

February 5, 1974

**Church Formed Because
One Man Read Tract**

SUCCHA, Peru (BP)--One man in this remote mountain village read a Christian tract, *belli ved*, shared his discovery with friends and relatives, and two years later a church was born.

L. Steve Ditmore, Southern Baptist missionary, handed a tract to Jose Huancas as they passed on a mountain road.

Huancas read the tract while he walked along a trail toward his village three hours away.

"It explained how one could become a child of God in this world and know that his sins were immediately forgiven," he said. "I had always wanted to be forgiven of my sins. I dreaded having to die and go to purgatory."

He stopped walking, kneeled and prayed the prayer suggested in the tract. "God heard and answered me," he said.

It was hard at first for his family to understand the change that had taken place in his life. The tract had mentioned reading the Bible or New Testament so he asked one of his brothers to buy him a New Testament the next time he went on a shopping trip to the coast.

After getting it he read his New Testament for several hours each day and began reading it to his family and any friends who would listen.

In two years, 22 villagers became Christians and from what they understood from the New Testament, they wanted to be baptized and form a church.

The tract Huancas had received included the name and address of Piura Baptist Church, so his fellow Christians sent Huancas to that church to present himself for baptism.

It's about 120 miles to Piura. Huancas walked the first three hours, then rode on a truck for another seven hours before he reached the city.

He told his story to the Piura Baptists and requested to be baptized so he could go back and baptize his friends in Succha. Later, Ditmore and Leonel Arroyo, pastor of the Piura church, made the trip to Succha to instruct the new believers on Christian doctrine and tell them how to organize into a Baptist church.

To the missionary's and pastor's amazement, Succha Christians quoted pertinent scripture verses on baptism and explained it was because they knew these passages that they sent Huancas to be baptized.

As the teachers moved on to other doctrines they found the new Christians well-versed from Bible study.

"It was, in a way, frustrating not knowing what to try to teach a people who had been open to the New Testament for two hours a day for two years," Ditmore said.

If a man is turned loose with the scripture and teaches others with no aids other than the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the end result will be strong Christians who need little doctrinal instruction, he concluded.

In this case, the end result included the formation of a strong, Succha Baptist Church.

Woman Assumes Florida
Baptist Presidency

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--Mrs. Henry Allen (Virginia) Parker, wife of the pastor of First Baptist Church here, will become the first woman president of the Florida Baptist Convention.

Mrs. Parker, whose husband served as the Florida convention's president in 1963, will succeed to the office from the second vice presidency following the resignation of the president and the first vice president.

Mrs. Letha Cassazza, a past president of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, dually aligned with Southern and American Baptists, is believed to be the first woman to ever serve a Southern Baptist-affiliated convention as president. Mrs. Parker would be the second.

A. Rudolph Fagan, a pastor from Bradenton, Fla., was elected president of the Florida convention last November, but announced his resignation after his election as executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, Nashville.

The first vice president, Fred Cooper, director of information services at Stetson University, Deland, Fla., resigned after learning of Fagan's proposed move, because, he said, "it would be impossible to give the time and leadership" the presidency of the Florida convention would require.

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French Baptist Named
Chief Protestant Chaplain

2/5/74

PARIS (BP)--Raymond Sedeyn of Fontenay-aux-Roses has been designated chief of Protestant chaplains for all French Armed Services. He is to take office next September upon the retirement of the present commanding chaplain.

Sedeyn is a graduate of Spurgeon's College in London and a former president of the Baptist Union of Belgium.

Currently chief Protestant chaplain of the French Air Force, Sedeyn is one of four Baptist chaplains now on military duty, according to European Baptist Press Service.

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Lay Renewal Director Named
By Brotherhood Commission

2/4/74

MEMPHIS (BP)--David P. Haney, pastor of the Heritage Baptist Church in Annapolis, Md., and author of three books on church renewal, has been named director of the department of lay ministries for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission here.

Haney will direct the commission's emphasis on lay renewal, effective March 1, working in close cooperation with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's division of evangelism, which has responsibility for the area of renewal evangelism.

The Maryland pastor will succeed James Johnson of Arlington, Tex., who resigned October 1.

Born and reared in Ohio, he is former pastor of churches in Kentucky and Ohio.

He attended Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, Seymour, Tenn.; Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky.; Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; and Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, Ind., where he earned a master's degree in religion.

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission, called Haney "one of Southern Baptists' greatest leaders in the area of renewal."

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At Earlham School of Religion, he studied under Elton Trueblood, who has been called the father of the church renewal movement in America.

Haney has written three books on renewal, including one entitled Breakthrough into Renewal scheduled for release in May by Broadman Press. He is also author of Renew My Church and The Idea of the Laity, both published by Zondervan.

Haney and Reid Hardin, renewal evangelism consultant for the Home Mission Board, will coordinate for the two agencies a joint effort in renewal to develop a Southern Baptist program which will lead churches and laymen into what they call a "journey into lifestyle evangelism and ministry."

Part of Haney's responsibilities will include training and enlisting coordinators for lay renewal weekends in Southern Baptist churches.

In April, the Brotherhood Commission will publish a Lay Renewal Preparation Manual, edited jointly by Haney and Hardin, to help churches in scheduling and holding lay renewal weekends.

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(BP) PHOTO mailed to Baptist state paper editors

Cothen Named President-Elect
of Sunday School Board

2/4/74

NASHVILLE (BP)--Grady C. Cothen, 53, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, was named president-elect of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board by vote of that agency's trustees in their semiannual meeting here.

Cothen, a native of Poplarville, Miss., will become president of the publication and education agency in February, 1975, upon the retirement of James L. Sullivan, who became chief executive in 1953.

The seminary president is expected to begin his work in Nashville in May, providing about nine months of orientation to the organization and work of the Sunday School Board before he is inaugurated as president.

Cothen has headed the New Orleans institution since September, 1970, coming to the seminary from the presidency of Oklahoma Baptist University, where he had served since 1966. Prior to that time he was executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California for five years.

A graduate of Mississippi College with the bachelor of arts degree and New Orleans Seminary with the master of theology degree, Cothen holds honorary doctorates from California Baptist College, Riverside, Cal., Mississippi College, and William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

A nominating committee headed by Gene Wofford of Dallas, Tex., presented Cothen's name to the trustees.

For the third time in succession, Southern Baptists have selected a native of southern Mississippi, from within the same 30-mile radius to head the Sunday School Board. The late T.L. Holcomb was a native of Purvis, while James L. Sullivan was born in Silver Creek.

The new executive's pastoral experience includes service at White Oak Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tenn, 1946-48, Olivet Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, 1948-59, and First Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., 1959-61. He was a Navy chaplain during World War II.

Active in denominational affairs, Cothen was first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1962. He preached the annual sermon at the SBC when it met in Denver in 1970.

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He has been a trustee of New Orleans Seminary, Oklahoma Baptist University and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He has been a member of the executive committee of the Baptist World Alliance, the North American Baptist Fellowship Committee, the executive committee of the American Association of Theological Schools and the executive boards of the state Baptist conventions in Oklahoma and Alabama.

Cothen is the son of a Baptist minister, with two preacher brothers. He is married to the former Bettye Major of Chattanooga. They have two grown children, Grady Coulter, Jr., and Carol Lorrain (Mrs. Don C. McChesney).

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(BP) PHOTO mailed to state Baptist paper editors; others on request

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CORRECTION

In Baptist Press story mailed 2/4/74, headlined "Billy Graham Scheduled On SBC Program in Dallas," change first word of graph 3 from Four to Five. At the end of that graph add the name of K. Owen White of Phoenix. Delete White's name from the last graph. Thanks.

--Baptist Press