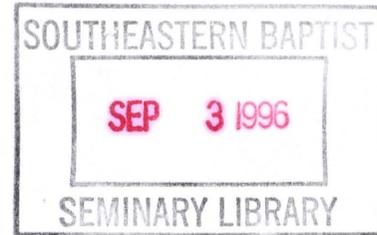


Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEMINARY GROWTH OUTPACES CP SUPPORT SAYS PATTERSON

By Lee Weeks

NEW ORLEANS, June 12 -- Four years ago, critics predicted there would be problems at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary when Paige Patterson became president of the Wake Forest, N.C. school.

They were right.

"Folks we're in trouble," Patterson said matter-of-factly during his state of the seminary address June 12 before a packed banquet hall at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans. "Your seminary has a major problem," Patterson confessed.

"We have no more places to bed students. We have no more places for offices for new faculty members coming in. We are totally out of classroom space. We are totally full in the library and we have no room to do anything."

But with these challenges, Patterson said, come great expectations.

"Thank the Lord we do have a lot of property but we don't have the money that we're going to have to have in order to build the campus to accommodate what's happening," he said.

Patterson said the school's growing pains are the result of a 34 percent increase in student enrollment two years ago compounded by another 20 percent increase in enrollment this year.

"Nor could anyone foresee that at the present time it looks as though next year we may go over 1,500 students in the seminary," Patterson predicted.

An estimated \$10 million to \$14 million, Patterson said, is needed to build a library and banquet building. "We've got to build housing," he said. "It's critically

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important that we do so."

Patterson said the seminary's tremendous growth has stretched Cooperative Program dollars as far as they can go. "The day is over when the Cooperative Program can cover everything you need to do," Patterson said.

The seminary, Patterson said, is in desperate need of endowments. "We need that \$1 million endowment for the Drummond Center For Great Commission Studies," Patterson said.

The endowment would be used to help subsidize mission trips to third world countries for every seminary student.

"Remember the goal is to get our arms around the world for Christ's sake," Patterson said.

Patterson said more than 200 students have served on the mission fields this year in Cambodia, China, El Salvador, Kenya, Mexico, Romania and Finland.

He asked for special prayer for a group of Southeastern students currently in the northern provinces of Cambodia where a \$400 reward has been offered by anti-Christian extremist for the "head" of any missionary found witnessing about Christ. Five years ago, Patterson said, there were no Baptists in Cambodia.

Patterson said there are 5 million land mines in Cambodia where one out of every 100 people are missing a limb caused by the unexpected explosion of a mine.

"They're excited as they can be," Patterson said referring to the attitude and spirit of the seminary students witnessing in Cambodia. "They're not worried about it. They're preaching the gospel and people are getting saved every day."

Patterson said the seminary will not retreat from danger in its call to evangelize the world.

"If I could find a tougher place we'll send them there," he said. "Once they've been in a situation like that and they see that God is able to do unbelievable things like He does in many of those places they'll never doubt what He can do here at home."

In other business, Jim Deloach, former associate pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, was recognized as the seminary's distinguished alumnus of the year. The World War II veteran has served on the seminary's Board of Trustees as well as former president of the school's national alumni association.

Julian Motley, director of placement and denominational relations at Southeastern, was elected president of the school's national alumni association. Motley will succeed Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga..

Elected president-elect of the national alumni association was Jerry Pereira, pastor of 1st Baptist Church os Swannanoa, N.C. Gerald Harris, pastor of

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Eastside Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., was elected secretary . Shannon Scott, pastor of Mt. Veronon Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C., was elected to serve at-large to the association's executive committee.

