



## BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 9, 1988

88-40

Entrepreneur Missiologists Needed  
To Reach Ethnics In The '90s, Says Romo By Joe Westbury

N-AMB

HONOLULU (BP)--Missions among ethnics in the last decade of the 20th century calls for "entrepreneur missiologists" if Southern Baptists are to reach their nation for Christ, according to a language missions specialist.

Oscar Romo, director of language missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said home missionaries of the near future must be innovators and visionaries who are willing to take chances in their ministries.

"Basic market segmentation of the unchurched will help us know how to package the uncompromised biblical message of salvation. The target group we wish to reach will determine the environment and context in which the gospel seed is to be planted and the selection of the salesman (missionary) who is to plant the seed," he said.

Romo made the observation during the agency's annual language missions leadership conference. Nearly 300 state language missions directors and other guests attended the workshop in Honolulu, which focused on evangelizing the growing number of "Pacific Rim" immigrants to America.

The United States is one of 27 Pacific Rim nations bordering the Pacific Ocean, but it is attracting more immigrants than any other country in the Pacific -- or the world. It is the responsibility of Southern Baptists to respond to the new Americans with the gospel of Jesus Christ, Romo said.

"The immigration and birthrate of the '80s point toward dramatic changes in the U.S. population during the next century," he said. "It is estimated that more than half of all Americans will be Hispanics, Asians and Black by the year 2080.

"The waves are bringing new energy to our nation. When one considers what the immigrant brings and adds it to the invigorating energies of the American ethnic, America is poised on the brink of its most exciting era of history."

Romo cautioned the denomination against trying to reach the immigrants with an Anglo version of the gospel that means little to non-Anglo groups. Rather, the ethnic must be exposed to the gospel in a manner that relates to his culture and value system.

Drawing parallels between the early Christian churches with their ethnic diversity, Romo said Southern Baptists must preach a gospel in the cultural context of their audiences.

"Although New Testament churches were bound by a definite unity, it was not uniformity," he stressed. Likewise, all Southern Baptist churches do not need to be cut from the same Anglo mold and judged successful by Anglo standards.

Romo praised the denomination's inroads in sharing the gospel with language groups, which has resulted in a 67 percent increase in ethnic congregations in the past five years. But he cautioned against ignoring the culture groups as Southern Baptists gear up to evangelize America's cities.

The nation's population centers are not predominantly Anglo, yet the denomination stands in danger of trying to reach their residents with primarily Anglo evangelistic methods. Southern Baptists need to envision cities as a mosaic of cultures and language groups and develop strategy accordingly, he said.

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"About 74 percent of the Blacks and 68 percent of Anglos in America's cities are church members; but less than 4 percent of the ethnics living there have heard the message of salvation. We cannot evangelize the city without evangelizing the ethnic and packaging the gospel in terms he can understand," he said. "In all probability, many of the ethnics who have recently become Christians had no idea when they attended their first church service what the message they heard actually meant."

Although he challenged Southern Baptists to be sensitive to evangelizing the growing number of Pacific Rim immigrants as well as other language groups and their communities, he warned against using Anglo church-starting methods to evaluate success with new ethnic congregations.

"Sometimes we see ourselves like Johnny Appleseed, throwing the gospel seed at random, planting churches wherever the seed falls to the ground. That concept will not work in sowing Anglo gospel seeds among other language culture groups," he said.

Romo warned against judging the success of non-Anglo congregations by Anglo standards. The two cultures are vastly different and do not respond to the gospel in the same manner in the same time frame, he said. "We cannot gauge all growth the same way. I once was pastor of a church that had no conversions, deaths or marriages during my time there. But the pastor after me soon established himself with a strong record of baptisms with the same congregation.

"I asked myself what he was doing that I didn't do, and when I visited the church I discovered he was baptizing all the people I had been witnessing to while I was there. He was reaping the harvest from my ministry.

"If you had compared our two records of service you would have said my record was a dismal failure. But when you stand back and look at the whole picture, you see us as co-laborers together in the harvest.

"There have been times when we continued our financial commitment to ethnic congregations when the numbers attending did not justify it and the financial giving record of the people did not justify it. But today those congregations, now established churches, have produced some of the strongest Hispanic leaders in our denomination.

"The ability to plant the gospel contextually will determine whether or not Southern Baptists evangelize the nation."

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China's Young People  
Searching For Faith

By Erich Bridges

F-FMB  
Baptist Press  
3/9/88

SHANGHAI, China (BP)--A Sunday afternoon walk in Shanghai can be frightening.

At certain times of the day, one does not walk at all. One clings to a wall for safety. Or allows oneself to be carried by the human river that rushes through Shanghai with almost violent force. Fortunately, the workers of China's largest city labor in shifts. If all the 18 million people of the city walked about at once, one imagines the streets might sag beneath their weight -- and the weight of their expectations.

Anticipation hangs in the air these days; also frustration, energy and boredom, hope and despair. On the streets of China, the spirit of communism now competes with the spirit of the individual. And of the 1.1 billion people in China, more than 700 million, or nearly three times the U.S. population, are under age 35.

China today is an almost endless series of contrasts between young and old. The nation has entered the space race while farmers in some provinces still pull their plows with their backs. Television tributes to socialist modernization share air time with the recently introduced, and enormously popular, Donald Duck. The construction crane, nicknamed the "national bird" of China, coexists with structures as old as recorded history.

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As the West now knows, China is in a continuous state of transition -- economic, social, political, spiritual. It is permanent revolution, but not the kind Chairman Mao dreamed of. The government and the Communist Party, the workers and the intellectuals, the students and the teachers, the young and the old all are struggling to decide what post-Mao China will be like. Will it follow Marx, or the stock market? Confucius, or Western thought?

The turmoil of the last century in China has uprooted the traditions of thousands of years. But something must take their place. "The young generation feels a spiritual crisis," writes one Chinese college student. "This is a very important problem which needs to be solved. Sociologists should establish a new system of thought education for 'hungry' young Chinese."

A classroom full of university students in Nanjing was asked to define happiness:

"Friendship is most important," answered one.

"No," interjected another. "The most important thing is good health, so you can earn money and get a pretty girl."

"A position in society," declared a third.

Other responses reflected the yearning to be understood, to have a good job or more freedom. But one student offered this reaction: true happiness, he said, "is spiritual."

While their generation debates the meaning of life, a steadily growing number of young Chinese are finding it in Christianity. And their expanding ranks are attracting attention.

"Many young people are going to church," a newspaper in Guangzhou reported. "Five years ago only old people attended. But now young people in blue jeans are going."

The newspaper correspondent, a Communist Party member, went to a local church and interviewed some of the young people going inside for a worship service. "Everything I've heard in the last 10 years has been false and boring," one student told him. "I don't want to be like that. I'm also not impressed by dating, disco and such things. But when I come to church and sing the hymns, in my spirit I feel very pure and peaceful."

The curious reporter was surprised to discover a crowded sanctuary and a choir composed entirely of young adults. "These young people, these workers and students, are human beings with a spiritual nature," he wrote. "The Communist Party policy and the new laws guarantee religious freedom, so anyone can freely go to church. But in all society, parents, teachers, factory leaders, cadres and intellectuals should do ideological work (upholding atheism). Do you not understand this challenge?"

Whether or not his readers understood the challenge, the reporter surely did. In the Chinese marketplace of ideas, Christianity has once again emerged as a force to be reckoned with. It actually never left, but repression drove it beneath the surface for a time. Freedom to worship has been restored and constitutionally guaranteed after the rabidly anti-religious persecution of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. And the church is presenting spiritual answers to the searching questions of a new generation.

There is no mass movement of youth toward the church, to be sure. It is more like a trickle.

"I am the only Christian in my institute," admitted one young graduate student at a research department of prestigious Beijing University. "It is very hard to express Jesus. Most of the students are atheists. They think religion is stupid, superstitious. But I have one classmate who has seen the change in my life."

The student's parents, both of whom are Communist Party members, disagree with her beliefs. But they have decided to respect her wish to follow Christ and allow her the freedom to do so.

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

Leader's Dream Fulfilled;  
Mini-Library Project Ends

By Charles Willis

F-SSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--A project developed in 1983 to meet a need for Bible study materials among Baptist pastors and laypersons in many nations has been completed.

More than 6,300 mini-libraries of Broadman Press and Holman books had been shipped to Baptist leaders in more than 73 countries by the end of 1987, Lloyd Elder, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, told the board's trustees.

The worldwide distribution of books for study and sermon preparation was begun as a tribute to Elder's predecessor, Grady C. Cothen, at his retirement in 1984. The former board president had been concerned about a lack of tools for ministry and preaching among Baptist pastors in many nations.

Cothen noted the needs while participating in Baptist World Alliance meetings in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. He had been chairman of the BWA's education committee.

Cothen said at the time his participation in those meetings "indicated to me the great lack of tools for ministry and preaching among Baptist pastors in many nations."

Friends of Cothen and trustees of the Sunday School Board provided funds to supply the books, while the Baptist World Alliance provided postage costs and secured the names of Baptist leaders to receive the books. At the end of the project, \$162,000 had been provided in books, with another \$47,000 spent in shipping costs.

Five categories of mini-libraries were provided during the course of the project. Theological mini-libraries consisted of 14 volumes; basic libraries, 10 volumes; Spanish, 10 volumes; Eastern Europe/China, 9 volumes; and The Holman Master Study Bible, a one-volume library. The total number of books provided exceeded 66,600.

Most of the mini-libraries were basic and theological, said Elder, with 83 percent of the shipments in that category. Spanish, Eastern Europe/China and the one-volume mini-libraries made up the remaining 17 percent.

The joint project provided recipients "access to materials of their own for the first time," Elder said. "In some countries, books like these are available, but the cost is prohibitive. In other countries, such books are not available at any cost."

Letters of appreciation from recipients indicate little or no available study materials prior to the gift of books.

Pastor Thank God Obudu of Nigeria wrote: "Apart from the teachings in the college, I had not even a single theological textbook to make research. I can now read wider to broaden my knowledge in the ministry. I have been testifying about this miracle to many people, because it remains a miracle."

Manuelito Rey, a pastor in the Philippines, wrote: "In a place where Christian magazines and books are not available, these books are very helpful. Especially in our country the price of books is very dear."

Elder said the board's joint participation with the Baptist World Alliance in the project supported "one of the great missions of the board -- its partnership with Baptists throughout the world in sharing the saving news of Christ's love."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Dashed Hope For Blind Daughter  
Opens Doors For Other Children

By Bill Bangham

F-60  
(B'hood)

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--A Cuban mother's five-year quest to restore her daughter's sight ended with a five-minute examination in Memphis, Tenn., in mid-February.

A Memphis surgeon, the last hope for Juana Carballeo Lopez of Dinar del Rio, Cuba, and her daughter, Barbara, concluded nothing can be done for the child.

Lopez, a member of the Baptist church in Dinar del Rio, lives on a collective farm with her husband, Antonio, and six other children. Yet the quest took her through the bureaucratic barriers of two countries separated by 90 miles of ocean and 30 years of hostility and suspicion.

Lopez garnered the combined efforts of the Cuban government, Cuban Baptists, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Baptist Memorial Hospital of Memphis, Tenn., and Memphis surgeon Steve Charles on behalf of her daughter.

"She's one of the unsung heroes of the faith," said Oscar Romo, director of the Home Mission Board's language missions division.

Noting her faith drove her to seek whatever help she could find for her youngest child, including writing Fidel Castro, Romo said: "This is a 20th century miracle, whether the child can see or not. This lady's faith is bigger than anything we've done.

"Here is a woman who could be bitter, selfish. But instead she's open. She wants to help others. If Castro had enough humanitarian desire for this child to see, we should call it to peoples' attention."

Barbara's blindness is due to retinopathy prematurity, the result of a high oxygen atmosphere in the incubator where she was placed following her premature birth.

The child's blindness was diagnosed three months after birth, and Lopez began looking for someone to restore her sight. In 1985 the Cuban government sent them to Spain. "When (physicians) have a case in Cuba they can't resolve, they talk with Spain," she said.

In Spain a physician told her he knew of only one surgeon who could possibly help Barbara -- Charles in Memphis. She immediately began to seek a way for Barbara.

Lopez is vague about the three-year delay in meeting Charles. She talked about feasibility studies, correspondence between physicians, going through channels to request Charles and the six months it took to get permission to enter the United States.

Romo heard about Lopez a year ago through Raul Suare, a Baptist pastor in Havana. He agreed to help with arrangements if Suare could help them get out of Cuba. Charles agreed to do any surgery free of charge, and Baptist Memorial agreed to cover all in-hospital expenses.

"All of a sudden last Wednesday I got a phone call that they were in Miami," said Romo. "Everything was falling together."

The Cuban government had paid for their flight to Miami, an Atlanta travel agency donated airline tickets between Miami and Memphis, Baptist Memorial supplied a hotel room and meals, and Temple Bautista, a Memphis Hispanic congregation, provided translators and members to sit with mother and daughter during the long hours awaiting the examination.

Asked beforehand what she would do if the examination proved negative, Lopez responded: "I try to have a lot of faith. I don't want to even think about it at this point. But I'd rather know than not know. The alternative is not pleasant to think about, but you must go on."

When told after the examination Barbara has no chance of sight, Lopez wept and responded, "Now at least I know." She then asked if Charles could help a friend's two-year-old child who has the same condition. "It's possible," he said. "That's the upper limit."

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Charles, a vitreoretinal surgeon who has operated on 800 children with retinopathy prematurity, developed the surgical procedures for correcting this condition. About 35 percent of his cases are successful. The children must be treated before they are 18 months old, no later than two years, he said.

"The message is, if patients are to come from Cuba for this, we've got no waiting list and no expense," said Charles. "But if they wait four years ... there's no reason for it."

He operated on a child from Cuba four or five years ago. She was accompanied by a woman physician he believes is assistant minister of health. He offered his services for other Cuban children with this condition. But the U.S. State Department has not allowed him to go to Cuba.

"The message to carry back home," Charles told Lopez, "is there is a physician in Memphis who will operate for free if they'll get them here within six months."

Roy Jennings, director of communications for Baptist Memorial Hospital, said a significant portion of Charles' practice is charity. The hospital has worked with him to provide the service and will continue to do so.

After talking via telephone with Lopez after the examination, Romo said she said: "My child can't see. Maybe others can."

Expressing hope for other children in her country, Lopez said things are changing in Cuba and that maybe her experience will open doors for other children.

"Sometimes it's the little children that open the doors," said Rick McDade, a chaplain at Baptist Memorial who helped the mother and daughter during their stay. "This has been a sad experience for everyone involved. But Barbara is a beautiful child, a happy child. I've learned a lot from her just watching her embrace life and sing her songs."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Brotherhood Commission

Biblical Definition Of Worship  
Urged For Many Baptist Churches

By Charles Willis

N-SSB

Baptist Press  
3/9/88

NASHVILLE (BP)--Many Southern Baptist congregations call "anything and everything" worship and ignore God, indicating an urgent need for biblical study of worship, according to a denominational educator and worship scholar.

Bruce Leafblad, associate professor of church music and worship and chair of prayer and spiritual formation at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said many Southern Baptists' definitions of worship come from tradition rather than serious Bible study, resulting in gatherings of Christians who "really don't know what worship is."

"Our people don't know what it is because we leaders don't know what it is," Leafblad told ministers of music in a national seminar at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. "We don't know what it is experientially or theologically. We have called anything and everything worship."

Southern Baptists "have so emphasized the human side of God's plan that we have humanized something very God-centered," he said. "What God is really about is a search for worshippers."

"I love the church and I've given my life to the church. Because of that, I am calling a spade a spade. Forgive me if I am overly honest about us. We are family, and we need to speak the truth in love."

"God can't be first if the functions and actions that make him first are second. Worship is about the priority of God in our values, affections and commitments."

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Urging ministers of music to "look at the points in the service where persons are directed toward God," he told them: "Worship is a vertical conversation with God, not a horizontal conversation about God. The leaders aren't the center of a worship service simply because there is a stage and they perform on it. Worship is the way the church comes before God and tells him how much he means to us, how much we love him and how committed we are to him."

"God didn't send Jesus to die on the cross for what he could get out of us. God is self-sufficient. We are the ones in desperate need of him."

Observing that many Christians today are engaging in vain worship, Leafblad said he believes everyone worships because everyone has some kind of god.

"God doesn't have a membership fix like we Americans do," he declared. "When we all gather in heaven, we will be a remnant, a small fraction of the persons on earth. God is not just looking for people who like to join things. Jesus tells us God is seeking persons who will worship him in spirit and in truth."

Leafblad said he is "amazed" when so many different facets of church life are taught by different leaders as the church's first priority.

"If everything is first priority, nothing is first priority," he said. "Today people who call themselves the children of God come into his presence and say not a word to him. Those persons will not open the hymnal nor sing. We teach wrong attitudes about worship to our children by our apathy."

"There is no cause that is first priority. It is not people, evangelism, discipleship; it isn't even worship. God himself is the first priority of the church."

Many activities that pass for worship today are "people talking to people about religious matters," Leafblad said. "They never say anything to God. Worship and witness are related, but they are not synonymous. Worship directed away from God is idolatry."

True worship is offered to God for his sake, for his pleasure, for his glory," he said.

"We must be narrow where the Bible is narrow and broad where the Bible is broad. The Bible is absolutely narrow here. God has not rescinded the Ten Commandments. You shall have no other objects of worship before or besides God."

Leafblad said he believes many people will reject the idea that "we have strayed," but he added, "until we respond to God's call for us to return, worship will be an appendage to what we do in the church."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Concerned Parents Offered Ways  
To Help Kids Say No To Drugs

By Shari Schubert

N-10  
(Mo)

Baptist Press  
3/9/88

BOONVILLE, Mo. (BP)--An unexplainable change in personality or behavior, withdrawal from others, inattentiveness or irresponsibility at home and school -- all could be warning signs that a young person is abusing drugs, a Southern Baptist chaplain who works with patients at a Boonville, Mo., drug and alcohol treatment center, said.

James Tsapelas, director of chaplains at Valley Hope Association's Boonville in-patient facility, offered advice for parents who are concerned their children may be using drugs.

Parents need to realize alcohol and other drugs are readily accessible to young people and take seriously the possibility that their children could become users, Tsapelas cautioned.

Alcohol and marijuana generally are the most easily available drugs, he said. Although more expensive, "crack" -- a smoked form of cocaine -- also is available and presents a special danger because it is "instantly addictive," he added. A host of other drugs, including PCP, or Phencyclidine, amphetamines and inhalants can disrupt and endanger the lives of young people.

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Parents need to tell their kids, "no drugs," the chaplain insisted. He added dialogue about the dangers of drugs needs to start as soon as children are old enough to be "aware of what you're talking about."

"Know the facts," Tsapelas admonished. "Read up on drugs, and discuss what you learn with your kids."

He cautioned parents to be sure the information they have is accurate, noting, "The problem with information is getting the right information."

For example, he said, 10 years ago cocaine was widely viewed as a relatively harmless recreational drug. In contrast, he recalled seeing materials depicting marijuana users exhibiting wildly erratic behavior that does not actually characterize users of that drug. Materials that either understate or overstate the effects and potential dangers of a substance are not helpful, he added.

"Set an example," Tsapelas urged. "The way you behave does have an effect on your children's behavior. You can't say, 'no drugs,' to your kids and then use alcohol and tranquilizers to cope with your own stress."

"We tend to survive in this life the best way we know how," he said, adding, adults who have not learned better ways to cope often abuse alcohol or prescription medications in an attempt to deal with life's stress.

But he pointed out, "Sitting there with a Budweiser in your hand telling your kid he can't drink" won't go very far toward discouraging a teen from using alcohol.

Tsapelas also stressed the importance of rational, rather than emotionally charged, communication with teens. "Talking with kids, not shouting at them, is the way to handle a drug situation," he insisted.

"Don't confront your kids when they're high," he advised. He explained when a person is high on drugs, he is not in control, and not able to have a rational dialogue.

When a parent is upset is not the best time to confront a young person about a drug-related problem, he said. At a time of pressure, it may be difficult for the parent to remember and effectively communicate all that he or she intends to say.

Before confronting the child, the parent should sit down and list his concerns, and then find a time to calmly share those concerns with the child, he suggested.

An appropriate way to start such a conversation might be, "Bobby, I'm concerned that you might be drinking. You come in without speaking to us. ... You tend not to be as responsible as you used to be," he noted.

"Spend more time with your children and their friends," he urged. "Talk about all of their problems of adolescence."

One of adolescents' strongest pressures, he pointed out, is the need to be accepted by others. Because the tendency to want to go along with the group can lead to alcohol and drug use, Tsapelas stressed the importance of encouraging young people to value their individuality.

Other ways in which parents can reduce the risk of their children abusing drugs include setting reasonable curfews and knowing who their children's friends are, Tsapelas said.

He encouraged parents to find positive activities for their children. "Whenever possible, do them together," he urged. As examples, he listed sports, theater, camping, cooking, gardening, music or part-time jobs.

In addition to his advice for parents, Tsapelas offered some advice for young people who are pressured to drink or experiment with drugs. "Remember, you have the right to say no," he said.

He also shared specific ways in which a young person can respond to the temptation to use drugs:

- "Give a reason. Be prepared with facts about why drugs are not good for you.
- "Have something else to do. Suggest an alternative activity, like playing sports.
- "Be prepared for different kinds of pressure. There are different levels of peer pressure. It can start out friendly or teasing; if so, you can respond the same way. If the pressure seems threatening, you may just need to walk away.
- "Be direct. You don't have to explain why you don't want to use drugs if you don't want to. You can just say, 'No thanks.'
- "Avoid the situation. If you see or know about places where people often use drugs, don't go there. If you hear people will be using drugs at a party, just don't go.
- "Hang out with friends who don't do drugs. Sometimes, your friends may have already decided to use drugs. If they're your real friends, they'll like you whether you do or not. And maybe, by saying no, you might make them think twice about using drugs themselves. That's how peer pressure can be positive, too."

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Baptist Layman Directs  
Puerto Rico Agriculture

By Jim Burton

F- CO  
(B'hood) Baptist Press  
3/9/88

VEGA ALTA, Puerto Rico (BP)--Tungsten lights and television mini-cameras stare at the podium. The governor of Puerto Rico is about to have a press conference to announce a drop in unemployment from 23 percent to 17 percent.

With the governor is Juan Bauza, a Baptist layman and secretary of agriculture for the government of Puerto Rico. The primary cause for the drop in unemployment is increased agricultural production.

The governor congratulates Bauza for the increased production and asks how it happened? It's not the crops in the fields that make the difference, Bauza tells the governor and the people of Puerto Rico.

"It's the corns on our knees," he said.

A member of Mision Bautista de Vega Alta near San Juan, Bauza has discovered room for faith on the job, even a government job.

Prior to Bauza's political appointment, a Christian mechanic who worked for him provoked his interest in Christ.

"He knew a lot about the Bible, and I started reading the Bible just to be able to argue with him," said Bauza, "to discuss with him certain things and try to make him look bad in front of other people."

Bauza began studying Scripture every day, discussing and debating the Bible with the mechanic. The exposure to Scripture led to a change of heart.

"All of a sudden I found myself with the urge to visit a church and to look for Jesus Christ in a way I had never felt before," said Bauza.

Two years later, during the Catholic observance of Holy Week, the desire to attend church became so strong that his family decided to visit a church, any church, as long as it was Christian, Bauza recalled. By chance, they stopped at Nazareth Baptist Church in San Juan.

"That same day my wife and I accepted the Lord," said Bauza. "I felt the need to present myself, my body and soul, to the Lord and to ask him to use me in whatever way he wanted."

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Bauza soon learned of one special way God wanted him to serve -- in government as the appointed secretary of agriculture.

Unemployment in Puerto Rico ranks among the highest of any state or territory in the United States. The burden of increasing production weighs heavy on Bauza.

"I have asked the Lord to provide when I cannot do the things and to take direction of my life ... and job," he said.

The strategy seems to be working. The government recently reported agricultural production increased more than 12 percent last year.

His fellow workers know that Bauza is a Christian.

"They know it and respect it," he said. "I think a lot of them will come to my belief because they are intrigued. That is the first step ... to salvation."

As a maturing Christian, Bauza is learning humility is necessary to balance the visibility of his government position.

"I think people in high positions, no matter if they are in government or private enterprise, need to be more humble," said Bauza. "I guess the success gets into our heads."

"We believe that because we are powerful or because we have a lot of strength or a lot of intelligence that we get things accomplished. Believe me, you don't get anything accomplished unless it's directed by him (God)."

A high-profile public-service occupation can create unusual amounts of stress. Bauza deals with this through prayer.

"I think the Lord is constantly not only testing me but challenging me. The Lord continually says to me, 'Juan, go ahead, do things your way.' When I can't, I have to come kneel down and say, 'Lord, you know I can't so help me,'" he said.

When Nazareth Baptist Church sponsored a mission in Vega Alta, Bauza joined Pastor Luis Vega in the effort to grow a church there. On Sunday morning, Bauza teaches the Sunday school in the church that was converted from an automobile repair garage located on Highway 2. At the conclusion of his term as agriculture secretary, Bauza anticipates returning to private business as a farmer and agricultural consultant in Caribbean and Latin American countries.

"I know God has other things for me," he said. "This is only a transition phase in my life. I hope to serve him all my life, no matter where he puts me."

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(BP) photo available upon request from the Brotherhood Commission