



BAPTIST PRESS

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February 18, 1976

76-31

Baptist Doctors Calm Fears of Guatemala Quake Victims

By Charlie Warren

GUATEMALA CITY (BP)--I thought the woman was going to die. My weary mind began to race, just like it had many times during the previous day I had spent in Guatemala's earthquake-stricken area.

"I've never seen anyone die before," I thought. "Why doesn't the mob back away and let her get air? Why does human suffering always draw a crowd? Why do I have to feel so helpless?"

We had just left Bethel Baptist Church in Guatemala City's zone three, one of the hardest hit areas of the city. There Southern Baptist missionaries, working through government authorities and Guatemalan Baptists, had set up a medical clinic.

I don't remember what time it was--time of day seemed so unimportant. The sun had disappeared an hour or so before.

Wearily we were walking back to missionary Herbert D. Billings' jeep, parked a mile or so away. Fortunately two doctors were with us, Dr. Robert L. Edwards, a Southern Baptist missionary to Colombia, and Dr. George Sibley, a Baptist layman from Dallas.

I heard the woman before I saw her. She was moaning, crying and screaming hysterically. Two men, one of them her husband, were helping her along. They were trying to find medical help. When the woman heard that two doctors were among us, she collapsed and began wailing even louder.

As the doctors began examining her, she started to writhe, jerk and hyperventilate--a phenomenon I had never seen before. That's why I thought she was dying.

Edwards quickly determined that even though there was probably some pain, the woman's main problem was not a medical one. She was overcome with fear and anxiety.

She also thought she was going to die.

Unsuccessful in their attempts to calm her, the doctors gave her a sedative. Minutes later the woman was asleep, resting like a baby.

Edwards, fluent in Spanish, began to reassure the husband that his wife was just excited--that there was no serious medical problem. His wife would be okay.

They helped carry the woman back to her makeshift tent where the family was huddled together.

"If she needs medical attention in the morning, bring her to the Bethel Baptist Church," the now composed husband was told.

Grateful that God had given them many opportunities to minister in his name that day, the weary doctors went to their accommodations for a few hours of rest before beginning again.

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

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Committee Urges Bold
Advance Into 21st Century

NASHVILLE (BP)--A 21-person committee, mandated by Southern Baptists in 1974 to study the potential of the 12.7-million-member denomination's worldwide missions advance during the last 25 years of the 20th century, presented 15 major recommendations to the SBC Executive Committee here.

The report will be voted on at the SBC annual meeting, June 14-15, in Norfolk.

The Missions Challenge Committee responded to an SBC request to study how the denomination's two mission boards and other agencies can work together to meet world needs in the final quarter of the century.

It did so by calling for accelerated cooperation of the agencies of the nation's largest Protestant denomination to achieve an accelerated level of missionary outreach.

The committee built the 15 recommendations around the first recommendation which urged the convention to set "as its primary missions challenge that every person in the world hear the gospel of Christ in the next 25 years."

In the presentation of this message, the committee said, the biblical faith should be "magnified so that all men, women and children can understand the claim Jesus Christ has on their lives."

Before launching into specific recommendations on inter-agency action to meet escalating world needs, the committee recommended that the convention "reaffirm the place and responsibility of the local church in missions." It urged that "all the agencies of the convention be called upon to reinforce this place by magnifying and promoting the biblical concept of missions, the importance of missions education and the power inherent in the interdependence and cooperation of the churches."

Realizing that financial support will make or break the ambitious plan of SBC missions advance into the 21st Century, the committee asked the convention to call on the denomination's 34,902 churches in 50 states "to teach the biblical revelation of Christian stewardship and develop plans and programs designed to enlist every member in the stewardship of possessions through the church."

Specifically that includes challenging members to increase contributions, with the tithe (one-tenth of income) as the minimum goal, challenging churches to increase the percentage of their giving through the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget annually with a 50-50 division as a goal, and challenging state conventions to work toward a 50-50 division of Cooperative Program funds, after appropriate expenses, with SBC causes.

As part of the overall effort the committee asked the convention to request the SBC Stewardship Commission, already active in Cooperative Program promotion, "to work with the state conventions to develop aggressive, sacrificial and bold promotional plans" to achieve objectives. Additionally, it urged pastors to "teach, preach, practice and lead their churches in the achievement of these worthy objectives."

Points of agency cooperation include the following:

--The Home and Foreign Mission Boards, with assistance of other appropriate SBC agencies, were urged to "undertake seriously the creative addition of new patterns of work that will help accomplish the objective of every person hearing the gospel in the next 25 years."

The committee urged that in development of these patterns "full emphasis be placed upon the Bible in the communication of missions, upon research as a fundamental necessity for missions, upon cooperation as a way of magnifying the missions witness of the church, and upon doctrinal integrity as a way of preserving the faith."

--The two missions boards, Woman's Missionary Union, the Brotherhood Commission and the Sunday School Board were asked to report to the convention in one year on two assignments.

The committee requested the five agencies "to work together to discover and implement the best ways for strengthening the biblical understanding of missions in the minds of all Southern Baptists" and "to discover and implement plans for a broader based missions education to reach all the members of the churches."

--The two mission boards also were asked:

1. "To develop as many ways as possible for long and short term involvement of persons in direct mission work in the modern setting" and, in cooperation with other agencies, "to enlist and guide lay persons with practical and spiritual gifts and callings in all phases of mission work, especially in such areas as publications, radio and TV, medical work, education, etc."
2. "To work with other agencies to facilitate the use of their special skills in mission work, recognizing the leadership responsibility of the two boards."
3. "To work together with the other appropriate agencies in developing a ministry and witness with foreigners sojourning in our land, with seamen who call at our ports, with international students in our colleges and universities and with internationals along the borders of our nation."

--The six SBC theological seminaries, in cooperation with the two missions boards, were asked "to review and strengthen the academic and clinical programs for the training of those dedicated to missions service."

--The Executive Committee was asked to work with the two mission boards, WMU, Brotherhood Commission, Stewardship Commission, Sunday School Board and the seminaries "to secure full implementation of these recommendations," and "to coordinate denominational missions goals and action plans looking toward the 21st Century." The Executive Committee was asked to report for the groups "periodically for the next five years on progress made in achievement of missions."

Other recommendations urged convention emphasis on themes for reaching out through bold mission thrusts and encouraged SBC seminaries, colleges, teachers, pastors, assemblies, encampments and conference centers to get behind the effort in various ways.

The Missions Challenge Committee grew out of a recommendation by the Committee of 15, a now-defunct study committee of the Executive Committee which studied SBC agencies. The Missions Challenge Committee became a convention committee when the 1974 SBC accepted the Executive Committee's recommendation that it be formed.

The same recommendation asked the two mission boards to study bold new plans for missions. The two agencies also made lengthy reports to the Executive Committee. Those reports also will go to the convention in June in Norfolk.

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SBC's Greatest Days
Ahead Weber Says

By Theo Sommerkamp

Baptist Press
2/18/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--The denomination's "return to conservatism theologically" indicates its greatest days lie in the future, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention said here.

The conservative theological stance was one of several items listed by Jaroy Weber, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lubbock, Tex., in his presidential forecast.

Speaking to a gathering of denominational leaders from across the nation, Weber also referred to a willingness to "challenge old axioms," to the continuing growth of the SBC's Cooperative Program unified budget, and to the record numbers of students in SBC seminaries.

Weber disassociated himself from the doomsayers. Dire predictions of the nation's future because of the population explosion, air pollution, and the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, he declared, do not darken his optimistic outlook.

The Bicentennial does not receive adequate emphasis from Southern Baptists because of their concerns over state-church issues related to its observance, Weber continued.

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The SBC president praised the Baptist Sunday School Board for announcing it will publish a book-by-book study of the Bible. This, according to Weber, "will cut off criticism from the independents."

He lauded the Foreign and Home Mission Boards for their outreach efforts as and in the U. S.

Weber's address came at the Cooperative Program Fellowship Luncheon, attended by about 350 leaders of state conventions and state and SBC agencies. The luncheon, sponsored by the SBC Stewardship Commission, occurs during the semi-annual meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

"The greatest assets we have today," Weber said, "are our preachers. The greatest tools we have are our teachers," who educate students at the six SBC seminaries. The record enrollments at the seminaries also demonstrate the bright picture ahead for Southern Baptists, he said.

"We are great enough to challenge old axioms," he went on. "We don't have to do things the way we did them 25 or 50 years ago. We are a growing people. We have new approaches to communicating the gospel."

Weber said he felt Baptists may have overreacted to the church-state questions raised in the Bicentennial observance. "We, as a denomination, are neglecting our opportunity to be a part of the Bicentennial," he chided.

"The gospel Baptists have preached has had an impact on our nation. Also, what happens in America has an effect on our denomination," he continued.

"I also say 'Hallelujah' for the Cooperative Program," Weber added. "Its increase is a response to the spiritual growth of our people." The Cooperative Program is the financial plan for supporting all phases of state, national, and worldwide ministries of Southern Baptists.

Weber disagreed with the word "renewal," often used to describe what denominations and churches are striving for. "Renewal suggests a return to something we had before. Education and science do not have 'renewals.' They have something 'new.'"

He said there is a need "to return to biblical preaching today as never before. You build a New Testament church by preaching the Bible Sunday after Sunday."

The denomination is "taking on bold new concepts, and great things are ahead," Weber declared.

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Home Mission Board Projects
Doubling Missionary Force

Baptist Press
2/18/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--The number of Southern Baptist home missionaries needed by the year 2000 will almost double if present trends and strategies continue, according to a projection report presented by the board's executive director here.

The report, tentatively projecting the board's human and financial resources to the year 2000, also identifies "itinerate" or "volunteer" missionaries as a viable and valuable force for home missions, that could increase from 20,000 in 1974 to more than 50,000 by the century's end.

The tentative projections are part of an overall report on "Home Mission Board Planning for the Future--1976." The report includes more detailed plans and goals through 1979, a review of board planning and decisions during the past decade, major trends and their implications through 1979, and 14 mission guidelines previously approved by the board.

The report was compiled in response to directions from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) meeting in Dallas in June, 1974. The SBC instructed the Home and Foreign Mission Boards to "review thoroughly their present mission plans, consider the implementation of bold new plans where needed," and present the plans to the SBC Executive Committee in February, 1976, and to the SBC "with such recommendations as they deem advisable" in June, 1976.

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Rutledge noted that the order for new plans and projecting for future needs came at a good time for the Home Mission Board, "since we were already involved in such study at the time."

Projections to the year 2000, Rutledge said, have not been formally adopted by the Home Mission Board, but were prepared as an indication of what might be expected in the final quarter of this century.

The report "contains the best projection that could be made using past trends and scientific means of projecting these trends into the future. Any such projections should be viewed from the perspective that the farther out into the future they are extended, the less the projections reflect the reality of that period . . . such projections should be reevaluated at least every five years. . ."

Projecting financial needs from year end 1975 to 2000 with a 1.5 percent per year increase in missionaries, the report says a 4 percent per year inflation rate could push budget needs from \$21.39 million in 1975 to \$110.7 million in 2000. At a 7 percent per year inflation rate, the figures would go from \$21.39 million to \$225.06 million by 2000. A 4 percent inflation rate, however, would mean that financial needs and income might be comparable, if the missionary force increased about 1.5 percent annually.

Projected income to the year 2000 for the home board, came to \$102.9 million, less than the 7 percent inflation rate, and even less than the financial needs at 6 or 5 percent inflation rates, \$178.5 million and \$140.5 million, respectively.

The financial projections were made, Rutledge noted, from past trends of the board's three main sources of income--the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and other income.

Board plans, the report notes, continue to place evangelism as top priority, with urban centers to receive the "major thrust" of its work.

Board planning includes the use of computer technology that provides evangelism and church indexes that list statistical breakdowns county by county across the United States.

Officials say the computer information is accurate enough to determine the potential for evangelism and church growth or establishment of new work by Southern Baptists, thereby enabling concentration on areas of the greatest need.

A 14-point statement of "mission guidelines" adopted in 1966 and included in the board's report, notes the evangelism and urban centers priorities, and says:

"Resources in personnel and finances shall be utilized primarily outside the states where Southern Baptists are well established and where associations and state conventions are strong enough to carry on effective mission programs. The major areas of need are now in the West, North, and the Northwest.

"This shall not be construed," the guidelines statement notes, "that the Home Mission Board will neglect human needs in other areas."

The board's "Directions '79" study stresses the pluralistic nature of American society, general regional migration, cultural diversity of the central cities, social-economic transitions and social segmentation in the suburbs, and specialized migration in the rural areas.

The "Directions" document cites movement toward high density living, scientism and humanism, perpetuation of racial-cultural heritages, general religious unrest or awakening, new signs in Southern Baptist life, shifting roles in the denominational structure and increased complexity of maturing religious institutions.

The mission guidelines statement cites the desire to "communicate and cooperate with other denominations . . . where there is no sacrifice of principles or weakening of basic (Baptist) beliefs and practices."

It stresses: "The interest of the Home Mission Board shall be in each person because of his intrinsic worth apart from incidental identification as to race, language, economics, nationality and religion. Institutions shall have validity only as they minister to the needs of persons . . ."

Concern was cited for welfare, rehabilitation, education and race relations and relating these to "public and private agencies working in these areas, avoiding duplication of efforts . . . We shall try to cooperate without sacrifice or violation of the principle of religious liberty."

The report stresses further: "We shall be concerned for human welfare even when it may not be feasible to cooperate with government agencies in meeting some of these needs."

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Foreign Mission Board
Looks 25 Years Ahead

Baptist Press
2/18/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--Emphasizing an over-arching objective of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world, the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board presented plans here for the next 25 years.

The report, presented to the SBC Executive Committee, will be voted on by the Southern Baptist Convention at its annual meeting, June 15-17, in Norfolk.

To reach the overall objective, the board's plans envision, by the year 2000, at least a 100 percent increase in the number of missionaries, a 50 percent increase in the number of countries in which missionaries serve, and an accelerated tempo of volunteer lay involvement overseas.

Missionary numbers would increase from over 2,600 now to more than 5,000, countries where missionaries serve from 81 to 125, and volunteers from 3,000 to 10,000 per year by the end of the century.

The report stresses that the Foreign Mission Board regards the concept of the career missionary as basic, while recognizing the valuable contributions of short term and volunteer personnel.

Highlights of the board's plans include proposals to greatly expand efforts in evangelism, especially in urban areas and among students and other young people. An appendix to the report outlines a four-phase plan for major city evangelization, including preparation, penetration and saturation, campaigns, and follow-up.

The report, which grew out of a mandate from the SBC in 1974 in Dallas that the Home and Foreign Mission Boards implement "bold new plans" for missions advance, also projects vastly increased use of mass media to play a vital role in mission efforts.

That would include increased use of radio, television and publications, according to the report, which also cites the need to take advantage of the technological revolution by using such things as satellites and computers as "servants of Christian missions."

Another emphasis of the report involved increased and more effective leadership training for national Baptists through strengthened seminaries, theological training by extension, and lay leadership on the board's far-flung mission fields.

The report speaks to the need for a continuation of joint efforts between missionaries and national Baptist leadership in planning and implementing this training.

Accentuated attention to human need--through health care, disease prevention, benevolent and social ministries and vigorous and prompt attention to world hunger and disasters--is also highlighted in the report.

The Foreign Mission Board also expressed a commitment to church development and projected a tenfold increase in the number of churches on foreign mission fields from some 7,339 in 1975 to some 73,400 by 2000. The report also calls for corresponding increases in baptisms, which numbered 70,712, in 1975.

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In presenting the report to members and visitors at the Executive Committee meeting, Baker J. Cauthen, the board's executive secretary, reminded his listeners that the worldwide missions projects of Southern Baptists "will be no bargain basement affair--it will cost money."

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Please substitute the following story for a similar one mailed 2-17-76, which attributed the appeal to the chairman rather than the entire committee. The appeal was made by the entire committee.

SBC Disaster Committee
Urges 'Quake Aid

Baptist Press
2/18/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention's Disaster Assistance Advisory Committee has called on Southern Baptists to "respond generously to the widespread needs caused by the devastating earthquake in Guatemala."

"We commend the SBC Foreign Mission Board for moving promptly to alleviate human suffering and to help bring order out of the chaos that occurred on Feb. 4," said Jaroy Weber of Lubbock, Tex., committee chairman and SBC president.

"Within hours, missionary personnel on the scene had organized assistance under way. The board allocated \$100,000 in emergency funds for immediate use. Within 10 days, 10 news stories were moved through Baptist Press, the first one on the day of the earthquake," Weber said.

Weber, on behalf of the Advisory Committee, urged Baptists to make contributions through their state Baptist conventions "where they will be quickly relayed through the Foreign Mission Board to the missionaries in Guatemala for relief and rehabilitation.

"Money is the most useful gift," said Weber, who appealed to Southern Baptists to respond "in the spirit of Christ whose compassion reaches out to the victims of misfortune."

A statement released by the committee said food and medical supplies are now available in sufficient quantities and that clothing drives "are not practical or needed at this time."

Weber said volunteers for work in Guatemala are being organized through the state Baptist Brotherhood offices, according to Eugene Grubbs, relief coordinator for the Foreign Mission Board.

"The first team of 20 workers, recruited in Florida, left for Guatemala, Sunday, February 15. Other teams for reconstruction work are being assembled to help rebuild homes and churches. A church can be rebuilt for as little as \$10,000. As many as 15 Baptist churches must be replaced," Weber said.

The committee noted that Southern Baptist missionaries in Guatemala are working with other relief agencies to coordinate disaster recovery efforts, avoid over-lapping and provide the best use of resources.

"The missionaries," the committee statement noted, "are concentrating on four agreed upon and assigned areas for their responsibility: Zone 3, the worst hit area in Guatemala City, plus four towns elsewhere."

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