

October 24, 1974

Boris Makarov

He's Only SBC Missionary
To Estonians in U.S.A.

By Jim Newton
for Baptist Press

Thirty years ago, Boris Makarov found Jesus Christ as his personal savior because a Baptist lady invited him to a neighborhood Bible study for children at her home in Estonia, a small country in Eastern Europe.

Today, Bob Makarov is repeating the cycle, leading a neighborhood Bible study for children at his home in suburban San Francisco.

But Makarov is doing much more than leading a small-scale child evangelism effort.

He is the only Southern Baptist missionary to the Estonian people in the United States and probably the only one in the world.

Thirty years ago, he went away from those Estonian neighborhood Bible studies with a bad taste in his mouth, and hostility toward the woman who invited him.

He was nine years old and constantly hungry during those days of German occupation of Estonia, an Eastern European country just South of Finland on the Baltic Sea between Russia and Lithuania. His diet of two slices of bread a day was hardly enough.

When he heard there would be a party with cookies, cocoa and ice cream for all the kids who had been "born again," young Boris went home and began to pray that he would be "saved" before the party in two weeks.

Three nights later, while lying in bed praying, he said, "I had a vision of heaven opening up and the angels rejoicing." He knew his prayer had been answered.

The day of the party young Boris excitedly knocked on the Baptist lady's door. "The party is only for those who have been born again, and you didn't raise your hand when I asked who had been saved. Go home," she commanded.

Young Boris cried all the way home and recalled the bad experience every time he heard the word "Baptist."

Shortly afterwards, however, the Russians again invaded Estonia, and young Makarov and his family went to Germany where they remained in a displaced persons camp for five years. At age 15, he and his family were allowed to emigrate to Australia.

There he met a young Estonian girl named Eevi who was born in Makarov's hometown, the city of Tartu in the heart of Estonia. They were married in Australia, more than 10,000 miles away from the city where they were born less than three blocks apart.

The Makarovs met an American in Australia, who told them his uncle, a U.S. Senator named John F. Kennedy, might be able to help them immigrate to the United States. Four years later--1958--the Makarov family was in the United States and Kennedy was President. They never met, but the Makarovs treasure the late JFK's letters.

Because they knew of an Estonian family in Rockford, Ill., the Makarov family moved there.

Makarov got a job selling automobiles and worked for nine years in Rockford, eventually becoming manager of the dealership.

It was there that the Makarovs also came in contact with Baptists, this time with a favorable response.

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A few years later, after a move to Peru, Ill., Bob felt "God's call to the ministry," during a revival meeting.

Much of his speech includes the phrase, "The Lord impressed me..." or "The Lord impressed my wife..." And so they act. Like the time Eevi came home from church in Peru, Ill., and said the Lord had impressed her to "go home and pack."

Within four days, they were on their way to attend Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

In 1971, with no money and no job, "the Lord impressed me" to go to Sweden with a youth evangelistic team for six weeks.

They returned home rejoicing with the spiritual experiences of the trip. But they also returned home broke, believing that somehow God would provide their needs.

We trusted him all the way, even for groceries," Eevi recounted. "One night we returned home to an empty kitchen and found instead two bags of groceries. We don't know to this day who left them for us."

They had no idea how they would pay for the plane tickets to Sweden. Not long after the first \$100 monthly statement arrived, a letter came from a layman in Germany where Bob had preached on his tour. The layman said he was sending the Makarovs \$100 a month for as long as there was a need.

Later, after the tickets had been paid off, the layman sent an additional check for \$1,000.

During his seminary years, Makarov felt led, not toward the pastorate, but toward evangelism. Yet there were never enough revivals to provide an adequate income.

Then he met E.J. (Jack) Combs, language missions secretary for the Southern Baptist General Convention of California. Combs, impressed by Makarov's ability to speak four languages, asked if he had ever considered the possibility of being a missionary to the Estonian people in the United States.

The next day, Makarov located not only one other Estonian family, but discovered an Estonian School in San Francisco that had twice-monthly meetings for Estonians. More than 200 to 300 Estonians were in the group.

Being accepted by the Estonians, however, has been difficult, Makarov observed. "It's taken us two years and they are just now beginning to trust us and accept us," he lamented.

Makarov has found his Estonian-language radio program is one of the best ways to reach the Estonians. The programs are produced by the SBC Radio-Television Commission in Fort Worth.

Radio Station KBRG, a Christian radio station in San Francisco broadcasts the program. Through the Radio-Television Commission, however, the radio ministry touches a much broader listening audience than just the San Francisco area.

Dispersed like the Jews, there are more than 250,000 Estonian people who have left their homeland since the Russian takeover in 1940. There are more than 10,000 in New York City, probably 20,000 in Toronto and surrounding areas in Canada, about 3,000 in the Los Angeles area, and almost 3,000 in the San Francisco Bay area, Makarov estimated. There are about 100,000 in all in the United States, he said.

Makarov, the pastor of Craig Avenue Baptist Church in El Verano, Calif., also leads a Thursday night Bible study for neighborhood children in his suburban home, just outside the San Francisco suburb of Petaluma.

One thing is for sure. Bob Makarov would never slam the door in the face of one of the children and say, "Go home, there is only enough for those who raised their hands." (BP)



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October 24, 1974

Baptists Serve As Leaders Of Brazil's Graham Crusade

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--When a quarter of a million people packed the Maracana the world's largest football stadium, to hear Evangelist Billy Graham during his recent crusade here, Baptists, both nationals and missionaries, played a leading role in crusade activities.

Two national Baptist pastors who participated were Walter Kaschel from Sao Paulo, Graham's interpreter, and Nilson do Amaral Fanini of Niteroi, president of the crusade.

Several Southern Baptist missionaries headed committees that began working months in advance. Harold E. Renfrow served as executive secretary-treasurer of the crusade. Edgar F. Hallock, Jr., was office manager and coordinator of the school of evangelism. William H. Ichter directed the crusade choir and was music coordinator, and Roberta Hampton coordinated the school of Christian writing.

The school of evangelism and school of Christian writing were held each day during the crusade week. Two members of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Grady B. Wilson of the Graham team, and William L. Self, pastor of Wieuca Road Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga., served on the evangelism school faculty.

The crusade's Sunday afternoon meeting was televised live across Brazil and over 370 stations in the English-speaking world via satellite. Graham crusade meetings have been broadcast live by radio in the United States, but nowhere else in the world has a crusade service received live nationwide television coverage, a crusade spokesman said.

Crusade attendance ranged from 30,000 on a rainy Friday night to 250,000 for the Sunday afternoon meeting, a record crowd for any activity at the Maracana, including sports events. About 25,000, who couldn't get into the stadium Sunday afternoon, had to stand inside the gates of the complex.

A caravan of buses came from as far away as Recife, 1,200 miles north of Rio. From the greater Rio area, various churches chartered 2,600 buses to transport people to the stadium. More than 10,000 persons were recruited as crusade choir members, an equal number as counselors and 4,000 as ushers.

Graham arrived in Rio after having an audience in Brasilia with Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel and the former chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General Humberto de Souza Mello. The governor of Guanabara, Chagas Freitas, hosted a banquet for Graham. Graham received a certificate as an honorary citizen of the state.

To date almost 26,000 decisions for Christ have resulted from the crusade. Miss Hampton said decisions are still being recorded as a result of the telecast.

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(BP) Photo will be mailed to state Baptist editors.

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Clyde Fant Resigns Seminary
Post for Texas Pastorate

10/24/74

DALLAS (BP)--Clyde Fant Jr., a seminary professor and author, has accepted the pastorate of the 3,000-member First Baptist Church, Richardson, Tex.

Fant, 39, has served as professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, for the past eight years.

He succeeds James H. Landes who resigned the Dallas suburban church a year ago to become executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Fant's former pastorates include Belcher Baptist Church, Belcher, La., and First Baptist Church, Ruston, La.

He and co-author William Pinson, also of Southwestern Seminary, drew widespread acclaim in Baptist circles in 1971 when they released their 13-volume "Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching: An Encyclopedia of Preaching."

Other Fant books include "Contemporary Christian Trends," "Some Said It Thundered," and "Bonhoeffer: Worldly Preaching by Thomas Nelson."

The Marshall, Tex., native is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Seminary, where he earned a doctorate in theology. He also has studied at Eberhard-Karls University and the Institute of Hermenutics, both in Tubingen, Germany.

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Baptist Association Launches
Counseling Center Program

10/24/74

By Louis Moore

HOUSTON, Tex. (BP)--The Union Baptist Association voted unanimously here to launch a program that will open six family counseling centers throughout Houston during the next five years.

The first center will open in January, 1975, if a director and staff can be hired by then, according to Wilson Brumley, metropolitan missions coordinator for the association, made up of 215 Southern Baptist churches.

Psychiatrists, psychologists and chaplains will staff the counseling centers, and an administrator-director will be sought to coordinate the program at a salary around \$20,000 a year.

Houston area Southern Baptists, who number nearly a quarter of a million out of some two million Southern Baptists in Texas, will be asked to underwrite \$30,000 from the association's budget and another \$30,000 in contributions in 1975 for the counseling program.

Brumley said the program, rising from a "grassroots call" from pastors and laymen in Harris County, sought professional guidance from Dr. Luden A. Gutieriz, a Houston specialist in child and family psychiatry, and Cecil Houser, one of the ministers at Houston's Willow Meadows Baptist Church.

He said the number of married couples and families seeking counseling is rising rapidly and is overtaxing the time and experience of local Baptist pastors. Most pastors are trained only to handle simple marital and family problems but frequently find themselves faced with situations beyond their ability and training, he added.

The counseling project is the first phase of a social action program developed under Brumley's leadership by the Union Association's long range planning committee, chaired by Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church.

Besides individual counseling, the centers will offer workshops, retreats and group counseling. Classes training pastors in counseling techniques and referral will also be scheduled.

Other phases of the program, which are now only on the drawing board but will likely be on the agenda of future annual association sessions, include:

-- Development of possibly four special nurseries for children age 3-7 who have emotional problems and who need intense daily treatment as well as removal from the home environment.

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--Development of four halfway houses designed to care for runaways and other adolescents having problems that need to be worked out outside his-her home environment.

--Development of an "adolescent residential center" that will house predelinquent children as well as emotionally disturbed children, including children experiencing behavior problems and drug addiction.

Brumley says he hopes some day a halfway house for prisoners will be added to the plans.

In the beginning, the centers will handle only Southern Baptists or persons referred by Southern Baptist pastors to keep the first center from being swamped with work. Eventually the centers will be open to the general public.

The centers will rely on professional psychiatric work, but counselors must have an appreciation for the spiritual dimension of life and feel "they have a Christian dimension to bring to counseling," Brumley said.

The centers will charge fees, based on ability to pay. Brumley hopes they will eventually support themselves but says the association may continue partial financing, so less financially able persons can afford services.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Louis Moore is religion editor of the Houston Chronicle.

Aging Quartet Urges
Accelerated Aging Programs

10/24/74

By Roy Jennings

NASHVILLE (BP)--A quartet of older Baptists, whose ages total 310 years, urged Southern Baptists to accelerate programs for the aged which would meet needs in the areas of housing, spiritual growth and maintenance of a sense of worth and usefulness.

The suggestions evolved from addresses by the quartet on the topic of "The Reality of Aging," one of seven major presentations at the three-day Conference on Aging sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention Inter-Agency Council.

Asking for the help were Mrs. Vitrué Blass, 73, of Nashville, president of Senior Baptists at the First Baptist Church; Gaines Dobbins, 88, of Birmingham, a retired seminary professor; Mrs. Louise Blount, 75, a professor at American Baptist Seminary in Nashville, and James W. Browning, 74, of Falls Church, Va., a retired employee of the United States Department of Agriculture.

About 235 persons from throughout the United States participated in nine workshops, each dealing with a different aspect of aging.

Mrs. Blass said Baptists need to do more now in providing housing for their aged.

"I've always hoped that Middle Tennessee Baptists would have a place I could go, but we don't. I think the churches are falling down on the job on this.

"The Methodists have homes for their aged, but Baptists in my area don't. I think that's bad." (Tennessee Baptists have a program for aging in the planning stage.)

Mrs. Blount asked for more help in Southern Baptist periodicals on how older Baptists can deal constructively with the real issues of life such as facing the reality of their true relationship with God and death.

"Improvements in Sunday School materials are wonderful until we get to the section on senior adults, then the suggestions are watered down," contended Mrs. Blount, who teaches a class of older women.

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"These people need something to help them feel God's presence. And you never say anything in the quarterlies about those people who aren't Christians. The truth is that most of these older persons aren't even going to heaven."

Dobbins said the magazine editors could deal effectively with the subject of death for the aged by emphasizing the life beyond death and by magnifying the great assurance in the Bible.

Browning chided Southern Baptists for their lack of progress in developing programs for their aged.

"I was down here two years ago for an old age seminar and in all due respect we haven't made any progress yet. I think it's about time Southern Baptists start getting something done."

The quartet bared the feelings they experienced at retirement and gave conferees some insights in how to relate effectively to older people.

Mrs. Blass said she thought she wanted to spend her retirement sleeping late each morning. But two weeks later she went back to work, she recalled.

Dobbins, who has taught in two Southern Baptist seminaries, reported he's devoting his time now to helping people in rest homes.

"These people tell me you will never know what it means to be put on the shelf and forgotten," he said.

"People want to feel a sense of usefulness and have something to live for. There's lots of mileage in people who are 65 and over. We need to discover the potentialities of these older people and give them something to do.

"People also have a sense of fear. They fear death because it is a reality. I'm not afraid of death, personally, because I have a keen anticipation of that future life.

"Then there's the sense of loneliness. I suppose this is the thing that's impressed me most about the people in the rest home. You know, you don't have to do anything at the rest homes but ask the people about themselves and be willing to listen."

Mrs. Blount described her retirement from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as a professor 10 years ago as "like being the corpse at a funeral.

"The next morning when you wake up, you find you aren't in heaven. You just don't have a job."

"I prayed for one thing and that was a job. I got it."

In contrast, Browning said retirement wasn't a problem to him because he enjoys living too much.

"I decided a long time ago I wasn't going to get ulcers like many of the other men in my family. I spend my time growing dahlias--250 varieties.

"When we old codgers aren't having a picnic in my back yard, I just sit back and look at my blooms," Browning said.

"My advice to you is don't let your sense of self importance get ahead of your sense of humor."

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CORRECTION

In Baptist Press story mailed 10/23/74, entitled "Foreign Fields Request 1,014 New Missionaries," add the word: six at end of line four of graph 11, making that read: requested for six. Thanks.

--Baptist Press