

# BUCKINGHAM

## REPORT

AN IN-DEPTH CRITIQUE OF THE ISSUES, PEOPLE & EVENTS AFFECTING TODAY'S CHRISTIAN LEADERS

### RESTORATION

On September 8, 1985, the front page of the *Dallas Times-Herald* carried the story that Don Crossland, pastor of the Highland Baptist Church in Waco, Texas—the largest charismatic church in the Southern Baptist Convention—had resigned after admitting to homosexual charges.

The 42-year-old Crossland, married 25 years and the father of two children, had been pastor at Highland for 11 years. The church was averaging more than 1,800 in attendance.

The week before the scandal became public Crossland and his wife, Helen, had visited Yonggi Cho's "Prayer Mountain" in Korea. Torn by the ambivalence caused by his secret homosexual activity, Crossland had spent the entire day in prayer. More than 20 times in the past he had actually written out his resignation, knowing he should not be pastoring until he had been healed. Each time he had torn up the resignations, but the struggle grew more intense. In Korea he finally cried out to God: "Oh, God, do whatever it takes to purify my heart."

God acted quickly. Within an hour after returning home there was a knock at his door. The counselor he had been seeing had involuntarily leaked the confidential information to one of the church elders. An emergency meeting was scheduled that night. Crossland resigned the following Sunday.

Charles Davis, a member of the church, was installed as pastor. He has worked hard, and the church, rocked by the nationwide scandal, has recovered—although not yet to its former glory. (Davis recounts the spiritual process used in healing the broken church in an article in the November/December 1987 issue of *Fulness*, a magazine for Spirit-filled Baptists.)

These last two years have been tough for the Crosslands. Helen, although suspecting her husband was involved in homosexual activity, did not know the details until he confessed to her. In numerous family meetings, involving their son, 17, and married daughter, 23, the family pulled together.

Rick Godwin, pastor of Eagles' Nest Christian Fellowship in San Antonio, came to Waco the night Crossland resigned—pledging to walk with him, to help and restore.

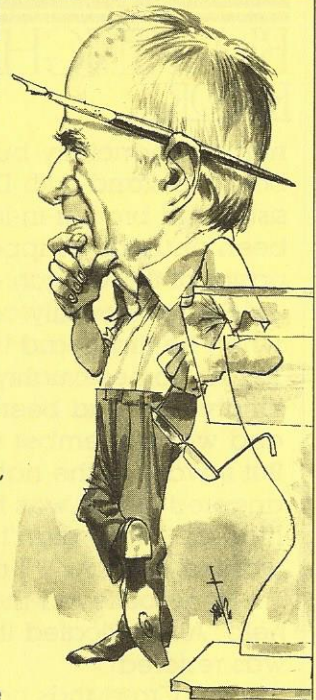
Jack Taylor, former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, made immediate contact. Taylor, now pastor of the charismatic Anchor Church in Ft. Worth, insisted the Crosslands retreat to his Florida condo.

Crossland recalls that the day after they arrived there was a knock on the door. There stood Peter Lord and his wife, Johnnie. Crossland said he was too ashamed, judged and self-condemned even to open the door. Peter, pastor of the Park Avenue Baptist Church in Titusville, Florida, continued to knock until Helen finally came to the door—weeping. "We don't need to know anything," the Lords said as they came in, hugging their old friends. "We've just come to love you."

That love was the key to Crossland's restoration.

While many of their old friends and associates shunned them, others ran the risk always associated with restoration and got involved in the healing process. While some declared them "unfit to minister," others believed God for healing—and offered hope.

Clark Whitten, Dudley Hall and James Robison all played a major roll. Robison picked up the Crosslands' salary and carried them, full time, for the first six months. Hall and Godwin assisted. At the end of that period two small charismatic churches got involved. Calvary Baptist Church in DeSota, Texas, started sending the Crosslands \$500 a month. Emmanuel Christian Fellowship near Waco, a church of fewer than 50 people, contributed \$400 a month. Several individuals, including laymen Joe Wylie and NFL hall-of-famer Bob Lilly, former tackle with the Dallas Cowboys, not only



DRAWING BY BRUCE STARK

Jamie Buckingham



## BUCKINGHAM REPORT

helped financially but formed a corporate board to stand with Don and Helen. Helen's sister and brother-in-law, Hank Norris, have been unusually supportive as has Larry Lea, pastor of the Church on the Rock near Dallas.

Ex-Cowboy Lily confessed he was angry when he first heard the news. Among men in Texas, homosexuality is not looked upon kindly. Lily had been baptized by Crossland and was a member of the Highland Church. But it was not the nature of the sin which angered Lily; it was that Crossland had kept it hidden. "Why didn't you confide in me?" Bob wanted to know. "I could have helped you."

None believed that Crossland was beyond help. All dedicated themselves to see that he was restored.

The Crosslands have submitted themselves to regular counseling under a Spirit-filled psychotherapist. She is majoring on family and marriage counseling as well as Don's problems.

Crossland has spent much time with the leadership at Godwin's Eagles' Nest Church in San Antonio. On several occasions he has met with the elders for counsel and deliverance. Godwin's "ministry teams" have met with him dealing with perversion, bitter judgment and other areas where deliverance was needed. He has traveled extensively with Godwin and his elders in ministry teams—always listening. Slowly they have been easing him back into the ministry. Eagles' Nest Church has been supporting him with \$700 per month until he is back on his feet.

In May 1987, the Crosslands were invited to attend the James Robison Crusade in Atlanta. They not only came as members of the congregation but were welcomed backstage to fellowship with the speakers. On Thursday night Robison called the Crosslands to the platform. James went into detail, spelling out before the more than 12,000 in attendance the nature of Crossland's problems. He then outlined the nature of the restoration. It had been more than a year and a half since the healing process had begun. Nothing had been done formally, but numbers of qualified men and women had been involved. Robison stated he was convinced Crossland not only had repented but had been healed. Robison then had Don and Helen to be seated. Peter Lord, Jack Taylor, Rick Godwin and others then came forward and laid hands on the Crosslands, forming an apostolic board and releasing them back into the ministry.

Lord and others have since asked Crossland to speak in their churches. The response has been overwhelmingly good. He is scheduled to speak to our church in March.

Those wishing to invite Don Crossland for ministry in your church may contact him at 8233 Forrest Ridge, Waco, TX 76710; (817) 776-3366.

### TREATING YOUR STAFF AS INDIVIDUALS

A youth director confided in me that he was about to break under the strain of the ministry. Strain, of course, is part of the package anyone buys when he signs on as youth director. But this man's strain did not come from the kids—it came from his relationship with his pastor.

"He has an insatiable desire to control every activity in MY department," the youth director said. "When I set up a weekly ice-skating event for my senior highs, the pastor insisted on being the one to pick the music—and the adults who would handle the money. It was an impossible situation and I finally had to close it down because the kids would not respond."

This is not an uncommon trait among insecure pastors who refuse to delegate for fear something will go wrong which will reflect on them. One pastor I know believes good ideas come from him—and only from him. Anyone who approaches him with feedback on the most minor office activity is liable to get his head chewed off. When an associate pastor told him recently that a meeting he had called wasn't helpful and that no one listened to what he had to say because of his militaristic attitude, the pastor exploded. "What do you mean, the meeting was a waste of time? I think you're wasting my time. I'm tired of your attitude. I suggest you get right with God or you may be looking for another job."

Blaming a subordinate's disagreement on a wrong relationship with God is a common way many leaders use to excuse their own unwillingness to listen to criticism. In the case of the pastor I just mentioned, it was not long before everyone on the church staff realized the man simply did not care about the opinions of others. The sad thing was the pastor had built an excellent staff. If he had only involved them in some of his decisions he could have kept them and could have built a mighty church. Instead, his overriding need to control the office thwarted all communication. The quality of work declined, most of the staff resigned, and eventually the pastor "felt called" to another church—blaming his own ineptitude on the unwillingness of others to do his bidding.

#### Two Extremes

This pastor's leadership style illustrates one of



two extremes that all pastor/managers should avoid. He was guilty of oversupervision—providing competent workers with too much direction. This kind of heavy-handed management style can be disastrous to the entire church as well as frustrating staff members.

The other extreme, under supervision, can be equally devastating. It comes when a pastor either refuses to delegate, or delegates without supervision.

My first assignment when I left seminary was with a pastor 40 years my senior—who had never worked with an associate before. I was fresh from graduate school and eager to learn. Young, inexperienced and uncertain about what I was doing, I desperately needed a mentor. But whenever I would go into his office to ask questions about specific tasks I would get answers like: "Trust your judgment. Do what you think best. You're in charge of that area and I trust you to use your innovation."

I appreciated his confidence, but I needed his expertise. When he did not give it I suspected he did not have it. That gave me cause to listen to his enemies in the church who also said the old pastor was a plodder, with no concept of growth or innovation. The bottom line was I sided with a growing movement in the church which eventually ousted the old pastor and installed me—long before I was ready—as head man. It took eight years for the chickens to come home to roost, but that's another story which I shall cover at another time. The point is none of that would have happened had the old pastor given me the direction I needed.

### **Personalized Approach**

The wise pastor/manager avoids both extremes. He knows when to keep an employee under his thumb and when to keep hands off. He is not afraid to match the amount of direction he provided to the expertise of each staff member.

In his Situational Leadership program Kenneth Blanchard, co-author of *The One-Minute Manager*, had developed a concept called "Contracting for Leadership Style."

1. Explain the "different strokes for different folks" philosophy and tell your staff members that you will gear your management style to their level of need. The key to making this work is to let your staff know you will be working at a different level with each staff member. You will give tight oversight to some, while others will operate with a free hand. Explaining this at the outset will keep them from thinking you are babying some while ignoring others.

2. Set goals for each employee, so they will know what tasks they are responsible for doing.

This means job descriptions are a necessity. It may be the task of the minister of music, for instance, to prepare the order of worship. This may be a printed order handed out to each worshipper, or it may simply be a conceptual program for the pastor and platform leaders only. One of the "goals" of the minister of music, then, is to have this ready at a given time each week so the pastor will know what the special music is, how much time to allow for a baby dedication, and so forth.

3. "Contract" with each employee. A good pastor/manager will talk to every staff member one by one, establishing what management style will get the best work out of each employee. Some will need direction, others coaching, some supporting. Some staff members need far more affirming than others. Some need to fill in progress reports.

Mastering this technique takes time. I mean you cannot treat all staff members the same—for they are all individuals. It means you need to get to know them, their families, their problems, their past, their dreams. You are apt to over and under supervise once in a while. You'll make some mistakes and some staff members will not react favorably. But once you match your style to the experience of your staff, you'll develop a smooth-running team of men and women who will respond to your spirit with loyalty and efficiency.

### **BETTER WAYS TO MAIL**

Postal service in the United States, while by far the cheapest and most efficient of any system in the world, is still fraught with problems. More and more mail is being lost or stolen or is disappearing down the tunnels of bureaucracy. Automation has speeded delivery—and caused increased mistakes and snarls. Here are some tips which will help insure safer and speedier delivery.

- Use Zip-Plus-4 on letters you mail. And get a Zip-Plus-4 number for yourself. The post office has publicized Zip-Plus-4 mostly for businesses, but it is available for your church—or for you personally. The extra four digits contain the information necessary for the sorting machine to sort mail down to your specific carrier level.

- Always type the address, even if your letter is hand-written. Automated sorting equipment can read typewriting, but cannot read script—even if it's pried by hand. If you hand-address a letter it must be pulled off the huge conveyor belt and sorted by hand. The same applies to script fonts on typewriters. That can delay the letter at least one day—and opens another door for mistakes. If you don't have a typewriter—at least print the address so the



# BUCKINGHAM REPORT

human sorters can read it.

- *Zip Codes* should always be typed as the last line of the address on the envelope. The electronic character readers in the post office scan the last printed line. If you write "Attention Reverend Windbag" as the last line, the machine will reject your address and send it to the human-sorting department.

- *Type apartment numbers* on the same line as the street address. Veteran mail carriers sort by name and this will insure speedy delivery. Often a substitute carrier will take the mail back to the postal station and stash it somewhere, leaving it for the regular carrier to deal with when he or she comes back from vacation, if the address is not to the sub's liking. That's the reason you sometimes receive little or no mail for a while, then your box is stuffed.

- *Don't drop your mail into a mailbox after the last daily pickup.* Hold it until the next morning. Too much theft and vandalism.

- *Don't waste money on special delivery.* Special delivery mail receives special attention only if it doesn't go out with the carrier on his regular route. If you have something important to mail, use registered mail (\$3.60 to \$4.25 plus postage). Registered letters are kept under lock and key and are logged at every step so they can be traced. You can insure a registered letter up to \$25,000. Registering a letter slows down delivery, however. It's better to pay the extra fee for overnight delivery. You can also give permission on the form to have it delivered even if no one is at home.

- *Certified mail* costs 75 cents plus postage and gives you a receipt that the mail was delivered.

- *Use Evergreen* if you're mailing a package to one of the 23 "hub cities." Evergreen is the post office's name of the private contract carrier that transports express mail packages. You might get overnight service by using priority mail, which is less expensive than express mail. A two-pound priority mail package costs only \$2.40 (express mail costs \$10.75), and service two days after mailing is promised. Priority mail to Evergreen cities gets delivered the next day, however.

- *Express mail* should be dropped off no later than 4 p.m. to guarantee next-day delivery.

- *Fourth-class mail* travels faster and safer if you use UPS rather than postal service.

- *UPS is best.* All carriers charge less for letters dropped off at their counters than for

pickup. UPS has the best fee—\$8.50. Purolator service costs \$8.75. If you call a day in advance, UPS will pick up your letter and send it for \$12.50; any other overnight letters UPS picks up from you that week travel for \$8.50. The post office does not pick up packages. I often use Federal Express for next morning delivery. They will come to my house (or office) if my material is ready by 5 p.m. and will guarantee delivery before noon the next day anywhere in the United States. Cost for a letter or short manuscript ranges from \$11 to \$14. You can charge it to your credit card.

If you can settle for second-day delivery (it often arrives the day after you send it), use UPS second-day air service. Cost: \$4 if you drop it off; \$8 for them to pick it up.

- *Insurance* is useless unless you have a receipt to prove the value of the items shipped. Unlike other carriers, the post office demands proof before it will pay a dime on the package it loses.

## I RECOMMEND...

Ken Curtis, who has published some of America's finest gospel and historical films, also publishes a quarterly magazine called *Christian History*. Each issue draws on specialists in particular subject areas who faithfully retell the stories of our Christian heritage in an interesting and captivating way.

Each issue covers men like Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, the Anabaptists, Pietism and the Heritage of Freedom. It is well worth the \$12 per year. You can also order all the outstanding back issues. Order from: *Christian History*, Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490.

## IN THIS ISSUE I AM SPOTLIGHTING...

### SOUTHERN BAPTISTS TIGHTEN SCREWS ON CHARISMATICS, DIVORCEES, THINKERS AND FREE PRESS

In an effort to return to "doctrinal purity," Southern Baptists are forcing their Home Mission Board to fire all missionaries and denominational workers who speak in tongues.

The policy, adopted last summer, also states that divorced people will rarely be appointed or approved for missionary service unless their divorce was based on "biblical rationale." That rationale was defined as being limited to adultery or fornication and desertion or physical abandonment by a spouse. Under no circumstances will missionaries be approved if divorced and remarried.

Commenting on the new policies, Home Mission Board director Larry Lewis said he will uphold them even if he personally disagrees



with them. "I wish there were some provision for those whose marriages fail prior to their conversion," Lewis said.

Individuals applying for missionary status also will be asked if they practice glossolalia—the word the Baptists use for speaking in tongues. The new policy states the board will not appoint a person who actively practices or promotes glossolalia. Those who are already missionaries and speak in tongues are to be called in for "counseling." They will be given an opportunity to recant. If they insist on continuing the practice they will be dismissed.

### **Battle Over Biblical Inspiration**

Ironically, the new policy was drawn up by individuals who hold to an inerrant position of biblical authorship. The battle as to whether the Bible is "inerrant"—that is, every word is divinely dictated—or merely "inspired," has almost split the huge SBC over the last several years. With the re-election of Adrian Rogers, Memphis pastor, as president of the SBC—the world's largest non-Catholic denomination—the inerrantists are solidly entrenched. One of their first moves was to seek the removal of all missionaries who speak in tongues and to clear their ranks of divorced personnel.

The two actions are ironic in that the Bible plainly commands church leaders to "forbid not to speak with tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39, KJV). I asked two SBC inerrantist leaders how they reconciled this dilemma. Both, who refused to let me use their names, answered that "tongues were for another dispensation." When I asked what that meant, both quoted 1 Corinthians 13:8, "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." When I suggested this was referring to the same future era where both prophecy shall fail and knowledge shall vanish away—a time when "shall I know even as also I am known"—both men grew angry and refused to talk further. One later admitted that he knew there was no way he could reconcile the Bible with firing people because they speak in tongues. "But," he said, "the practice is too dangerous to be allowed to continue. Baptists have learned they must control such things or they will quickly get out of hand."

When I asked if he thought God would anoint any ministry which insisted on doing things man's way, rather than letting God control, he, too, grew angry. "Now you understand why Baptists don't want people to read what you write," he said. "Those are the kinds of questions that split churches."

Jack Taylor, author of some of the Baptists' most popular books, former first vice president of the SBC and former president of the Baptist pastors' conference, told me, "It is a sad day

when Baptists take an official stand against the work of the Holy Spirit." Although Taylor's Anchor Church in Ft. Worth, Texas, has an in-depth ministry to many students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, his church is fully charismatic and is not aligned with the SBC.

### **Ripple Effect Being Felt**

The anti-tongues policy and the exclusion of all divorcees from leadership does not directly affect leadership in local churches—all of whom are autonomous and most of whom are governed by congregational rule apart from denominational dictates. However, the swing toward fundamentalism is being reflected in local churches and associations (groups of churches which form Baptists' basic corporate structure on the local level).

In October the 51-church Muskogee Baptist Association in Oklahoma "disfellowshipped" the Brushy Mountain Baptist Church because the pastor, Dale Lewis, and his wife, Alice, were both divorced before they were married to each other 10 years ago. Lewis was not a Christian until after he married his current wife.

Lewis, who also holds a secular job, became pastor of the little Brushy Mountain Church a year ago. At that time the church had an average attendance of 58. Over this last year Lewis has baptized 62 new converts.

In the annual associational sermon, Muskogee pastor Kevin Clarkson said that if the "biblical standard of husband of one wife is allowed to be polluted, church members can expect to see their churches and children slide into promiscuity, child abuse and drug use."

In September, Missouri's Greene County Baptist Association dismissed Rolling Hills Church from fellowship, charging the church with deviation from the association's "historic interpretation of Scripture" by allowing its members to speak in tongues. The church is located in Springfield, headquarters for the Assemblies of God.

The Shelby Baptist Association, located in Memphis, Tennessee, dismissed the Prescott Memorial Baptist Church for calling a woman as pastor. SBC president, Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church which is a member of that association, supported the dismissal.

The 75-percent vote overrode a recommendation by the associational credentials committee which moved that no action be taken. Nancy Sehested, the ousted pastor, was finally allowed to speak after Rogers asked the messengers to cease their shouting and give her the courtesy of being heard.

Sehested said, "I am a full-blooded Southern Baptist. I decided to follow in my



# BUCKINGHAM REPORT

dad's and my granddad's footsteps and become a pastor."

She said the autonomy of the local church or association is not the question, but whether the Holy Spirit has the right to work in people's lives.

"While we are in this place debating about who can and cannot stand behind a piece of wood, there's a world out there. And the cries of that world are growing louder. There's a world that is desperately in need of all of us. How will the world hear us tonight?" she asked.

## Seminary President Resigns

In a separate move Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary president Randall Lolley resigned his 13-year post after the new inerrantist board of trustees removed all power for selecting new professors from the faculty. Speaking before a stunned and tearful student body in Wake Forest, North Carolina, Lolley said he would be compromising his convictions by staying on as president. He was referring to the intent of the new trustees to appoint only fundamentalists (inerrantists) to the faculty.

Morris Ashcraft, dean at Southeastern, also resigned in protest.

Trustee chairman Robert Crowley, who heads the search committee, vowed the new president would be an inerrantist.

Professor Richard Hester said the faculty had no plans to resign en masse. "We do not intend to give up our prophetic voice. We do not intend to give up our academic freedom. We do not intend to abandon this school's 37-year tradition of quality theological education... These events have shaped this campus into the clearest and most determined opposition New Right fundamentalism in the Southern Baptist Convention has ever faced. The losses of a great president and a great dean make us all the more determined to continue this fight."

North Carolina Baptists seemed to agree. A record number of 5,638 "messengers" attended the annual convention in November and elected, by an overwhelming majority, a pastor nominated by Randall Lolley to be their president.

## Newspaper Editor Resigns in Protest

Another shakeup involved Jack V. Harwell, editor of the Georgia Baptist paper, the *Christian Index*. As the fundamentalists tightened their noose, it began to include the Baptist publications. Harwell, 55, who had been editor of the weekly paper for 21 years, resigned in protest. He cited "restrictions and censorship" placed

on him by the fundamentalist camp.

Harwell has been under fire for a number of years for insisting on the right of a free press. In 1986, Georgia Baptists appointed a review board to review all editorials and articles appearing in the paper. If any article did not meet their conservative standard they were to recommend dismissal of the editor.

In August, the review board jumped Harwell about an editorial he had written criticizing the Southern Baptist Convention. He was warned that one more violation would result in his termination.

In November Harwell said, "All the terrible events of the past few weeks (among Southern Baptists) made me take a new and harder look at my own ministry. I saw that I had not written my conscience in a single one of those recent issues. I had written what I knew would pass muster with the review board, not what I felt to be true and honest and prophetic. I could no longer live with the restrictions and censorship placed upon this newspaper and be true to my God, my heritage, my denomination or my conscience."

Harwell believed, and rightly so, that a free press is mandatory if the kingdom of God is to police itself. The moment a church or denomination is unable to receive open criticism from its own leaders, it has already passed from life into death.

However, as in North Carolina, the rank and file of Georgia Baptists rebelled against the ultra-conservative's methods. At their annual meeting in Savannah—which attracted a record 4,863 church representatives—cheering Baptists abolished the review board to "preserve editorial freedom and integrity." They asked Harwell to reconsider. He accepted. Conservatives, however, vowed to increase their hold and force Baptists back into the fundamentalist fold.

Baptist watchers believe these tremors are but early signs of a much larger earthquake yet to come—perhaps eventuating in a split in the giant denomination.

