

(BP)**-- FEATURES**

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Missionary Fights In
 Arena of the Spirit

By Sara Hines Martin

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (BP)--Howard L. Shoemake has forced himself to live again.

And it's been a painful struggle. There were days when, as friends prayed for his healing, the Southern Baptist missionary with cancer would offer counter-prayers: "Lord, just let this be over. Let me go home to be with you. If I must die, take me now and relieve me of all this suffering."

It was more than a year ago when he said, "I have accepted the fact that I am going to die. It would be a greater adjustment for me if I learn that I will live."

That time has come. Doctors who originally gave the missionary to the Dominican Republic a prognosis of three to six months, now say they don't know how long he'll live. Shoemake has had to learn to live again.

Since June 26, 1978, when he learned he had multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow, severe physical pain has been his enemy and companion. But he found the real battle raged in the arena of the spirit.

Shoemake, a big man and an activist, was unable to even put on his shoes. Instead of taking charge of his life and schedule as before, his schedule was dictated by how he felt. Sometimes medicine made him so dizzy he had to hold on to a wall to take only a few steps. The man who had preached, sometimes daily, for the past 40 years, now could not preach at all.

Frustration threatened to overwhelm him. It increased with confinement to a wheelchair and being told: "You can't do this; you can't do that." In a state of desperation, he drove his van for four days, rather than allowing someone else to drive him. On the fourth day he lost control of the vehicle and crashed into a palm tree. Slamming into the steering wheel, he broke a rib.

Massive doses of medication produced such deep depression that Shoemake feared he would take his own life. He cleared all lethal medicines from his home. Then, taking a worker and a medical digest, Shoemake went through the warehouse of the medical clinic that his church sponsored and did the same.

How, at 59, with the forces of pain and depressions, has this missionary begun living again? Several factors helped him cope with cancer. Two were books which dealt with the patient's attitudes. Shoemake learned that when he received the pain rather than resist it, the pain seemed to lessen. He also began to understand his feelings.

A Dominican friend read Shoemake Jeremiah 20:11 in a Spanish translation which speaks of God as "the Giant who is by our side." Picturing this "Giant" by his side helped Shoemake to feel stronger in coping with hurts.

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A turning point came in January 1979 when he and his wife, Dorothy Dell, spent hours talking with a doctor and his wife. This doctor with cancer was given a year to live eight years ago. Spending time with someone who walked the same valley of despair helped Shoemake to begin to cope more effectively with his illness.

Shoemake's original plea, "Lord, take me home," changed to, "Lord, how can you use me in this situation to serve you?" God answered. Shoemake now has a new and instant rapport with people plagued with problems.

Every day, when he goes to the rehabilitation center for therapy, he comforts those who sometimes scream in pain--like the elderly woman who wept daily when therapists picked up her arthritic body to put her into a whirlpool bath. Shoemake talked with her about how God could help her with pain.

A few days later the woman said to the therapist, "I have a secret." Then she stood and walked out of the center rather than leaving in her wheelchair.

"Do you want me to walk beside you?" Shoemake asked her.

"No," she replied, "A giant is walking beside me."

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Adapted from "The Commission" magazine, December, 1979

(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

Christ the Only Hope
In Crisis-Struck World

By Dan Martin

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--"Jesus Christ is the only hope" in the current critical world situation, a noted world statesman told Southern Baptist evangelism leaders here.

Charles Malik, one of the signers of the United Nations Charter, soberly told Southern Baptist leaders that the "world situation is critical. We are facing very serious issues. We may be heading toward a great turning point in history while we sit here."

He chided Americans for seemingly being interested only in freedom for the hostages held in Iran when there are "a half dozen problems infinitely more important" to history and to the world.

"I believe that upon Christians today evolves the historic task of awakening the world to the fact that Christ is the only hope. The full responsibility is on Christians. And Baptists have a tremendous part to play in that," said Malik, a Greek Orthodox.

Malik, 73, from Lebanon, was president of both the General Assembly and the Security Council during many years of service in the United Nations. He also was co-chairman--with Eleanor Roosevelt--of the Human Rights Commission. Currently, he is professor emeritus at the American University in Beirut. He also has been active in the "Here's Life" campaign of Campus Crusade for Christ, International, and serves on its executive board.

"To awaken the world to the fact that Jesus Christ is our only hope, Christians can do three things," he said.

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"First, is a deepening of our own lives and trust in Jesus Christ. This means prayer, Bible reading, and repentance," he said, adding that Christians also must seek repentance on a national scale because God calls on nations for repentance as well as individuals.

"Second, and more difficult, is to acquaint yourselves with the history of the church. That way you get a sense of world Christianity and historical Christianity and not just parochial Christianity."

"Third, and vastly more difficult, I ask you to promote fellowship between yourselves and other existing Christians in humility and compassion and trust. I do not believe any Christian denomination today, any Christian church, is alone capable of facing the magnitude of the challenge, but I believe and am certain that Christians together can route the devil and his work. But, together," he said.

Malik stunned the Southern Baptists with his assessment of world conditions and American response to it. He chastized Americans for preoccupation with hostages in Iran. "All I read in the paper is about the hostages. If all you are concerned about is the release of your hostages, then the rest of the world is confirmed in its opinion that you do not care about the rest of the world, only about yourselves," he declared.

He said a number of problems are infinitely more important to the world and to history than the release of 50 American hostages held in the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

"The first thing more important is the question of the flow of oil from the Middle East," he said. "Eighty-five percent of the oil in the world comes from there. The question is how we preserve the safety of the flow of oil to industrialized nations."

Another issue, he said, involves Soviet penetration into the Middle East. "There are two questions: Is (the Ayatollah) Khomeini in power (in Iran)? If he is not, then who is?" Malik says he does not believe Khomeini is ruler in Iran, but is the "ruled, rather than the ruler." He said he believes the students--who are disciples of Marxism--are the real power.

Another issue is the failure of Westerners to understand Islamic thought and the resurgence of Islam, he said.

"For the first time since Pearl Harbor, this country is united as never before. This moral and political unity that has been forged as a result of the crisis in Iran is a God-send. Please do not squander it...waste it...dissipate it only on the release of the hostages. It would be a terrible waste if this nation's unity were sold only for the release of the hostages," he said.

That unity is necessary, he added, if America is to be the power it must be in the world. "At the rate by which you have been retreating, doing nothing, or doing precious little and then congratulating yourselves that you have done even this little, is it any wonder that you are in the mess that you are in in Iran?"

He criticized American belief that the nation can withdraw into itself. "Fortress America is finished. Fortress America, much as you cherish that notion, is an illusion."

Malik pointed to the fact that "every square inch on earth is only 15 minutes from any other place on earth and can be reached with tremendous nuclear power."

"Economically, it is impossible for Americans to withdraw from the world. There is no self-sufficient country in the world today. Americans must face that fact."

Malik told Southern Baptist religious leaders that "great world conflict today is between freedom and totalitarianism. The issue is between the freedom of man and what liberates him and lifts him up in his dignity and what enslaves him and diminishes his stature."

Man is being progressively enslaved today almost everywhere in all sorts of ways and nobody seems to care, he said. "The real issue is not equality, nor development, nor justice, nor peace. The issue is freedom. But the realm of freedom in the world keeps on shrinking and shrinking and shrinking every day."

"There have been instances of free people getting enslaved, but in not one instance in the past 34 years have there been enslaved people becoming free. There are revolutions for servitude, but where are the revolutions for freedom?"

Malik told the Southern Baptist leaders that they must wake up. "The greatest secret weapon --indeed the only weapon you have in America--is freedom, but yet the West does not want to wield that weapon or to back it up politically or militarily."

As he concluded his hour-long address, Malik urged Christians everywhere to unite so that a "continuing moral and spiritual and intellectual message can be offered to this drifting, thirsting world just about to go to pieces. The world is so hopelessly lost in humanism, materialism, relativism, cynicism, legalism, rationalism, atheism, self-worship."

"Jesus Christ is the only hope for the world," he concluded.

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Government Official Meets
With Evangelicals in Spain

By Martha Skelton

Baptist Press
12/14/79

MADRID, Spain (BP)--A Spanish government official and evangelical pastors from throughout Spain exchanged varying viewpoints on church and state roles during a conference held at the First Baptist Church, Madrid.

The historic session would not have been possible without the lessening of restrictions on religious liberty of Spanish laws in recent years.

Catholicism remains the state religion of Spain, and nearly 99 percent of the people consider themselves at least nominally Catholic.

"I want a chance to exchange ideas," the official, Eugenio Nasarre, director general of religion for the Spanish government, told the pastors in his opening remarks.

Evangelical spokesmen pointed to improved religious liberty under current laws, but also to abstraction in the law which have led to varying interpretations. They questioned Nasarre about provisions of a new constitutional bill on religious liberty to be debated in the Spanish cortes, or parliament, in January.

Continued religious instruction in public schools was the major topic of discussion. Nasarre reiterated the government position that it has responsibility for religious instruction. "It has to be part of overall education. Our feeling is that churches make a social contribution; why shouldn't they permit government to help them?"

Pointing out such activities as camps and youth programs, he said: "We have common social interests."

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Religious instruction in Spanish schools (taught by Catholic priests) has been made optional on the elementary level effective this fall. High school students may take an ethics course rather than the religion course, Nasarre said.

"But ethics is taught by the priests. What difference does it make?" one pastor responded. "Wouldn't it be better to become detached from religious training altogether?" another pastor asked Nasarre.

The director general maintained a position of church-state unity. If Protestants would like to teach religion in the public schools, they need to get together, name teachers, and get organized, Nasarre said. "Then we would have to talk about it."

Over 100 pastors from Spain and surrounding European countries attended the session on religious liberty, in addition to discussions on the family and ministry in today's world, all held during the three-day conference.

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

Baptists Begin Assistance
In Earthquake Aftermath

Baptist Press
12/14/79

CALI, Columbia (BP)--Thousands dig through the rubble while the estimated 400 death toll rises in the aftermath of the powerful Dec. 12 earthquake which rocked the Columbia-Ecuador border area--the worst to hit the area in 70 years.

Southern Baptist missionaries are reported safe and have begun administering food and assistance to needy victims with a \$7,500 emergency allocation from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's hunger relief fund. No mission property was damaged.

After a meeting with Columbian officials, missionaries moved quickly to request medical supplies, blankets and water purification systems for hard-hit Tumaco, where 3,000 are homeless and at least 40 deaths were reported, said John R. Cheyne, associate consultant for relief ministries at the Foreign Mission Board. The board responded by sending a shipment of medical supplies, 1,000 blankets and six water purification systems.

A number of villages from Buenaventura along the Columbian Pacific coastline south to Northern Ecuador have been "hit extremely hard and some destroyed," said H. Robert Tucker Jr., missionary field representative for Western South America. He told of at least one small village of which no traces are left.

Tucker, stationed in Cali, has been in contact with the Foreign Mission Board via ham radio because the quake disrupted telephone communication. He said the missionaries were well received by government officials and given an open door to aid victims.

Reports said the initial earthquake, which registered up to 8.1 on the Richter Scale, lasted close to five minutes and was followed by repeated tremors and severe tidal waves. The quake was five times worse than the Nov. 23 quake in Columbia, according to reports.

Missionary James E. Giles, president of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Cali, organized a team of six seminary students to go to the coastal city of Tumaco, then to Gwapi by canoe to give whatever assistance they can and to assess the needs.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story mailed Dec. 12, entitled "Sunday School Growth Plan Urges '8.5 by '85'" please change figures in second paragraph to read: . . . increased from five to seven million between 1950 and 1958, it has grown only 200,000, from 7.1 to 7.3 million, since 1958.

Thanks, (BP)



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