



March 10, 1976

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'Fear, Fetishes, Spirits'  
Challenge Missionaries

By Larry Jerden  
Adapted for Baptist Press

Upper Volta made international headlines almost two years ago, during the worst of the Sahel drought.

When the drought ended, so did the headlines. But for nine Southern Baptist missionaries, the work and the dust continues.

Upper Volta's climate is harsh and dry, even at its best. When drought baked sub-Saharan Africa, famine relief became the major thrust of the Southern Baptist effort there. But in 1976, the fifth year of the denomination's mission work in the former French possession, the priority has reverted to building a basic Christian witness.

The priority is on building churches, not because of unconcern with physical relief, but because the missionaries know they must go beyond simple relief if the underlying problems are to be solved.

"Relief is an emphasis," insisted missionary Norman Coad, "but not the major emphasis. Digging wells is important, but not the most important.

"We now realize there are other relief agencies with millions of dollars to put into it and people trained to do a far better job of it than we could.

"But we've also found that what has to be changed is the system of "fear, fetishes and evil spirits" the people live in, and some of these other relief groups don't touch that. If you don't change their system, nothing has really been changed."

So, the Coads, the J.B. Durhams and the other Upper Volta missionaries are trying to base the people in a system--faith in Christ--that will permit whatever help does come to be truly worthwhile.

Coad gave an example from the old system: "A child dies in the village, and the village elders meet to decide the blame for the death," he began. "There has to be a reason for it... Whatever the elders decide, that's it. In one instance they took the mother and shaved all the hair off of her body. Then they took the father and shaved him. The elders had decided that the child died because the disease was in the parents' hair.

"But while that was going on, everyone in the village was drinking bad water from the same, shared cup. There was no sanitation in the village."

When the Durhams opened Baptist work in Upper Volta after 20 years in Nigeria, they found themselves in a society in which Christians were a minority, evangelicals an oddity among the minority, and Baptists unknown.

Out of 5.8 million people in a country about the size of Colorado, there are 1.2 million Muslim, 220,000 Christians and the rest animists. Of the Christians, all but about 18,000 are Catholic. Most of the evangelicals are Assembly of God.

In an animist society, Coad said the missionaries have faced some tough decisions.

"They have no background, no basis for Christianity," he said, "so we have some tough decisions related to their culture. At what point, for instance, do we tell them to stop making sacrifices. What do we say about polygamy?"

Other decisions deal with what direction a totally new mission work should take.

"One question deals with a paid clergy," Coad said. "We are about to baptize our first converts. We will be having our first pastors. Do we start out paying them and tying them to mission support? If we do, how do we stop?"

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The new work in Upper Volta began in Ouagadougou or "Ouaga"--the capital city of Upper Volta. The major city of an agrarian society, "Ouaga" has about 100,000 people.

"You almost always must establish first in the capital city when you start a new work," Coad explained. "It's the single area of greatest population concentration, and you must be near government offices or you'll spend all your time traveling to them for contacts you must make. You must also establish your identity."

"Identity" was a major reason the mission is located in Ouagadougou, and was the major reason for construction of the Baptist Center near a major intersection.

People now know who Baptists are because of our Baptist Center in Ouagadougou," Durham said

Locating in the city has also proved to be the best location for the work of greatest outreach, the correspondence school.

"Our correspondence course has more than 1,700 students enrolled in three courses," Coad explained. "We have used it as the basis of our beginning in Upper Volta. It was our first contact with the people and most of our leadership still comes from it."

"The school is in Ouagadougou because this is where we are and because we had no point of reference outside the city--no churches for the students to relate to."

Coad noted that 50 percent of the nation's high school students are in the capital, and that the literacy rate is much higher in the city than outside.

There is also a language problem.

French is the official language and is sufficient for communication with the educated in the city. But tribal languages, especially Mori, are needed in the villages.

"So we can't use the correspondence school in much of the countryside until we get it into Mori," Coad added. "But it has worked remarkably well for us and we will continue to operate it."

A Theological Education by Extension (TEE) class also has been organized, but only four or five students have made the step from correspondence school to TEE. The next step, said Coad, is the establishment of a Baptist Rural Training Center, "where we can train pastors in a trade or agriculture while they are getting their theological education," he said. "We have an agriculturalist coming, and we are going to give that our next priority,"

Durham and Coad have even more ideas for future expansion. Publications and radio are among the goals for the future.

"There are literate people in West Africa and they don't have much to read," Durham noted. "They will read anything you put into their hands. The Sudan Interior Mission has an excellent slick magazine in both English and French for West Africa and have excellent radio work."

"They have done a far better job in these areas than we, and with less resources than we have I feel we should do more in these areas, for instance."

Coad noted that the Francophone Conference, an organization of Southern Baptist missionaries from all the French-speaking nations of West Africa, has voted to request a radio-tv missionary to be stationed in Abidjan.

Upper Volta is an open society, the missionaries said, both in politics and religion.

"The old comity agreement is breaking down," Coad explained, referring to the system used by the French to divide their territories geographically among Protestant mission organizations.

"Now the government will deal with anyone who wants to come in. And we are able to cooperate with other groups."



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Foreign Board Appoints 7;  
Allots \$320,000 for Relief

**RICHMOND (BP)**--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed seven missionaries in its March meeting here and responded again to relief needs around the world with relief appropriations totaling \$320,000,

Of the relief funds, \$297,000 will go to Guatemala for reconstruction efforts following February's earthquake; \$10,000 will be used in Christian social ministries for the people of Honduras; \$10,000 for special projects in refugee work in Thailand; and \$3,000 to meet various human needs in Hong Kong,

The board also heard a report from its executive secretary, Baker J. Cauthen, who commended Southern Baptists for their support of the work of their missionaries overseas,

Cauthen expressed appreciation for reports from Nashville of a 14.77 percent increase in receipts through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program unified budget from October through February over the same period last year.

Reminding those present that the books on the denomination's 1975 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions would remain open through April, Cauthen said he was encouraged by the \$20,358,878 collected so far. This amount is "well ahead" of the receipts collected at the same point last year, he said.

Cauthen also expressed gratitude for the continuing response of Baptists to relief of human suffering around the world. He cited Guatemala as an example. In two months, the board has appropriated \$397,000 for that Central American nation.

Of the \$297,000 March appropriation to Guatemala, \$176,000 will help rebuild Baptist churches and pastors' homes, \$100,000 will help 200 other Guatemalan families reconstruct their homes, \$15,000 will rebuild a public health clinic, \$5,000 will repair Guatemala City's Baptist Seminary and \$1,000 will repair the damage to the Baptist Bookstore.

The board approved an additional \$7,000 from regular Foreign Mission Board funds for special evangelism projects in Guatemala which will parallel Baptist reconstruction efforts there.

Seven missionaries were appointed to serve in four countries. Southern Baptists now have more than 2,600 missionaries in 82 countries.

Appointed as career missionaries were Mr. and Mrs. Rodney E. (Rod) Batie from Colorado and Texas, assigned to Ivory Coast; Mr. and Mrs. Danny L. Broskie, Virginia, to Costa Rica; and Mr. and Mrs. James M. (Jim) Richardson, Virginia and Missouri, to East Africa.

Employed as a missionary associate was Jean (Mrs. Grover Forrest) Teague from North Carolina, assigned to Jordan.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Estes, former Southern Baptist missionaries to Switzerland who resigned in 1965, were reappointed to Spain.

A medical receptorship, an arrangement in which the board provides short-term overseas opportunities for qualified medical students, was awarded to Susan Cox, a student at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, N. C.

Bible Societies Publish  
New Chinese Translation

NEW YORK (BP)--The American Bible Society (ABS) has announced the publication by the United Bible Societies of a new translation of the New Testament in contemporary Mandarin Chinese--Today's Chinese Version.

Translation work on the Old Testament has already begun. Publication of the complete Bible in the Today's Chinese Version is expected by the end of the decade.

The new translation has been designed primarily for evangelism among non-Christian youth, ages 15-25. "It avoids as much as possible using a technical and ecclesiastical vocabulary comprehensible only to Christians and the theologically educated," an ABS spokesman said. "Instead Today's Chinese Version tries to express accurately the meaning of the original Greek in everyday Mandarin Chinese understandable to Chinese-speaking people throughout the world.

"Emphasis has also been placed upon a fluent oral style, since more people will hear the translation read aloud than will read it for themselves," he said. "It's already being broadcast by radio to Chinese communities throughout Asia, including mainland China. The new translation can be quickly transposed into the new simplified script used on the Chinese mainland should opportunities for distribution there suddenly open up."

Today's Chinese Version is the first new Chinese translation published by the Bible Societies since 1919, when they released the Union Version, the standard Biblical text used in Chinese Protestant churches. "It is not designed to replace the widely revered Union Version in church worship, but rather to assist evangelism among non-Christians," the spokesman said.

The new translation is based upon the same principles of common-language translation employed in "Good News for Modern Man," (the New Testament in the Today's English Version) which the American Bible Society published in 1966. The English "Good News for Modern Man" has been phenomenally popular. Its total circulation passed the 50,000,000 mark in late 1975.

Work on Today's Chinese Version began in September 1971. The translating team has consisted of several Chinese whose work was reviewed by other scholars, stylists, and 70 church leaders from many different denominations.

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John Newport Accepts  
Rice Faculty Post

Baptist Press  
3/10/76

HOUSTON (BP)--John P. Newport, professor of philosophy of religion at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, since 1952, has been named to the newly-created Harry and Hazel Chavanne Chair of Religious Studies at Rice University here, effective July 1.

Newport, 59, taught at Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and was minister of churches in Kentucky, Mississippi and Oklahoma before joining Southwestern.

Widely known as a theologian and author, Newport holds a doctor of theology degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a doctor of philosophy from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

He also holds a bachelor of arts degree and an honorary doctor of letters from William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., a master of theology degree from Southern Seminary, and a master of arts degree in philosophy from Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. He has also studied and conducted research at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

Newport has served as a visiting professor at Rice and also at the Boston University School of Theology and at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif. In 1958-59, he held a Seatlantic Fellowship at Harvard University from the Rockefeller Foundation. He has held a dozen endowed lectureships.

The Chavannes, for whom the newly created religious studies chair is named, are a prominent Houston Baptist family. Harry Chavanne, a banker, rancher and investor, has served as a trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, on the president's council of Houston Baptist University, and on the board of directors of the Baptist Foundation of Texas.

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