christmas tree, and so we found the cheapest tree we could possibly get."

Christmas trees have come a little easier for the Chapmans since then. But the memories of that Christmas have endured, inspiring Steven's "Christmas Is All In The Heart," one of the original songs on his newest album, "The Music of Christmas."

"I've wanted to do a Christmas album for a long time because I love Christmas music so much," said Chapman, who also co-produced the project.

While some people may get their first inkling of the Christmas spirit from lights or other sights, not Chapman. "For me it's music," he said. "If I can hear one line of a certain Christmas song, that Christmas spirit just explodes in my heart."

"The Music of Christmas," Chapman's eighth album, just might have that effect on a number of people. Since his debut on the Christian music scene in 1987, Chapman has been one of the hottest Christian recording artists in the country. His 27 Dove Awards, three Grammy Awards and three consecutive gold recordings attest to his popularity.

But Chapman had never recorded a Christmas album -- until now.

"It was a real timely thing," said Chapman, who noted his last release, "Heaven In the Real World," carried some Christmas overtones with lines like, "It happened one night with a tiny baby's birth/God heard creation crying, and He sent heaven to earth."

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"It was a real natural progression to continue on from an album like 'Heaven in the Real World,'" Chapman said. "To say, 'Let me expand on that a little more and talk about the reality of that.'"

The album contains a collection of traditional Christmas carols and original songs, all of which were written or co-written by Chapman.

"When I sat down to make this Christmas recording, I wanted to create a timeless gift for all who would listen to it," Chapman said. "I drew on all my 32 years of Christmas experiences and memories to write, select and record music that celebrates the wonderfully timeless truth that our God is with us."

Experiences like growing up in a Southern Baptist church in Paducah, Ky., where his brother, Herb, would sing "O Holy Night" every year. Experiences like waking his parents up at 4 a.m. on Christmas Day to open presents, a memory Chapman is now living all over again with his three children.

"Obviously, the true meaning of Christmas is for all humanity, but there's so much about Christmas that's for the child in all of us," Chapman said. "It's a season that I watch now through the eyes of my kids."

One song on the album that will undoubtedly touch a number of listeners is "Going Home For Christmas," a song co-written by Chapman and James Isaac Elliot about the death of Mary Beth's grandmother two years ago and her absence during that first Christmas season.

"Christmas is a holiday season where everything is exaggerated," Chapman said. "If you're joyful and happy, it's the greatest time of the year. But when you're in pain, I think it's also a time when that's exaggerated because you're reminded of what you've lost."

Chapman said he wanted to acknowledge that pain in an album with the theme of "our God is with us."

"It's not just 'our God is with us' on the mountain peaks, it's 'our God is with us' through all of the pain of life, the mourning as well as the laughing," Chapman said.

The first Christmas without Mary Beth's grandmother was a time of heartbreak, Chapman said, but also a time of celebration because she was celebrating Christmas in the presence of the Lord.

"When we first thought of the idea I really encouraged him," Elliot said. "I thought a lot of people would relate to that. It's sad, but there's happiness in there because of the future."

The Christmas season has also been enhanced for the Chapman family by their involvement in Angel Tree, a ministry of Prison Fellowship that provides gifts for the children of prisoners.

"It makes you feel like your hands are not as tied as you think they are when you look at the problem of crime," Chapman said. Angel Tree has made a tremendous impact on his life and family by offering a way to respond to the problem of crime, Chapman said.

"I guess in my own life I want Christmas to be a time of happiness, and part of that comes from helping others," Chapman said. "Whether it's December or July, it's Christmas every time we let God love others through us."

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