

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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80-173

Korean Harvest Continues
As 2,700 Accept Christ

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

ANDONG, Korea (BP)--Membership in the Baptist church in the ancient former Korean capital city of Andong tripled from 30 to 96 during the week a Louisiana Baptist team led in witness training and evangelistic services.

The three-month-old church, whose pastor, Lee Jae Jee, cancelled a trip to the United States to participate in the crusade, is now looking for larger quarters, according to Gail Debord, pastor of the Istrouma Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La., who was a team participant.

Debord said during the week church members canvassed approximately 1,000 homes in the city of about 200,000.

"As we were walking down the street one day a lady came out of her house and when she found out what we were doing said, 'Walt.' When she returned a few minutes later she had three friends and invited us into her house. The three made professions of faith. The lady was a Presbyterian and said she had never seen people visiting like we were doing it," Debord said.

Debord spoke to more than 700 high school students each day and preached at a local prison. Professions of faith during the week totaled 416, including 100 at the prison, he said.

Debord's experiences were representative of the events in the other 49 Korean Baptist churches during the recent two-week effort of the Louisiana Baptist mission group. More than 2,700 professions of faith were reported during the crusade that concluded in mid-October.

Leonard Sanderson, Louisiana Baptist Convention director of evangelism, who coordinated the 52-member team, said the Korea Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board asked them "to lead a program of developing church members to be more effective soul winners.

"We worked in small churches in witness training for three days, then harvest revival for four days during each of the two weeks. This gave Korean pastors and members an opportunity to learn witnessing techniques and to become involved in what they had studied," Sanderson said.

Sanderson said the Louisiana team agreed to go where no other Baptist crusade team had gone, including some places where no missionary had worked. Florida Baptists witnessed in five major Korean cities in May and June.

Louisiana teams were composed of a minister and layperson, in many cases a pastor and his wife as the Debord team was. Each team served one church for one week and then moved to another church in another city for a second week.

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Many of the teams worked in churches as new as one month old and some as small as 15 members. Often Korean Baptist churches are started by young men who complete their study in the Baptist Seminary in Taejon, locate a community they feel the Lord has opened to them, and start a church.

One such pastor is Kim Dong Yak, who started the Seohoe Baptist Church in Kunsan in September with 18 members.

Kim and his wife, who have been married since May, used funds they had saved for furniture as "jeonsce" (rent) to start the church. The annual rental fee paid in advance for the second-floor facility, which includes a 40-square-foot room for the auditorium and a three-room apartment, was seven million won (about \$11,000). They borrowed three million won.

The congregation more than doubled after the week the Louisiana team was there.

There may be a difference in language in this 4,000-year-old country that had been alternately ruled by China and Japan before gaining independence following the Korean War, but there is no wavering in the dedication of Korean Christians witnessing of their faith.

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Missions 'Hotline'
Gives Twice the News

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The news on foreign missions hotline in 1980 will be even hotter than in the past.

From Nov. 14 through Dec. 15, the three-minute telephone messages giving the latest in missions information will change every Tuesday and Friday, rather than weekly as in past years. By calling the toll free number, (800) 446-2725, Southern Baptists in most states can get up-to-date information and learn about specific needs of missions and missionaries for which they can pray in both Sunday and mid-week services.

Baptists in Alaska, Hawaii and Virginia, who cannot use the toll free number, can get the same information by calling (804) 355-6581 for the price of a station-to-station call. In 1979, more than 10,000 calls came in on the two numbers during the four weeks the hotline was in operation for the Southern Baptist Convention's annual foreign missions emphasis.

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Circulo Tres Telecasts
Debut at Chilean Station

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MEXICO CITY (BP)--After five years of research, planning and production the international Spanish television series, Circulo Tres (Circle Three), is being telecast in Antofagasta, Chile.

Already response mail is arriving and Antofagasta churches are feeling the effects in terms of conversions and visitors in their churches, said Alan Compton, media consultant for Latin America.

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The impulse for Circulo Tres came from a 1975 meeting of Baptist communicators from all over Latin America. They agreed that it was imperative Baptists cooperate in an international television production effort rather than continue meager efforts on a country-by-country basis.

The interlocking three circles referred to in the title are "you, me and God—when all three are locked together, life works best."

The project includes not only television programs in 26-week packages, but also a detailed follow-up system using counseling by mail, correspondence courses, identification with local churches, and follow-up by national Christians.

Local Baptists are encouraged to plan an evangelistic effort coinciding with the program's airing. Eventually, three centers for handling mail and conducting counseling by mail will be in operation. The first center already is functioning in Cali, Colombia.

By January 1981, Compton expects Circulo Tres to begin broadcasting over the Spanish International Network in the United States with marketing and follow-up conducted by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. The program will be aired in 17 cities of Latin America in 1981 if adequate financial support can be supplied, he said.

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Brooks Hays Honored; Reacts
To Smith on Jews' Prayers

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NEW YORK (BP)--Former Southern Baptist Convention president Brooks Hays was honored in New York City at the premiere of a film on his public career by an organization devoted to fostering relations between Christians and Jews.

The New York premiere of the Hays film, "Return To Little Rock," was sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, which helped produce the film. The group also presented its mass media award to the film's producer, David Solomon.

In a related development, the former Arkansas congressman released a statement to Baptist Press disassociating himself from current SBC President Bailey Smith's well-publicized remark that "God Almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew."

To believe that God hears only the prayers of Christians invoking the name of Christ, Hays declared, "would be to shut out from God's love and care the largest part of the world's population, and to abrogate to ourselves alone his mercy and favor, something Jesus never intended."

Hays' statement, citing Jesus' endorsement of the publican's prayer in the temple without invoking his name and the fact that Jesus' model prayer "made no mention of himself," goes on to state that "there is no basis for claiming that Jesus' name must be mentioned like an 'open sesame' to God's attention."

The statement concludes by declaring that because the purpose of prayer "is worship and the desire to learn the divine will, the way to God should be, and is, open to everyone, saint and sinner, Jew, Moslem and Christian."

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The movie focuses on Hays' conciliatory role in the Little Rock school desegregation crisis in 1957. It portrays the former SBC president as a statesman committed to human and civil rights. The film recalls Hays' efforts as a conciliator between Arkansas Gov. Orvil Faubus, a staunch segregationist, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who ordered federal troops to integrate Little Rock's Central High School in compliance with a court order.

The film notes that Hays' moderation on the race issue, while costing him his seat in Congress in an upset defeat the following year, also opened up a whole new career for the Russellville, Ark., native, including a stint as a special assistant to President John F. Kennedy.

Also noted was Hays' role during the 1930s in helping establish the Arkansas chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Hays' longtime association with the New York-based organization was recognized two years ago when it honored him on his 80th birthday.

Hays was president of the SBC in 1958-59.

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Italian-Born Missionary
Stirring Fire and Water

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
10/30/80

MOTTOLA, Italy (BP)--Wearily, Amelio Giannetta braced against the cold, hard wind which stung his cheeks and snatched his breath as he scurried to his warm car.

Despite the chill, Giannetta felt warmth as he reflected on his evening with an Italian couple, Mimo and Maria. Just a few days before, Mimo had told Maria, "Just leave me alone. Don't bother me anymore with your church."

But he had consented to a visit from Giannetta and his wife, Lidia, Italian-born Southern Baptist missionaries on special assignment in their native land after 20 years as missionaries to Brazil.

After midnight, stuffed with fine Italian cooking, Giannetta rose and said, "Mimo, before we go, won't you join me in prayer, asking the Lord to make this the beginning of a new day in your life?"

Mimo did so. Then he said, "Why do you want to go away now? Stay a little longer." The gesture created the bridge Giannetta needed to cross to a new relationship—a kind of relationship which characterizes a new evangelistic surge among Italians.

Earlier the same day, "an unusual Sunday," Giannetta recalls, he had preached in Martina Franca, a town of 45,000, at a church called Chiesa Cristiana Evangelica Battista. The small congregation, he said, was "divided and spiritually cold."

Twenty-two persons waited in the narrow, cold, windowless hall to hear the guest preacher. Giannetta spoke frankly. "I told them that they were marking time and slowly fossilizing, but that was not God's will for them or for any church."

Giannetta preached, gave an invitation and asked the pastor, Pino Mollica, to stand in the front to receive the people. Probably, Giannetta noted, no one there had ever experienced an invitation—or come forward. But a deacon came.

"He stood before pastor Mollica and began praying, softly at first, then louder," Giannetta relates. "Finally he burst into tears and cried and prayed. Then came another man, who did the same thing."

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"When he went back to his seat his wife was crying. He turned to her and said: 'What are you waiting for? Go forward.'"

More than half the congregation came forward. Five people made professions of faith in Jesus Christ and asked for baptism. Pastor Mollica choked up and could not speak. Later he confided that he had decided earlier to give up his pastorate in Martina Franca. Now, he said, he was able to continue.

That type of experience—a moving of the Holy Spirit—has become more than occasional as continuing reports come out of Italy about a new evangelistic thrust throughout the country.

The Giannettas have played a key role in stirring the fires of evangelism.

During a two-week growth seminar in the 31-member Baptist church in Conversano, where neither evangelistic fires nor baptismal waters had stirred for 11 years, 22 persons accepted Christ and asked for baptism.

Giannetta recalls a baptismal service for nine of those: "That service was everything but reverent. In the little church, which seats 65 at most, about 250 were pushing, and some fighting, to see those being baptized."

After the service, Giannetta preached and gave an invitation. Fifteen more persons accepted Jesus Christ.

Italian Baptists haven't finished yet. They want more people to respond with the conviction displayed by Pasquale di Leo. The 60-year-old man accepted Christ at a service in Mottola on the morning of Giannetta's "unusual Sunday."

A year earlier Pasquale had nearly died—the doctors gave him up. But in a semiconscious state, he said he heard God telling him he would recover.

"When he got well," Giannetta said, "Pasquale began reading a New Testament given him 10 years earlier, and he gave his heart to Jesus. One day he prayed: 'God, I would like to see a true baptism and Lord's Supper.'"

That Sunday he entered the Baptist church in Mottola for the first time in his life. During the service, the congregation participated in the Lord's Supper and witnessed the baptism of nine converts.

"This is my church," Pasquale said to himself.

It has been ever since.