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Prayer Loss To Politics  
Harmful, Say MissionariesBy Norman Jameson *ced*

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--MaryDean Phillips' hardest times as a missionary to Zambia weren't when she was working in the bush station, doing without or in danger during civil unrest.

She suffered most when she learned Christian friends she depended on for prayer support were more concerned with biblical inerrancy and politics than with missions.

MaryDean and her husband Bill are Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's first missionaries-in-residence. "Our prayer is that because we've been here, many more people might respond to missions," said MaryDean. "Bill and I are convinced God is calling many more to foreign missions than are finding their way there."

"If, for example, Southern Baptists have the potential to win 100 people in an hour to Christ, how many people are left unsaved when we spend 45 minutes of that hour arguing about doctrine?" she asked.

Phillips tells of a Zambian bush church to which he traveled every two or three months to baptize 10 to 20 persons won to faith in Christ by church members.

Then, personalities embroiled the church in a conflict which consumed all its energies. When Phillips returned there were no baptismal candidates.

He worked to resolve the conflict and when he came again he baptized 18.

Southern Baptists concentrating on personalities and doctrine may be just as distracted "if we begin to emphasize anything that's not our main reason for existing," Phillips said.

Still the Phillipses have been encouraged about mission interest since their return to the States. They find church members eager to learn how the Cooperative Program supports missions as well. "We're generally encouraged, but it's a little discouraging to know the needs around the world and see us (Southern Baptists) using our time for other things," said MaryDean.

Losing touch with friends in the States leads to heartaches upon returning. Phillips was moved to tears remembering times he lifted U.S. pastors as examples of virtue to Zambian pastors struggling with culturally accepted infidelity--only to learn of friends who left the ministry and of families shattered by divorce.

"Zambians understand more who you are than what you say," said Phillips. "It's necessary to have a lifestyle that goes with the message."

The Phillipses resolved lifestyle issues soon after arriving in Zambia in 1978. Seeing Zambians uncomfortable in their home the Phillipses gradually replaced their decorative furnishings with utilitarian local items.

When they noticed friends walking around the patch of carpet rather than across it to take a seat on the sofa they r moved the carpet.

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Like women in America, MaryDean was conscious of what she wore to church from one Sunday to the next. Unlike them she remembered so she could wear the same dress again, enabling Zambian women who only had one dress not to be self-conscious.

The Phillipses said their lifestyle consciousness dawned gradually. While they urge everyone to be aware of the consequences of their lifestyle on others, they said their only advice would be to do as God leads.

"People in America are crying for somebody after whom they can pattern their lives," Phillips said. He would like those models to be Christians who are visible stewards of God's material resources.

As a general evangelist in Zambia for three and a half years, Phillips saw the number of rural churches in his area double from 17 to 34. He participated in more than 1,600 baptisms--results of national church evangelism, he said.

"The people are eager to grow and worship together and mature in their Christian faith in Zambia," said MaryDean, who traveled with Phillips and stayed with him in the back of a truck he had converted to a camper.

The closest Baptist mission station to the Phillipses was 100 miles. Their own town of 35,000 had one grocery store and three gas stations where fuel was nearly \$4 a gallon.

Caterpillars and field mice, sold in the local market, complemented a steady diet of corn-meal mush. Food grown locally was reasonably priced but a refrigerator could cost \$3,000.

Electricity was fairly dependable except when an elephant knocked down a power pole on a nearby game reserve. Tap water was available about half the time.

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✓ (BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Press

Nebraska Authorities Violated  
Right of Sanctuary, Dunn Says

  
By Helen Parmley

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DALLAS (BP) -- Authorities who pulled worshippers out of Faith Baptist Church in Louisville, Neb., and padlocked the church, violated the ancient right of sanctuary, according to James Dunn.

"It is devastating that a church can be padlocked and people, whatever the nature of their protest, can be dragged out of a church while in prayer," said Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington.

A five-year-old dispute between Louisville authorities and the church came to a head Oct. 18, when Sheriff Fred Tesch and his deputies went to the church and arrested Everett Sileven, who was conducting a singing session with children. The dispute focuses on the pastor's refusal to use state-certified teachers in his church-related school.

"There is more involved here than religious liberty," Dunn said. "We are dealing with the right of assembly, the right of redress for grievances and the freedom of speech.

"There is a clear distinction that can be made between the laws that relate to certification of teachers and the padlocking of a church and pulling people out while they are worshipping. It is, if not technically and legally, at least emotionally and ethically, a violation of the ancient right of sanctuary."

Sileven, a fundamentalist preacher of the independent Baptist congregation in Louisville, was given a four-month contempt of court sentence for refusing to close his non-accredited Faith Christian School. He was released from jail Oct. 23 after promising to close the school temporarily.

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More than 350 supporters from around the nation wept and cheered when Sileven returned to the church. One said the pastor promised a "moratorium" on the school until the Nebraska Legislature meets next month in an emergency session.

Several times during the five-year-old dispute, Sileven has promised to close the school, only to reopen it later.

Dunn, whose agency is composed of nine Baptist bodies, including the Southern Baptist Convention, said he is not familiar with the background of the Faith Baptist dispute, but claimed it is beside the point when addressing the violation of rights.

"When an overreaction of this severity occurs, a line has been crossed," he said. "Whatever we believe about accreditation or non-accreditation, people of good will everywhere ought to respond negatively to a situation where the right of sanctuary has been violated."

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(Parmley is religion editor of the Dallas Morning News.)

Quit "Missionizing" Jews,  
Rabbi Urges Christians

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LITTLE SWITZERLAND, N. C. (BP)--"Christians shouldn't stop missionizing, but Christians should stop missionizing Jews," said Rabbi Leon Klenicki, co-director of interreligious affairs for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith during the third in a series of Baptist-Jewish academic dialogues.

Klenicki was the opening speaker in the four-day meeting at Wildacres Retreat, a Jewish-owned center located about 30 miles northeast of Asheville in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains.

The New York rabbi stressed the mutual responsibility of Jews and Christians for missions, saying "we have to missionize together" in trueness to God's covenant with Noah charging the faithful with bringing God to the world, adding the best technique of mission for both Jews and Christians is to "live in God."

From beginning to end of the dialogue, Jews affirmed Christians as having a part in God's covenant and helping fulfill the mission of God's people.

B. Elmo Scoggin, professor of Hebrew and Old Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N. C., the major Baptist speaker at the dialogue, said the issue of mission and witness is vital because of the command to evangelize the world.

Luther Copeland, senior professor of missions and world religions at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. added that, without harshness or any implication of superiority, he feels he must present his witness of God's activity in Christ to his Jewish friends.

Copeland expressed dismay, however, at the thought there would ever cease to be a Jewish community.

Rabbi Joshua O. Haberman of Washington Hebrew Congregation agreed Jews and Christians have the same essential mission--to study and declare their faith to the world and to develop a righteous community that makes faith believable.

Haberman, the major Jewish speaker at the dialogue, affirmed that Christianity has brought the revelation of God to areas of the world Jews could never have reached. He added that the value of a dialogue such as this is that it forces both sides to rethink their views and to work at restoring confidence in each other.

Thirty Jews and Baptists from 10 states and the District of Columbia were involved in the regional dialogue, sponsored jointly by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board interfaith witness department and the interreligious affairs department of A.D.L.

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Similar regional dialogues were held at Wildacres in the summers of 1979 and 1980. A national dialogue co-sponsored by the organizations was held in January 1982, at Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Co-directors of the regional dialogue were Klenicki and George J. Sheridan, regional director of the HMB interfaith witness department, based in Union, N.J.

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Questions Led Buddhist Monk  
To Christ, Then To DBC Campus

By Tommy Thomason

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DALLAS (BP)--Seven years ago, Paul Chandrapala was a zealous Buddhist monk.

Now Chandrapala is a junior Bible major at Dallas Bible College, and he's still planning to become a missionary—but he wants to return to the Far East with the gospel of Christ.

He was raised in a devout Buddhist home, and some of his earliest memories are of being taken to Buddhist temples.

When he entered school, his teacher spent the first day of class telling his young pupils about the character of Buddha. Chandrapala was so challenged he went home to tell his parents he wanted to become a Buddhist monk.

"In one sense my parents were sad, because it meant I would be leaving home for many years to join a monastery," he remembered. "But in another way they were quite happy, because it is a great honor in Sri Lanka for a family to have a member who is a monk."

So at age seven, he entered the strenuous, regimented life of the monastery—days which began at 4 a.m. and lasted until almost midnight. Even novices his age were expected to meditate four or five hours a day.

Chandrapala enthusiastically accepted the teaching of Buddhism.

"I was motivated by my desire to find the truth, to tell the truth, and to destroy all other religions," he said.

But the more he studied Buddhism, the more spiritually frustrated he became.

"I never doubted that Buddhism had the truth," he explained. "I just believed I hadn't found the truth yet. I wanted to discover the real meaning of life."

If he had questions on his mind, on the outside he was a model Buddhist monk. Like all monks, he was worshiped as a holy man—even his parents bowed down before him to worship their son.

At age 17 he left the monastery to become, in effect, a Buddhist preacher. "My main goal was to go to all the world and tell people about Buddha," he said.

But he wanted to be more effective as a Buddhist missionary, especially among Christians. So he approached another monk with his concern, and the monk obtained a copy of the Bible for him.

"I began reading the Bible to find its falsehoods to use against Christians," he said. He began reading with Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." And instead of finding "falsehoods," he began to wonder if the God of the Bible was really the One who had created the universe.

In the back of the Bible was an address of a Christian group in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. So Chandrapala set out for Colombo. By this time, his spiritual frustration was so great he decided if he couldn't find truth with this group of Christians, he would commit suicide.

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"I went to these people and they told me about Jesus Christ," he said. "I felt inside that what they were saying was true, but I argued with them. I told them Christianity was nonsense." He left the office of the Christian group, and for eight hours walked on a lonely beach, thinking of his years of Buddhist indoctrination and of the strange new truth with which he had just been confronted.

"Then it was just as if God were speaking directly to me," he explained. "He was saying, 'Why don't you do what those Christians told you?'"

So he returned to the Christian group.

"They accepted me and told me how I could be saved," he said. "I bowed my head and prayed a simple prayer. I was born again."

Chandrapala was as zealous for his new-found faith as he had been for Buddhism. He studied for two years in a Bible school in Sri Lanka and later traveled widely in India and Pakistan preaching the gospel.

But he felt he needed more training. He wanted to come to America.

He was given \$1,000 to travel to the United States. The airplane ticket cost \$900, so he arrived at John F. Kenedy Airport in New York City with \$100 in his pocket. Since he planned to come to Dallas to attend school, he checked into the cost of an airline ticket to D-FW Airport. It was \$250.

But bus fare to Dallas was \$94. The taxi to the bus station cost him exactly \$6.

Penniless, Chandrapala was finally on his way to Dallas. But he felt the call of God on his life, and trusted God to provide the money he would need for his education.

He receives scholarship money at Dallas Baptist College, and works in the learning center. He gets many opportunities to speak in churches and tell of his conversion from Buddhism to Christianity.

But he is looking to the future, and plans to return to the Far East. He wants to establish a Bible school in Pakistan to train native workers, and eventually to minister in Communist China.

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(Tommy Thomason is director of public relations at Dallas Baptist College.)

Lost Pounds Of Flesh  
To Benefit Lottie Moon

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ARLINGTON, Tex. (BP)--Shylock asked for his "pound of flesh closest to the heart" in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice. Mayfield Road Church, Arlington, is going him one better. The church staff is offering to lose weight and sell each lost pound for \$1 to raise money for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"It will be tough, but we are all prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for Bold Mission Thrust," Pastor Robert L. Maddox Jr. said. Lay participation is also encouraged. A last weigh-in and pie supper kicked off the contest Oct. 24 and it will end with a weigh-out on Dec. 24.

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