



BAPTIST PRESS

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Historic Satellite Telecast
Previews Network Prototype

BSSB

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A historic live telecast of a Sunday School Board-sponsored seminar was beamed to more than 4,000 persons across the United States Oct. 26 with only two minor technical problems during the hour-long program.

The "Adult Growth Emphasis" satellite seminar was broadcast from the studios of Nashville's WDCN-TV by local microwave signals by AT&T telephone lines to Virginia Beach, Va., where a satellite uplink is located. From the satellite, signals were beamed on a leased satellite network to participants meeting in 24 states in 64 Holiday Inns, 14 churches and New Orleans and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminaries.

The program featured board president Grady Cothen, Sunday School department director Harry Piland, Larry Shotwell, supervisor of the adult Sunday School program section and several consultants in the section. Also included were videotaped interviews from church leaders and questions from participants at locations in Maryland, California, Colorado and Alabama via two-way audio communications.

Host directors at each location distributed copies of the "Powerpacket for the Adult Class," which was introduced and interpreted on the program. The powerpacket includes witnessing motivation and training helps and a questionnaire which Sunday School class leaders can fill out and send to the board to receive computerized suggestions for reaching more persons through the class.

The only actual broadcast difficulty came when audio problems were experienced and corrected during the first minute of the program. The other technical problem occurred toward the end of the broadcast, when a long distance call from Sunday School department director Harry Piland was lost because of a broken telephone connection. Piland, who was with the seminar audience at Golden Gate Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., was to have delivered a challenge statement to all seminar participants.

In Birmingham, Ala., where 59 persons gathered at the Holiday Inn convention center, host director Terrell Lawless, director of religious education for the Birmingham Baptist Association, said, "With every first time event there are a few mistakes and this was no exception. But I think they did a remarkable job. The concept of using this medium for reaching and training larger numbers of people is tremendous."

C.W. Moss, minister of education at McElwain Baptist Church, Birmingham, said the use of satellite communications will "enable the Sunday School Board to bring Glorieta and Ridgecrest types of training experiences to larger numbers of people through the year."

Shotwell observed that such a telecast will affect the success of Adult Growth Emphasis positively "because of its immediate introduction across the country to a representative group which will spread the word."

Cothen called the seminar an example of the "tremendous potential" available to Southern Baptists. He added that it was a good preview of programming to be done on Baptist TelNet, the Sunday School Board's network to churches to begin in 1984.

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"I just can't avoid feeling that what we have planned (Baptist TelNet) has been justified and prototyped today," Cothen said. "We gained some very valuable experience. We learned all over again how technical it is and how expensive it is. We have seen how important technical excellence is."

"I think we can see now that the sky is the limit in potential for the use of satellite broadcasting in the Lord's work," he said. "I have high hopes that seminar participants will see that potential and will want to see their churches get equipped to participate in Baptist TelNet."

Roy Kornegay, minister of education at First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, where one of the conferences was hosted, said he believes satellite teleconference training is limited only by people's imagination. "The seminar was tremendous to get that much information to that many people, that fast."

Small churches will benefit from this type of seminar, according to R.D. Jones, minister of education at First Baptist Church, Perryton, Texas, who drove 125 miles to attend the seminar in Amarillo. He said increased access to training opportunities will increase the effectiveness of small church leaders.

The attendance of approximately 4,000 was considerably below the initial goal of 9,000. Shotwell said conflicts with state and associational meetings in several locations were a major factor in attendance. However, he noted that the seminar still reached more persons than would have been possible through sending board consultants to the 24 states where sessions were held.

Shotwell said the idea of the satellite seminar originated out of a desire to stress to adult Sunday School leaders nationwide the need for reaching adults as part of the SBC goals of increasing the Sunday School enrollment to 8.5 million by 1985.

The adult growth emphasis includes four major projects: Adult Start-A-Class, Adult Growth Week, Powerpacketing Adult Classes and Powerpacketing Adult Homebound departments. The powerpacket introduced at the seminar also is being mailed to every church in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

HMB's Nelson To Retire
To Alabama Association

Baptist Press
10/27/82

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ALBERTVILLE, Ala. (BP)—James W. Nelson, director of the associational missions division for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, has been elected director of missions for the Marshall Missionary Baptist Association in the county where he was born.

Nelson, 58, will take early retirement from the Home Mission Board, effective Jan. 1, 1983, after 22 years as a HMB missionary, director of missions for New Mexico Baptists and national staff member.

He will be going back home to retire in Albertville where he graduated from high school, where his mother, Emma Dean Nelson, lives and where he met his wife, Annis Dodd.

Located between Huntsville and Gadsden, Ala., bisected by the Tennessee River and Lake Guntersville, Marshall Missionary Baptist Association includes 82 churches, about two-thirds of them led by bivocational pastors.

Nelson said he is excited about going back home and working closely with people he loves.

In an interview published in Missions/USA magazine, Nelson said his greatest frustrations as an administrator have been "not being personally involved with people," and working through "bureaucratic red tape."

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Taking the Marshall association position offers an opportunity to spend his remaining years working with people on a local level "back in the trenches where the battles are fought and won," Nelson said.

Before joining the Home Mission Board staff in 1975 as director of the rural-urban missions department, Nelson was director of the mission ministries division for the Baptist Convention of New Mexico from 1971-75.

He was a missionary working with Navajo Indians, living on the Navajo Reservation near Shiprock, N.M., from 1964-71, and was a pastor and HMB missionary in Panama, 1960-63.

Before appointment as a missionary, Nelson was pastor of several churches in Alabama and Mississippi, including Catawba Springs Baptist Church and East Brewton Baptist Church, both in Brewton, Ala., and Goodyear Baptist Church, Picayune, Miss.

He is a graduate of Howard College (now Samford University), Birmingham, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of two books.

Nelson will succeed Gilbert Burks who is retiring after 27 years as director of missions for Marshall Association.

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Relief Ministry Work
Prompts Baptism Requests

RB
By Elizabeth Smith

Baptist Press
10/27/82

SAFED, Israel (BP)—Two women of diverse religious backgrounds who worked in Israeli Baptist relief efforts were so influenced by the volunteer ministry they asked to be baptized.

Nowal Jerias Kumseyah of Beit Sahous, near Bethlehem, a Greek Orthodox, and Anna Birkenhauer of Tubingen, West Germany, a Lutheran, were so influenced by the work and by each other that they were baptized the same day in different services.

The two women were working in a hostel in the Galilee city of Safed where Lebanese Moslems, Druze and Christians of several denominations stay while they visit hospitalized family members who are victims of the Lebanon war.

According to Ibrahim Sim'an, a pastor and director of Baptist relief and social ministries, the women were themselves influenced by the prayers and Bible studies they were leading. "They, too, felt something special as they served the Lord in the effort to provide for physical and spiritual needs in this ministry of reconciliation," he said.

As Kumseyah, an Arab mother of five, completed 10 days of volunteer service at the hostel, she told Birkenhauer, her co-worker, that she planned to attend a Baptist conference at Baptist Village, Petah Tiqva, and she would ask for baptism.

Birkenhauer, a 21-year-old social worker who had been at the hostel for six weeks, decided to go along to the conference and see her friend baptized.

She was in the crowd which gathered around the swimming pool just before the final session of the conference. She heard Kumseyah's testimony and saw Sim'an baptize her.

Two hours later at the close of a message preached by Joseph Underwood, former Foreign Mission Board consultant in evangelism, Birkenhauer went forward in the worship service and asked that she, too, receive believer's baptism.

Within half an hour conference participants—more than 150 Arabs, Jews and other believers of many nationalities—were gathered around the pool again. This time Kumseyah watched as Birkenhauer was baptized.

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Both women are preparing for more effective Christian service. Kumseyah is a second-year student at Bethlehem Bible College. Her husband, a craftsman who works in mother-of-pearl, approves of her studies although it is fairly uncommon in the Bethlehem area for an Arab mother in her mid-30s to be a college student.

Family members give her prayerful support and help with the household chores while she is in class.

Birkenhauer is studying Hebrew in Jerusalem where she plans to support herself by caring for children and the elderly.

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Stray Bullet Gives
Missionary A Start

Baptist Press
10/27/82

RB

OLINDA, Brazil (BP)— A stray bullet grazed the shoulder of Southern Baptist missionary Lou Demie Mein as her husband conducted an outdoor worship service.

Mrs. Mein and 14 Brazilian Baptists were listening to missionary David Mein preach under the trees at a Baptist deacon's vacation home near Olinda when a shot was heard in the distance. She felt something hit her shoulder. Astounded, she watched a bullet drop into her lap.

Because the bullet tore through a tree branch before striking Mrs. Mein its impact was slowed so it only grazed her shoulder. The worshipers never determined who fired the shot but Mein said he was certain it was a freak accident, not an attack on the congregation.

Mein is president of the North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary in Recife and pastor of Cordeiro Baptist Church there. Mrs. Mein is a church librarian and deaconess and works with with senior citizens at the church.

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Tennesseans, Missionaries
Meet Upper Volta President

By Al Shackelford

RB

Baptist Press
10/27/82

OUAGADOUGOU, Upper Volta—President Saye Zerbo of Upper Volta told representatives of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board that a Baptist hunger and relief pilot project is "one of the best rural development services in all Upper Volta."

Meeting with the president in his office were Wayne Allen, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor of East Park Baptist Church, Memphis; Al Shackelford, editor of the Baptist and Reflector; Bryant Durham, FMB missionary and chairman of the Baptist Mission in Upper Volta, and Larry Cox, FMB agriculture evangelist at the Sanwabo project.

Zerbo said 98 percent of the population depends on farming, but have no technology in agriculture. "Thanks to the Baptist Mission I see a difference in the Sanwabo area," he said.

He described the most critical need in Upper Volta as water and praised Baptists' efforts in digging wells and in completing the dam for a 65-acre lake. "Most of the population are very courageous and will work, but without water they cannot be self-sufficient," he added.

Allen presented a certificate from Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander making Zerbo an honorary citizen of the state, a key to the city of Memphis and a certificate from Memphis Mayor J.O. Patterson Jr. making the president an honorary citizen of that city.

Noting the number of Tennesseans who have come to serve as volunteers in Upper Volta, Zerbo observed, "There is a feeling of brotherhood that already exists in the spirit and in the heart between the people of Tennessee and the people of Upper Volta. It is great to notice that neither distance nor the difference in color has prevented this."

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Expressing appreciation for this spirit the president pledged his continuing support and said he expects the relationship to grow.

Zerbo said Baptists being in his country for only 11 years was not a handicap for the group to become known. He noted that the French were there for centuries, but in some areas more people know about Baptists than about the French.

Durham said the 30-minute meeting with the president was very encouraging and gave the opportunity for many Voltairics to learn who Baptists are. After the meeting in the president's office, an interview with Durham and Allen was videotaped and played over the Ouagadougou television station.

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Trucking Company Logo
Sure Sign Of Commitment

By Elsie Taylor

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Baptist Press
10/27/82

FARMER CITY, Ill. (BP)--When Roger Roberson became a Christian seven years ago he realized Christians "are committed to spread the Word." Roberson, president of Pre-Fab Transit Co. decided to put a Christian-centered logo and a picture of a church with the words, 'Attend the church of your choice,' on the backs of his trucks.

Roberson said Pre-Fab has 150 vans on the road now and is purchasing 50 more. The company also has 1,000 flat-bed trucks, helping convey the message nationwide.

"A sign on the back adds about \$200 to the cost of each truck, but God always trades off," Roberson said. "We've only had one van stolen since we added the signs."

"We get letters daily from people who follow the trucks and are encouraged by the message," Roberson added. "We've gotten about 1,000 or more letters and only two have been negative. Oh, one fellow did take me to task and accused me of trying to advertise God. Another said his was the only true god. I told him he must not read the same Bible as I do."

A typical letter read: "Just a note of thanks. I appreciated the message on the back of one of your trucks with a church painted on it."

He said some motorists even follow the trucks, going out of their way to get the address so they can send a note of thanks. When the decals were put on, the drivers never hesitated or complained, Roberson said. "It was just the opposite. They are proud to pull them. They, too, get favorable comments."

Roberson and his wife, Ramona, are members of Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church in Urbana, where he teaches youth, is an usher and is on the finance committee. Ramona teaches children and is on the music committee. They have four daughters and one son.

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(Elsie Taylor is editorial assistant at the Illinois Baptist.)

CORRECTION---In BP story mailed 10/25/82 entitled "Brotherhood Commission Plans Scripture Distribution," please correct graph 9, line 2, from Carl Doda to Carl Voda. Thanks, BP

CORRECTION--In BP story mailed 10/26/82 entitled "Questions Led Buddhist Monk to Christ, Then to DBC Campus," please change graph 2, line 1 to read Dallas Baptist College, not Dallas Bible College. Thanks, BP.