

BAPTIST FEATURES

R leased by BAPTIST PRESS
127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn.

September 20, 1954

SECOND OF TWO ARTICLES

ADVANCE IN WORLD EVANGELISM MUST BE TOTAL ADVANCE BY: H. Guy Moore

Communism has its eyes on the whole world. Its ideology lays claim to the total man - mind, body, and soul. World evangelism in the name of Christ can do no less.

In a recent article by the Southern Baptist Convention's Committee on World Evangelism, we set forth the brief history back of its appointment and the urgency of its task. Your committee recognizes at once that its task embraces the full ministry of Christ for the whole man and the whole world. Advance must be, indeed, total advance.

What channel do we have as Southern Baptists through which we can make that total impact? Where can I give knowing that my gifts go to evangelize, teach, heal, train, educate? Do not let an old name lose its dynamic meaning. When we understand its vital content, its comprehensive purpose it is what we have chosen to call The Cooperative Program!

It has revolutionized Southern Baptist stewardship history in the past twenty-five years. It has been the sustaining life line of our united and total missionary program. The amazing thing is that we have to be able to do so much on such a small percentage of Southern Baptist dollars. For the past five years we have talked about a 50-50 division of our funds. What are the actual facts? While our total gifts through our local churches have increased since 1946, the year after the war, from \$115,226,949 to \$278,851,129 or a gain of 142 per cent. Gifts to missions have increased from \$27,240,704 to \$48,427,760 or 77.77 per cent. In other words, gifts to local causes have increased more than twice as much as gifts to mission causes in the past eight years. Only \$6.14 of the average Baptist gift of \$35.36 ever gets outside his local church or to put it another way only eighteen and one-half cents out of each dollar.

Some of the states may be adjusting the percentages so as to favor state programs, which means that Southern Baptist Convention causes may get a smaller proportion of the Cooperative Program dollar. In most cases the dollar budget will be raised enough to give a slight dollar increase in spite of the reduced percentage. In some cases, however, even this token increase may not prevail.

At this time there is no way to tell what this will do for the Southern Baptist

(more)

BAPTIST FEATURES

Released by BAPTIST PRESS
127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn.

Cooperative Program in 1955. Let us pray that it will not be the year when state causes will increase and Southern causes decrease. We constantly stand aware of that hour as always a threatening possibility.

It is because of this that the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program faces one of its really critical hours this fall and your committee on world evangelism feels called upon now to send this urgent appeal to every Baptist church and to our state leaders for the fullest support of the Cooperative Program.

We would offer, therefore, the following suggestions for immediate and prayerful consideration by every Baptist church in our Convention territory.

1. Prepare and plan your church budget and stewardship program to reach your maximum possibilities.
2. Include the Cooperative Program on the basis of a definite percentage of the total church budget.
3. If it is already included on the basis of a definite percentage, increase that percentage by at least 5 per cent of the total budget.
4. Seek to enlist every member to tithe.
5. Encourage your people to send their gifts undesignated so that our advance toward world evangelization will be a total advance.

No, this will not win the world this next year or the next, but it is a step in that direction. "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step," or to quote another, "Little by little, inch by inch, the insignificant communist movement of forty years ago has now become a crusading, possessing, paralyzing world force. Dare we do less than they for the Master? Do we dare fail to make our advance for the souls and the nations inch by inch, undergirded each year per cent by per cent?"

God, help us do it now -- this fall, 1954! (MAT ENCLOSED--BAPTIST PRESS)

---30---

H. Guy Moore, pastor, Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Tex., is chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's Committee on World Evangelization. Other members of the committee are Leon Latimer, South Carolina; Wade Bryant, Virginia; John W. Raley, Oklahoma; Harold W. Seever, Alabama; A. Warren Huyck, Florida; and R. Paul Caudill, Tennessee.