



--FEATURES

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Missionary Appointment:
God's Will, Nothing Else

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Bob Hughes was born with what he calls a "denominational silverspoon" and knew nothing but success all his life. Yet, three years ago, he was turned down when he applied for missionary service.

The three years that passed between his rejection and finally his appointment as a missionary communications specialist to Nigeria have been filled with wonderful things, says Hughes' wife, Gail. But they've also known sorrow and deep introspection.

When Hughes was born, his father was pastor of a church in California. Later on, his father became executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California, a post he still holds. Bob became a Christian at age seven and first felt called to preach at age nine.

In high school, he played football, ran track, sang in a madrigal group, wrote songs and played the guitar. In college, he played football, wrote plays and majored in theatre. After college, he spent two years in Zambia as a missionary journeyman through the Foreign Mission Board.

Soon after returning to the states, he married Gail Wallace, whom he met the summer before he went to Zambia, and enrolled in Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. They were serving a church in Hayward, Calif., but Hughes couldn't get the needs he saw in Africa out of his mind.

The Hugheses applied for career missionary service, but were turned down because they were not ready emotionally. "I was deeply depressed for several weeks after the Foreign Mission Board personnel staff asked us to wait, and was confused about what to do," he recalls.

They moved to Louisville, Ky., for Hughes to continue his education at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary there. "When we arrived we had nothing waiting for us--no place to live, no job, no church, and I wasn't even accepted into the graduate program at Southern yet," he explains.

"Those first two months were the **hardest** of our marriage--as well as the best thing that could have happened. While always before I had kind of felt under the shadow of my family, we were now completely on our own."

Now, with a great deal of satisfaction, he looks back at it and says, "We made it."

Hughes has had two novels published, led a rural Kentucky church, and together he and Gail have had some memorable experiences with their church as well as growing closer to each other and to God.

But they've dealt with some harsh things, too. Gail broke her jaw in an automobile accident in March 1978 and Bob's brother and sister-in-law died.

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His brother left a prayer which said, "Dear God, your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else." That prayer is Bob and Gail's motto today as they prepare for the mission field, he in communications, she in women's work.

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(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

Pastor Not Frightened
From Impending Death

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (BP)--Facing death on a deadline can be a victorious experience for Christians, says a man who's probably celebrated his last Christmas.

Doctors predict that cancer of the colon and liver will claim the life of Norman Blake, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church, Colorado Springs, Colo., before the end of the year.

Blake, 44, says the knowledge of his impending death has given him a better understanding of life, of what's important and what's not important.

"The average person lives doing what he has to and doesn't make many conscious decisions," he told the Rocky Mountain Baptist, newspaper for Colorado Baptists. "Now the problems of life seem so unimportant and insignificant. The fusses and battles people have are so unnecessary."

Blake's wife and four teen-age children show "no great signs of frustration, anger or resentment" over his imminent death, he said. His most difficult times come when he realizes he will not be able "to see my kids grow up and knowing that although I'm better off, it's going to be tough on my wife."

Test results bring more emotional lows. "You hope things will get better," he said. "But each time you face the stark realities of the situation, those are the times it knocks you down. You're never ultimately prepared. It boils down to trusting the Lord and believing that the Lord knows best."

Blake said he hasn't changed his lifestyle or sermon messages but he tries to have more of an influence in his day-to-day relationships with people. "I would like to feel that every Christian does face up to death, and as a result, lives a more enjoyable, effective, meaningful life," he said.

Many people have an unrealistic view of life, he said, and don't realize that death is part of the life process.

"Most people just never do come down to the business of admitting they're going to die some day," he said.

"This kind of experience can be a very victorious experience for the Christian," Blake said. "Most Christians in situations like this find a strength beyond themselves and are able to handle it using God as a resource."

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Missionaries Return To Work in Nicaragua

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Stanley D. Stamps has returned to his work in Nicaragua after being out of the country nearly three months.

At his request, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is sending a representative to examine refugee resettlement needs in the country, which has been torn by internal conflict for more than a year.

Stamps and his wife had been in Honduras since the end of May when they took a vacation outside of Nicaragua. He reported the Baptist Book Store in Managua is operating at full capacity.

The only other Southern Baptist missionaries in the country, missionary journeymen Stephens and Paula Baumgardner, evacuated from Nicaragua about two weeks later as fighting escalated between national guard forces of former president Anastasio Somoza Jr. and the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

John R. Cheyne, associate consultant for the board's relief ministries, planned to fly to Nicaragua to survey the needs of refugees who are returning to their homeland. Many will have to rebuild homes destroyed in the fighting. Refugees who fled to Honduras and Guatemala have been encouraged to return by the new government and most are expected to move home within the next 15 days, according to Charles W. Bryan, board secretary for Middle America and the Caribbean.

Plans for refugee work in Honduras, which Stamps would have coordinated, have been canceled in light of these developments, Bryan said.

The Baumgardners have been reassigned to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, but Bryan says they are considering returning to Nicaragua for the last 10 months of their journeyman term. Stamps reported that a rocket blast had destroyed the roof and ceiling of a bedroom in the Baumgardners' house. Within one block of their house, an area of 15 to 20 blocks was leveled in the last phase of fighting before Somoza's resignation.

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Radio-TV Commission
Expands Search Committee

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Three more trustees have been named to the five-member search committee seeking a president for the Radio-Television Commission to succeed Paul M. Stevens.

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Stewart R. McChesney Jr., of Arvada, Colo., Tommy Joe Payne of Greenville, N.C., and Richard H. Rogers of Lansing, Mich., have joined the committee, according to Fred W. Isaacs of Cosby, Tenn., chairman of the trustees and the search committee.

"This action will give us input from a broader based cross section of our denomination," Isaacs said, "and these three men will be available to lend needed administrative follow-through as we narrow the list of candidates."

The three join Isaacs, John E. Hughes of Independence, Mo., George Miller of Oklahoma City, Okla., Jess P. Odom of Little Rock, Ark., and Franklin A. Terry of Laurel, Md., on the committee.

Isaacs noted that the three new members will provide a "fairer division of laymen and pastors on the committee. Miller, Odom, Payne and I are laymen," he said. "The others are pastors of churches."

Isaacs said the search committee had narrowed an original list of candidates from 48 to 14. "But that doesn't mean that new candidates can't be submitted or considered. They can be," said Isaacs, who commented earlier that the committee hopes to have a person by the time of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in June 1980 in St. Louis.

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John Stevens Resigns
Radio-TV Commission Post

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--John C. Stevens, a 17-year veteran of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, has resigned effective Sept. 6.

The son of Paul M. Stevens, who stepped down earlier this year as commission chief executive, John Stevens said his job at the commission gave him creative freedom and solid experience. But he said he felt it was time for him to take a different direction than the commission is taking.

He will begin his own film writing and production business, American Enterprise Co., and is also writing a book about former Texas Christian University athlete Kent Waldrep.

During his tenure at the commission, the 38-year-old Stevens has produced, written, and/or directed about 150 films, many of them top award winners. He has written or directed 20 specials throughout the world for the three American television networks.

Bob Taylor, director of the commission's broadcast division, said of Stevens: "He has been endowed with a unique insight into life itself and the ability to transmit this insight to us all through his writing and producing talents."

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Students to Sponsor
Hunger, Relief Projects

By Jerilynn W. Armstrong

Baptist Press
8/28/79

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--How would you like to raise \$55,000 to purchase 10,000 hoes in Uganda?

College students will have that opportunity among others this fall as they raise money for hunger and relief needs pinpointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in various parts of the world.

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The program, called "MANNA" (Ministering Aid to Needy Nations Abroad), is a new approach coordinated by John Cheyne which allows local college campuses the opportunity to support specific projects initiated by the Foreign Mission Board.

Any MANNA project not selected by a college campus by early October will be made available for churches, organizations or individuals to undertake, a board spokesman said. Students will get first crack at new MANNA projects each year between July and October.

"In March state student directors met at the board in Richmond to discuss ways that college students could plug into missions," said Charles Beckett of the board staff. "The Bangladesh Hunger Project, in which students raised \$150,000, has been completed and directors were interested in personalizing future goals and getting campuses more directly involved," he said.

As a result of the meeting, the board created MANNA and divided current projects into bite-sized pieces to allow a campus to sponsor any portion of a project during a school year.

"We are excited about the possibility," Beckett said. "Funds have been appropriated by the Foreign Mission Board to initiate all the projects but with the participation of Baptist Student Unions the board will be able to utilize previously appropriated funds for other urgent relief needs."

Thirteen countries and 50 projects, ranging from \$100 to \$55,000 to buy equipment, food, land and many other needs, are available for campuses to choose and sponsor.

"The local directors in North Carolina are enthusiastic about the MANNA project because students will know exactly where their money is being sent instead of raising money for the broad scope of hunger in Bangladesh," said Kay Huggins, director of student ministries, North Carolina.

"Another benefit of MANNA is that the foreign missionaries involved with the project will report to the sponsoring campus and share the progress being made and the needs being met," said Huggins. "We hope that MANNA will make missions a more personal and meaningful aspect of students' lives."

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Jerilynn Wood Armstrong is a reporter in the office of communications at the Baptist Sunday School Board and in the Baptist Press Bureau at the board.