



# BAPTIST PRESS

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October 16, 1985

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Lebanese Baptists Begin  
Radio Work In Beirut

By Art Toalston

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Lebanese Baptists are launching a radio station in Beirut as part of a continuing ministry in the midst of their country's 10-year-old civil war.

The 2,000-watt FM stereo station will provide evangelical programming. There are about three dozen radio stations in the Beirut area, most operated by the government or competing Islamic and Maronite Catholic political groups.

The station, to be operated and primarily financed by the Lebanese Baptist Convention, has a potential for reaching 1.7 million people in the Beirut area, where there are seven Baptist churches.

Its programming, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day, will include semiclassical music; seven-minute Christian teaching sessions on the hour; two-minute Bible reading segments on the half hour; public service announcements, such as locations where drug abusers or people with physical injuries can receive rehabilitation; and special programs, such as Bible correspondence courses and live broadcasts of worship services.

These worship service broadcasts ultimately may bolster church membership, according to Pete Dunn, Southern Baptist missionary who directs the Baptist Center for Mass Communications in east Beirut. "A lot of people will never go into a Baptist church because they're afraid of it. But if they can hear and see that it won't 'bite' them, then maybe doors will open for our local churches.

"We're going to try to present what Baptists believe," Dunn added, "but in the context of the Lebanese Baptists."

Five Baptist nationals are being trained as full-time workers, two others as part-time. The station will be housed in the basement of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in east Beirut and its antenna will be atop the building.

In another area of Baptist ministry in the city, Dunn works with two Baptist relief committees, one in east Beirut and one in west Beirut.

Throughout Beirut, there are refugees "everywhere," perhaps as many as 200,000 who have been left homeless during the course of the 10-year civil war, Dunn said.

"We've got a lot of people here who are in desperate need. Now, how to meet those needs in a short time and on a long-term basis is our problem. And this is a problem faced by the government as well as relief agencies. If there were some light at the end of the tunnel, we would sort of know how to get towards that light. But at the present time, it's a dead end.

"They (refugees) are taking over old buildings...abandoned buildings...buildings that have been bombed out," Dunn said. "Some are living in quite squalid conditions, but at least they're covered. And they're trying to get food as best they can."

Refugees being sheltered in Baptist facilities are primarily from the Mio-Mio Baptist Church. The congregation of 30 to 40 people was scattered when Shiite Muslim and Palestinian forces stormed Sidon and surrounding villages after Israeli troops vacated the south Lebanon area earlier this year. An estimated 100,000 Lebanese were left homeless.

One Mio-Mio church family, for example, lost a home and grocery store. One widow lost a home which had cost her life savings to build.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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"They got out...with the clothes on their backs," said Ed Nicholas, chairman of the Southern Baptist missionaries in Lebanon.

Badar Street Baptist Church in east Beirut and Bikfaya Baptist Church in the village of Bikfaya about 20 miles north of Beirut have taken in some of these refugees.

Some Mio-Mio church members fled to the south, along Lebanon's border with Israel. There has been no contact with them, Nicholas said.

Fighting in Tripoli, to the north of Beirut, had Baptists in Beirut wondering about the welfare of members of the Tripoli Baptist Church and their pastor, Elias Saleeby. Through early October, no word had been received from him for about six weeks.

Nicholas believes Saleeby and others have sought refuge in a mountain region near Tripoli, as they did once before in the face of intense fighting. During September, more than 500 people were killed and 1,000 wounded.

The scattering of the Mio-Mio congregation is the most severe setback to Lebanese Baptists since the early days of the civil war, 1975-77, when several churches closed, had their buildings seized or looted and, in one case, saw their pastor flee for his life.

Today, minimal numbers attend the Riyak Baptist Church because of continuing tension in the Bekaa Valley east of Beirut. And turmoil in west Beirut has resulted in many members of the Ras Beirut Baptist Church moving to east Beirut.

Even so, Ras Beirut, which had about 55 members, has provided finances pivotal for getting the new FM station on the air, according to Dunn.

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Disaster Relief Teams  
Leave Mexico Oct. 11

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
10/16/85

DALLAS (BP)--After providing more than 150,000 meals for the earthquake-stricken residents of Mexico City, seeing at least 4,000 persons make first time professions of faith in Christ and setting up four field kitchens for earthquake victims, Baptist disaster relief teams from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Oklahoma left Mexico City Oct. 11.

During their final week in Mexico City, the disaster relief teams built new field kitchens in front of each of their 18-wheel mobile units. The teams observed feeding operations by Mexican Baptists, who had served all meals since the arrival of the units, at each field kitchen for about 24 hours. Assured of their efficient operation, the volunteers drove the trucks away on Friday, leaving the kitchens in place.

Three of the field kitchens, with stoves, pots, pans, tables and other utensils, will be given to the National Baptist Convention of Mexico. The fourth will serve as a model for the Mexican government. The government plans to build ten modular kitchens alongside the temporary hospitals that have been established in Mexico City.

The interior of one 18-wheel tractor trailer rig already has been measured and diagrammed by the government to determine the arrangement of storage space for the field kitchens as Mexican officials seek to develop a comprehensive disaster response program.

The mayor of Mexico City, governor and chief of Social Protective Services joined the president and the executive director of the National Baptist Convention of Mexico in a recognition service for the volunteers before their departure.

Eighty Spanish-speaking Texas Baptist pastors and deacons had been assigned to the four disaster relief units to act as counselors and interpreters. About 40 will remain in Mexico City.

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Texas Baptist volunteers had set up the first field kitchen in the Tepito neighborhood of Mexico City Sept. 26. The initial team was joined by Louisiana, Oklahoma and Mississippi disaster relief units within four days.

From a command post at the Texas disaster relief unit, volunteers directed feeding operations and trained Mexican Baptists in field kitchen feeding techniques, according to Robert E. Dixon, Texas Baptist Emergency Task Force coordinator.

Disaster relief was performed in full cooperation with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission and the National Baptist Convention of Mexico.

On Oct. 3, William M. Pinson Jr., executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and Texas State Missions Commission Director Charles McLaughlin viewed each of the feeding operations.

"Southern Baptists can be assured that every dollar they designated to disaster relief in Mexico City is going directly to the relief of suffering people in that earthquake ravaged city," said McLaughlin.

By Oct. 14, Texas Baptists had given \$92,152 in disaster relief offerings designated for Mexico. The Foreign Mission Board reported more than \$30,000 in designated offerings for Mexico relief sent directly to the board, emphasizing that the bulk of receipts would come through state conventions.

The board had released \$466,500 of its disaster relief funds in response to the Mexico City earthquake as of Oct. 15.

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Jerusalem Congregation Faces  
Three-Year Wait On New Building

By David Smith

Baptist Press  
10/16/85

JERUSALEM (BP)—Three more years of waiting may lie ahead for the Narkis Street Baptist Church in Jerusalem, which lost its auditorium in a 1982 fire set by arsonists.

After receiving official notice that the church's rebuilding plans have been turned down by Israeli officials, the pastor, Robert Lindsey, said it may be three years before the congregation has a permanent home.

In a notice dated Oct. 8—three years and a day after the fire—the Jerusalem district planning commission offered to let the 300-member congregation build an auditorium of about 350 square meters and add a second floor of about 175 square meters at the adjacent Baptist House, which is used for small-group meetings and also houses a bookstore. The church would have to develop new building plans and then await a review by planning officials.

Embarking on an appeal process "may be the next thing we should do," said Lindsey, a longtime Southern Baptist representative in Israel. "It's one of those things you just have to pray through."

The church's plans called for a 1,000-square-meter facility encompassing a 400-seat auditorium, several Sunday school rooms and office space. The building would have been smaller than limits imposed by municipal codes.

The size of the former 60-seat chapel, built in 1933, was about 150 square meters.

The commission cited two reasons in turning down the church's plans: insufficient parking and noise.

Lindsey said the parking problem had been resolved to the satisfaction of the Jerusalem municipality, which approved the building plans in November 1984. Worshipers park at least two blocks from the church in a business district that is empty when the church meets on Saturday, or Sabbath, mornings.

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Lindsey said only a small minority of residents in the Jewish neighborhood have complained about noise related to the church. The congregation will create less noise, he added, once it is in an enclosed building, instead of the tent-like structure it has used since the fire.

Ultra-Orthodox opposition to the church is the "basic problem," Lindsey said. "They are a minority in the area. They just don't want us to be there."

About a year ago, Lindsey received a letter from Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek encouraging the congregation to consider moving to Abu Tor, an Arab village about five miles from the present church site. Since then, the government lands agency has offered 1.5 acres there, which is three times the church's Narkis Street site. But, again, new building plans and a review by planning officials would be involved.

"Most of the people (in the church) think we should continue to worship where we are," Lindsey said.

Brad Young, a leader of the congregation and a Southern Baptist living in Israel, said the move would undermine one of the church's distinctives. "Our congregation emphasizes the rediscovering of the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. Only in Jewish Jerusalem can Christians experience an encounter with Judaism," an encounter that "helps us understand the original message of Jesus."

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Seminary Prof Discusses  
Biblical Authority Models

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
10/16/85

DALLAS (BP)—Declaring that persons with opposing theological views "need to talk to one another" rather than "about one another," William L. Hendricks of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., addressed the issue of biblical authority during a chapel address at the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas on Oct. 15.

With students of the independent Bible institute filling three sections of the sanctuary at First Baptist Church, Hendricks outlined what he perceives as the strengths and weaknesses of two models of biblical authority: Model A, which he called the "1 + 1 = 2" model, and Model B, the "I love you" model.

Hendricks identified Model A as mathematical, based on formal logic, deductive and purely propositional. He said the model assumes Scripture contains a complete, rational and logically demonstrable systematic theology.

"This means that one would be able to find the answers to all doctrinal questions in such a fashion as to leave no loose ends in a complete, unified body of propositions that teach us everything about God, our world and anything that might be included in a systematic theology," he said.

While acknowledging the model gives its followers a feeling of certainty and is rationally consistent, Hendricks cited several disadvantages. He said: the source of the model is Greek philosophy rather than biblical thought; the model does not give a formal place to personal interaction and relationship with God; and the model requires a divinely inspired system of interpretation to find the one, correct systematic theology within Scripture.

"To be logically complete, an infallible, unified message requires an infallible, unified interpretation," he said.

Hendricks also said Model A is so deeply rooted in Greek philosophy and Protestant scholastic rationalism that it is neither appropriate for, nor understandable to non-Western cultures. Citing his own experience teaching at a seminary in Taiwan, he related the difficulty of translating terms such as "inerrancy" and "plenary" into languages that have no words with those precise meanings.

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"Must we teach Asian persons--the one-fifth of the world who use the Chinese language--to think in terms of Greek philosophical insights before we can assure their biblical orthodoxy or permit them to have an adequate understanding of the biblical materials," he asked, rhetorically.

Furthermore, he said Model A is not based on the Bible we have but on original manuscripts no longer in existence. Hendricks admitted that "what we have is errant and fallible," though he said "I do not like to speak that way."

"It does no good to say that given the variations in the manuscripts and the small amount of substantial difference that these make on doctrine, that we have a reasonably inerrant Scripture," he said. "In the mathematical and rational model, if there is one exception, or if the theory breaks down at any point, the logical game is lost."

In Model B, which Hendricks identified as his model for biblical authority, attention is placed primarily upon the relationship between God and man rather than upon a single system of rational philosophy.

"It does not deny formal, philosophical thinking," he said, "but it is aware that there are other types of logic and thinking that are appropriate in the biblical materials and in life itself."

Hendricks said Model B "reflects on the circumstances in which we find ourselves and the kind of scripture, the Bible, which God in his providence has seen fit to give us." The model is both relational and propositional, he said, and recognizes the Bible's central redemptive purpose.

"The Bible makes no claim for itself that it is a fountain of modern scientific wisdom that changes every ten years or of any other type of wisdom except the knowledge that leads to God," he said.

Hendricks said the model gives assurance rather than certainty, stresses the affective rather than the cognitive domain and has many rather than one philosophical system as its basis.

"The one thing that is required from an adequate view of inspiration," he said, "is what is found in the scriptures themselves, namely that God confronts us with his revelation in Jesus Christ and convicts us on the basis of that revelation by his Holy Spirit."

One advantage of Model B, according to Hendricks, is that it recognizes diversity in the ways in which truth is communicated in the Bible and tolerates diversity in the interpretation of biblical truth.

"It is a contradiction of definitions to say that an authority is mistaken in matters in which it is the authority," he said, "and if we come to the Bible as an ultimate authority in matters in which it does not claim to be an authority, we are misusing it."

Paige Patterson, president of the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, identifying himself as "one who holds Model A," praised Hendricks for an address "fairly presented" and "eloquently done."

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Lackey Named  
BSSB Reporter

Baptist Press  
10/16/85

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Terri Lackey has accepted the position of reporter in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's office of communications.

Lackey, 29, has been a reporter for the Nashville Banner for two and one-half years. Earlier, she was a reporter-photographer for the Southern Standard in McMinnville, Tenn.

A Nashville native, she holds the B.S. degree in journalism from Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville.

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