



--FEATURES
produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Craig Bird, Feature Editor

April 4, 1983

83-52

Chile Missionary's Ministry
Takes Him to 'End of World'

By Bill Webb

PORT WILLIAMS, Chile(BP)--This South Atlantic island port of 600 people goes virtually unnoticed by most of the world. But Port Williams is of immense importance to the Chilean government--and to a Southern Baptist missionary.

Situated 200 miles off the Southern tip of South America, Williams is a strategic military base guarding Chilean territorial claims to dozens of islands and a wedge of the Antarctic against what Chile regards as Argentine expansionism. Williams is the official capital of the Chilean Antarctic.

To missionary Victor Lyons, Williams is spiritually strategic. Military personnel here experience tensions from isolation and separation from family. Many welcome Christian counseling and witness. Eighty to 90 percent of base personnel leave after two years at the Navarino Island port, so Christians won and developed at Williams will, in time, disperse to communities throughout Chile with the gospel.

Ironically, Lyons' bimonthly visits to Williams weren't even on the first-term missionary's agenda when he and his wife, Lucinda, arrived in Chile in January 1982. For two years they had anticipated ministry in the world's southernmost city, Punta Arenas, Chile. Lyons had most of his evangelistic strategy mapped out for the city of 120,000 people on the Straits of Magellan, even before he arrived.

As the couple stepped off the plane in Punta Arenas for the first time, David Salinas, a marine electrician, greeted them on behalf of a two-family congregation in Williams. Salinas and his wife, Nora, and children, Claudia and Moises, had flown up to the mainland at their own expense to ask the new missionary to make regular visits to their community.

Lyons was impressed. In early March, he boarded a six-passenger plane to make a trial trip to Williams. When the aircraft glided onto the tiny island airstrip, all eight evangelicals greeted him.

The week went well. Base Commander Frederick Corthorn Besse, also the mayor of Williams and governor of the entire Chilean Antarctic, said he would try to arrange free passage for Lyons' future visits. He gave the group wood to build benches for their chapel, constructed a few months earlier. A committed Catholic, Corthorn attended services himself one night, then authorized a weekly radio broadcast and granted the group permission to evangelize the whole community door to door. By the end of the week, an enthusiastic Lyons had committed himself to return regularly.

Lyons' work on Williams is comprehensive, his schedule rigorous. He preaches very night and visits homes each afternoon, passing out tracts to the adults and chewing gum to the children. Bible and doctrinal studies often follow worship and may last a couple of nights.

He also maintains a late-night counseling schedule that starts around 11 p.m. and may continue until 2 a.m. or later. He helps couples deal with marital problems and counsels young soldiers trying to eliminate vices--such as excessive drinking and gambling, both prevalent in Williams.

On his most recent trip to Williams, he was granted permission to visit three other island communities in the region, where he preached and distributed literature. He hopes to return to those ports; some had never had a clergyman before, he said.

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Since neither Williams nor Punta Arenas has a source for religious literature, Lyons takes orders each visit. With healthy diversions so limited in Williams, he places great stock in what he calls the "reading ministry." He also plans to train several members of the group in theological education by extension. "We will have input into many evangelical churches and help train some future leaders in churches throughout Chile as these men leave," he said.

One of those men is Salinas. A Baptist--though several of the 30 or so current members of the congregation represent other evangelical traditions--Salinas is president of the group, an administrator-lay pastor. Soft-spoken and gentle, he is the driving force behind the work. He provides leadership when "Pastor Lyons" is not there. He also mobilizes the believers for community ministries.

When someone on the base faces a crisis and must return to the Chilean mainland, the group is likely to help with travel. When fire destroyed a family's home, the evangelicals saw that the victims didn't miss a meal.

Nora Salinas wasn't a believer when her husband opened their home for worship four years ago. She closed herself in her bedroom while he and the others prayed, studied and worshipped, but she couldn't help overhearing them as they prayed over and over for her salvation. Finally she made her profession of faith and her life changed dramatically. Today she faithfully leads a women's group.

Though the congregation has its own chapel now, the Salinas home has remained the fellowship hall. Because dinner at the base dorm coincides with evening worship services, Nora Salinas developed a ministry of hospitality for the single men and those separated from their families. They know they'll find a hot meal at her table after the service. She usually doesn't sit to eat herself but quietly waits on the others. Like her husband, she has developed servant qualities.

The little dining table in one end of the living room is central to the ministry in Williams. Strategy for evangelism and training have been shared here. Over cups of thick, black Chilean coffee, visitors linger long after the meal for fellowship, prayer and singing to guitar accompaniment.

Says Lyons, "I've taught more theology and Bible around that table than in the chapel."

And if he figures it right, as his fellow believers are dispersed from Williams, that theology will be shared informally at other tables all over Chile for years to come.

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

Black Baptist Student Groups
Minister To Variety Of Needs

By Gail Rothwell

Baptist Press
4/4/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Baptist student leaders should promote both black student fellowships on predominately white campuses and Baptist Student Union groups on black campuses in an effort to minister to a variety of student needs, according to three ministers.

Lloyd Crosby, BSU director at Texas Southern University, Houston, the largest black college in the United States; Otto Spangler, BSU campus minister at the University of Florida, Gainesville, and John H. Corbitt, part-time ethnic ministries consultant for national student ministries of the Baptist Sunday School Board, are each involved in black student ministry.

Corbitt, who is also pastor of Springfield Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C., said in the mid-70s there had been an effort to combine black and white student groups.

"In the mid-70s black students began attending traditionally all-white colleges and universities, causing a major shift in the student population," explained Corbitt.

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"Although there are no doctrinal or theological differences between Southern Baptist and National Baptist student groups, there is a distinctive difference in the content and style of worship," he said.

Spangler, whose predominately white campus of 34,000 students is the largest in the Southeast, believes there can be unity among the different student groups, but cautions leaders to be sensitive to the variety of cultural needs. "I don't mix my Korean and Chinese Bible study groups," he noted. "It took me a while to realize I don't have to force my black and white student groups to worship together."

Spangler and Crosby agree student directors should see black student groups as assets to the total student ministry program. Black student fellowships are semi-autonomous groups that work within the total BSU structure, they noted.

"We can learn a lot from our black brothers, such as not being afraid to express our emotions," said Spangler. "I have never sensed such a feeling of joy and freedom as I experienced in a black worship service."

Crosby is the BSU director for a campus of 10,000 black students. He said much more freedom of expression exists in black worship services because "historically blacks have been a society of people under restraints. "Religion, especially music, gave us an avenue of expression we were not able to find elsewhere," he noted. "The church was the one place blacks were allowed freedom of self-expression."

Crosby challenged student leaders to look for points of unity, but also warned against using the "blanket approach" to ministry. "Nurturing and developing individuals should be the focus of a student ministry program," he noted.

"Cultural distinctives become minor when you focus on the one factor that unifies all people," Crosby said. "The bottom line in any ministry is love, regardless of culture."

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Evangelism Leaders Forecast
National Spiritual Awakening

By Patti Stephenson

Baptist Press
4/4/83

ATLANTA (BP)--Record-breaking attendance, outbreaks of revival, renewed interest and commitment to communicating the gospel--these highlights of recent state evangelism conferences may herald the coming of a "major evangelical awakening in America," according to Robert Hamblin, Home Mission Board evangelism vice president.

Hamblin and other HMB evangelism staff and consultants attend 38 state evangelism conferences annually. The latest spate of these gatherings, which attract primarily pastors, denominational leaders and also an increasing number of laypersons, have been marked by a "unique unity," Hamblin reported. "Pastors of large and small churches, seminary and college professors, denominational leaders, laypeople from rural, suburban and metropolitan churches--all are calling for better ways to communicate the gospel."

Hamblin assessed this common concern as "an indication we have a unity in the Southern Baptist Convention centered around evangelism and missions. People are really interested in getting on with winning the world to Jesus."

"While we're debating the Bible, most Baptists are interested in hearing what the Bible says and doing it," Hamblin noted. Evangelism meetings are focusing on "how-tos" as well as the typical inspirational format, he said. "What we've seen means we need to do a better job of presenting the means of evangelizing."

Glenn Sheppard, the HMB's special assistant in spiritual awakening, said, "We've heard people calling for programs annointed of God rather than methological machinery to build institutions" and pastors are exhibiting a "more positive and open attitude toward implementing a prayer strategy for spiritual awakening." He predicted, "We're on the brink of real revival--not just emotional, but a movement of real depth."

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The HMB leaders attributed the interest in revival to a "sense of desperation" among Americans. "People feel circumstances have gotten out of control and realize God must intervene in society," Hamblin explained.

When Southern Baptists understand the critical world situation, "they want to know more about how to reach the lost," observed Joe Ford, associate vice president of HMB evangelism.

Ford cited evidence of the same trends in "phenomenal" attendance at recent state youth evangelism conferences. In Tennessee, 35,000 youth gathered and "hundreds made decisions," he reported. Many youth who attend these Southern Baptist sessions are members of other Christian denominations, he added.

Sheppard said results of the Tennessee youth conference reverberated through a 72-member church when their youth returned home. "They're still having revival," he declared.

Other major awakenings have occurred in the late 1950s, and again in the early '70s when the "Jesus Movement" stormed the nation. "Other great revivals have had a great impact on our cities and we hope this one will, too," Hamblin said.

Hamblin stressed "we saw people at evangelism conferences showing genuine Christian love in action as they witnessed," wedding evangelism and ministry.

The budding sense of revival within Southern Baptist ranks will result in "greater personal involvement of pastors and laypeople in such personal witnessing," Hamblin noted, with corresponding increases in the number of persons won to Christ.

Sheppard concluded, "We define revival not just as a meeting but as an invasion of God. We think God is responding to our prayers."

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Seattle Pastor's
'Service' Unique

By Carol Rathbun

Baptist Press
4/4/83

SEATTLE (BP)--Having a strong forehand or serve has never been a prerequisite among Southern Baptists for the pastoral ministry, but in Joseph Chen's case it proves to be a definite advantage.

Once the national table tennis champion in Taiwan, Chen now uses his athletic skills to bring people into church.

Chen, pastor of the only Taiwanese Baptist church in Seattle, says there are more Taiwanese people in the Seattle area than anywhere else on the West Coast. His current work with 21 Taiwanese families throughout the city and the potential for ministering to many more is broadened by his ability to play table tennis and to play it well.

Every Sunday after morning worship service in the fellowship hall of Lake Washington Baptist Church, the people sit down to a potluck dinner. Then the tables are cleared, the chairs moved aside and the table tennis begins.

Chen explained a lot of Taiwanese and Chinese people who won't come to the worship service will come to the church on Sunday afternoon and during the week to play table tennis. This is a means of getting them into the church and at least acquainting them with Christianity, he said. These contacts open the door to further witnessing opportunities.

Phil Flick, pastor of the Lake Washington church, said the church once had a "Beat the Champ" tournament as a revival promotion effort and about 50 people came to play.

"If you're going to reach the Taiwanese, I believe, it must be through a Taiwanese pastor," Flick said. "And Joseph has all the credentials to do it.

"He has the aggressiveness and the heart to share Christ and he has a very loving touch."

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Flick said Chen has had every reason to quit several times because of health concerns and discouragement, but he has "stayed with it." A pastor for 26 years, Chen first came to the United States as one of six members on a national table tennis team from Taiwan in 1971.

In 1980 Chen and his family moved to Seattle to stay. Now they all share in his ministry, especially his wife and mother who do a lot of visiting among Taiwanese families.

Chen's competitive days are not over, but there is less and less time to devote to competitive table tennis. In 1981, Chen competed in the U.S. Closed National Tournament in Las Vegas and took second place in his singles division.

Other tournaments are regularly held in Portland and Vancouver, Wash., but there is little free time to participate in them with a church to take care of, Chen said.

To Chen, it is much more important to win his Taiwanese people to the Lord than to win in a lot of table tennis tournaments.

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(Rathbun is associate editor of the Northwest Baptist Witness.)

Marguerite McCall
Died Easter Morning

By Pat Patillo

Baptist Press
4/4/83

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Marguerite Mullinix McCall, 68, wife of Duke K. McCall, chancellor of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, died Easter morning of a stroke.

She had undergone successful surgery to replace a heart valve earlier on March 3 and had been on medication to regulate her heart beat.

She was a native of Greenville, S.C. and met her husband while both were students at Furman University. Reared a Presbyterian, she was the first person her newly ordained husband baptized. Survivors include four sons: Duke Jr., who is an attorney in Greenville, S.C.; and Douglas, a dentist; John Richard, an attorney and a member of the SBC Executive Committee, and Michael, a physician, all of Louisville.

Mrs. McCall shared her husband's heavy work load through 46 years of marriage. During that time he served as pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, 1940-43; president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1943-46; executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, 1946-51; president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary 1951-82, and since 1980 as president of the 30-million member Baptist World Alliance.

She was a founding member of the Woman's Committee of Southern Seminary and was active in Broadway Baptist Church.

Burial will be in Cave Hill Cemetery where the seminary has two official plots for its presidents and for the faculty. The funeral will be at 2:30 p.m. April 5 at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville.

The family has requested that expressions of sympathy take the form of contributions to the Marguerite McCall professorship fund which has been established at Southern Seminary.

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CORRECTION: In BP mailed 3/28/83, please make the following correction on page 1. Lewis McDonald is 'former,' not present President of Baptist Convention of Maryland.

Thanks,
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