

January 16, 1968

Project 500 Analysis:

Not A Slogan But
A Learning Experience

By Dallas Lee

ATLANTA (BP)--One Southern Baptist leader has characterized the Baptist growth pattern as a vine that shoots out runners rooted ever so many feet.

Using this analogy, Loyd Corder of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board describes Project 500 this way:

"This special effort is an attempt to plant new roots of the vine out in front of normal growth so that new bases for growth can be established. This, basically, is what makes Project 500 different.

Normal growth, in other words, is expected to continue in communities where Southern Baptist families get together and then ask for assistance in starting a mission.

But Project 500 reflects a new capability for the denomination to go beyond this type of growth and pinpoint particularly strategic locations for new churches regardless of whether Southern Baptists are there now or not.

The resulting churches will be considered "base" churches, so labeled because the nature of their locations will give them the opportunity to minister to a variety of geographic locations and reach a vast cross-section of people.

As far as Corder is concerned, Project 500 is a \$25 million pilot project in the context of his continuing program of establishing new churches and church-type missions.

As he puts it: "Project 500 is more than a slogan--it's got to be a learning experience. An evaluation of our success or failure will be whether or not we have learned to do it the next time."

To Corder, one major aim of the project is to explore methods for establishing churches in diverse circumstances.

"How do you start a church in the inner city, for example? We don't really know. In fact, for a period we were taking them out instead of putting them in.

"Or how do you start a church that really will appeal to the academic community?

"What I'm saying is that a program of starting churches needs to know how to start one wherever one is needed and not just in the places where we know how to start them."

Corder said new ways must be explored "Because we could multiply our giving 10 times and still not be able to do all that needs to be done if every new church has to be subsidized by the denomination.

"We must find a way that churches can be established by other churches without the direct financial participation of the state conventions or the Home Mission Board."

Project 500, of course, is a plan for subsidy, but in the long run it should build churches that will start other churches--that is part of the definition of strategic.

For the most part, however, church buildings are not being pushed for Project 500 locations either. In fact, Project 500 locations do not necessarily involve church sites at all, but areas of influence where the denomination feels a Southern Baptist witness is needed.

Thus in Lewiston, Maine, for example, missionary Gordon Thomas has rented space in a shopping center, in which he plans to establish chapel worship services, a reading room and a day care center, which will provide the base where central worship services can be held for people involved in satellite or home fellowship ministries.

Whatever the outcome of Project 500, Corder and other related program leaders in the denomination are determined to learn from the effort. If they do learn, then Project 500 may produce major breakthroughs in creative mission planning.

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director**REGIONAL OFFICES**

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593

DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAUBAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631

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**Baptist Airman Leaves Six
Children To Go To Vietnam**

COLUMBUS, Miss. (BP)--An Air Force sergeant who is leaving his six motherless children behind to go to Vietnam said here that he didn't realize there were so many good-hearted people in this world until telephone calls by the hundreds came offering to care for his children.

S. Sgt. John L. Wolfe, who is an ordained Baptist minister, is leaving the three oldest children in the Spring Meadow Children's Home in Middletown, Ky., an institution of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, while he spends a year in Vietnam.

Since the death of Mrs. Wolfe in 1966, the Air Force sergeant has washed and cooked for five of the six children, ages four through ten.

Sgt. Wolfe said that he had received hundreds of calls from concerned individuals since the nation's press reported he was having to leave the children behind to go to Vietnam.

In California, the editor of the California Southern Baptist sent a telegram to President Lyndon Johnson urging him as Commander in Chief of the armed forces to countermand the orders sending Sgt. Wolfe to Vietnam.

"I beg you in the name of human compassion to keep this man at home," said Editor J. Terry Young in the telegram to President Johnson.

Sgt. Wolfe must report to Phu Cat, Vietnam, on Feb. 25. Since his wife's death of a brain hemorrhage 22 months ago, he has been eligible for a hardship discharge from the service, but Wolfe has decided he wants to make a career of military service and does not want the discharge. He has been in the service for 13 years.

An ordained Baptist minister, Wolfe served until about a year ago as pastor of a small rural church near the Columbus Air Force Base where he is stationed, the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church.

A supervisor for the sentry dog handlers used for guard duty at the Columbus Air Force Base here, Wolfe made an appeal to Mississippi Congressmen to change his orders to go to Vietnam so he would not have to leave his children.

Sen. John C. Stennis and Sen. James O. Eastland, intervened on Sgt. Wolfe's behalf, but the Air Force position was that there are so many other servicemen with similar situations, it would be unfair to them to change Sgt. Wolfe's orders.

They said, however, a hardship discharge would probably be granted if requested. Sgt. Wolfe, in reply, said that he was willing to serve in Vietnam, but felt an obligation to care for his children at home if there was some way to get his orders changed.

He said that his three oldest children, Wanda, 10, David, 9, and Johnathan, 7, have already gone to the Kentucky Baptist children's home in Middletown.

His mother lives in Valley Station, Ky., only about 15 miles from the children's home near Louisville, and she will keep George, 5, and Ralph, 4, while Wolfe is in Vietnam.

His brother, Richard Wolfe who also lives in Valley Station, adopted the sixth child who was born one week before Mrs. Wolfe's death in 1966.

Sgt. Wolfe praised the Spring Meadow Children's Home in Middletown, calling it "a real nice set-up, with bungalow-type cottages---n more f those big dormitories where they herd you in."

Sgt. Wolfe is now a very active member of the Antioch Baptist Church near Columbus. The pastor of the church, Banks W. Hardy, said he was a "fine man" who felt a great sense of responsibility to his children.

Kentuckian Joins
Pioneer Missions

1/16/68

ATLANTA (BP)--A former missionary to the Midwest has been appointed to the department of pioneer missions of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board as administrator of pioneer mission areas in the Western United States.

Quentin Lockwood, former area superintendent of missions in Omaha, Neb., was elected in the January meeting of Home Mission Board directors.

Lockwood will promote techniques of church extension and will represent pioneer missions in assisting associations and state conventions in their development.

He also will produce a continuing comprehensive study of the western pioneer missions territories (territories in which Southern Baptist work has been started since 1940)--including Minnesota, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Iowa, Nebraska, Utah, Idaho and Nevada.

A native of Louisa, Ky., he is a graduate of Georgetown (Ky.) College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

He has held several pastorates, in Kentucky and Georgia.

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Home Mission Board
Names 8 Missionaries

1/16/68

ATLANTA (BP)--Eight homeland missionaries were appointed in the January meeting of the directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, including one to the U. S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

The appointees are Donald Gene Gurney of Watonga, Okla.; George Ernest Ray, Sr., of Norton, Tex.; Mary Evelyn Wigger of Bentonville, Ark.; Robert Clifton Jones of Wilmington, Del.; Mr. and Mrs. Audley G. Hamrick of Boiling Springs, N.C., and Knoxville, Tenn., respectively; Jazzeal Boyd Buchanan of Person County, N.C.; and James Theodore Burdine, Jr., of Cleveland, Ohio.

Gurney, former pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Moscow, Idaho, will serve as director of Baptist military personnel and student ministries at the Air Force Academy.

Appointed as superintendents of missions were Ray, former pastor of Circle Drive Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, who will serve the western slope area of the Colorado Baptist General Convention; and Burdine, former pastor of University Baptist Church in Fairbanks, Alaska, for the newly-established Northern Plains Convention.

A 1967 graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Miss Wigger will undergo a training period at Clark Howell Techwood Center in Atlanta before transfer to Salt Lake City where she will serve with the department of Christian social ministries.

Jones, who has been serving as superintendent of missions of the Pike Association in Shelbiana, Ky., was appointed director of mountain missions for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamrick will be missionaries to the Indians in Cubero, N.M., coming from Gaffney, S.C., where he was pastor of Camp Creek Baptist Church.

Buchanan leaves a pastorate at Heights Baptist Church in Albuquerque, N.M. to become pastor-director in Brooklyn, N.Y.

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Texas Baptists Create
New Men's Organization

1/16/68

DALLAS (BP)--A new organization for Baptist laymen, called Texas Baptist Men, has been officially constituted during its first meeting.

About 75 Baptist laymen and pastors from throughout the state approved the constitution and by-laws for the new organization in a called meeting here at First Baptist Church.

The new organization will replace the Texas Baptist Brotherhood organization, although convention officials said that the work of the two will be virtually the same.

In the past, however, the work of the Brotherhood organization has been coordinated by the Brotherhood department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board.

The new organization provides for an Executive Board of Texas Baptist Men and an "auxilliary" relationship to the state convention, similar to that of Woman's Missionary Union. The Texas Baptist Men Executive Board will be composed of about 150 members.

Membership in Texas Baptist Men will include the members of Baptist men's groups in churches affiliated with the state convention. The organization will continue to correlate work with the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Purpose of the organization, states its newly-approved constitution, is "to support the Baptist General Convention of Texas in its task of bringing men to God through Christ by fostering programs that will assist the churches and (Baptist) associations in their tasks of leading men, young men and boys to a deeper commitment to missions..."

The Executive Board of the organization was authorized to elect an executive secretary-treasurer and other professional staff members. W. L. Smith is currently serving as secretary of the convention's Brotherhood department, and most convention officials forecast that he will continue as executive secretary of the new organization.

Roy Akers, funeral home director and prominent Baptist layman in San Antonio, is president of Texas Baptist Men. In an address to the organizational meeting here, he challenged the men "to get off the bench and get into the game."

T. A. Patterson, executive secretary of the state convention, praised the new organization, saying "We have seen what laymen can do when they put their hearts into the work."

Patterson called for a "task force of laymen in Texas" who will go anywhere in the world to present the Christian message.

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Dallas College Names
Two Administrative Posts

1/16/68

DALLAS (BP)--Dallas Baptist College has appointed Ralph C. Atkinson, Jr., as vice president of academic affairs, and E. N. Jones as administrative associate.

Atkinson, 33, will assume on-campus responsibilities in July, 1968, serving the college on a consultant basis until that time.

The new vice president will direct the work of the Dallas Baptist College faculty, which will number 60 by the fall session in 1968. He is presently a candidate for the doctor of philosophy in higher education administration at the University of Michigan's Center for the Study of Higher Education.

Jones, who recently retired as secretary of the Christian Education Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, will serve as administrative associate in a temporary capacity through July of this year.

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