

# Baptist Briefs\_80904

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## Baptist Briefs

**GuideStone offers online help.** Investors with GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention—formerly the SBC Annuity Board—can use the Internet to view online presentations or participate in interactive seminars for retirement planning. Presentations cover key topics for ministers and church employees such as enrollment in the church retirement plan, advantages of consolidating investments and how to know if you are invested appropriately for retirement. For more information on this new service, visit the website at [www.guidestone.org](http://www.guidestone.org) or call toll-free at (800) 262-0511.

**Retired seminary professor Blevins dies.** James Blevins, former professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, died July 24 in Louisville, Ky., after a long-term illness. He was 67. Blevins was on Southern Seminary's faculty from 1976 until 1999, when a severe case of diabetes forced him to take early medical retirement. Blevins was widely published on the Book of Revelation, including his 1984 book "Revelation as Drama," and was known for his dramatic presentation of Bible characters.

**Veteran missionary Bryant dead at 74.** Thurmon Bryant, longtime missionary to Brazil and former senior administrator of the International Mission Board, died July 27 in Fort Worth at age 74. A native of Claud, Okla., Bryant and his wife, the former Doris Morris of Sudan, were

appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1958. Bryant served 17 years as a field missionary in Brazil and almost 20 years on the mission board staff. He was a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to missionary appointment, he was pastor of three Texas congregations-Prairie Point Baptist Church in Groesbeck, Friendship Baptist Church in Cleburne and First Baptist Church in Grandview.

**American Baptists may cut missionaries.** The American Baptists Churches USA may lose up to a fifth of its missionary force unless its missions agency can raise enough money to overcome its current financial crisis. The head of International Ministries, the ABC's mission-sending agency, said in a recent memo to missionaries the agency may eliminate up to 36 of its 150 missionary positions-28 by recall and eight by attrition-unless it can raise \$1.5 million quickly to erase a projected shortfall.

**Peace fellowship names director.** Gary Percesepe, an American Baptist minister and teacher, has been named coordinating director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. He is associate pastor of First Baptist Church in Springfield, Ohio. Percesepe has taught philosophy at the University of Dayton, Wittenberg University and St. Louis University, and he served as founding director of the honors program at Cedarville University.

**Seminary names communications director.** Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has named Cory Miller as communications director. Miller, 28, served First Baptist Church of Broken Arrow, Okla., as communications director two and a half years. He worked at three Oklahoma daily newspapers and a collegiate sports magazine group. A native of Ardmore, Okla., Miller is completing his undergraduate degree at

Southern Nazarene University-Tulsa. Previously, Miller attended the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, majoring in journalism/public relations.

**Seminary opens Internet classes to locals.** Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has eliminated a 75-mile distance requirement for students taking Internet classes through its Computer Assisted Seminary Education program. The move, approved by President Phil Roberts this summer, opens up seminary Internet classes to potential students living in the Kansas City metropolitan area or within 75 miles of campus. More than 30 hours of seminary credit can be earned through online classes.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention ( SBC ) and around the world.