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**NATIONAL OFFICE**

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

**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250  
**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115  
**NASHVILLE** Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72  
**WASHINGTON** Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

December 8, 1995

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TENNESSEE--Meetings for next week.

TENNESSEE--Union University names David Dockery president.

WASHINGTON--Senate passes prohibition on partial-birth abortions.

CHICAGO--'Holistic' Chicago congregation focuses on Bible, community needs; photos.

ALABAMA--Montgomery churches join hands in inner-city tutoring program.

TENNESSEE--First-person: A question for Christian parents: Have you paid your child

support?; photo illustration.

DALLAS--First-person: Rebekah, 3, just needed a little special attention.

CALENDAR

TENNESSEE--Foreign Mission Board, trustee meeting, Dec. 11-13, Memphis.

GEORGIA--Home Mission Board, directors meeting, Dec. 12-13, Alpharetta.

Union University names  
David Dockery president

By Keith Currey

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP)--In a special meeting of Union University's board of trustees Dec. 8, David S. Dockery was named the Jackson, Tenn., school's 15th president.

Dockery, 43, is vice president of academic administration and dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., joining the seminary staff in 1992.

Dockery succeeds Hyran Barefoot, who assumed the presidency in 1987 and will retire from the post May 31 to assume the newly created position of chancellor. In addition to his presidential duties, Dockery will serve on the faculty as professor of Christian studies.

"It is with a deep sense of gratitude I accept the invitation of Union's board of trustees to become the next president of this great institution," Dockery said in response to the trustees' decision. "With a dependence on God's enabling grace, (my wife) Lanese and I shall look forward to investing our lives at this university in the years to come.

"Particularly in the last decade Union University has begun to move to the forefront among Christian colleges," Dockery said. "Recent recognitions underscore the quality education provided at this university. It is with expectation and anticipation that we look forward to working with the excellent administrators, faculty, staff and students of this school.

"It will be a privilege to serve alongside a faculty of this quality, to work with this very capable trustee board and to get to know the outstanding students and alumni of this institution."

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Before joining Southern Seminary's administration, Dockery had been general editor of the 40-volume New American Commentary series being published by Broadman & Holman, the publishing arm of the Baptist Sunday School Board. He 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.

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 in Fort Worth, Texas, and Grace Theological Seminary in Indiana, as well as a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham.

He also serves as a consulting editor for Christianity Today; has authored five books and edited an additional 13 volumes including the Holman Bible Handbook, while contributing works to 16 other books. Almost 150 of Dockery's articles, book reviews and commentaries have appeared in various papers, periodicals and scholarly journals.

He and his wife have three teen-age sons.

John Drinnon, chairman of Union's board of trustees and presidential search committee, said, "The search committee and board of trustees see Dr. David Dockery as a man of true conviction and vision who already possesses a firm understanding of Christian higher education, a man we believe will capably lead Union University into the next century."

"I observed the search committee's careful consideration of each applicant and was pleased when the committee unanimously selected Dr. Dockery as the most qualified individual to guide Union University's future," Barefoot said. "I support the board's decision wholeheartedly and look forward to working with Dr. Dockery in my new position of chancellor."

Union faculty also expressed their support of Dockery's selection. "Dr. David Dockery possesses the desired presidential qualities as described by the search committee, faculty and staff of our university," said Carla Sanderson, dean of Union's school of nursing and Union's faculty representative on the presidential search committee.

"Dr. Dockery has a vision of distinction for Union University, a vision that combines our heritage of Christian, liberal arts education with a vision for a new definition of scholarship and outreach. I am excited to be a part of a team that will be led by this man as we work toward providing quality education for the young men and women who come our way," Sanderson continued.

"I believe Dr. Dockery's appointment as president is significant on several counts, but I will mention three," George Guthrie, chair of Union's department of religion, said. "First, he is widely known and respected in academic circles as a leading evangelical thinker and author. His contacts both inside and outside Southern Baptist life are wide-ranging and diverse. Therefore, he will enhance Union's growing national visibility as an academic institution.

"Second, Dr. Dockery is committed to the classroom, which fits well with the community of fine teachers we have at Union.

"Third, he is a committed Christian who cares deeply about the church and will continue the University's focus on spiritual life and ministry."

Dockery's colleagues at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary wished him well in his new position at Union.

"I congratulate the board of trustees of Union University on its election of Dr. David S. Dockery as Union University's next president," R. Albert Mohler, Southern Seminary president, said. "Dr. Dockery is an acclaimed scholar and an experienced administrator, and I am certain that he will lead Union University into a new era of excellence and progress.

"Dr. Dockery has made a stellar contribution to the life and work of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has provided leadership for this faculty, guidance for students and he has served as a model of the Christian scholar," Mohler said. "He has served among Southern Baptists as a guide whose voice is respected for both conviction and clarity.

"He has been a cherished colleague at Southern Seminary. We will miss him greatly and give thanks to God for the contributions he has made to this institution. In this case, Union University's gain is Southern Seminary's loss. Yet, with a kingdom perspective, we congratulate both David S. Dockery and Union University and pray God's richest blessings for their common future," Mohler said.

"David Dockery is a Christian of the highest caliber and I have utmost respect for both him and Lanese," said Richard White, pastor of First Baptist Church, Franklin, Tenn., and chairman of the seminary's board of trustees. "He has done a tremendous job working with the seminary's faculty, staff and administration, and he will be deeply missed. However, I would like all of the Union University family to know the best is yet to come, and I congratulate both David Dockery and Union University."

Union University is a four-year, liberal arts university affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Founded in 1823, the 2,000-student institution is the oldest university in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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(BP) photos available upon request from Union University office of public relations. Currey is assistant director of public relations at Union.

Senate passes prohibition  
on partial-birth abortions

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Senate voted 54-44 to ban a gruesome, late-term abortion procedure after narrowly defeating an amendment which bill supporters said would have rendered the bill meaningless.

The bill must return to the House of Representatives, which passed it Nov. 1 by a 288-139 margin. The House and Senate versions differ on how they handle an exception to protect the life of the mother.

When the measure is sent to the White House, President Bill Clinton is expected to veto it.

Approval of the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act, H.R. 1833, followed defeat of an amendment offered earlier Dec. 7 by Sen. Barbara Boxer, D.-Calif. The Boxer amendment would have allowed the procedure "prior to the viability of the fetus." It also would have permitted the method to protect the life of the mother or to avoid "serious adverse health consequences to the woman."

The Boxer amendment failed by a 51-47 vote.

Before the Boxer amendment was considered, the senators passed unanimously a life-of-the-mother amendment offered by Sen. Bob Smith, R.-N.H., the chief supporter in the Senate, and Sen. Bob Dole, R.-Kan., the majority leader. The Smith-Dole amendment allows an exception to the bill to "save the life of a mother whose life is endangered by a physical disorder, illness, or injury, provided that no other medical procedure would suffice for that purpose."

Opponents of the Boxer amendment said it would have allowed abortion doctors to determine their definition of viability. It also would have permitted doctors to use "health" to cover any reason for the procedure, opponents said.

The Supreme Court's definition of health in *Doe v. Bolton*, the 1973 companion case to *Roe v. Wade*, includes "all factors -- physical, emotional, psychological, familial and the woman's age -- relevant to the well-being of the patient," thereby permitting abortion for a wide variety of reasons throughout pregnancy.

"Despite efforts by the pro-abortion lobby and the media to spin the ban as radical legislation, the bill only represents the humane treatment of babies," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"Were this legislation to become law, it would only bring abortion law up to the standards of the SPCA. We wouldn't let helpless animals be treated this way," he said.

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"The president's action on the bill will demonstrate to the world whether he is a man of compassion or a pawn of the abortion lobby."

In November, the White House announced officially Clinton's opposition to the bill. In a policy statement released through the Office of Management and Budget, the Clinton administration said:

"The President believes that the decision to have an abortion should be between a woman, her conscience, her doctor, and her God. ... The President has long opposed late-term abortions except where they are necessary to protect the life of the mother or where there is a threat to her health, consistent with the law. ... Therefore, the Administration cannot support H.R. 1833 because it fails to provide for consideration of the need to preserve the life and health of the mother, consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade."

While the House version does not provide an exception in case of a threat to the mother's life, it does allow as an acceptable defense for the doctor the necessity of saving her life.

The House and Senate votes mark the first time Congress has outlawed an abortion procedure since the Roe and Doe rulings.

The procedure, named partial-birth by the bill's sponsors but commonly known as dilation and extraction (D and X), occurs in the second half of pregnancy. With ultrasound for guidance, an abortion doctor uses forceps and his hands to deliver an intact baby feet first until only the head is left in the birth canal. The doctor pierces the base of the baby's skull with surgical scissors and inserts a catheter into the opening and suctions out the brain. The collapse of the skull enables easier removal of the dead child. This method apparently is used by a limited number of doctors in the country.

Punishment of up to two years in prison and fines could be levied on any doctor found guilty under the legislation.

Opponents of the bill have charged it is part of a strategy to reverse abortion rights. They have said the procedure is used only in cases of severely defective children or a threat to the mother's life.

Martin Haskell, one of the leading practitioners of the procedure, has said, however, about 80 percent of his D and X abortions are "purely elective," according to a 1993 interview with American Medical News, a journal of the American Medical Association. In a 1992 speech, Haskell said he had performed about 700 D and X abortions.

Haskell, from Ohio, and another physician identified with the technique, James McMahon of Los Angeles, both have said the majority of babies are alive until near the conclusion of the procedure. Haskell has said he performs D and X abortions until about the 26th week of pregnancy. McMahon said he did abortions through all 40 weeks. McMahon died Oct. 28.

In September, the American Medical Association's legislative council unanimously recommended the AMA's board of trustees support the bill. In October, however, the AMA's board split on the recommendation and decided not to take a position. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists opposes the bill.

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'Holistic' Chicago congregation  
focuses on Bible, community needs By Chip Alford

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

CHICAGO (BP)--On a recent Sunday morning, a nurse dropped by Willie Jordan's office at St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church to ask if he wanted his blood pressure checked.

With all that's happening at the African American church in the Chicago suburb of Harvey, Ill., it's not surprising.

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Each Sunday, Jordan preaches in at least two and occasionally three worship services. He oversees a staff of 16 ministers and Bible study and social ministries programs that make his office a non-stop center of activity.

As Jordan puts it: "We're open seven days a week."

Jordan was a full-time crane operator at a local steel mill when he became pastor of the Southern Baptist church in 1976. At the time, the church's 47 members met in a wood-frame house in a community infested with gangs, prostitutes and drugs. At one point, the pastor was threatened at gunpoint.

Today, Jordan is a full-time pastor and the church's 3,100 members enjoy a sprawling church campus that includes a new 2,100-seat worship center. The neighborhood is safer and continuing to improve. And this year alone, more than 900 people have joined the church; more than 300 have been baptized.

How did it happen? Jordan credits a "holistic approach to ministry" that combines intensive Bible study and leadership training with an active social ministries program.

He learned from Southern Baptist leaders at the Chicago Metro Baptist Association and the Illinois Baptist State Association that "if you really want to grow your church, you need to start with Sunday school."

Hardly a day goes by that some type of Bible study isn't going on at St. Mark. There are two Sunday schools on Sunday morning, a Tuesday night Bible study that regularly draws more than 600 adults and 120 young people and noon-hour Bible studies on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday designed to reach people who work nights. And choir members can't sing on Sunday unless they attend their weekly Thursday night Bible study.

In addition, more than 90 Bible study teachers and ministry leaders meet once a month for leadership training. Attendance is mandatory.

As part of the church's Christian education program, 13-week Old and New Testament survey courses also are offered, as are Continuous Witness Training (CWT) and Christian growth classes.

"If folks don't hear the Word, they don't live different lives," Jordan explained. "You have to teach and train folks so when they shout on Sunday, they'll know what they're shouting about."

But to make a positive impact in their neighborhood, Jordan knew church members had to not only learn about God's Word, but live it out through active social ministry programs.

"When folks were hungry, Jesus fed them. When they were sick, he healed them. Folks are going to be interested in a church that is interested in their community," Jordan explained.

St. Mark's community concern is made clear through ministries such as:

-- Jordan Community Service Center. Five employees and other volunteers provide tutoring, counseling and spiritual guidance to troubled youth. The center receives referrals from the Sixth District Court. To help pay for the program, the church received a grant from the state of Illinois. As part of their community service sentences, juveniles are required to attend Bible study. "We're trying to make a positive difference in their lives while they're young; we're trying to change their attitudes," Jordan said.

-- housing assistance. The church buys homes in the neighborhood, repairs and remodels them and then rents them out at affordable rates. The church plans to buy vacant property as well to build more affordable new houses and townhomes and a 61-unit senior citizens center is in the works.

-- medical care. Occasional health-related seminars and workshops are offered and, twice a week, the church becomes a medical clinic offering a variety of services from blood tests and blood pressure checks to breast cancer and diabetes screenings. The congregation also has purchased property across the street from the church campus and plans to break ground in March on a 16-room professional full-service medical center staffed by six doctors.

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-- employment assistance. Church leaders helped 40 people find jobs last year and also hired 25 young people during the summer, paying them \$4.25 per hour to do odd jobs such as painting senior citizens' homes, cleaning vacant lots and working in nursing homes.

-- food pantry. Twice a month, the church distributes food to the homeless or needy.

-- educational assistance. The church has awarded 25 college scholarships to young people and currently helps support five people attending medical school.

-- political action. Jordan isn't ashamed to admit he's politically active. The local mayor, governor and U.S. senators have been guests in his church. And both a Fifth District Cook County Commissioner and a local parks commissioner have offices there. "We can't get around being politically involved. Jobs, help for the poor, fair housing, equal rights -- these are political issues," Jordan explained. "If we are not involved, then we don't have a say in improving our community."

Jordan also is involved in denominational life. He is active in his association and has been on mission trips to Sweden, Germany, Jamaica and Canada. And in November, St. Mark became the first African American church to host the annual Illinois state convention meeting.

As St. Mark continues to grow, Jordan said the church "must continue to focus on the total family. We have to help bring families together because so many are broken up. We need to get more fathers involved in the family as well as in the church. That's why we have to stay involved in the community."

That involvement is a seven-day-a-week job.

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(BP) photos are posted on SBCNet and being mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Montgomery churches join hands  
in inner-city tutoring program By Laurie A. Lattimore

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--Six-year-old Martell Peoples is fascinated by the parting of the Red Sea. "That's cool," he says, flipping back to the picture in the storybook as Betty Hammock explains how the water divided.

Michael Turner is learning how to recognize plural possessive nouns. Jonathan Ashley is practicing multiplication by playing with flash cards. Reginald Crumpton is learning subtraction.

These kids represent 60 from a Montgomery, Ala., housing community who spend their Wednesday nights at First Baptist Church for one-on-one tutoring. The program, now in its seventh year, rarely has absentees -- and for a recent session six children jumped on the bus who weren't registered but wanted to come.

Jane Ferguson, director of community services at First Baptist and director of the weekly tutor sessions, laughed briefly over the six additions. "That ruins our one-on-one ratio, but I guess that says a lot about our program if kids are sneaking on the bus to come to church."

The tutoring program is part of First Baptist's involvement with STEP, Strategies To Elevate People, a national program begun in the 1970s in Harlem. Lee Baugh, executive director of Montgomery's STEP program, said the purpose is to use inner-city churches to work with people and help them help themselves.

In Montgomery, 24 churches participate, eight of which are Baptist. An effort is made to pair a white church and an African American church to work with a particular housing community. STEP started in Montgomery in 1986 with seven churches working with one housing community. Now the churches cover nine low-income neighborhoods. Among all the churches, more than 300 children are tutored each week.

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First Baptist and Hutchinson Street Missionary Church team together to work with families in Tulane Court in Montgomery. In addition to tutoring, the two congregations offer a weekly support group for single mothers and a performing arts group to teach children singing and piano. Ferguson said the STEP program has made a difference in the children's lives. Schoolteachers have told her the children are more respectful and less likely to get into trouble.

Children in preschool through sixth grade must register for the year-long tutoring program in August. The number of children who can participate depends on the number of volunteers because of the focus on personal instruction. The group of 60 volunteers this year is the largest so far. The children are bussed to one of the two churches by 5:30 p.m. for dinner. At 5:45 they meet individually with their tutors, and the group convenes at 6:30 for a Bible story before going home.

"It is really like the Big Brother/Big Sister program," Ferguson said. "Their development is really more important than what they learn." In STEP's mission statement, tutors are reminded the purpose is to make a positive difference in the children's lives. "It's just nice to know someone cares," Ferguson said.

Richard Alford, an associate in the Alabama Baptist State Convention's associational and cooperative missions department and a tutor at First Baptist, said the program is an excellent example for many children who do not grow up with good role models. The tutors range from schoolteachers to professors to attorneys and even one fighter pilot.

"Besides knowing Christ as your Savior, this is one of the most life-changing things we can do for these at-risk children," Alford said, noting Ferguson reported no child who had been through the tutoring program from Tulane Court had ever been arrested.

Cecile Waldrop, a "principal" in the tutoring program, added, "The best part of this is the relationship between the student and teacher that builds throughout the year to the point that they do things together outside of Wednesday night tutoring."

Pat Alford has been tutoring Jessica, 9, since kindergarten. While Alford is excited about the academic progress of the children, she is more satisfied if they feel loved. "Just by being here and letting the kids know someone cares about them is a big thing," she said.

Besides the benefits for the kids, the program is an excellent outreach program for churches to show their communities they care, Ferguson said. "This gives people in the pews a chance to get out in the community and make a difference."

But above all, it is still the kids who matter most. As more than 60 children met for their large-group Bible story at a recent session, one boy was singled out to recite the Bible verses he had memorized during the session.

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11," said third-grader Calvin Ashley before the room erupted in applause.

"This program," Alford reiterated, "is life-changing."

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#### FIRST-PERSON

A question for Christian parents:  
Have you paid your child support? By Bill Taylor

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Occasionally, a newspaper carries an account of the police department running a "sting operation" where hundreds of people are brought to justice because they have not provided resources for their families.

Often a judge will incarcerate a person for failing to make "child support" payments.

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One of the blights on this generation has been the proliferation of parents, especially fathers, who fail to honor the obligations they have to their children. Generally, citizens consider this practice to be despicable; one can hardly be accused of anything worse than being someone who allows a child to go without proper shelter or food.

Today's churches have children who are being denied proper encouragement and opportunities for adequate nourishment. Probably every state in the nation has situations in which this practice is damaging the potential growth of boys and girls. Because this form of "child abuse" is not addressed in the courts of the land nor are there newspapers carrying accounts of this denial of basic privileges, most people and probably all offenders do not even realize how rampant the practice is.

The lack of "child support" I am talking about is that every Sunday of the year Bible study departments for preschoolers and children are scandalously short of Bible teachers. Many Sunday school departments operate weekly with as little as 25 to 50 percent of the leadership required to meet the spiritual needs of these children. Those people who do give of their time and heart to staff these departments are not able to teach in the manner that best enables children to learn about Jesus and, when the time is right, give their hearts and lives to him. For many of these workers, keeping order or just tending to the physical needs of the children takes up most of their time.

Recently, a church decided to utilize a promotional video to help church members become aware of the desperate need for workers. During the taping, when the children were asked about their teachers, not one child could name the teachers in a particular department. Because there was such a stream of different leaders each Sunday, there was not enough time for children to even learn the names of their teachers.

Twenty-five years ago in most churches, a group of dedicated workers often gave their entire teaching ministries to the boys and girls. Today, there is more of a tendency for an adult department to "adopt" a children's department. They send a different person each week to "baby-sit" during the Sunday school hour or perhaps they might have a system where a worker is willing to give one quarter out of four to make sure there are teachers in the children's area.

I think most Christian educators understand that the intense pressures on people in today's society have caused many potential leaders to be so much in need of spiritual help for themselves that they have unwittingly not been available to address these mounting needs of children. Regardless of the reasons, the children are going without "proper nourishment" and no one knows what the ultimate results may be in their lives as they mature without the support of church members.

There are many possible solutions to this dilemma but space will allow for only a few suggestions:

- 1) Parents of the children must step forward and provide the manpower to make sure that the best teaching possible is made available for their children.
- 2) The entire membership must join forces with the parents to bolster these ranks with the very best personnel possible.
- 3) Church leaders, such as pastors, staff members and deacons, must keep before the membership the growing need for members to prepare themselves for this task.
- 4) The adult teachers of our churches are the answer to this problem. Every Sunday they have opportunity to "spiritually prepare their class members" to be able to meet this assignment. The adult teachers must aggressively attack this problem and pray that the Lord will give them wisdom in training their class members to mature in the Lord and to be on the front lines of providing for the needs of these babies. As long as members feel their own teachers do not want them to leave the "nest of learning," they will never meet the challenge. The prolonged effect of this neglect will bring as much shame to our ranks as the one who is placed in a cell because a judge in our court systems has determined that harm has been caused because of this negligence.

In the secular realm of society, this question brings instant attention and sorrow to the offending parties. Dare we Christians not take the same question as seriously as we consider this disarming inquiry: "Have you paid your child support?"

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Taylor is director of the Sunday School Board's Bible Teaching-Reaching division. (BP) photo illustration to accompany this story mailed to state Baptist newspapers and posted in the SBCNet News Room by the BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

FIRST-PERSON

Rebekah, 3, just needed  
a little special attention

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press  
12/08/95

DALLAS (BP)--Christmas will be special this year because of the birth of a "special" child into our family. Michael Steadman has Down syndrome with apparent deafness, but he has awakened our senses to a new awareness of the presence of God as we celebrate the birthday of a special baby born in a manger 2,000 years ago.

Following the birth of Michael in November, our daughter temporarily experienced some physical problems, and with the routine of caring for an infant, naturally had less time for their two older children, Rebekah, 3, and Travis, 5.

Their hard-working dad bridged the gap as much as possible.

Although missing some of their accustomed attention, Travis and Rebekah showed only tender love toward their new brother, eagerly holding and cuddling him at every opportunity.

After Travis had held the baby for an unusually long time, his grandfather asked, "Are you getting tired?"

"I never get tired of holding my brother," Travis replied.

About two weeks after the new baby arrived, Rebekah came home from church with her dad and Travis.

"How was church?" her mother asked.

"Nobody hugged me," Rebekah answered.

After a contemplative pause, she added, "They didn't see me. They just saw my dress."

The Bible says, "From the mouth of infants and nursing babes . . . ."

How often we see only the external and not the hurting soul beneath. How many people at church, at work or on the street are inwardly crying out, "They don't see ME. They see only my dress."

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