

# THE ENQUIRY

SERVING THE SOUTHEASTERN COMMUNITY

Volume 30, Number 3

"Writing the History of the Future"

March, 1995

## Mrs. "Pep" Carson:

# A Miracle Before Our Eyes

*The doctor cautiously reported some improvement. Some brain function had been restored and some kidney activity was evident. The doctor commented that now the family could cling to a little hope. There was a 1-out-of-100 chance that she could come back. Dr. Carson prayed, "Lord, she can be that one."*

By William Summey

*It is difficult to believe that Dr. Logan Carson and his wife "Pep" have only been part of the Southeastern community for six months. They have become an integral part of the seminary family in such a short time. When crisis struck the Carsons on January 3, the Southeastern family came together in prayer and support on their behalf. Throughout the last month a miracle has happened before us with Mrs. Carson's remarkable recovery. The EnquirY spoke with Dr. Carson about his wife's recovery.*

It was a busy New Year's holiday around Green Bethel Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, NC where Dr. Carson is pastor. Dr. Carson performed a wedding on Saturday afternoon and held a Watchnight Service that evening for New Year's Eve. Sunday morning there were services and later a funeral. Mrs. Carson, a faithful worker in the church, sang in the choir that morning. It was going to be a long day, for after the funeral Mrs. Carson drove them to Charlotte to catch a US Air flight to New York. The Carsons were on their way to visit Mrs. Carson's sister in the Bronx for the holidays.

After the Carsons' arrival in New York, Mrs. Carson did some shopping on Monday afternoon, ate about 5:30, and complained about feeling sick. She went to sleep early that night because she was feeling bad. At 12:30 AM Tuesday morning Dr. Carson checked on his wife and noticed that she was breathing irregularly. He tried to wake her but could not. His first thought was that Mrs. Carson, a diabetic, may be having a problem with her blood sugar. They called EMS and took her to the hospital about 1:30 AM.

It was not until 5:00 AM Tuesday that Dr. Carson first spoke to one of her doctors. The doctor's



*Dr. & Mrs. Carson at home on the sofa after her recovery.*

reply was unexpected, "She may never wake up. She is in a situation where she

*(continued, page 2, "Miracle")*

## Seminary trustees entertain offers on U.S. 1 land parcel

By Dwayne Hastings

*Wake Forest NC*—Southeastern's board of trustees took a first step toward implementing the school's recently-adopted land use management plan during a special-called meeting in early January.

Meeting in Broyhill Hall, the trustees indicated a willingness to accept an offer from

Baita International, Inc. to purchase 45 of the seminary's 300-plus undeveloped acres. The tract, designated for commercial development in the land use plan, fronts U.S. Highway 1 south of the Stadium Road intersection.

Baita International, Inc., a commercial real estate development and acquisition firm headquartered in Atlanta, was one of several companies to tender a proposal to acquire and develop the property. While much speculation has been generated by the company's interest, no specific announcement has been made as to the future use of the land.

The trustees had approved the concept of the land use plan during their 1994 fall meeting, accepting the report of a Land Use Task Force

which outlined a plan to develop and market sections of the seminary's property into the 21st century.

As the plan was presented last fall, it raised some concern among students in its suggestion that the seminary should divest itself of its current student housing program. Southeastern President Paige Patterson took great pains to anticipate and defuse those same fears following the January announcement.

Patterson indicated that *the seminary has no plans to get out of the student housing business and was in fact more committed than ever to seeking quality, reasonably-priced housing for students and their families.*

**Miracle (continued from p. 1)**

may never come out of this." The diagnosis was a heart blockage. The chambers of the heart were not cooperating. The result of this blockage was that the oxygen to Mrs. Carson's brain had been cut off. She was officially brain dead. Many of Mrs. Carson's bodily functions were in trouble as well; her kidneys and liver had shut down completely.

In a situation that seemed hopeless, Dr. Carson said that he felt surprisingly peaceful. "I didn't panic. I didn't cry. I felt infinite peace as if Jesus had said, 'Let me take care of this. Just lean on me and rest assured I am with you.' It was as if I was a bird on a stormy seascape, hidden in a cleft of the rock singing. Though the storm was raging all around me, I was at peace."

At this time, Dr. Carson's daughter, Tricia, and their son, Aaron, also joined them. They called many people to pray for Mrs. Carson. Dr. Carson called Dr. Patterson and told him the situation. The family was hopeful, but they had made the decision to take Mrs. Carson off life support if she showed no sign of recovery in three days. Dr. Carson reflected how that during fall semester his Christian Ethics class had discussed this matter in great detail, and he felt this prepared him for this situation. The only thing that he or anyone else could do now was to pray and wait.

In a matter of a few hours, Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Carson went back to the hospital. The doctor cautiously reported some improvement. Some brain function had been restored and some kidney activity was

evident. The doctor commented that now the family could cling to a little hope. There was a 1-out-of-100-chance that she could come back. Dr. Carson prayed, "Lord, she can be that one."

By Wednesday morning the doctors reported that there was much improvement. Mrs. Carson had become conscious that morning and her brain function was coming back. She was now awake and aware. When the family arrived, Mrs. Carson immediately recognized her daughter, Tricia, and called out her name. By Wednesday evening it was apparent that she was going to come back. The EEG showed that her brain and liver were normal and that her kidneys were back to the state they were before the heart block. Some damage had previously occurred because of her diabetes which made the recovery of the kidneys a particular item of care. In thirty-six hours Mrs. Carson went from brain dead to a full recovery expected.

However, some problems still did exist. It was evident to the doctors that Mrs. Carson had a slow

heartbeat and that installing a defibrillator would be necessary to regulate her heart rate. The doctors also wanted to find out why this heart block had occurred. So far the tests have proved nothing. The angiogram showed there was no damage to the arteries surrounding the heart. Mrs. Carson also had anemia, a low count of red blood cells, and a low iron content. The doctors wanted to run a bone marrow exam as well to test why her blood count was low.

Dr. Carson's reaction to his wife's recovery was one of confidence in the Lord. "I wasn't surprised. I

wasn't amazed. I was elated. I knew that she could be that 1-of-100. Like the old song says, 'The age of miracles is still the same today.' God is going to make her just as well as He wants to make her, and she will be a living witness to His power. Even the science of medicine has to stop and bow before the majestic throne of the Almighty God, the Great Physician, Jesus Christ."

Dr. Carson was able to return to Southeastern for the beginning of the spring semester. Mrs. Carson was released from the hospital on Wednesday, February 1 and at the time of this printing has already returned home to regular duties, including washing those dirty dishes. Mrs. Carson will still have to undergo some ongoing treatment with her own doctor as well as with a heart and kidney specialist. As far as Mrs. Carson's memory is concerned, she does not remember a thing that happened after Christmas Day, even though there was another full week before her rush to the hospital. Continue to be in prayer for Mrs. Carson as she regains her strength and continues her ongoing treatment.

When asked about the support of the Southeastern community, Dr. Carson commented that Southeastern was just like a family to him. He felt the love and prayers of everyone. Many offered to give him rides and to bring him food after his return. Dr.

Carson wanted to thank the entire Southeastern community for their gracious support.

The truth is that Mrs. Carson is a blessing to the Southeastern

community, for she is a living witness to the power of God. Her recovery speaks of God's graciousness and activity among us. God is still at work and chooses to use earthen vessels to make His glory known.

***In a situation that seemed hopeless . . . I felt infinite peace, as if Jesus had said, "Let me take care of this. Just rest assured I am with you."***

***She is in a situation where she may never come out of this!***

## Library Lines

# Expanding SEBTS Library Hires Cataloger

By **Chele Caughron**

Laura Smith joined the SEBTS library staff as a full-time cataloger. She received a Master of Library Science degree in May from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"We are very excited about the addition of Laura Smith to our crew," said Shawn Madden, director of Library Services. "She joined us at a critical and exciting time in the history of the library as we prepare to expand and automate our collection."

Smith came to Southeastern from her job as a student cataloger at the university's Wilson Library.

As cataloger, Smith will take new books, review them, decide under which subjects

they should be placed, and assign them call numbers.

"What the cataloger does is take a book and take from that book information that everybody else can use to find what they want," Smith said. "If you look at the title of this book, *Graduale Romanum*, even if you're fluent in Latin, you might not know what it's about, so I go through this and find out that it's about Latin hymns."

Smith said her interest in library science surfaced in high school when she took a job at East Branch Public Library in Greenville, NC.

"When I was a senior in



LAURA SMITH

high school I wanted a job, and the only job my mom would let me have was working in the library, because she wanted me to spend my time doing my school work instead of flipping hamburgers and spending all the money I earned," Smith said. "I just kept coming back and started getting more and more

responsibility, and my sophomore year I decided I was good at it and that I might as well spend the rest of my life doing it."

Smith is married to Paul Smith, a doctoral student at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

## THE ENQUIRY

SERVING THE SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY COMMUNITY

Published by  
the students of

**SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

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Wake Forest, NC 27588-1889

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*numerous to list, but too*

*valuable to ignore.*

**LETTER POLICY:** All letters to the editor are welcome. They should be typed, double-spaced, no more than 200 words long. All letters must be signed.

**DEADLINES:** The deadline for letters or other copy will be the 27th of each month. We reserve the right to edit or refuse to publish any material submitted. Please maintain copies of materials submitted, as they cannot be returned.

Printed by The Evening Telegram, Rocky Mount, NC

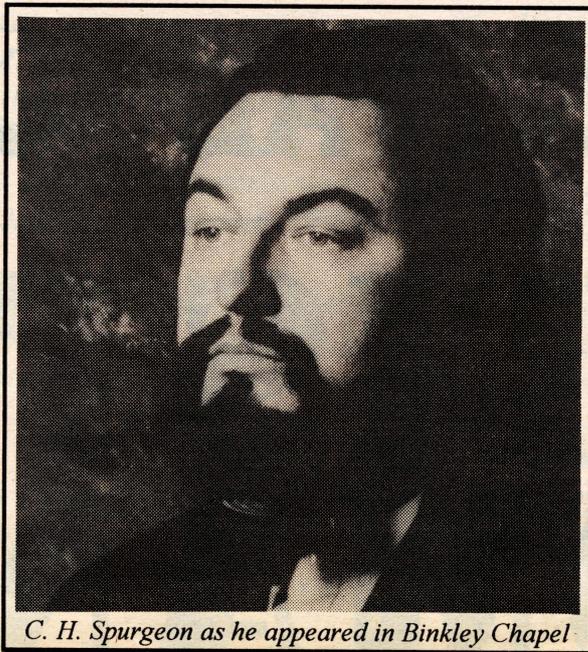
# Spurgeon Preaches on SEBT's Campus

By Ken Keathley

Wake Forest, NC---One look at the calendar explains why Southeastern is becoming known as a central meeting place for the evangelical world. In February, SEBT's hosted four great events: the Preaching and Worship Conference (Feb. 6-9), the Foreign Mission Board's Appointing and Commissioning service (Feb. 14), the Mind Games Seminar (Feb. 24-25), and the Christian Life Commission's War of the Worlds Seminar (Feb. 27-Mar. 1).

Rarely has such a wide spectrum of spiritual and educational resources been available in one place at practically the same time. Stephen Olford, Charles Colson, and Timothy George were slated as speakers--just to name a few. When asked why SEBT's is experiencing such a flurry of activity, Dr. Patterson said, "There is a good deal of curiosity in the evangelical world as to what is going on at Southeastern Seminary. I think it shows that what we have been doing is striking a responsive chord."

The preaching and worship conference featured Stephen Olford of Encounter Ministries and



C. H. Spurgeon as he appeared in Binkley Chapel

Bruce Leafblad, professor of church music and worship at Southwestern Seminary, along with several SEBT's professors. Dr. Olford is internationally known as one of the leading proponents and examples of expository preaching. According to Dr. Wayne McDill, a major goal of the conference was to teach specific principles for expository preaching. In addition, one special highlight was dramatist Doug Whitley, who appeared as some of the great preachers of yesteryear, including C. H. Spurgeon, "Uncle Bud" Robinson, and John Jasper.

For the first time in Southern Baptist history, the Foreign Mission Board conducted an Appointment and Commissioning service at a seminary campus. Dr. Keith Eitel, director of Southeastern's Center for Great Commission Studies, was understandably excited about the event. In addition to the seminary's new church planting program, he sees the special service as illustrating "our desire to partner with the FMB for missions anyway we can."

The last two conferences of the month were closely related in both timing and theme. According to Dr. Danny Akin, the Mind Games seminar was "geared especially for high school and college age young people." Using 1 Peter 3:15 as a basis, teenagers were taught how to develop a Biblical world view. Covering such issues as the creationism-evolution controversy and homosexuality, Dr. Akin stated that a major goal was to "prepare Christian kids that will be entering secular universities." Since some studies show that up to 70% of high school seniors will never return to church once they begin college, the Mind Games seminar could not have been more timely.

February ended with the War of the Worlds, the 28th annual seminar of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. With over 20 speakers such as Dr. Jim Henry, Dr. Albert Mohler, Jr., and Charles Colson, the pressing moral and social issues facing our nation were addressed.

Regardless if one's interest is in missions or in abortion-related issues, in the theoretical or the practical, Southeastern had something special for everyone last month.

## Tips for SEBT's Students from SBC President, Jim Henry

By Dwayne Hastings

SBC convention president Jim Henry was on the SEBT's campus in December to give the charge to the seminary's fall 1994 graduates. A graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Henry took a few moments out to reflect on his time as a seminary student for this Enquiry reporter.

Nobody ever warned me about the stress seminary life would place on my *devotional life*. I thought when I went to seminary it would be kinda like going to youth camp, I discovered it wasn't always such a spiritual high. Protect your quiet time with the Lord. Be sure you stay up-to-date with your walk with Jesus. Guarding your quiet time and keeping your devotional life must be a top priority in your seminary life.

Second, *be involved in a local church*. Even if you don't have a place to preach or serve, get in a church. Don't tell yourself, 'I'll sleep in now and wait to get involved in ministry when I'm a pastor.'

Make it a point to *develop friendships with the faculty and with other students*. More than likely, you will be keeping in touch with many of them for the rest of your life. You will be calling them to do winter bible studies, to fill the pulpit, and just to talk.

Watch out that you *don't get in debt*. It's easy to get financially-strapped in seminary. You must be very careful about taking on any foolish financial burden. Practice tithing even if you don't have very much money. Keep your stewardship relationship with God strong.

Try to get out in the community where God has placed you. *Note and relate to the culture around you*. Know the community and the people around you. Don't pull yourself in a shell.

On the seminary campus, be willing to *take classes that will stretch you*. The course may not be one you think you will particularly enjoy, but a class like that may get you digging spiritually and intellectually and challenge you to consider areas of the faith you hadn't explored before.

A word to seniors: *don't panic about not having a pastorate* as you near graduation. Trust God to put you in his place of service. Be available. Don't sit passively, but on the other hand, don't run out and grab the first thing that comes along until you are sure it is the ministry God has placed before you. Don't feel God has forsaken you at any point during your time as a seminarian. He has called you and he is going to place you.

Protect the temple: Exercise. Stretch. Walk. Jog. Play basketball. *Engage in some kind of physical activity* to keep your body tuned up and healthy.

Last, but surely not the least -- *Keep your relationship with your spouse and children strong*. It is so important that you don't let it drift in these years. If you are absent from the family while you are in seminary, it can build up resentment and bitterness that rises to the surface later once you are on the ministry field.

## CHAOS by Brian Shuster



As he read the headline in horror, Larry knew that now he'd HAVE to take Bertha to the prom.

## UP-CLOSE &amp; PERSONAL

## How REVIVAL Came to

## BAPTISTS IN ROMANIA

By Ed Houck

**Ed:** How do you know Pastor Josef, Elijah?**Elijah:** I recall many years ago in Romania when he was a top evangelical (radio) preacher. And I got acquainted with him later when I was listening to his message on the Euro Free radio station (Radio Free Europe). And then later, when he came back in January 1990.**Josef:** I was speaking on Radio Free Europe, preaching the gospel to Romania with American taxpayers' money. Every Sunday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock they gave me 50 minutes to preach the gospel to Romania. From 1982 to the 12th of October last year.**Ed:** Wow!**Josef:** Now they are closing down that radio. That was a political radio and the U. S. State Department under President Reagan decided to let that radio broadcast the gospel. And they gave me that time. People were listening everywhere in the country to Radio Free Europe. Everybody. Radio Free Europe was their source of information. So, preaching on that radio meant that everybody listened to you. Now let him tell you where was he when he listened to that radio.**Elijah:** From 1987 to January 1989 I was in the army, and it happened to be where one of the houses of the president was. He had 45 houses, most were strategically built inside army compounds. I was there working as an assistant to the Commandant. While there I was listening to the sermon.**Josef:** He had been listening secretly to the service on the radio and calling other soldiers.**Ed:** It was like medicine, wasn't it? And so, how did you first meet Pastor Josef?**Elijah:** Basically I met him when he came back (from exile). I was just shocked to meet him because for many years, when he used to go somewhere to preach from a distance of two or three hours traveling, people were coming in to listen to his preaching. Everybody wanted to meet him. He came to my grandparents' village with the male choir from the Second Baptist. I know for a fact that for that service people from like

three and four hours away traveled. People came to listen to the Word of God and Dr. Tson.

**Josef:** I had a rule at that time with the church that one Sunday per month I went to preach in a different place with the male choir of 80 men. They came with me wherever I went. Once I had to preach in Bucharest on the other side of the country, and they chartered a plane under communism. And 60 men flew for that weekend with me. So, when I went to their village, we choose another place in the country to go from that Sunday, and 20, 25 cars loaded with men would come with me. And the Secret Police tried to stop us, and they threatened me. But we just didn't stop. That's what we were doing under communism.**Ed:** You were giving them great medicine for what their hurting hearts needed. How long were you pastor at Second Baptist, Oradea?**Josef:** Not very long. There was just 4 years, 1977-81. In 1981 I was exiled. I was summoned to the police and an officer told me that I had three weeks to pack and take my wife and daughter out and leave the country. That's when I came and settled in Wheaton (ILL) and started that radio ministry.

I was broadcasting from Europe, sending the tapes to New York, going into the diplomatic pouch of the United States and broadcasting with the Americans' money. But, let's come to the thing that I started to tell you yesterday morning.

**BAPTISTS UNDER COMMUNISM****W**hen communists took over in Romania in 1948, there were two (among many other) objectives that they had. There were two conflicting goals in their policy. One was to destroy all religion. And they had this in their publications. Their official goal was to create a totally religionless society. The other goal was to prove to the world that theirs was a democratic system and that there was liberty for religion, liberty for everything. How can you destroy the whole religion while still making the *show* of freedom? So, these were the two conflicting goals there.**N**ow, in order to achieve their goal of destroying religion, they put together a team of experts to stop every denomination; analyze its weak and strong points, and come with the plans specific for each denomination how to destroy it while preserving that *show* of freedom. I happen to know about that study in early 50's. So, I was a follower of those events for a long time.**B**y 1954 they were ready with the plan. The first thing in their plan was to put in the leadership of the Baptist Union their own stooges. People who on the surface were Baptists, Baptist pastors, but who were themselves communist sympathizers and who were ready to do what the government said. And they succeeded through manipulation and threats and force. They succeeded in the congress in 1955, I think, to have in place that kind of leadership. But they knew that the Baptist Union was not the commanding organ. They could not give orders to the church just because the churches were autonomous according to our constitution.**S**o, the biggest problem for them was how to give the Baptist Union more power. And they came with a very shrewd plan. And here is what was their plan. They had a meeting with all the pastors, and they explained to the pastors of the churches who are small no church was able to put together a plan for retirement or medical insurance or saying things like that. And the government wanted them to have all those things. So, the government was prepared to allow the Baptist Union to establish pensions, medical insurance, and everything else with the condition that the churches send the money to the Baptist Union and the Baptist Union organizes so that retirement and insurance and the Baptist Union pays them the salaries of the pastors. The pastors were quite surprised that the communist government thought of them and came with a very good plan for their welfare, and accepted the plan with no blinking. And, very shortly after that the government said, "Now, the Baptist Union has become the employment agency, and they hire and fire. From now on, whenever the pastors disobey the Baptist Union, the Baptist Union can fire him."



THE NEW 3,000-SEAT WORSHIP CENTER OPENED FOR USE FEBRUARY 26, 1995 AT THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH, ORADEA, ROMANIA. BUT THE DEMAND FOR THIS NEW FACILITY IS NOT BECAUSE OF A SLICK, USER-FRIENDLY, SEEKER-ORIENTED CHURCH GROWTH STRATEGY. RATHER, IT IS THE RESULT OF UNBELIEVABLE ANGUISH OF SOUL UNDER COMMUNIST CONTROL.

**The scene:** Communist sympathizers and informants were planted in churches and denominational positions. The churches were shrinking, losing their children and youth. There was no life. Communist rules choked the life out of the church.

**The Solution:** Five Baptist pastors meet weekly for fellowship, agonizing in prayer. Included is Dr. Josef Tson, an Oxford scholar. Having researched how God uses martyrdom, he pours out his heart in writing a 40-page paper, "Whoever Loses His Life." Fully expecting to die for secretly distributing his document to the free world, "Pastor Joe" discovers God's power released in splendor!

**THE INCREDIBLE STORY IS RECOUNTED HERE IN TWO BREAKFAST INTERVIEWS WHILE DR. TSON WAS ON CAMPUS FOR THE FMB'S EXCITING COMMISSIONING SERVICE. HEAR FORMER COMMUNIST SOLDIER, ILIE "ELIJAH" SORITAU (SEBTS M.DIV. STUDENT) AND HIS PASTOR, DR. TSON, AS THEY REVEAL HARDSHIPS AND SUPERNAL JOYS OF CHURCH GROWTH AND REVIVAL AMONG BAPTISTS IN ROMANIA.**

From that moment they just told the Baptist Union what were the new rules that they wanted the Baptist Union to implement. And the Baptist Union just had that kind of meetings with the pastors and told them, "From now on you meet in the church on Saturday night and Sunday morning. No other services. You will have no children meetings, no Sunday School. You will have no women's meeting, no youth meetings, no evangelism. If you want to do a baptism, you have to have approval from the local authorities whom to baptize. If you want to elect deacons, you have to have approval from those local authorities before those people become deacons in your church." And, of course, pastors were shocked and they wouldn't accept.

From 1959, I know that was the last statistic I got, there were 540 pastors. From 1959 to 1964, the Baptist Union fired 400 of them for breaking one or the other of those rules. Of course, whoever wanted to stay in the job rationalized and said, "Brothers, I have limited liberty. Now I can do only this, but at least I can do this. So, I accept." And, nobody could say a word because if you just said something they would pick you up and throw you in prison or the labor camp. At that time you could disappear without a trial. And it was terror system. So, you just had to accept what was there. Churches were shrinking. We were losing our children and youth. There was no life.

Five of us pastors came together in 1973, deciding to have one day of fellowship a week (the whole day for prayer and for agonizing before the Lord about the situation of the churches). And as we looked to the situation, we saw pretty early that it was these rules and prohibitions that were choking the life of the church. And to make a long story short, after a few months I had a clear light from the Lord that I had to write a paper that should be first for the Baptist doctrine of the church. And then in the light of the doctrine of the autonomy of the local church, I should analyze the development in the Baptist Union, how those things happened and how those rules were introduced. And at the end to call the churches to disregard those rules.

#### NO TURNING BACK

And, I did write that paper in the summer of 1973, knowing that they would kill me for it. And a friend that read the paper, the first man to read it after I brought it from the mountains of Bucharest, came to me and he just said, "Josef, you commit suicide with this paper. It's beautiful. It's the most beautiful thing I ever read in my life. But you commit suicide on it. You are a preacher. We need you as a preacher. Please stay a preacher. Don't kill yourself. Just ignore these things and go on preaching."

**Ed:** And, at this point you hadn't released the paper? He alone had seen it.

**Josef:** Yes. I kept it for a few weeks, first of all to make sure that copies got in the West. I wanted it to get publicity. I knew that that was a chance for some victory. So, before I spread them in the country, I gave them to friends who smuggled them out. When I knew that they were out and safe in the hands...

**Ed:** Were there any specific targets for getting them over here, or did you just give them to friends and trust them to distribute them?

**Josef:** No, I had an organization in England called Keston College that specialized in collecting that kind of information from the communist world and giving it publicity. It was the beginning. They just started a few years before that with a man called Michael. He was very vocal in defending the rights of the Christians in the communist countries.

**Ed:** So, you got some copies into others' hands, and then you still had yours in the country to give out.

**Josef:** Yes. And, at the beginning of September I released about 20 carbon copies, and just gave them to pastors and to churches. I took care to give one to the Secretary of the Baptist Union, whom I knew was a secret police agent. And a week later he came to me, sort of very scared, and said, "Josef, I don't know how, but somehow the secret police got a copy of your paper. And it's bad, Josef. Very bad. They are furious. It will be very bad with you. And they want to make a deal with you. If you tell them where are all the copies and if you bring them together, they will destroy them and forget the incident. Otherwise, I cannot tell you what will happen, but it's bad."

So, I smiled and I told him, "Please tell them



L. to R.: Ilie "Elijah" Soritau, Ed Houck, Dr. Josef Tson.

that I knew they were going to torture me to get them. But I spread them in such a way that even if I wish to bring them back, I cannot."

**Ed:** You burned all the bridges.

**Josef:** So, he said, "Okay, I understand. The first step is that you are fired from the seminary (I was teaching in the Baptist seminary at that time in Bucharest) and you are not permitted to preach in any church."

And I said, "Alright, but please go and tell them that I have a problem. You know I was three years student in England in Oxford, and in that time I told everybody there that there is freedom to preach the gospel in Romania and that I have come back and I am preaching the gospel wherever I want. Now, for a year this was true. But now I have to tell the same message to them that I was wrong. There is no freedom for preaching the gospel on Romania. Just tell them this."

And they came next day back to me and said, "Joseph, will you put in paper that statement about England." I said "yes" and made the paper bigger. And they took that to a bigger boss in the communist party and eventually that man said, "Well, let him preach." Now, on one side they were ready to arrest me. On the other, a communist boss told them to let me preach. That was real confusion. But then, they had to think what that could mean now. And their plan was to show that somehow in England while I studied there I got to become an agent of the foreign powers and this was part of destroying the peace in the country and of the Baptist denomination. That I was a loner. Nobody followed me. And (they wanted) to isolate me and then somehow to kill me.

There was a young pastor in Bucharest who understood that plot. He was one of the five pastors in our group, Vasile Talos. He is now President of the Baptist Union. He understood that plan, and he came to me and he said, "Brother Josef, here is the plan. Here is how they want to do it. Now, I want to outplay them. I want to write a three-page summary of your 40-page paper as a letter to the president of the country, just to make problems in the prosecution. And I want to collect as many signatures of Baptist ministers as I can and completely take the whole issue from your hands. Will you be upset with me?" I said, "Possibly. This is a battle to free the churches. If you throw me out and you free the churches, I kiss your feet. Alright?" But I said, "When you finish that letter, bring it to me. I want to see that it's alright."

So, he wrote and then I rewrote it for him. And in one week he had 50 signatures of pastors on

*see this must be done and you decided to do it?*

**Josef:** The Lord prepared me for that. And here is how He prepared me. I was still in Oxford studying theology in 1972. When I left for England, I left for a short trip to Austria. And from Austria I went to England with no Romanian approvals. I got the scholarship in Oxford, and I studied. And going back to Romania after you were away for 3 1/2 years and to that communist system was like suicide again. But the struggle was there. Shall I go back or not? And whenever I prayed I just saw the hand of the Lord pointing back to Romania. And I told all my friends I go back to Romania.

And being very active in the Inter-Varsity movement of Oxford, the leaders of Inter-Varsity had a meeting and they invited me to share before going back to Romania. They wanted to know what to pray for. So, for half an hour I told them my dream of training a new generation of preachers in Romania. And when I finished one of them said, "Josef, your plan sounds marvelous, but tell me what chances of success of implementing your plan that you have?"

that letter to the president of the country saying, in effect, that those issues were their issues, not my issues, not only my issues. And when they put that at the Office of the President, I was no more a loner, an isolated foreign agent. Again, that was the second thing that saved my life. First was that statement about England and the second one was this action.

For three months they didn't know what to do with us. This was the first open revolt, and it was public, and it was already known in the West. They couldn't do anything. But, if they really did... a big, big international splash! So, they just didn't know what to do. We were in a sort of limbo, these rebels that wrote these things. I was still fired from the seminary but going and preaching every Sunday in another church and encouraging people to go and stand up. And here is what I did.

Keston College translated my paper and printed it, both on Romanian and in English. It was printed with a title *Whoever Loses His Life* (Romanian translation). It circulated widely in Romania. That time it was smuggled in by some Swedish people. But they sent copies of them to different governments because at that time they were organizing the Helsinki Conference on Human Rights that took place two or three years later. But they were right then making the decision that any trade agreement made with the communist countries should be conditioned on human rights issues.

So, Ceausescu came to Washington at the beginning of December, '73, to negotiate a new trade agreement. And we knew that he was given these human rights issues that they could collect among them our papers. All I know for a fact is what somebody told me that happened in Washington: that he saw them and he promised to solve them. The fact is we were invited to go to see the Minister of Religious Affairs. He told us that the leadership of the country somehow got our papers. They considered that our complaints were justified, and he got orders to solve all our grievances. And such a way that at the end we write a letter to the president stating that all those problems were solved to our satisfaction.

**Ed:** So, this finished up in 1973?

When I heard the word success I smiled and I said, "This is typical western way of thinking. In Romania they don't invite you to Jesus to have success. I invite them to receive Jesus and ask, "But are you prepared to lose your job and to lose your freedom? Then follow Jesus!" So, that word success never had a place in our thinking. The only word they had was obedience. I prayed where to go and the Lord said, "You go to Romania." And I had to say, "Yes sir." And I go to Romania.

At that point immediately I said to myself, "Now, I don't know how to answer that question. Lord, I have an idea. What if I turn this question to you? What chances do you give me?" And the Lord was quick. "Josef, my answer is Matthew 10:16. I send my sheep in the midst of wolves." I saw, like in a vision (a very clear picture), a circle of wolves, a sheep in the center, and the Lord saying to me "Joseph, what chance has that sheep to stay alive five or ten minutes, let alone after working the wolves?"

That question, "What chance has the sheep to stay alive five or ten minutes, let alone after working the wolves? Joseph, that's how I send you to Romania,

**Josef:** Well, we had had about two months of negotiations.

**Ed:** I understand. But it was pretty rapid compared to what all you've been through. It was solved pretty quickly.

**Josef:** At the beginning of '74 news went through the country that all those rules and prohibitions were gone, people could live again as they want, the church got free. And that is when the revival started, when the Baptist churches of Romania started to get life back in them.

Among other things, as we negotiated to get back those rights, there were pastors who were fired from their jobs, and I intervened that certain pastors should get back their license. One got back his license, and he was immediately asked to go to be pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Oradea. And in six months there a revival started and the second half of '74 he baptized 400 people. And, that was phenomenal. That was never heard of in the communist world. In two years he baptized 650 people. And then he decided to leave. He actually left the country and came to America.

A year later I moved there and I became the pastor of that church. And the revival then spread across the country and people got back the courage to stand for what they believe. Once they saw that there were five who dared risk their lives and the Lord honored them, the others were able to say, "Well, we do the same." Once you model it, there is no stopping.

### PREPARING FOR MARTYRDOM

**Ed:** Now, I've heard the basic story. Back to the point when you had your days of prayer and wrestling before the Lord, agonizing for the church. Then you felt you needed to write the paper "Whoever Loses His Life." What was going on inside of you during that time? You knew that you might die for what you were doing, probably would. Most people probably would have some kind of intense struggle inside. Did you have such a struggle or could you just clearly

totally vulnerable, with no guarantees even of survival. If you accept to go to Romania as I send you, go to Romania. If not, never go there." That experience changed my life because I went to my room after that and I said, "Lord, I go to Romania whichever way you send. But you are my father. I want to understand why do you send me to wolves?" And, it was through that, that I started my study on the place of martyrdom in God's strategy. And I came to see that martyrdom is not an accident. Martyrdom is a very much a part of God's strategy conquering the world. He sent this Son as a lamb, and His Son said, "As my father sent me, so send I you." I send you His lambs. God never conquers but the lambs who are sent to be slaughtered. And, ah, that's what Tertullian saw when he said that "the blood of the martyrs become seed of the Christians." And as I studied that issue, then I went back to Romania prepared for that type of ministry.

And I prepared my wife. I said to her at one point, "If we succeed to raise a new generation of young people who stand up for the Lord and preach uninhibited and ready to die for what they preach, we

conquer this country. But it may be that the Lord wants me to model it for them. If I do it then many others will do it. But you have to give me to the Lord for that." She struggled with that for a while, but she came and said, "Joseph, let's go and pray." And we prayed together, and she gave me to the Lord for that kind of ministry. And from that day that woman was the best fighter of the family.

And, so, I was prepared for martyrdom. When I wrote that paper, my goal of becoming a martyr was already clear. If the Lord wanted that. It is He who has to choose. The sacrifice is consumed or He says, "No, step down from the altar." But you have to put yourself on the altar like Isaac. And so, yes, there was apprehension. I have to really prepare myself. But I knew at that time that this was going to be it.

**Ed:** *You told me yesterday that some folks had a special name for you and Phil Roberts. They branded you.*

**Josef:** After the collapse of communism I went back to Romania and we started our Bible Institute, College, and Seminary. And right at that time (I think it was in 1992) the European Baptist Federation, angered about Ruchlikon issue, wanted to publish a very liberal Statement of Faith of the European Baptists.

And I took it and analyzed it with Philip. And we worked for about two weeks and we wrote a response to it. The Romanian Baptist Union accepted it, and we were the only union (Baptist Union) in Europe who confronted them and said, "No, that's not what a Baptist stands for." And eventually they dropped that statement. They diluted it later on and so forth. That's the whole affair. And it was with that occasion that Baptist Press published a big press release that Philip Roberts and Joseph Tson want to bring American fundamentalism to Europe and they are the most dangerous people to watch.

**Ed:** *You told me yesterday about one of the top men who strategized against you. He wanted to meet you in the end. Could you tell us that story?*

**Josef:** I told you the beginning of this interview that they made the plan how to destroy the denomination.

Now, the man who made that plan was an atheist expert in dealing with religion (destroying religion). Later on he became the Minister of Religious Affairs. And it was he who had to solve all our problems after Ceausescu came to America.

So, he had to give in to all of our requests and cancel all those restrictions that he conceived 20 years before. So, after we got all we wanted and we wrote a letter to Ceausescu that we were satisfied, a week or two later somebody came to me and said, "You are invited to see the Minister of Religious Affairs alone." I always went with the others in the negotiation team. So, I didn't know why I had to go alone, private audience with the Minister.

He was very polite, invited me to the small table where he set coffee for a special guest in his office and had two cups of coffee. And then he said, "Well, Mr. Tson, in two weeks I retire. I am 55 and I will be out of everything. For me it is all over. I want to tell you something. For 20 years I worked to destroy your denomination. Mr. Tson, with one paper you destroyed the work, my work of 20 years. I just wanted to know the man who did it before I retired. So, let's just chat friendly."

**Elijah:** For almost five years in Second Baptist I never had a seat. I was standing. Every time I stood up because . . .

**Josef:** For five years he never *sat* in a church service.

**Ed:** *How many would it seat?*

**Josef:** 900.

**Ed:** *Then how many could stand besides that?*

**Josef:** Well, we would squeeze 1,500, 1,800. But you would have them in different rooms, in the street.

**Ed:** *Open windows, maybe?*

**Elijah:** At that time we were 2,800, just the members of the church. And then you have lots of visitors. I know people who were deciding to stay home and pray while the services were going on because . . .

**Josef:** The most crowded services were when there were baptisms. With us baptism is a very serious matter. Many people are thrown out of their homes if they are baptized. Taking that step is breaking with your past.

So, we take them to a baptismal class. Then you really examine them to make sure that they really mean it. And on a Sunday morning 60, 70, 80 candidates for baptism are in white. And it's a big procession. And it's usually a five-hour service.

**Ed:** *That's a very public baptismal service.*

**Josef:** Adrian Rogers saw one. He was so moved. He just kept talking after that, "How could we make baptism be like that?" But after baptism service, our church always got this order: "Don't come. The church will be full with the friends of the ones that will be baptized. Friends, relatives." There was a situation when I said, "let's sing this or that hymn," and almost nobody was there to sing.

**Ed:** *They were all newcomers and they didn't know the songs.*

**Josef:** We would preach an evangelistic sermon explaining the meaning of baptism and then have 60, 70, 80 people in the white stand and sing *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*. And I would just continue to make the invitation. Usually, by the end of that Sunday, we had at least as many registered for a baptismal class as . . .

**Ed:** *Ready for another baptismal service just because of the one you had?*

**Josef:** Yes.

**Ed:** *So, you're not singing "Come to Jesus so you can be happy and prosperous and successful." Come to Jesus and lose your life. No turning back.*

**Josef:** The cross is there. The world is behind me.

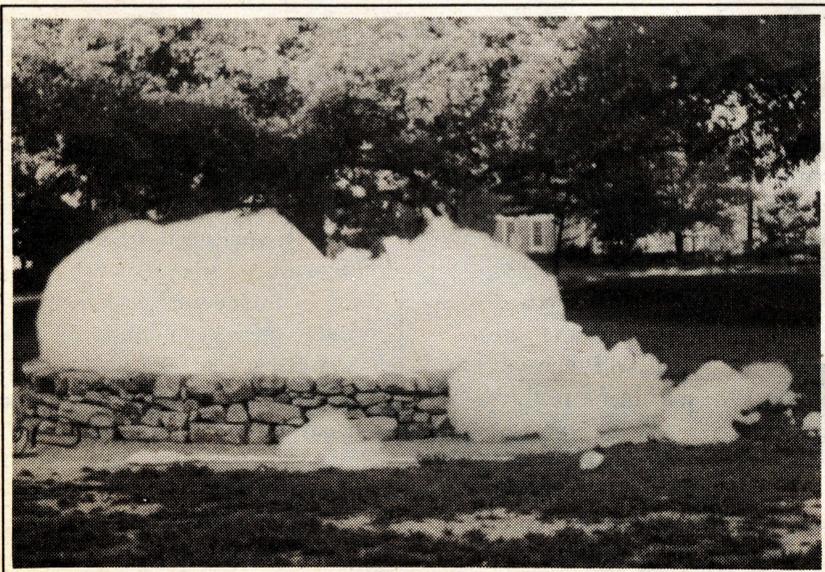
**Ed:** *That song has fresh meaning when you sing it in that environment.*

**Josef:** That's the only place where we sing it. For us, that song is the baptism song. It is never sung anywhere else.

**Ed:** *Well, you made me want to visit your church just to see such vibrant Christianity.*

**Josef:** I never did realize this. We never sing that song any other place except for the baptism. Isn't that strange?

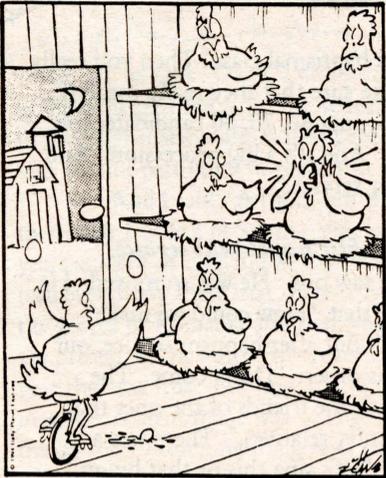
**Elijah:** The young generation of kids growing up, we heard of him, you know. Listened to the radio. But the inspiration for any of us was when he came back (from exile). Because, I mean, I realize now to live in America . . . I live here only for five years. But to live almost nine, ten years in America and to be willing to give up this kind of life and going back to nothing. . .



*Were you there when the fountain rose with foam?*

*(An alert EnquirY fan filmed the event, but no one knows how the soap made its way into our landscape centerpiece, or do they!?!?)*

CHAOS by Brian Shuster



It would take months for Bessie to forgive Lucy for that one fateful night.



## IN MY OPINION

Editorial comments by Dwayne Hastings

*Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of this newspaper or SEBTS.*

The third time was not a charm, and so Baptist AIDS Partnership of North Carolina executive director, Eric Raddatz, has all but scrapped plans for the 4th annual AIDS conference next Spring. Less than a handful of people showed up Monday morning (Jan. 24) to take part in the 3rd annual AIDS conference held on Southeastern's campus. The group would have been more comfortable sitting together on the couch outside instead of scattered here and there inside the seemingly-cavernous Binkley 101 lecture hall. Suffice it to say, the lack of attendance screamed "We could care less!"

With announcements detailing the conference mailed to over 600 area churches and every student, faculty member, and administrator at Southeastern informed, the response said volumes about the Body of Christ's compassion for AIDS victims and their families. While acknowledging that Monday is a workday for many and that a number of students serve churches out of town and are traveling back to campus on that day, where was everybody else?

As leaders in the church, will you be conveniently absent the day a man with full-blown AIDS comes to your church? Will you run to your office and lock the door the Sunday morning a new family brings an infant to the nursery and tells the teacher the child is HIV-positive? Does your church have a policy on infectious diseases? Does your church have a heart for what Dr. Logan Carson referred to in the conference as the "unloved and unlovely?" Where were the conservatives? My goodness, where were the moderates?

With AIDS now the leading cause of death of adults age 25 to 44, we will all encounter its wicked face sooner and not later. I recoil at the lifestyle that facilitates transmission of this disease. It angers me to consider the babies who 'inherit' this horror from their mothers. I weep, too, with families who lose a member to AIDS from an unintentional source, such as tainted blood.

Dr. Carson said, in addressing the conference, "The AIDS-despondent person can experience light in darkness, hope in the midst of death. The Word of God has a word for every person in every situation." But then who will go to tell them? I wonder how Isaiah would have responded. You mean to say Jesus actually touched those lepers?

From Award-winning SEBTS Student Author:

## Ken Keathley's Tips for Research Writers

By Pete Schemm

Ken Keathley was recently distinguished from among his classroom peers to receive the Culler Middler Theology Award. He was presented this award for writing an outstanding paper in his Systematic Theology class. Ken was "surprised" to receive the award, being unaware that his paper was being considered for such an honor. Ken was chosen by the theology professors here at Southeastern. His work was titled *The Origin of Evil and the Doctrine of Origins*.

Besides reading an excellent paper on the issues of creationism, evolution, the beginning of natural evil, and the fall, the wise student can learn something else from Ken. If you're looking to improve your paper-writing skills you may want to take notes here (or simply hold on to this inspirational and informative copy of *The Enquiry*). While most students know that professors are looking for original research, a well-written analysis, and a critique that is clearly defended, it may be helpful to go to school on Ken's practical approach.

Ken has some very helpful hints for paper writing. I have paraphrased and summarized them this way:

1. *Study what captures you* - you're going to be putting in a lot of research time (or at least you should be) so be sure you're hungry for the topic. Do not just pick a topic. Be captured by it.

2. *Focus on one aspect of the story* --you cannot do justice to any subject in a twelve-page paper. So make it as focused as possible. Never write on a general topic like "Sin" or "Innerrancy." What will you say in twelve pages that has not been said before? Be focused.

3. *Research, Research, Research* - study to the point that you have excess material. This will allow you to put on paper the stuff that is really worthwhile.

4. *Argue both sides well* - you must be able to articulate the other's view and then critique it with accuracy. You should have a point of view, and it should be clearly expressed, but that is

no excuse for not understanding the other side.

5. *Remember the keys to communication* -

- 1.) Figure out what you are going to say.
- 2.) Tell people you are going to say it.
- 3.) Say it.
- 4.) Tell people what you just said.

6. *Remember the importance of content and clarity* - people will want to hear you and read you if you have content. You must have something of substance to say. Then, say it clearly. The reader or listener should be able to identify your main thesis in one simple sentence.

One final note: Remember, the call to preparation for ministry is a call to writing. The man who cannot put it on paper cannot effectively preach it from the pulpit. As the President of this fine institution says, "A word to the wise should be sufficient."

**What's  
Going  
On  
at  
SEBTS  
for  
Heaven's  
Sake!?!**

**The Short  
Answer:  
More than most  
of us full-time  
students can  
keep up with!**

**The Long  
Answer is  
spread  
throughout  
these pages!!**