



BAPTIST PRESS

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Reid Concludes 550 Mile
"Run for Life" in Richmond

By Teresa Shields

RICHMOND (BP)--"I would crawl from New York City to Los Angeles on my knees, if I knew one person would come to know Christ," exclaimed Orvil W. Reid, retiring Southern Baptist missionary.

This is not a stale promise from a worn-out pulpit. Reid, 68-year-old missionary preacher, author, printer and athlete, doesn't believe in stale promises. He recently followed through on a goal to jog 550 miles, see 1,000 people come to know Christ and raise \$60,000 for world hunger relief.

Since Sept. 3, during his "Run for Life" campaign, he has jogged over 550 miles from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) headquarters in Atlanta, Ga., to the denomination's Foreign Mission Board (FMB) headquarters in Richmond, Va.

The 150-pound Reid has preached and talked to over 18,800 people, more than 340 of whom made recorded decisions for Christ. Thousands of others indicated interest in learning more about the Christian faith and cleaner living, Reid said.

During worship services and rallies he included pleas for people to give the money they are "throwing away on vices," to the Lord--specifically to world hunger. The money was given through the state Baptist offices, 40 percent going to the HMB and 60 percent to the FMB. Reid has no idea of the amount of money received but believes the influence of the run will greatly boost giving to world hunger.

Along the run, he led services and gave demonstrations of his physical strength in 38 churches, 18 schools, 10 prisons, eight rallies and three children's homes.

Feats of strength he performed included having a person break a rock on his stomach with a sledgehammer, having 10 people try to choke him with a rope around his neck, and having four men try to bend his outstretched arm.

During the trip, more than 1,140 people participated in the demonstrations of physical strength, not to mention the 21 people who drove vans (estimated at from 4,000 to 7,600 lbs.) over his stomach.

Alma (Mrs. Orvil) Reid says she doesn't get scared when her husband is under the van. "I know he's taking a risk everytime he does something like that. But he's doing it for people to come to know the Lord and that makes us both happy."

Mr. and Mrs. Reid were Southern Baptist representatives in Mexico, for 38 years and 33 years respectively. They attended and were honored at a service with other retiring missionaries at the FMB, Monday, Oct. 11, the day Reid officially completed the run.

At the end of the run, another service was held at the FMB, specially to celebrate the completion of Reid's feat. E. Eugene Greer, program planning director for the Texas Baptist State Missions Commission, coordinated the project.

"Physical fitness is a spiritual matter," Greer told those gathered. "Orvil once told me, 'How much you believe in your body's physical fitness means how much you believe God owns you.'"

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Reid says he ran for various reasons--to show gratitude to the Lord for 68 years of life, to the country for his freedom and to Southern Baptists for 38 years of support while he was on the mission field.

"Also, I ran to say to children and young people they can easily get off the hook of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs and begin now to prepare for healthy lives," he related.

"I ran for senior citizens, to say they don't have to sit around and wait for death when they get to retirement age. I ran for people to be aware of the world hunger problem.

"But more than anything else, I ran with the hope of helping people to have eternal life and to dedicate their lives to the cause of Christ. So, my motives were strong enough to keep me going in the rain, the cold and the heat."

James Holcombe, a deacon in Atlanta's United Baptist Church, and his wife "tried to keep up with Reid" in a camping bus during the trip.

Holcombe described Reid as a man who never stops. "We asked him when he was going to rest," Holcombe said. "His answer to us was 'one day in heaven.' He says he'll have time to sit up there and rock. He (Reid) also says he's off his rocker down here."

Reid quoted a verse from one of his various poems,

"Some good advice I'd give to you, when goals are set, carry them through. I started out to be a wit, I got half-way and then I quit."

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

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Seven Baptist Missionaries
Honored for Years of Service

Baptist Press
10/12/76

By Irma Duke

RICHMOND (BP)--"The sunset ought to be as beautiful as the sunrise," commented Southern Baptist missionary Orvil W. Reid on his retirement.

Reid, 68, had seen several sunrises and sunsets on a 550-mile run for world hunger relief, during which he performed feats of physical strength and preached to churches and other groups enroute.

He completed the run, begun Sept. 3, the same day he and Mrs. Reid and five other missionaries were honored in a recognition service at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) headquarters here, Oct. 11.

Baker J. Cauthen, the board's executive director, said of the occasion, "It may be even more glorious than an appointment service."

He said the missionaries had gone the full length of their service on the mission field "in season, out of season, in fair weather, in stormy weather.

"Then the time comes for them to move their base of activity off the mission field back to this land," he added. "We call it retiring, becoming emeritus. Actually it's simply relocation . . . They never cease to be missionaries."

Each of the missionaries let it be known they aren't stopping because they are retiring but, as Jennie (Mrs. Coleman) Clarke said, they are "re-treading."

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The Clarkes, who served in Hawaii and Japan 26 years, have moved to Atlanta where they will be working with Japanese people. According to Mrs. Clarke, there are more than 1,000 Japanese living in Atlanta.

Mr. and Mrs. James A. Lunsford will make their retirement home in Plainview, Tex., after more than 36 years in South Brazil. He has already accepted a position as interim pastor for a church there.

Georgia Mae Ogburn doesn't plan to slow down either. "My initials spell 'Go' and that's what I will be doing," she said. She already has speaking engagements lined up through April. She served as a missionary to Chile for 36 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Orvil W. Reid are retiring from missionary service in Mexico where they served for 38 years and 33 years, respectively. Now they are planning a trip to Africa for an eight-month FMB-sponsored project.

Each of the missionaries said it was hard to choose an outstanding experience on the field. All spoke of the gratitude and pleasure they felt in seeing Baptist nationals taking their places. Each of the retiring missionaries told of joy they received in seeing how the Holy Spirit has worked in the hearts of the people--young and old.

"The richest person in the world is a retiring missionary," said Reid. He explained that it was not because of monetary reasons but due to meaningful experiences a missionary has had on the field.

After each missionary gave a brief testimony, they were presented certificates, "love gifts," and service pins. A reception in their honor followed the recognition program.