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August 18, 1987

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Appointment Service  
Proves A Family Affair

By Mary Jane Welch

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Gregg Fort became the third of five brothers appointed to return to Africa, the continent where his parents have been Southern Baptist missionaries for almost 35 years.

Kent Parks, son of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, said he was excited to be following the steps of his parents and his older brother and sister-in-law in missionary service.

Missions seemed to be a family affair for many of the 66 new missionaries named Aug. 12 by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board during Foreign Missions Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Also during the week, two former missionaries, Jimmy and Dorothy Foster of Texas, were reappointed, and Buckley and Ann Qualls of Texas and Louisiana were named Cooperative Services International representatives to teach in Asia.

Five other missionary children, the son of a Foreign Mission Board staff member, a trustee's daughter and several others with family ties to missions demonstrated the lasting effect a person's missions involvement can have on family members.

Fort, son of physicians Giles and Wana Ann Fort, missionaries to Zimbabwe, reported that his father was preaching the Sunday he became a Christian and his brother Gordon, now a missionary to Botswana, was preaching the day he responded to the call to enter foreign mission service. Another brother, David, is a missionary physician in Ghana.

Returning to Zimbabwe as a church planter, he will have certain advantages over other missionaries, Fort said. While many new missionaries have difficulty getting visas, he easily can get permanent residence status because he was born in Zimbabwe. While others are struggling to learn a language, he can return as one who knows the language well enough to be called "a son of the people."

"While other missionaries go and sit down to meals and during the prayer time silently pray, 'Lord, I'll get it down. You keep it there,'" he said, "I can go looking forward to the corn meal mash that the Africans call 'sadza,' eating sometimes pumpkin leaves flavored with peanut butter and even anticipate the aroma of termites roasting on an open fire.

"More importantly than all these things," said Fort, "I can go back to a country that I call home, to a people who are my family, to be able to share with them the love God has given me for them and to share with them the Savior I've come to know and to love."

Is Fort nervous about being compared to his parents? Not really, he says. He'll be doing a different ministry in a new mission station where few know his parents. The older Forts, who are anticipating retirement soon, will return to Zimbabwe with their son and daughter-in-law to close their house and pass their household goods to the new missionary couple.

Fort's wife, Donna Jean, also is the child of missionaries, but says she may have more to do with her parents being missionaries than the other way around. She and her husband already were planning to become missionaries when they invited her parents, Clifford and Betty Hobbs, to attend Foreign Missions Week at Glorieta with them. While there, she learned about the missionary associate program for people over 35 years old and talked her parents into considering it. They had applied for appointment when they were younger but had been turned down.

The Hobbses were employed to work in Liberia in 1985, an event their daughter admits has a touch of bittersweet. "You expect to leave home," she said. "You don't expect your parents to take home from you."

Telling how he became the second of Keith and Helen Jean Parks' children appointed for missionary service, Kent Parks pointed out that when he was 18 months old and his parents were on their first missionary furlough from Indonesia, he was diagnosed as having tuberculosis. The doctor told his mother, "Mrs. Parks, I would never consider taking Kent back to the country of Indonesia."

But his father later told her, "Honey, that doctor never would have considered going in the first place."

"Bless that doctor's heart," said the younger Parks, "he's going to be wrong again." He said that several years earlier, at another Foreign Mission Week at Glorieta, he responded to the missions call during the preaching of Baker James Cauthen, his father's predecessor as Foreign Mission Board chief.

The younger Parks and his wife, the former Erika Alcorn of Valdosta, Ga., will go to Indonesia, where he will teach theological education by extension and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

The missionary appointment service also marked the opening of Southern Baptists' 111th mission field when Philip and Dixie Holeman of Louisiana and Oklahoma were appointed to begin work in New Caledonia. The island cluster, a French territory, lies in the Pacific Ocean east of Australia.

Testimonies during the appointment service, which some called the highlight of Foreign Mission Week activities, often related to the week's theme, "Risk Takers and Rope Holders." The theme refers to people who take the risks to follow God's call and people who support them with prayer, giving and other assistance.

One appointment, that of Dennis and Lynn Davidson of Texas and New Mexico, tied directly to the testimony of missionary Karl Wallace on the importance of prayer in his work in Peru. When he and his wife, Peggy, left work in Piura, Peru, to fill a critical need for someone to operate the Baptist book deposit in Lima, he said, they prayed that God would send someone to fill their place in Piura. During the week at Glorieta, they saw that prayer answered when the Davidsons were appointed to that post.

Other missionaries and Baptists from other countries shared testimonies of risk taking and rope holding during the week. In a poignant moment, Asano Hoshizaki, retired missionary to Japan, told a story unknown to program planners when they placed her on the program just before Carter Morgan, retired missionary to Hawaii, Hong Kong and the Philippines. The lives of her Buddhist family, she said, had been changed completely when they became Christians under the ministry of Morgan and his wife, Agnes, in Hawaii.

R. Keith Parks closed the week with a plea for churches to commit themselves to pray for a year for a country or group of people with virtually no Christian witness. Prayer is the first step toward reaching people who live in countries where missionaries are not allowed, Parks said. Then he played a recording from the coming week's foreign missions PrayerLine, calling for 100 churches to commit themselves to a year of praying for an assigned group.

The aisles were clogged as people came forward to get information to carry back to their churches.

During the week, 84 people made public professions of some type of Christian commitment, with most saying they were willing to consider missionary service.

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

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the first of a two-part series on Christian higher education and evangelism, adapted from the H.I. Hester Lectures published in the September issue of The Southern Baptist Educator.

Christian Colleges Must Convert  
The West, Baptist Leader Asserts

By Lonnie Wilkey

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Conversion of the West must become the primary purpose of Christian colleges because Americans falsely believe they are living in a Christian nation, Denton Lotz told Southern Baptist educators.

Lotz, deputy general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance in McLean, Va., delivered the H.I. Hester Lectures during the annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools in Kansas City, Mo.

Lotz told educators: "We have moved beyond a merely secular society to a pagan society which denies God and has its own idols and own pantheon of new gods, whether in music, art, film or literature. It is the task of Christian higher education to prepare the groundwork for the conversion of this neo-pagan society."

Yet before the West can be converted, colleges, especially church-related institutions, must change or in some cases be reconverted, Lotz said.

Leading secular colleges in America basically have rejected the Christian faith, and are now "hostile even to a religious interpretation of its history," he asserted.

Rejection of the Christian faith in educational institutions has affected the entire country, Lotz said: "For too long we have coasted along on the false assumption that we are living in a Christian nation, not realizing that the underlying philosophy of the faith has long been eliminated from our institutions of higher learning and that what we have is a vestige of Christianity with no intellectual defense at the very heart of the American educational system."

Church-related colleges must step in and fill the void, Lotz noted. He acknowledged all the reasons normally given for having Christian colleges but insisted the primary purpose should be rooted in missions.

The existence of a Christian college -- or specifically a Baptist college -- has as its only reason for being the reclamation of the "mind of our country for Christ, which has been lost in the secularization of the American educational system," he said.

Faculty and administrators are vital to the "conversion" of colleges, and in turn, the West, Lotz said.

"The key to converting the college will be dedicated and committed faculty members who intellectually and morally are not only equal to their colleagues at secular universities, but are in fact leaders in the whole field of academia," he noted.

Before complete conversion can take place, repentance from all parties -- the university, the church and individual Christians -- must take place, Lotz said.

"The West will only be converted when Christian colleges are converted and can give the intellectual, philosophical and spiritual basis for a new revival of learning and commitment to Jesus Christ," he noted.

Lotz observed some church-related colleges have not lived up to their task because of their relationship with the supporting churches. "Part of the educational crisis in church-related institutions is that the church has not been willing to allow freedom and the college has not been willing to accept discipline," he explained.

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He pointed out if the university requires conversion, the same applies to the church: "In fact, the sorry state of many church colleges can be laid directly at the door of the church, which has not repented of its medieval attempt to lord it over everyone with no repentance, no compassion, no mercy and no judgment. That the churches are still the No. 1 segregated institution must say something about this lack of repentance and conversion on the part of wide areas of the church."

Lotz cited examples of Chinese Christians who truly have been converted and expressed a desire American churches follow suit: "Such a church will produce a committed faculty, committed students and committed leaders that will by their very lives and thought again ... claim the West for Christ. God give us the courage and power so to be."

Lotz answered his own question, "Can the West be converted?"

"Yes, if Christian colleges regain the vision of the unity of all things in Jesus Christ as the universal center around whom and in whom all truth confides."

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Rash Of Robberies Hits  
Guatemala Missionaries

Baptist Press  
8/18/87

GUATEMALA CITY (BP)--A series of armed robberies and robbery attempts has plagued Southern Baptist missionaries in Guatemala this summer, apparently as a result of a local missionary directory falling into criminal hands.

In a recent incident, missionaries Ted and Sue Lindwall returned from church Aug. 2 to find three armed men ransacking their home. The men had broken a window to get inside and had tied up a guard in the house.

Mrs. Lindwall chased one of the men out of the house with a knife. Her husband pursued the other two into the yard. But they turned on him brandishing guns, forced him to his knees and took his wallet, which contained more than \$200. Jewelry and some Baptist convention funds inside the house also were taken. The robbers tried to take the Lindwalls' car but could not shift the gears into reverse.

Two men tried to break into another missionary home in Guatemala City the same day but were turned away by a guard. The same week a group of known criminals tried to gain entrance to a third missionary home, and a fourth home was being watched by presumed robbers, according to missionaries.

These incidents follow the May 28 robbery at gunpoint of missionary Margie Carothers, whose car, wedding rings and purse were taken.

One Baptist layman, a retired Guatemalan police official, has suggested the incidents are related and indicate an organized attempt to rob or frighten Southern Baptist missionaries. He recommended that armed guards be hired, at least temporarily, to protect all missionary homes in Guatemala City.

Missionary Don Doyle, whose own house was the target of an apparent robbery attempt, agrees the incidents are related. But he said he believes the motive is money, not intimidation.

"I feel like a group has gotten hold of information regarding our particular mission," Doyle said. "We know pretty well how it happened. We had a car stolen here recently and in that car was a directory that has all our names and addresses in it. I think they're going down the list. But I doubt seriously that it's for the purpose of terrorizing us. I think it's for the purpose of getting in and robbing us."

Doyle said missionaries in the city are beefing up home security and would be "extremely careful" during the next few months. But the mission organization has declined the suggestion of armed guards.

"We do not want to project the image of having to be protected by an armed military guard," explained Doyle. "We're not interested in that."

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Crimes like robbery and burglary have increased in Guatemala because of hunger and worsening economic conditions, he said. North Americans in the country make "vulnerable targets," he added, because they tend not to be as careful about personal and property security as Guatemalans are.

Apparently unrelated to the missionary robberies is the trouble surrounding Family of God Baptist Church in the city. The church has been robbed and vandalized five times in the last year.

In the latest incident, four men held a guard at gunpoint while they smashed furniture and an accordion, the church's only musical instrument, and took a Communion table. Pastor Isaac Batz said he believes the attacks are part of a systematic persecution of the church by people who do not want an evangelical witness in the community. Missionaries John and Anne Brackin are members of the church.

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CORRECTION: Please make the following corrections on BP story sent 8/14/87, titled "FMB Says Its Policies In Line With Peace Plan":

In 9th paragraph, beginning "All these statements are....," change the final phrase to read "a Southern Baptist doctrinal position."

In 17th paragraph, beginning "Discussion of the divorce....," add an "s" to the word "Corps".

In 20th paragraph, beginning "Chinese pastors....," change name to "Shi Qigui".

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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Family, Friends Remember  
Life, Work Of Missionary

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press  
8/18/87

WASHINGTON (BP)--"I think he will be well remembered," Jewell Waldron said with a trace of pride in her voice.

Family and friends of Troy M. Waldron Jr. gathered Aug. 16 to do just that -- remember the life and work of the Southern Baptist missionary who was killed in an Aug. 4 helicopter accident in Ethiopia.

Waldron's wife, Jewell, stood before participants in a memorial service in Silver Spring, Md., and described the crash that claimed the lives of her husband and the helicopter's pilot, Steve Bartalsky. Originally, four people were to have been on the helicopter, Mrs. Waldron said, adding the fact her husband and Bartalsky ended up as the only passengers proved to her their deaths were not an accident, but "part of God's specific plan."

Mrs. Waldron reported a brief graveside funeral service was held for the two men Aug. 6 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and a memorial service was held Aug. 9 in International Evangelical Church, the congregation attended by the Waldrons, Bartalskys and a number of missionaries and relief workers.

Closing her comments, Mrs. Waldron said of her husband, "He's happy, I'm sure, to be home with his Lord."

John Faulkner, Eastern and Southern Africa area director for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said Waldron's enthusiasm, energy and joy were "like a breath of fresh air."

Recalling that Waldron finished at the head of his language class and spent his last furlough learning to use a computer to assist in translation, Faulkner told people gathered at Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church, the Waldrons' home church, "Troy exemplified what it meant to be a foreign missionary."

Waldron was business manager and treasurer for the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Ethiopia and was helping translate leadership materials. The family returned to Ethiopia about four months ago following a furlough in the United States.

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The pastor of the Silver Spring congregation said, "Troy was bound for Ethiopia just as Jesus was bound for Jerusalem," with both men realizing the potential dangers involved in following God's will. "Troy's mistakes were never in failing to act," said Pastor Ed Briggs.

A letter written by an Ethiopian worker at the Southern Baptist mission in Addis Ababa and read during the memorial service told how the news of Waldron's death "shocked our hearts so hard that we couldn't eat or sleep that night." Fikadu Jembere added, "It is not easy to miss him."

Another voice from Ethiopia joined in remembering Waldron. Suzanne Groce, who along with her husband, Lynn, is on furlough in Florida from service as a Southern Baptist career missionary in Ethiopia, read an original poem she wrote about Waldron following his death.

In addition, four former mission volunteers and a former journeyman to Ethiopia, as well as two former mission volunteers to Kenya, attended the memorial service. Also present were Susan and Rachel Thompson Robertson, the widow and daughter of Roger L. Thompson, a Southern Baptist missionary killed in an Ecuadorian airliner crash in 1983.

People gathered for the memorial service shared many memories of Waldron, who began his spiritual pilgrimage as a 9-year-old Royal Ambassador in the Luther Rice congregation. He became the most highly decorated RA in that church's history.

As a teen-ager, Waldron organized an extensive camping program in his home church, including scheduling youth choir concerts at various state parks. It was through the youth choir program that he met his wife, the former Deborah Jewell.

"The things we dreamed about, Troy went out and did," said Jerry Barringer, a member of Luther Rice. "He always projected such an enthusiasm for everything."

"And he always used the talents he had. He didn't go to Ethiopia as an evangelist or preacher. He was a businessman and liked to work with people, so that's how he went to the mission field."

Barringer recalled even when Waldron was forced to return from Ethiopia for emergency reasons -- the death of his sister in 1984, the death of his mother-in-law in 1985 and the death of his father in 1986 -- he was "always busy helping other people while he was here."

Mrs. Waldron said she hopes to return to Ethiopia by mid-September to complete some of the work she and her husband began. Her plans are then to return to the United States permanently in December or January.

She asked Southern Baptists to pray for people -- career missionaries and short-term volunteers -- who have business and administration skills to go to Ethiopia.

"The real problem now with Troy gone -- Troy who normally did the work of about three people -- is that we have no one in administration," Mrs. Waldron said. "Troy had just gotten out of language school and he was really starting to get the office organized. A lot of things with the famine crunch had just gone by the wayside because we were so busy."

"The last three years it had been the tyranny of the urgent. The absolutely most urgent thing would be what would be done and that normally was concerning food and personnel."

Mrs. Waldron said she thinks her husband will be remembered in Ethiopia for his energy and hard work. She recalled her husband also expected his employees to work hard. But, she added, the workers realized Waldron would never ask them to do anything he was not willing to do himself and respected him for his fairness.

"He was also very well loved," Mrs. Waldron said. "He really cared about spreading the gospel in Ethiopia as far and as quickly as possible."

"His real love was the literature program. The impact he had on literature belies the four years he was there."