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Correspondence School--A Success Story in Zambia

by June P. Carter

RICHMOND (BP)--With 2,000 new Christians and four new churches to its credit, a correspondence school in Zambia is enabling a handful of missionaries to teach Bible truths to thousands of Africans.

A Southern Baptist Missionary Journeyman, 27-year-old Miss Joy Neal, is the school's coordinator.

A 1965 graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., Miss Neal says that the Bible Way Correspondence School is "a unique approach" to the problem of how a small missionary staff can get the word of God to many people in a large area.

The Bible Way School, a ministry of the Baptist Mission of Zambia, has been so successful that it is being duplicated by groups of Southern Baptist Missionaries in other parts of Africa.

Headquartered in the Baptist Building in Lusaka, capital of Zambia, the correspondence school has enrolled 12,300 students during its first five and half years, and the number grows daily.

More than 300 have completed the full five courses of Bible study, thus becoming "five star" students, and according to Miss Neal, they are "eager for more." She adds that almost 2,000 students have professed faith in Christ after studying the courses.

In spite of its high enrollment, the correspondence school strives to make contacts with students as personal as possible. Miss Neal encourages them to write her for an explanation of any material they do not understand.

In a letter to all the students she wrote, "remember: it is more important that you understand what you have studied than that you get a certificate, because your certificate is just a peice of paper that means nothing unless you have the knowledge of God's word that it represents.

And they do write to her. From a boy in an area with no Baptist church or missionary came the question, "What if my heart is full of sin--how can I take it out?"

Theological and biblical questions are frequent: "Why are we taught to say 'Our Father,' if Jesus is the only begotten son of God?" and "Why do you say there is a hell when the Bible says that the wages of sin is death? How can there be more punishment than death?"

Says Miss Neal: "Reading the Bible to find answers for my students I've rediscovered the beauty and penetrating message of the scriptures."

A quarterly newsletter mailed to all students serves to inform, encourage and to establish rapport with them. In the last issue Miss Neal told about a map in her office with pins showing the location of each student. "Daily I look at that map and see the pin that stands for you, and I pray that God will be with you today, to guide you as you study and give you strength for whatever you must do, and most of all that he will draw you close to him," she wrote.

Miss Neal promotes Bible Way through schools, newspaper advertising and posters. In addition, the Baptist mission has a booth at the annual Copperbelt Agricultural Fair. Crowds are attracted through such features as films and pictures, and Southern Baptist Missionary Journeymen are present to enroll new students in the correspondence course.

Students help too. Last year a challenge went out through the newsletter for students to help double the enrollment, which was just over 5,000. The goal was exceeded in a matter of months.

Materials for the Bible Way courses are published in the Baptist Building in Lusaka. The first course of study is based on the book, Who Is Jesus? by missionary Tom G. Small. Although students can obtain this first book free of charge, they must pay for succeeding ones. Missionary director of the program Douglas E. Kendall says, "Our records tell us clearly that when they pay, they complete."

Results of the correspondence school have been spectacular, both in numbers and in changed lives. Students mail in many testimonies, some of which are published in newsletters. Wrote one "five star" student: "I prize this...lesson next to my Bible...for no other reading material has led me closer to the Lord...than this."

An eight-page collection of testimonies titled "Jesus Changes Lives" is used as a promotional piece for the school.

Already four Baptist churches have been organized in Zambia as a direct result of the Bible Way program, and the school's influence is beginning to be felt continent-wide. Requests have come in from Baptist missionaries all over Africa for information on establishing similar schools.

Last fall a delegation of missionaries from Malawi spent three days in Lusaka studying the Bible Way method. In Ethiopia, *Who Is Jesus?* has been translated into the Amharic language, and other courses will follow.

Missionaries in Rhodesia, Botswana, Uganda, and Kenya are investigating the possibility of beginning Bible Way schools. Missionaries in Angola have translated three of the Bible way courses into Portuguese and several courses have been translated into French for use in the French-speaking nations of West Africa.

Requests for information about Bible Way have recently come from Baptists in South Africa, even though there are no Southern Baptist missionaries in that country.

Director Kendall believes, that, in view of the rapid enrollment, present planning should anticipate 50,000 students by 1975. He thinks 4,000 will be added in 1970 alone.

Advanced study for "five star" students is in the planning stages. The advanced program will be available in units of four courses, with a diploma to be granted to the end of each unit.

H. Cornell Goerner, Foreign Mission Board secretary for Africa, is enthusiastic about the correspondence course. "Many newly literate people of Africa are eager for reading material," he says. "While filling this need, the Bible Way Correspondence School offers great potential for mass evangelism."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: June P. Carter is a staff writer in the press office of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, a bureau of Baptist Press.

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BP PHOTOS mailed to Baptist state papers



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May 8, 1970

Court Dismisses Suit Challenging Sale of Arizona Baptist Hospitals

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--A federal court judge has dismissed here a suit challenging the right of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention to sell one of its three hospitals.

U.S. District Court Judge William P. Copple, dismissed the suit for lack of jurisdiction.

The suit had been filed by a Phoenix attorney in the name of his wife, Gracia R. Duecy. She is not a Baptist.

Attorneys for the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention asked that the case be dismissed by the court.

In his decision, Judge Copple said that the only way his court would have had a jurisdiction in the case was for there to have been the possibility of fraudulent security transfers. He added that the "security transactions were for fair considerations, all parties knowing the value of the securities."

Meanwhile, the offer of the J. Allen Guinn Jr. Charitable Foundation to purchase the Baptist Hospital of Phoenix has been withdrawn, and convention officials doubt the likelihood of selling any of the three hospitals as authorized by the convention messengers in November until another court decision is reached.

Still pending in State Superior Court is a suit filed by the Arizona Baptist Convention against the 26 directors of the hospital association of the state convention, asking the court to declare null and void amendments to their articles of incorporation which would sever ties with the convention. A counter claim has also been filed by the hospital association.

To add to the complexity, the convention's Executive Board recently dismissed all directors of the hospital association "who had not resigned or pledged their cooperation with the convention," according to a report in the Baptist Beacon, the convention's state paper.

The convention's Executive Board is now in the process of appointing new members of the hospital association to replace those who have been dismissed, a convention official said. So far, about six new hospital association trustees have been named.

Appointed as the new president of the association, which would replace the group dismissed, was Byron Bruce, pastor of Southside Baptist Church, Tempe, Ariz. Named vice president was K. Owen White, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention who has retired and is now living in Tuscon, Ariz.

Some observers have said there is a possibility that the hospital association trustees who were dismissed may file court action to challenge the right of the Executive Board to "fire" them.

There is a provision in the constitution for the state convention which grants power to the Executive Board to "recall" trustees who have refused to cooperate with the convention, provided they are given a hearing to state their views.

At a hearing held by the board in March, the 17 hospital association members who voted in favor of severing ties with the convention, refused to attend.

Instead, they sent a telegram, an attorney, and a court reporter to the hearing. In the telegram, the trustees pointed out that the articles of incorporation for the hospital association and the three Baptist hospitals make no provisions for "recall."

"We do not believe the Executive Board has the right or power to effectuate recall," the 17 accused trustees said in the telegram.

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The 17 trustees earlier had voted to change the hospital association's articles of incorporation so that the trustees of the three hospitals would elect their own successors, by deleting an article which states the trustees shall be elected by the state convention.

Last November, the state convention voted 133-125, an eight-vote margin, to sell the three hospitals in Phoenix, Scottsdale, and Yuma, Ariz., and authorized the Executive Board to follow through on the sale. The convention also asked that 40 per cent of the funds received from the hospital sale go to pay off debts of Grand Canyon College in Phoenix.

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A. T. Greene Elected
South Carolina Aide

5/8/70

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--A. T. Greene Jr., director of the missions department for the South Carolina Baptist Convention since 1963, was elected here assistant general-secretary-treasurer, effective June 1.

Greene will succeed A. Harold Cole, who became general secretary-treasurer on Jan. 1.

He was recommended to the position by a special committee, and elected unanimously by a called meeting of the General Board of the convention.

Before joining the state convention staff in 1963, Greene was superintendent of missions for the Cabarrus Baptist Association, Concord, N.C.

A native of South Carolina, he is a graduate of Wofford College, Spartanburg, S.C., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

He was a pastor of Baptist churches in Cross Anchor and Laurens, S.C., and Wilmington, N.C.

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Joe Denney Named To
Broadman Supplies Post

5/8/70

NASHVILLE (BP)--Joe Denney, formerly ~~senior~~ research analyst in the research and statistics department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has been named Broadman supplies specialist for Broadman Press.

He joined the research and statistics department as research assistant in 1963. Later, he became research analyst and subsequently was promoted to senior analyst.

In his new position, Denney is responsible for reaching the need for church supplies, developing and testing new Broadman Supplies products and improving existing products, according to Ras B. Robinson, manager of the Broadman books department of the board.

Broadman Press is the general books publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A native of Alabama, Denney earned the bachelor of science and master of science degrees in psychology from Auburn University.

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Denver SBC To Feature Drama,
Three Multi-Media Presentations

DENVER (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention, meeting here June 1-4, will feature one drama and three multi-media presentations as major program attractions during its 125th anniversary sessions.

In addition, for the first time this year, the convention will project the image of platform speakers onto a screen so that those who are seated near the rear of the 560-foot Denver Convention Center can see the speaker's face.

The opening Monday night session, June 1, will feature a multi-media presentation using motion pictures and eight slide projectors to depict the convention's 125-year history in sound and lights onto a huge 30 x 60 foot screen and three walls of the Convention Center.

Entitled, "Milepost 125," the film and slide presentation will be a major portion of the convention's anniversary celebration.

The presentation has been produced by a 125th anniversary celebration committee and coordinated by Mrs. Marie Mathis of Waco, Tex., president of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union. Producer and director for the film and slide presentation is Ted Perry, professor in the radio and television department at the University of Texas, Austin.

On Tuesday evening, a dramatic presentation on "So Much More--The Denomination Serving the Churches" will be presented. Following several testimonies, and music by Mrs. Beverly Terrell of Dallas, a major address will be given by Jimmy Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., and president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The Tuesday evening program is being coordinated by a committee headed by James L. Sullivan, executive secretary of the SBC Sunday School Board, and directed by Cecil McGee, church drama consultant in the board's church recreation department.

A world missions emphasis multi-media presentation on Wednesday evening, June 3, will spotlight the SBC Home and Foreign Mission Boards, both organized in 1845, on their 125th anniversaries.

Sponsored by both mission boards, the SBC Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission are also cooperating in the Wednesday evening missions emphasis.

In addition to the multi-media presentation, the Wednesday evening program will also feature music by the Denver Symphony Orchestra, and the Centurymen, a choral group of Southern Baptist ministers of music organized by the SBC Radio-Television Commission and major addresses by Home Mission Board Executive Secretary Arthur Rutledge and Foreign Mission Board Executive Secretary Baker James Cauthen.

On Wednesday morning, the six Southern Baptist seminaries will jointly present a multi-media film and slide show entitled, "The Seminaries Serving the Churches."

The seminaries' presentation is being coordinated by John Earl Seelig, assistant to the president at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth; and produced by Billy Keith, director of public relations for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas.



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