

(BP)

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

-- FEATURES

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January 26, 1977

77-14

Koreans Fastest Growing
Baptist Group in U.S.A.

By Larry Jerden

MB Jr.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (BP)--The fastest-growing segment of new church starts among Southern Baptists today rides no wave of migration from the South, nor does it rely on "transplants" from traditional strongholds of the denomination for its leadership.

For Korean Southern Baptists in the United States, talk "of the South" is a reference to their divided homeland across the Pacific.

Korean-language Baptists in the U.S. are concentrated in California but are present in many parts of the country. They began 34 new congregations from 1973-75, with 16 started in 1975 alone, according to Danny Moon, a Korean-born language missionary of the denomination's Home Mission Board (HMB), now working with the Brotherhood Commission, Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

"While many of these are fully organized, self-supporting churches, most are still small, struggling, mission-type congregations," Moon said.

The rapid growth of Korean churches in the U.S. follows a growing Korean immigration to this country.

"The Kennedy bill allowing Oriental countries the same immigration quotas as European countries spawned the present influx," Moon said. "The bill also allowed Korean-Americans to invite immediate family members."

That bill, plus the influx of Korean wives of American servicemen, has pushed the number of Koreans now holding U.S. citizenship to more than 85,000, the missionary said. But 1975 figures indicate more than 85,000 Koreans are in Los Angeles, Calif., alone, Moon added.

High on a knoll in the heart of Los Angeles' "Korea Town," is Berendo Street Baptist Church--the first Korean Southern Baptist church in the U.S.

"This is all new," Moon said while driving down Olympic Blvd., the Korean community's "main drag." "It's not traditional like Chinatown. There about 2-3 square miles of businesses owned by and catering to Koreans, with Koreans living in the surrounding residential areas.

"It started about five years ago, with grocery stores and wig shops catering to Koreans. Then Koreans started opening insurance agencies, getting into real estate."

Pastor and Mrs. Don Kim of Berendo Street Church are the "pioneers of the Korean-language ministry in the U.S.," Moon said. The Kims were appointed Southern Baptist home missionaries to the Koreans in January 1957. The HMB provided a building, and in October 1959, Berendo Street Church was constituted. More than 700 persons have joined the church since then.

The oldest and largest of the Korean congregations, Berendo Street Church's ministries are also the most developed, with plans for expansion.

"One thing we hope to do is have more children's programs," said Kim. "We want to have something every day for children...Christians are crazy to spend a million dollars on a building and then use it only on Sunday morning and night and Wednesday nights. No businessman would do that; it would be a bad investment."

For Kim, training leadership is a key to the church's success. "Jesus spent three years working with 12 men. Sure, he healed people and fed the 5,000, but when he left, there were 12 left to carry on his work."

If leaving a few to carry on his work is Kim's goal, he has succeeded. Six or more Korean Baptist churches exist in Southern California today, and most have been connected with Berendo Street Church.

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The Presbyterian or Methodist background of most Korean Protestants is a factor Southern Baptists must consider, Moon and others noted. Presbyterians and Methodists have a strong traditional background in Korea, he said.

Baptists in Korea have a much lower profile, often considered on a par with some fringe religious groups, he said. So, many Koreans are surprised when they come to the U.S. and find Baptist churches with programs and buildings like the Presbyterians and Methodists.

"Many Koreans who come to the U.S. were won to Christ by Presbyterians...but when they come over here, they discover the Presbyterian church is quite different...they make good Baptists."

John Park, for example was a former Presbyterian and Methodist in Korea. He came to the U.S. in 1964 to attend Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif. He joined Berendo Street Church in October 1964, was ordained and went to work as Kim's assistant, during which time he began to see a need for Korean work in Long Beach, Calif.

"But I didn't know a single Korean in Long Beach. I surveyed the area, made contacts and visits. I started a prayer meeting every Friday at my place--that was the beginning."

Truett Memorial Southern Baptist Church in Long Beach assumed sponsorship of Park's work and offered the use of their sanctuary. The Long Beach Korean Baptist church, constituted in 1972, now has its own facilities and is almost self-supporting.

Another former Presbyterian-turned-Baptist is Jaiky Le, pastor of Korean First Baptist Church of Hollywood. The son of a Presbyterian elder, Le fled North Korea in 1947 to avoid the Communists.

"While coming from the North, I faced three major trials to the point of death," Le said. "Once, I had an encounter with North Korean guards. A dozen guards shot at me. I know the Lord hid the guards' eyes so I could escape, so I decided to give everything to the Lord because he helped me escape."

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Succeeding at the tough job of starting congregations and winning members isn't the total challenge of Korean pastors, Moon noted.

"The Korean pastor is dealing with a people in an alien culture," Moon said, pointing out that most of the work is with first-generation immigrants: "Some of his members can't read signs, can't shop or get papers filled out, so he has to help in these basic areas."

"Koreans in Korea see Americans with economic buying power--military, tourists, businessmen," Moon said. "They feel that if they go to America, they, too, will be in that land where everyone has that. So they come, but find that things aren't that way. Even though they have the education and the skills, often they can't practice them in the U.S., so are reduced to lower economic status."

"They find a culture that is highly individualistic, and they are accustomed to one more family oriented. They find a highly competitive lifestyle, and they come from one more cooperative-oriented. In that time of need, they are very open to the gospel."

"We have 12 Korean churches in California, with four self-supporting," Moon reported. "The rest should be self-supporting this year. But we could have a dozen churches in Korea Town in Los Angeles if we had the leadership."

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

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January 26, 1977

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**What Lies Ahead For
Religion in 1977 ?**

CHAPPAQUA, N. Y. (BP)--The emergence of evangelical Christianity, dramatized by such events as Jimmy Carter's open affirmations of being "born again" and Gerald Ford's campaign support from the pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, brought various predictions for 1977 from religion writers on secular newspapers and magazines across the nation.

The predictions came in an article by Jo-Ann Price in the January, 1977 issue of Christian Herald, which reported responses from 14 of the nation's top religion editors and writers to a mail survey on what lies ahead for religion in 1977.

Reactions of several of the writers, asked to see into the future, were summed up by W.A. Reed Jr., religion news editor of The Nashville Tennessean and president of the Religion Newswriters Association, that such ability would require "the wisdom of a panel of modern Solomons and the acumen of a twentieth century St. Thomas Aquinas."

While not claiming the gift of prophecy, the writers picked up on several 1976 trends that they felt can be taken as indicators of 1977, the Christian Herald reported.

Major stories, they said, will include women's ordination, interfaith charismatic alliances, practical ecumenism, some evangelical maneuvering for power in politics, schism in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the religion-linked consciousness revolution, the rights status of homosexuals in established churches, continued Catholic pressure for an anti-abortion constitutional amendment, and continued urging from the Jewish community for support for Israel.

The evangelical emergence evoked a number of predictions:

Bob Bell Jr. of the Nashville Banner, citing evangelism as a rallying point for a number of Baptist gains in finances and membership, commented: "Mark down 1977 as the year of the Southern Baptist . . . It took the nomination of Jimmy Carter to give them an unexpected strong exposure for the first time in areas where they are little known."

Kenneth A. Briggs of the New York Times said, "I won't be surprised . . . if the attention given to traditional American religion during the political campaign continues to stimulate Christians who have felt somewhat overwhelmed by secularism, cultism and exotic mysticism. My guess is that the mainline churches will benefit the most."

George W. Cornell of the Associated Press, New York: "The religious barometer is going up . . . There's something in the Carter phenomenon and the more overtly moral concern in institutional life such as schools, courts, even business organizations, that makes me think that a better balance between the secular and the sacred is on the way."

Richard N. Ostling of Time magazine: "Evangelicalism will grow, and anything perceived as liberalism will have rough going."

Kenneth L. Woodward of Newsweek: "Evangelicalism will have center stage in 1977, beginning in the White House . . . For most of the year, evangelicals will be in, culturally speaking, with grits and 'sharing' of personal experiences, even among habitues of the Hamptons . . ."

Continues Woodward, "Radical evangelicals, such as the kids at Sojourners magazine, will win a permanent place on the religious scene and offer . . . the best hope of Christianizing evangelicals. The worst fight will be over biblical inerrancy" (as a test of orthodoxy).

"Watershed" advocates (ultraconservative inerrancy advocates) "will win initial victories, but lose the battle."

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Roy W. Larson of the Chicago Sun-Times: "The evangelicals will consolidate their gains, but the evangelical renaissance is not here to stay. As evangelicals become part of the establishment, they will suffer the problems of the establishment."

Russ Chandler of the Los Angeles Times: "I think we're going to hear lots more about 'right-wing' political involvement of the theologically right-oriented evangelical and fundamentalist wings, despite (Arizona Republican John) Conlan's loss (for the U. S. Senate)."

Marjorie Hyer of the Washington Post: "The Carter campaign gave new opportunities to deal with concepts and beliefs in a new way, and in a sense has spurred the evangelicals toward a new maturity."

Ben L. Kaufman of the Cincinnati Enquirer: "All Americans benefited from the attention white, conservative, evangelistic Protestants received in the wake of Jimmy Carter's candidacy . . . One result may be holes in the ghetto walls these Christians have built around themselves in the century of liberal triumph."

The optimism voiced by religion editors is seen where they speak of a widespread search for meaning, values and secure goals.

"I expect," says Ray Ruppert of the Seattle Times, "that there will be an increasing number of 'end-time' predictions." This phenomenon, in Ruppert's view, will be fueled by "the desperate need of so many people to have something they can believe in without too much critical thought."

Many people are emotionally overwhelmed by the uncertainties of modern living, he says, adding: "I expect the swing toward fundamentalism in religion to continue in 1977."

According to Larson, Americans "are looking for integrative forces, but will settle for ersatz formulas for coherence."

"I think we'll see an increasing interest in a variety of things to help people," predicts Virginia Culver of the Denver Post. These will include "meditation, relaxation and stress courses." It is a question of "helping people in how to cope" with problems such as career frustrations and family tangles, she suggests.

Another facet of the American search for something to hold on to is seen in a renewed sensitivity to moral values, ethics and firm principles. This development has occurred since Vietnam and Watergate, particularly among businessmen and the government community in Washington. It was given a push by Bicentennial restatements of American goals.

"For quite awhile," says Cornell, "a lopsidedly secular rationalism has dominated public affairs in this country, generated through exaggerations of the separation of church and state doctrine . . . In some instances, it virtually isolated corporate functioning and policy from the common moral-religious concerns of the people."

One result, he feels, was a kind of "schizophrenia" between the mood of the people and practices of government agencies. The Carter campaign, emphasizing the people's concern for moral values and principles, signalled a trend toward "a new and more realistic balance between prevailing convictions and public instrumentalities," Cornell says.

To Willmar L. Thorkelson, veteran religion editor of The Minneapolis Star, the charismatic renewal movement will provide the most significant news of religion in 1977.

"The major event," observes Thorkelson, "will be a conference July 22 to 24 in Kansas City, Mo., which will bring together thousands of charismatic Christians from many denominations. The conference will demonstrate again that the charismatic renewal movement is where the real ecumenical action is taking place in grassroots American Christianity."

Meeting in conjunction with the Catholic/Lutheran/Episcopal/Baptist/Presbyterian/Pentecostal Holiness charismatics will be two worldwide groups: the International Catholic Charismatic Conference and the International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit.

Several religion editors agree with Thorkelson. Formal organic unity plans such as the Consultation on Church Union, are "not where it's at" in ecumenism these days, declares Hyer.

In the words of Cornell, "The big ecumenical thrust is with the charismatics. The old walls have collapsed. These people think together and move together without the problems of perpetuating institutions."

Years ago, religious fights were between denominations. Now the battle lines have moved inside the churches.

Although the controversy over ordination of women as priests in the Episcopal Church may simmer down, several editors agree, it may become a dramatic fight among Catholics. Sums up Reed of The Tennessean: "This (Episcopal) action gave hope to Catholic women. It may well lead to new conflicts...and pressures will work upward and downward to keep Catholic women in the forefront and to keep them in the pews."

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Adapted and condensed from the January, 1977 Christian Herald, with permission.

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Some Churches Are Like
Little Boy Blue

Baptist Press
1/26/77

ALTON, Ill. (BP)--A Southern Baptist evangelism consultant, speaking at a two-day conference here, criticized what he called the "Little Boy Blue Syndrome" in some Baptist churches.

"Some churches," declared Don Johnson of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta, "are asleep in the haystack of theological irrelevancies, while the sheep graze in meadows of religious exclusiveness and the cows feed in the corn fields of racism."

Johnson, speaking at the 32nd annual state evangelism conference of Illinois Baptists, noted reports of controversy over tongues speaking and commented that if Baptist churches are going to withdraw fellowship from those who speak in tongues, they should also withdraw fellowship from segregated churches.

Another speaker, Ron S. Lewis, Illinois Baptists' church development director, commented along the same line:

"Recent headlines in the Baptist state papers tell about churches withdrawing fellowship from each other over ordaining women and speaking in tongues when we should be focusing our energies on the two great gifts mentioned in the Bible in Joel 2, that is, young men seeing visions and old men dreaming dreams," Lewis declared.

He said Baptists in Illinois should be dreaming big dreams about reaching the six million or more in the state who have no vital relationship to Jesus Christ.

Lewis also asked his listeners to dream about cross-cultural Sunday School literature written for blacks and other ethnic groups, about when the first ethnic would serve as president of Illinois Baptists, about increased giving through the denomination's Cooperative Program unified budget, about increased attendance in summer assemblies.

He warned that members of some churches need to get down on their knees and ask forgiveness for destroying the dreams of their pastors who once had visions of great things for God, but since have lost their enthusiasm.

Lewis also declared that Southern Baptists should be alert to good ideas from other religious groups and that every major awakening in the history of Christianity began where no one was looking for it. Southern Baptists, he said, cannot win the world to Christ alone.

Paul Burlison, pastor of Southcliff Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, also noted that Southern Baptists need to profit from the ideas of other Christians.

In referring to Bill Gothard, who leads seminars across the U. S. on family relationships, Burlison said, "I am not talking about the Gospel according to Gothard, but I do believe God has raised him up to provide us with some workable tools.

"I know that when I use the word Gothard, it's a 'bad word' to some people," he said, referring to mixed opinions among Christians about Gothard's theology.

Burlison, commenting on husband-wife relationships, a major Gothard theme, said, "If there's no love in a home, it's because the husband is not showing love. Woman is the responder, and God made her that way. Man is the initiator, and if he knows how to demonstrate love in a marriage, the woman will respond."

Evangelism Leader Urges New Church Growth Criteria

ALTON, ILL. (BP)--A world evangelism leader from Washington, D. C., told the Illinois Baptist evangelism conference here that a successful church should be judged by what goes out from it on Sunday, not just how many people come in on Sunday.

"Your pews may be packed, but this could mean you're just entertaining the people," said C. Ronald Goulding, who directs evangelism for the Baptist World Alliance.

A native of England, Goulding's crisp British accent and witty expressions highlighted his five Bible studies, which opened each session.

"I have no fear of what outside authorities may do to the church," he confessed. "But I am terrified at what the church, internally, can do to itself."

He told of visiting a large Baptist church in Russia with 5,000 members and eight pastors. One of the Russian pastors told him, "I think one of the best things that ever happened was when the government told us we could have the church, but not the organizations that go with it (such as Bible classes, etc.)."

Goulding insisted he is not against organization, but that he does magnify the church as a worshipping, evangelizing body.

He compared churches in Western Europe which are languishing, while in Eastern Europe, where there is less freedom, the churches are flourishing.

This is why he said that churches need have no fear of external pressures, but only of internal dissensions.

All Christians, he said, have spiritual gifts, but if love is missing, then those gifts are meaningless. "We must help Christians find their gifts. Evangelism is not just for specialists, although admittedly, some Christians are more gifted than others in sharing their witness."

Goulding reminded his Illinois listeners that what has happened to many churches in England could happen in America. "Many of our older, beautiful churches (in England) are looked on as antiquities, as architectural curiosities," he said. "And unfortunately, in the eyes of many, the churches themselves are considered antique."

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Layman Establishes Travel Fund at Baptist Seminary

Baptist Press
1/26/77

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--A Holy Land Travel-Study Scholarship Fund has been established at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary here by Charles S. Coleman, a Baptist businessman from Charlotte, N. C., with an initial gift of \$25,000.

Although his career has been in the steel industry, Coleman's interest and concern in becoming a better informed Christian layman led him to earn the master of divinity degree at Southeastern Seminary. The three-year task was accomplished while continuing his business activities.

While at Southeastern, Coleman began to feel the need for such a travel-study program for young ministers. "I feel," he said, "the recipients will especially benefit from such a trip in the early years of their ministries and will be able to share their travel experiences with members of their congregations throughout their ministries."

The initial gift has made it possible, a seminary spokesman said, for Southeastern to select a 1977 recipient, senior student Lynn Anderson of Pamlico, S. C. He is pastor of the First Baptist Church there.

In making the gift, Coleman said that he wanted to "provide a way for Southeastern Seminary students to travel to the Holy Land who otherwise could never afford to make the trip." He gave three purposes for the fund: (1) to illumine the minds of God's ministers to the

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historical setting of the ministry of Jesus; (2) to enrich the lives of the church members whose ministers have participated in the program; and (3) to magnify and expand Jesus Christ to the glory of God.

Coleman, a native of Bessemer, Ala., hopes the fund will grow large enough to make it possible for every Baptist minister attending Southeastern to participate. "Perhaps," he said, "other interested persons and organizations will join us in contributing to this Christian mission."

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\$2,000 Refund Offer Has
No Takers Among Tithers

Baptist Press
1/26/77

By Adon Taft

MIAMI, Fla. (BP)--God apparently has only satisfied customers among tithers.

That's the observation of Conrad Willard, pastor of Miami's Central Baptist Church, who reported that so far there have been no applications for refunds from the 4,000 members of the church or 30,000 persons in the listening audience under terms of a proposal he made last December during the broadcast of church services over radio station WBBS.

His offer was that if anybody who was not already tithing (giving 10 percent of their income to the church) would start tithing, he could guarantee their money back (up to \$2,000) if they were dissatisfied after a week, a month, or six months.

"We didn't put it in monetary terms," explained Willard, who was a banker before he entered the ministry. "We just said that if they didn't feel like the Lord had blessed their lives, we would refund their money."

The offer was made, he said, because a retired banker, who believes strongly in tithing, put up the \$2,000 guarantee. Limits were set because of a law suit brought against the Allapattah Baptist Church here several years ago by a mentally ill man who said he didn't get the benefits implied when he was encouraged to tithe. The case was settled out of court when a Texas industrialist who read of the case paid the man his money back.

"We've asked everybody to tithe," said Willard. "We have more than 400 people tithing--almost every deacon and Sunday school teacher--so far. That's already 100 more than we had before."

In addition, at least 40 listeners from the radio audience contribute regularly. Radio listeners include people in Cuba, the Bahamas, the area around Lake Placid, and Tampa Bay where a man who was fishing heard the broadcast of the service and drove to the church in Miami to make public his profession of faith in Christ.

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Mission Board To Be Organized
By Luzon Baptist Convention

Baptist Press
1/26/77

MANILA, Philippines (BP)--Members of the Luzon Baptist Convention during their 18th annual session, began steps toward the organization of a mission board.

The board is being created by the convention "with the view of supporting missionaries within the convention territory and abroad, as God calls and as convention funds become available," said William T. Roberson, Southern Baptist missionary press representative.

Henry Silbor, president of the convention, led the three-day meeting at the Tuliao Baptist Church in Central Luzon. Zacarias Dayot, professor at the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, taught Bible classes for the 150 persons attending the convention.

In other business, the convention called upon member churches to support its Bible school at Dagupan, where more than 50 young men and women are in training for church ministries.

Preliminary reports on the simultaneous crusades which are being conducted among the churches indicated more than 4,000 public decisions in the meetings, with 53 volunteering for special Christian service, according to Roberson. Ten churches throughout the convention each reported 10 or more weekly Bible study groups meeting in homes or other locations.

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The Luzon convention is comprised of 67 churches located on the islands of Luzon and Negros.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist papers

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'Project Look-Up' Target
Moved To The Caribbean

Baptist Press
1/26/77

RICHMOND (BP)--"Project Look-Up" will begin airing experimental community service programs prepared by Christian broadcasters, probably sometime in February.

The programs will be beamed by satellite to Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands, however, instead of Colombia and Ecuador as earlier planned.

Due to the necessity for immediate clearance to get the programs into the countries by February, the group decided to go ahead with plans to air programs in these islands since they are U. S. protectorates," said Fred T. Laughon, special assistant to Paul M. Stevens, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, Fort Worth.

Persons from 49 Christian organizations, including the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, and Radio and Television Commission, asked the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) if they could use the satellite, ATS-6, for programming in 1977.

Since the project is experimental, NASA agreed.

The satellite has recently been in operation over India. It beams instructional television programs to parts of India where they are received and transmitted to television sets centrally located in 2,400 villages.

Last year, the satellite was over the United States, where it was used for medical and educational purposes in Alaska and southwestern states. The year before it aided school teachers in the Appalachian region.

Now it will be situated where it can beam programs to the Caribbean and Latin American countries.

"Now we're just waiting for them to tell us which band we can broadcast on and hopefully we'll be ready to beam two hours of programs every night to this Caribbean area," Laughon commented.

Tentatively the broadcasts will be between 7 and 9 p.m. each evening. According to Laughon, the programs will be aired from NASA's "Up-Link" stations in North Carolina and Texas. The availability of the station in Texas allows the group to broadcast programs seven days a week, since the North Carolina station is closed Saturday and Sunday.

"All of this is brand new to us," Laughon explained. "We're still not on the air yet and we can't anticipate all the problems that might arise. But, little by little, the good Lord is piecing things together for us."

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"The Korean pastor is dealing with a people in an alien culture," Moon said, pointing out that most of the work is with first-generation immigrants: "Some of his members can't read signs, can't shop or get papers filled out, so he has to help in these basic areas."

"Koreans in Korea see Americans with economic buying power--military, tourists, businessmen," Moon said. "They feel that if they go to America, they, too, will be in that land where everyone has that. So they come, but find that things aren't that way. Even though they have the education and the skills, often they can't practice them in the U.S., so are reduced to lower economic status."

"They find a culture that is highly individualistic, and they are accustomed to one more family oriented. They find a highly competitive lifestyle, and they come from one more cooperative-oriented. In that time of need, they are very open to the gospel."

"We have 12 Korean churches in California, with four self-supporting," Moon reported. "The rest should be self-supporting this year. But we could have a dozen churches in Korea Town in Los Angeles if we had the leadership."