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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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83-104

'Passport To People'
Asks Baptists To Care

By Erich Bridges

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention is "big" on missions--but how much do Southern Baptists really care about people?

Southern Baptist foreign missionaries answer that question for themselves every day, but a few of them posed the question again and again to some 2,000 lay adults, young people and ministers attending "Passport to People," the Foreign Missions Conference June 25-July 1 at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

"Traveling" from session to session with visas stamped into their passport-like programs, participants saw a series of graphic images through the eyes of missionaries.

Physician Martha Hagood told of a Korean seaman who plunged a knife into his abdomen in a suicide attempt during a port stop in Nigeria. Rushed to Eku Baptist Hospital, he refused treatment, pulling life-sustaining tubes from his body. The entire hospital staff, missionary family members and friends worked for weeks to restore his will to live. He went home and sent a letter two years later saying, "Thank you for giving me life and hope."

Grover Tyner, missionary in the Philippines, can't forget the sight of a mother on a road begging alms to bury the dead child draped in her arms. Or the morning he woke up in a missionary compound and heard a "small commotion" at the gate. A starving woman had stopped there the night before. And died.

Missionary Lynn Barrett rides the Hong Kong subway on her way to work in a Baptist medical clinic. Sometimes she is literally swept off the train at the wrong station by some of the nearly six million Chinese surging toward schools and work in the crowded colony.

Al Hood, missionary surgeon in Thailand, related "one of the saddest sights I have ever seen," an 11-year-old boy dying of rabies, the result of an untreated dog bite. He had the misfortune of being born in an area where even the simplest medical treatment is still widely unknown. "There's so much darkness in Thailand," Hood said, and he wept. "I can still cry about it. We've got to be burdened about the people of the world who are lost."

A former missionary to Sri Lanka, Murphy Terry, recently rode through the streets of Manila, Philippines, not in an air-conditioned car but in the back of a pickup truck. He heard the city's sounds, smelled its odors, brushed by its masses. "At that moment I felt at one with the people of Manila," said Terry, now associate director for South and Southeast Asia.

Actress Sheila Bailey, who portrayed missionary Lottie Moon in the new film, "Journey Home: Lottie Moon of China," presented two dramatic monologues based on Moon's writings. They revealed a missionary who identified so completely with the desperately hungry Chinese she lived with that she ultimately starved herself.

"We must see people, all the people of the world and each person individually because God loves people individually," said Charles Bryan, Foreign Mission Board senior vice president, as he summarized the conference theme. "To see people as Jesus sees people is to care."

Southern Baptists may think they see people as Jesus sees them, added President R. Keith Parks, but they haven't yet become "people of spiritual power. If we were, we'd be changing the world." Parks acknowledged Southern Baptists send more money and missionaries overseas than any other Protestant denomination, but compared per capita foreign mission participation of 20 American Protestant groups.

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"Where do we rank in numbers of members per missionary?" he asked. "Not in numbers of missionaries, but numbers of members to provide one missionary? Out of 20, we're ninth.

"Out of percentage of our budget that goes to foreign missions, we're number 12," he continued. "Missions is our hallmark, yet Episcopalians and American Baptists give a greater percentage than we do. Out of per capita giving to foreign missions, we rank 13th. A dozen groups do better than we do.... You see, sometimes we allow our bigness to confuse us."

Parks chastised preachers who say God wants to make all faithful believers rich ("That is heresy if I ever heard it.") and called churches that amass wealth only to spend it on themselves "tumors on the body of Christ."

"He who has the mind of Christ doesn't hold on to what he has," Parks said. "He turns it loose in order that others might have."

Sixty-five people responded publicly to Parks' challenges to spiritual commitment. Thirty-five committed themselves to foreign or home missions service and eleven indicated a calling to church vocations, including possible mission service. Nineteen others rededicated themselves to Christ's leadership.

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Urban Evangelism Congress
Produces Practical Strategies

Baptist Press
7/13/83

NITEROI, Brazil (BP)--Some 440 Baptist leaders from 20 countries compared notes on urban evangelism June 26-July 3 in Niteroi, Brazil, and went home with a bundle of practical ideas.

The World Baptist Congress on Urban Evangelism, sponsored by Brazilian Baptists, produced a thick sheaf of strategies for evangelizing cities. Participants joined several thousand Brazilians each evening for inspirational messages, but afternoon sessions focused on intensive discussion of 12 models for action.

Recorded on paper and videocassette for distribution to Baptist conventions worldwide, the models outline proven evangelistic methods in philosophy and practice. They include tactics for reaching the nominally religious, confronting secular ideologies, church planting, student evangelism, social ministry and motivating laymen.

"For the first time in any conference I have attended, we came out with programs that can be shared with people around the world," said Ervin Hastey, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board evangelism and church growth strategist. "We're going to try to see every country gets this."

The growing vitality and effectiveness of urban home Bible studies, for example, drew attention from Irland Azevedo, pastor of First Baptist Church in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the largest city on the continent.

The family atmosphere of a home, and its appeal to city people repelled by church buildings, opens unlimited possibilities, Azevedo said. Space for city churches is rapidly disappearing and home groups may be the key to evangelizing urban apartment blocks, where half the world's population will live at the end of this century.

Denton Lotz, Baptist World Alliance evangelism and education director, introduced a series of approaches for reaching target groups--secularized people such as professionals and intellectuals, the poor, believers in other religions, ethnic subcultures, students.

But specialized approaches can only succeed through or in cooperation with the local church, the leaders agreed. "We are convinced...the local congregation of believers committed to Christ and his mission is God's concrete alternative for this urban generation," said "A Challenge to Baptists" adopted by the congress.

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"Therefore, we urgently call all Baptists...to a courageous, unified endeavor toward establishing thousands of new churches in the cities."

The leaders also called on Baptists of various nations to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones. "Methods may vary from nation to nation...but our message is not cultural; our message is Jesus Christ," declared the Congress Resolutions Committee.

The evangelism congress made an immediate impact on two urban areas--Niteroi and nearby Rio de Janeiro. Federal employees were allowed leave time to attend the sessions through the efforts of a Baptist congressman. The meeting drew considerable attention from Brazil's largest newspapers and a session on urban social needs reportedly sparked an hour-long discussion in the federal congress in Brasilia.

Southern Baptist missionary Perry Ellis, who works with the Brazilian Baptist Convention's evangelism board, coordinated the conference.

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Conflicts, Forced Terminations
Trouble Many Congregations

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
7/13/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Forced termination of Southern Baptist pastors is only one part of a thorny, multi-faceted issue which threatens the very existence of some churches and the spiritual and emotional health of many persons involved.

The firing of a pastor or staff member is often a manifestation of a church embroiled in conflict, according to Brooks Faulkner, supervisor of the career guidance section in the Sunday School Board's church administration department. Also, termination has an impact on family members who may be torn between anger and grief.

There are other dimensions: staff members called under one pastor whose resignations are requested by a new pastor; church members who feel victimized by a pastor who (to them) has been lazy, irresponsible or even dishonest, and ministers and families who need counseling to deal with spiritual and emotional pain as well as food and a roof over their heads.

That the problems are real and immediate was evidenced by the response to Baptist Press articles earlier this year about a conference for terminated ministers. Some wrote to offer help and others to simply share personal feelings and experiences.

The wife of a staff member whose pastor is pressuring him to move, wrote, "I don't know what the solution is, but I feel sometimes like we are looked upon as second-class citizens. God's call upon our lives is just as important, just as serious, just as dedicated. I keep reminding myself that the Lord is in control, but it still hurts to kneel with your husband and see him weep because his heart is broken. We have a teenager who also is hurting."

Billy H. Willard of Randleman, N.C., wrote to the Biblical Recorder to propose the establishment of a trust fund for unemployed pastors. "Recognizing occasionally changes are indicated in the best interest of the pastor, the church or both, we suggest such changes should not be deemed sufficient reason for the denial of benefits," Willard said.

The wife of a terminated pastor wrote, "I only wish I could tell you what it is really like. Everywhere we go it is awkward. Some people really do not know what to say. Some avoid us like we were ill. Some pretend it never happened. There are a few of those who have come stronger into our friendship than before."

A layman, Tom Brown of Murfreesboro, Tenn., wrote to the Baptist and Reflector to offer a ministry of prayer for terminated ministers. "To any pastor who asks, I promise to pray for him. I don't need to know why, the Lord knows that, just that the prayer is needed," he said.

Messengers to the 1983 Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution on forced termination which urged associations, state conventions and the Baptist Sunday School Board "to continue positive corrective measures related to this sensitive problem through the provision of preventive and redemptive support services to ministers and churches."

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Faulkner emphasized there are no easy solutions for any of the problems but said greater efforts must be given to providing help.

For a church, he recommended "a healing ministry with an interim pastor. Most churches who fire people don't keep the next pastor very long," said Faulkner. "That says to me they haven't worked through the grief or guilt process."

Even if the crisis occurred months earlier, Faulkner advised, "Look back and deal with what happened as reality and not as a closed closet. It can be redemptive."

In many situations, Faulkner said the director of missions may be the key to a church experiencing a healing ministry.

For terminated pastors, staff members, spouses and children, he advised counseling and support groups. Faulkner said he plans to work with several state conventions to develop a network of denominationally sponsored support groups.

"A lot of people won't go to one now because it has no credibility in terms of sponsorship," he said.

Faulkner praised state conventions which are developing funds or insurance programs to meet the critical financial needs of terminated ministers.

He is working with state church-minister relations consultants to provide conferences and workshops for terminated pastors, staff members, spouses and children. He also plans to assist in establishing regional satellite counseling programs.

He cited a need for more preventive maintenance articles on strategies for dealing with problems and models for how to help ministers deal with emergency situations such as making the next house payment.

At the heart of all these problems, Faulkner believes, may lie two common questions-- Who's in charge? and, What is the mission of the church?

"First and foremost, God is in charge; then you get to human leadership," Faulkner said. "In most situations where the pastor gets fired, he (the pastor) is not in charge. If he maintains stability, he is either in charge or he has learned to work with his allies."

In terms of mission, the alternatives may be whether the church is to reach, teach, win and develop or to be only a place where Christians gather to renew their strength. "A pastor who tries to get an inactive church to reach people may run into problems," Faulkner said.

In the midst of church conflicts, pastors and laypersons have been heard to observe that the only solution appears to be a few funerals. "I surely hope that is not the only answer," Faulkner said. "That is not in line with my concept of redemption."

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Philippine Pastor Keeps
Students Dreaming Big

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
7/13/83

MANILA, Philippines (BP)--At University Baptist Church, pastor Henry Cabalang sees to it his members are dreamers.

"We give them more challenges almost every day," Cabalang said. His congregation, mostly students and young professionals who joined as students, "never run out of great visions."

Cabalang spoke on student ministry at the World Baptist Congress on Urban Evangelism in Rio de Janeiro in late June. His insight, and that of other speakers, will be used to put together teaching packages around which Baptists worldwide can develop ministries.

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Cabalang and his wife, Imelda, direct a ministry strategically situated in the midst of 300,000 college students in Manila. Dubbed the "University Belt," the area represents a huge pool of student power, which University church harvests through its Baptist Student Union.

Students are won to Christ through the student center and trained to participate in the growing ministry. Fifteen years ago, University church was just a handful of students. Four years ago, it took three full-time staff members to direct the ministry, which also included eight mission points scattered throughout the city.

Now Cabalang uses 15 seminary-trained leaders. About 2,500 church members meet at 20 mission points and in the main three-story building which doubles as both student center and church. About 200 students are trained to witness and counsel at the student center.

But to Cabalang, this is just the beginning. "We have big plans. We have no more space to put our people, so our plan is to expand going up"--in the form of a 1,000-seat auditorium on what is now the roof of the church building.

"And the goal is to expand our staff members to include 10 more because of the growing of the work. I told them," he says with a wide grin, "I would resign as pastor and BSU director when they have 100 staff members. Then they won't need me, you see." The church also plans to double its number of mission points to 40 during the next several years.

"It is because of bold praying and bold faith we are able to do this--because of God's unlimited supply and resources," Cabalang explained. "People have asked me, 'How can you manage with such a big staff?' I don't know. Many times Imelda and I will cry and kneel and say, 'God, I don't know what to do.' It is amazing how God comes to you when you say, 'I don't know.' That is him teaching us."

Cabalang grew up in the lush Cagayan Valley on the Philippine island of Luzon. He was studying law at Manuel L. Quezon University in Manila when he began attending the student center. There he built a friendship with Bill Wakefield, area director for the Foreign Mission Board who as a missionary pioneered student work in the Philippines.

He also met Imelda at the center.

After becoming one of the center's active student leaders, he joined the staff after graduation. Later he left to attend seminary. In 1977, the mission that had begun in the center to minister to students had become fully organized and he was called as pastor of University Baptist Church.

The church's success stems from setting Christ up as the authority, Cabalang believes. "At the start of the process of witnessing and follow-up," he said, "we are already building into their minds the importance of what it means to become a Christian. On top of everything they do, they know that more important is the work of God.

"We have medical students who are studying to be nurses and doctors," Cabalang says. "And if you look at them, they really don't have time. But they find out, when they give time for God, he honors their time. It is amazing how students testify that if they put God first then God is going to help them in many areas of their life."

Most students understand commitment. Many once belonged to school organizations that often served as fronts for the Communist Party. Life in the party is quite demanding and structured.

"I say if communism demands more, why can't we ask our believers to sacrifice? After all, we have the greatest cause on the face of the earth."

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(Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)

New Orleans World's Fair
To Have Baptist Ministry

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Baptists will set up off-site ministry programs and cooperate with the New Orleans Federation of Churches during the 1984 New Orleans World's Fair which opens May 1.

Jim Knox, recently employed as director of Baptist Exposition Ministries, said church choir groups and other witnessing programs (such as puppets) will function within the general traffic flow of fair visitors in the Vieux Carre (French Quarter) of the city.

At the fair site Baptists will be part of the Federation of Churches program. "The Federation has been given responsibility for coordinating all religious activities on the fair grounds during the six months the fair is operational," Knox said.

The high cost of building and operating a pavilion precluded Baptists from entering the same type of program in New Orleans as the SBC had at the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn.

Off-site activities will include witnessing programs and community services at recreational vehicle camp sites in and around New Orleans.

In the French Quarter, "We will have street witnessing, musical groups including street musicians who will provide scripture and witnessing materials and other related activities," Knox said.

Tours of Baptist mission sites in New Orleans and historical points of interest will be offered to Baptists attending the fair, Knox said. "We are planning to have volunteer guides who will travel with a bus group, for example, to show visitors the areas."

The Baptist Exposition Ministries Executive Committee are seeking a "staging area" in the French Quarter. "Finding a suitable building has been our greatest problem," Knox said.

Property costs have been prohibitive. "We found one building with three floors at a cost of \$4,000 per month but the owner wanted an additional \$300,000 up-front payment in addition to the rental fee. But I believe the Lord will provide space for us," Knox explained.

Knox plans to spend time at student weeks at Southern Baptist conference centers this summer to help enlist workers for the fair ministries. Many churches have already written their desire to participate in ministry programs.

"We will conduct 'popcorn witnessing',--the group will sing a song or two and sit down for awhile," Knox explained. "Fair visitors are on the move and they will not stand still for a lengthy performance."

David Peach, who directed Baptist Pavilion ministries at the Knoxville Fair, has been employed to direct the Federation programs. Landrum Leavell, president of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, is chairman of the New Orleans Baptist Exposition Ministries Executive Committee.

Church groups wishing to perform during the fair should contact Knox at the ministries office, 2222 Lakeshore Drive, New Orleans, La., 70122.

Knox, pastor of First Baptist Church, Norco (a New Orleans suburb) prior to assuming his present position, also worked as director of the Carver Center in New Orleans as an employee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He is a former Alabama pastor and is a graduate of Samford University in Birmingham and the New Orleans Baptist Seminary where he earned the Doctor of Ministry Degree in 1976.

He and his wife, the former Patti Wooten of Oklahoma, are parents of four grown children.

The fair ministry program is a cooperative effort of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Louisiana Baptist Convention, New Orleans Baptist Association and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Knox said.

Instrumental Music Trend
Enhances SBC Outreach

By Charles Willis

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The trend toward using instrumental musicians in Southern Baptist worship services is growing at a rapid pace as an outreach tool, followed more slowly by a trend toward having full-time directors of instrumental music.

Camp Kirkland, director of instrumental music at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., became the first such full-time staff member for a Southern Baptist congregation in 1976. Since then, 17 others have joined ranks with him.

"Southern Baptists are really leading the way in the area of instrumental music," Kirkland said. "The number of ensembles in churches with part-time instrumental directors must be staggering--possible exceeding 25,000 instruments, excluding handbells and keyboard instruments."

According to Kirkland, many churches had orchestras prior to 1940--his own church had a 20-member band in 1910. But World War II took many instrumentalists overseas, ending much of the organized instrumental efforts.

Today, Kirkland said, "It appears every church beginning an ensemble is using every resource to try to grow an orchestra. For special occasions, such as Christmas and Easter, people like to hear live instruments instead of tape tracks. Even if the live sound isn't as polished as a tape, it is a more exciting sound."

Reflecting on the benefits of having organized instrumental groups in churches, Kirkland recalled "when I first had an opportunity to build an instrumental ensemble, the goal was just to play. But as I studied it, I began to see the real purpose--to reach people for Jesus Christ and to help people to grow."

He testifies to an ongoing excitement at "seeing people come in and, as a result of playing in an orchestra, to be exposed to the gospel, perhaps for the first time."

Paul Aday, minister of music at First Baptist Church, Conyers, Ga., directs several instrumental groups in addition to leading the other facets of the music program. Like Kirkland, he has seen the opportunities for outreach through "kids and adults whose reason for coming to church was to play instruments. Groups that play and perform bring persons into the worship service and expose them to the gospel. We've had two conversions due to involvement that began because of the instrumental program."

Aday's experience is congregational acceptance comes "when people find out that you're not out just to put on a show. Playing in worship provides opportunities for worship expression and taps resources available for that expression."

Lloyd Landrum, minister of music at Vineville Baptist Church, Macon, Ga., notes "the fact several churches have full-time orchestra directors and arrangers and many have volunteer or part-time instrumental persons on staff gives a pretty good indication instrumental music is a factor in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Octavos now include instrumental accompaniment," he said, "a change that has occurred in the last 20 years. Now there is much more literature available. Broadman Press and the Sunday School Board have done a great service for Southern Baptist churches in this area. Instrumental music is beginning to get on the front burner."

Landrum predicts, "In five to ten years, instrumental programs in Southern Baptist churches will be common."

At First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., Betty Moffatt, instrumental director and coordinator, said she has "not heard one negative comment about our orchestra.

"There is a personal pride in taking part in something that sounds good and is spiritually uplifting, both to the instrumentalists and the congregation," she said. "Orchestra members bring in other members. Some have joined us, dusting off instruments unused for years."

Small churches, she said, need instrumental groups as much as large ones. "The scale is the only difference. You can learn as you go along," she said, noting "a person can direct groups if they have a fairly good background in any instrument and have some musical common sense. I don't think you have to be an outstanding musician. Do your own thing within the boundaries you have," she advised. "The most important part of this is the spiritual aspect."

Jeff Squires, a layman and director of orchestral activities at Eastside Baptist Church, Marietta, Ga., is a testimony to the outreach benefits of instrumental music in churches. "An orchestra member drew me in because they needed a clarinet player," he said. During a revival at Eastside more than two years ago, 11 orchestra members were saved.

The potential for growth in instrumental music has yet to be tapped, according to Kirkland. "I think we're in a miracle-working business. God has given us a renewed ministry from earlier times when instruments were used for the glory of God."

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(BP) photo mailed to Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press.

Brazilian Floods Leave
250,000 People Homeless

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BLUMENAU, Brazil (BP)--South Brazil's worst floods in a century inundated the home of Southern Baptist missionaries John and Jean Poe in Blumenau, Brazil.

The Poes, from Durham, N.C., and Knoxville, Tenn., were meeting with other missionaries in the state of Sao Paulo when the flooding began July 8. Missionary Sandy Simmons, from Hillsboro, Texas, also lives in Blumenau and was with the Poes. Her second-floor residence may have been damaged, too.

Blumenau is one of the hardest hit of the nearly 100 cities declared disaster areas in the three southern states of Santa Catarina, Parana and Rio Grande do Sul. The Brazilian newspaper Jornal do Brasil reported July 10 at least 20 people had been killed and 130,000 left homeless by the rain-swollen flooding.

Southern Baptist missionary Raymond Kolb reported the number of homeless had climbed above 250,000 by July 12.

A team of three missionaries tried to land a small plane in the Blumenau area to inspect the damage, but turned back after seeing a "wall of water" that reached the rooftops of some buildings. The Poes were trying to get back into the region as soon as possible, Kolb said.

Missionaries in south Brazil were assessing the damage and human needs in all three flood-stricken states, Kolb said, and will likely ask the Foreign Mission Board for relief funds.

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Fugitive Fleeing Justice
Finds Life in Christianity

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7/13/83

PATTALUNG, Thailand (BP)--Now they call him John the Baptist, but before he became a Christian, a more fitting name might have been "wild man from Borneo."

Today, slightly more than three years after his appearance at the outer edges of an open-air night service in south Thailand, the man they call Suthep has cleaned up his act.

Since his first exposure to Baptists that night, Suthep has lopped off the matted, uncombed hair and softened the hostile, beady glare. He also has found material blessing through a rising position with a construction company in Haadyai, the largest city in the south part of Thailand.

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His employer, in fact, says he wants 10 more Christians just like Suthep working for him.

And missionaries have found a new preaching point in the area where Suthep works and witnesses. Having shared his faith with people there, Suthep has disciplined a group of Christians eager for missionaries to teach them more.

He's come a long way in a short time.

Suthep fled from a province north of Pattalung to avoid death. Though he is stingy with details of his former life, it is clear he cannot return home.

In south Thailand revenge is often found outside the law and feuds are settled with guns and knives. Lawful settlement for Suthep might not be an option. Assassinations come cheap.

Suthep was captivated by the message of grace and forgiveness the first time he heard it. He took every piece of literature the missionaries had that night and asked for more. He also left with a Bible, which he read in its entirety in two months.

A blind man from a nearby village taught him to pray. At 2 a.m. on June 21, 1980, Suthep accepted Christ. It was one month after that first meeting.

Suthep wore his hair long because of an obligation he had vowed to cut his hair only after his debts were paid. When he showed up with short hair a year after becoming a Christian, fellow Baptists knew he had kept his vow.

At first he had no regular job and the church supplied him with rice and school fees for his children. But soon Suthep secured a job with a road construction company.

Last year between jobs, Suthep helped support his family by gathering wild honey to eat and sell, thus living up to his new name, John the Baptist.

Suthep, like John, is opening a way in the wilderness of superstition, fear and ignorance of God's love. And wherever he goes, his Bible, full of markings and notations, goes with him.

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Reagan Proposes Revised
School Prayer Amendment

By Stan Hasteley

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WASHINGTON (BP)--President Reagan said July 12 he is sending Congress a revised version of his constitutional amendment on prayer in public schools.

In a half-hour meeting at the White House, Reagan told 22 conservative religious leaders he is proposing an additional sentence to the original version of the amendment in an effort to allay fears the proposal would give federal and state governments power to write prayers for use in public school classrooms.

As introduced in Congress, the original version read: "Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any State to participate in prayer." The revised amendment adds: "Nor shall the United States or any State compose the words of any prayer to be said in public schools."

After emerging from the meeting with Reagan, spokesmen for the religious leaders differed as to how the new sentence will be interpreted.

Robert Grant, chairman of Christian Voice, said the change means while Congress and state legislatures would be prohibited from writing the prayers, local school boards would not.

But Jerry Falwell, president of Moral Majority, disagreed, saying the wording should be interpreted to mean no official body could compose the prayers.

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The lone Southern Baptist attending the meeting was Edward E. McAteer, president of The Roundtable, a group which, along with Moral Majority and Christian Voice, form the "Big Three" of the Religious Right.

Other participants included television evangelists Pat Robertson and Jimmy Swaggart; Ben Armstrong, director of National Religious Broadcasters; Connaught Marshner, chairman of the National Pro-Family Coalition; Paul M. Weyrich, president of Free Congress Research and Education Foundation; two Orthodox Jewish leaders and the Roman Catholic bishop of Allentown, Pa., Thomas Welsh.

Speaking to reporters after the closed-door meeting, Robertson, president of Christian Broadcasting Network, read portions of a letter to Reagan from Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., indicating most Baptists cannot support an amendment which fails to guarantee that government officials at all levels will not compose prayers to be recited in public schools. Robertson said he thought the revised language would satisfy Draper and Southern Baptists generally.

But in a telephone interview later, Draper stopped short of endorsing the language and said again he prefers no constitutional amendment. He said he conveyed that message to presidential assistant Morton Blackwell in a telephone conversation July 12 and Blackwell said he too prefers the problem of school prayer be addressed in a proposal other than a constitutional amendment.

Draper, who said he was invited to the White House meeting but declined because he was preaching at Falls Creek assembly in Oklahoma, said he met last week with Robertson to insist he could not support a constitutional amendment unless it guaranteed that no agent of the state compose the prayers to be recited. That includes not just Congress and state legislatures, he added, but local school boards and individual teachers.

"Anyone who works for the school is the agent of the state," he declared. He said the only truly voluntary prayer in the classroom would be "student-initiated" prayer.

Draper also said he cannot support an alternative amendment proposed by U.S. Senator Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, calling for silent prayer and equal access to school property for student religious groups.

John W. Baker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, who recently testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to the original Reagan amendment as well as the Hatch proposal, discounted the new language's meaning.

"The attempt of the White House staff to soften the opposition of the mainline denominations to a prayer amendment reflects a failure to understand their opposition springs from a concern for truly voluntary prayer as well as the religious liberty of students and teachers alike," Baker said.

He added: "The fact a constitutional amendment is unnecessary for truly voluntary prayer to exist in public schools is not altered by the addition of the words proposed by the White House staff. The new words contain legal loopholes which could lead to serious inroads into the principle of the separation of church and state."

Blackwell, Reagan's liaison to religious groups, said the revised amendment will be introduced by Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., who introduced the original version in May, 1982.

A spokesman for Thurmond confirmed the South Carolina Republican will introduce the new language as an amendment to the president's original version at a Judiciary Committee meeting July 14. He added: "The chances for its passage look very good. We are optimistic."

He said new hearings on the measure are not likely and the Senate panel may vote July 14 to send it to the full Senate for final disposition.