



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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## Missionary Leads 'Way' For Hawaiian Chinese

HONOLULU -- Do Shang Wong represents "the way and the light" to 12,000 Chinese-speaking people on the island of Oahu.

He left Hong Kong three years ago, after Nuuanu Baptist Church in Honolulu asked him to lead a mission aimed at reaching Honolulu's Chinese community.

His efforts have resulted in a mission to the Chinese in their own language. Yet for Wong, whose names mean "the way and the light," the way has not been easy.

Wong, 50, accepted the position without discussing salary.

"As a Chinese person, I believe if I ask how much they pay, then I come only for the pay," he explains. Only after arrival did he discover he was to serve bivocationally.

For the first two months, he slaved "like a coolie" as a butcher in Honolulu's Chinatown. His wife, Wai Kuen, worked in a noodle factory.

Six persons attended his first Chinese service; five were his family. But within four months, Wong quit his job to accept appointment by the Hawaii Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board as a Chinese language missionary of the Nuuanu church.

Three years later his congregation has grown to 90 members, and Wong has activities for all age groups almost daily.

But traditional Chinese religions—Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism—mingle with ancestor worship in a difficult-to-overcome mixture.

"Chinese people are so concerned about the family name, it is hard for them to give up worshipping the family," says Wong. "All Chinese are the same; they know their family line for hundreds of generations, and the gravest betrayal of Chinese children to parents is not to continue the family line."

So he concentrates on youth; 40 percent of the church is under 30. "They are more fresh and open," he says. "Middle-aged Chinese have a purer family background, and it is more difficult for them to accept Jesus."

Still, Wong encourages new Christians to "witness through love" and not break traditional ties.

Wong doesn't plan to fail in his attempt to establish a lasting witness among Oahu's Chinese. And now, with the help of two-year mission volunteer Winnie Yiu, Wong has expanded the mission to include the Hawaii university community.

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"I do not want to disappoint Nuuanu or the Home Mission Board for their faith in me," he says. "I must serve as an example. I cannot win all Hawaii to Jesus, but I can help others realize the opportunity we have for reaching Chinese-speaking people."

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Adapted from Sept.-Oct. issue of Home Missions magazine. (BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

First Southern Del City  
Passes 2000 Baptisms

Baptist Press  
10/1/80

DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)--First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., became the first Southern Baptist church to baptize 2,000 persons in a single year by baptizing 2,027 in the 12 months ending Sept. 30.

First Southern's total surpassed the previous single year high of 1,669 set in 1971 at First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas. That was the first time a Southern Baptist church had baptized as many as 1,000 persons in one year.

Bailey Smith, pastor at Del City and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said surpassing the 2,000 barrier has "raised a new standard."

The 15,000-member church in suburban Oklahoma City led the Southern Baptist Convention in baptisms five of the past six years, not including the year just finished, averaging 971 baptisms in that stretch. The 2,027 baptisms this year raise its average to 1,122 over seven years.

Final statistics from 35,600 Southern Baptist churches have not been gathered and evaluated yet so it cannot be officially stated that Smith's church led the convention. But a check with last year's top five churches shows none is within 950 of Del City.

San Jacinto Baptist Church in Amarillo, Texas, led the convention last year with 1,174 baptisms. They lost their pastor and most of their staff this year and baptized 411. Del City was second last year with 1,105. First Baptist, Jacksonville, Fla., third last year with 938, baptized 1,067. North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., fourth last year with 815, baptized 1,033. First Baptist, Dallas, fifth last year with 663, baptized 624.

This is the first time three churches have baptized over 1,000 in the same year. Last year was the first time two churches had done it in the same year. Smith said the numbers indicate there is a move in the denomination toward reaching more people.

In the past 12 months, Del City baptized nearly seven times as many people as make up the entire membership of over 60 percent of Southern Baptist churches. Asked if that might not discourage some of those small-church pastors, Smith responded:

"Every place I go, people say what our church has done is an encouragement because it gives them a model and they can tell their people 'it can be done.' I realize not every church can do it. Not every church can baptize a thousand.

"God doesn't look at the total number as much as he looks at how much we can do where we are. Maybe a little country church that struggles to baptize 50 is working harder than we are. Maybe God wants First Southern to do more."

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Smith said 2,000 baptisms was never a goal of the church because "We never anticipated such a thing would happen." We just rejoice that many people have found Christ," he said. "We just give glory to the Lord that he wanted to save that many."

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Houston Pastor Questions Motives  
Of Those Who Attack Seminaries

By Dan Martin

Baptist Press  
10/1/80

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Persons attacking the credibility of trustees of Southern Baptist Convention agencies may be motivated by a desire to help three non-SBC schools, a Houston pastor has charged.

Kenneth Chafin, pastor of South Main Baptist Church and chairman of trustees at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, made his remarks in the wake of accusations trustees of SBC agencies and institutions are "dummies" and "rubber stamps."

Other Southern Baptist leaders—including the presidents of the six seminaries—also have responded to remarks made recently by Houston appellate court judge Paul Pressler at a public meeting in Lynchburg, Va.

In the meeting, Pressler said conservatives are "going for the jugular" in their campaign to gain control of Southern Baptist Convention institutions, and will appoint trustees who are "knowledgeable, Bible-centered, Christ-honoring...who are not going to sit there like a bunch of dummies and rubber stamp everything that's presented to them..."

Chafin, a former seminary professor and head of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, said: "I think you must look at the motives of those who make such sweeping statements to imply there is nobody left at any seminary who believes anything. You have to wonder why they are attacking our seminaries."

"There are only three institutions who have anything to be gained from the discrediting of our seminaries," he added. "They are Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas; Mid-America Seminary in Memphis and Luther Rice Seminary in Jacksonville, Fla. It is not coincidental that those who are attacking and attempting to discredit our seminaries have some connection with those three groups."

Chafin added he is working with the chairman of trustees of the other five seminaries to ask the Committee on Order of Business at the Los Angeles meeting of the SBC for "ample time on the program so the trustees can give an account of our stewardship."

He added praise for the trustees of Southwestern, noting: "We take very seriously what we are doing, the kind of product we are producing, the kind of professors we elect, the kind of courses authorized in the curriculum."

The presidents of the six SBC seminaries also reacted to Pressler's criticism of the trustees in a letter released to the editors of the 34 Baptist state newspapers.

"The men and women who serve as trustees of our Southern Baptist seminaries as well as those of the other agencies are responsible, competent and committed Christian stewards. They deserve better than unfair and ill-informed accusations," the letter says.

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It refers to the trustees as "Bible-believing, Christ-honoring, soul-winning Baptists" who are "fully representative of Southern Baptist life and fellowship."

"Any attack which vilifies the character of our trustees, boards and commissions is an attack on the integrity of all Southern Baptists," the letter says. "It jeopardizes the essential nature of our fellowship at every level and is an insult to those who support the Cooperative Program through sacrificial giving."

The letter, which calls on Southern Baptists to "repudiate" the charge by "reaffirmation" of the trustees, was signed by Duke McCall of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Russell Dilday of Southwestern Seminary, Randall Lolley of Southeastern Seminary, Landrum Leavell of New Orleans Seminary, Milton Ferguson of Midwestern Seminary and Bill Pinson of Golden Gate Seminary.

Fred Isaacs, a Cosby, Tenn., businessman who is chairman of the board of the Radio and Television Commission, strongly disagreed with Pressler: "I respect his right to say anything he wants, but I believe he is overstating what he actually believes in order to prove a point."

Isaacs, who headed the board during the termination of one executive and finding another, added: "I've seen our trustees go through a real bad situation and come out of it very strong. That is the exact opposite of a rubber stamp."

Bill Sherman, pastor of Woodmont Baptist Church of Nashville, and immediate past chairman of the SBC Committee on Boards, which nominates trustees for the agencies, said he was "incensed" by the accusations.

He defended the committee he chaired and its work, noting "highly responsible persons" were appointed. "We chose those persons who would support the life and work of our convention for the next eight years. We looked for people who love God, hate sin, believe the Bible, support the churches, are tithers, regular attenders and who love the Kingdom of God. That is the kind of people we tried to place on committees and boards."

Paige Patterson, president of Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, and a leader in the cause of biblical inerrancy, confirmed Pressler made the comments about trustees, but said they are being judged more harshly than they ought to be.

"The judge didn't mean anything other than that the situation of who represents Southern Baptists on the boards and agencies has become very important. We are concerned that whatever changes which need to be made are made to get more representative boards of trustees, boards which will represent the grassroots Southern Baptist constituency," Patterson said.

He added "many of the trustees are superb," but that others need to be replaced "by people in sympathy with the majority view of Southern Baptists."

Pressler was unavailable for comment.

CP Gifts Fall Short  
Of 1979-80 Projection

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist giving to the national Cooperative Program fell short of projections when September gifts increased only 1.2 percent over September 1979.

Year end totals show Southern Baptists contributed \$71,762,635 in undesignated gifts to the national Cooperative Program which funds the missions and educational enterprises of the convention. That total is an increase of 11.84 percent over the 1978-79 gifts. By comparison, the increase is one percent short of the cost of living index of 12.8 percent for the 12 months ending August 31, the latest figure available.

The gifts met the operating and capital needs budgets of \$71 million and edged \$762,645 into the \$12 million challenge goal.

September undesignated gifts were \$5,915,251, up 1.2 percent. Designated gifts rose 32.9 percent over September 1979 to \$1,330,873. For the year, designated gifts were \$63,439,562, up 15.53 percent.

Total designated and undesignated gifts for the year ending Sept. 30 were \$135,202,197, an increase of \$16,125,813 or 13.54 percent over the previous year.