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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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VIRGINIA--Summer missionaries receive, give in Cuba.

NORTH CAROLINA--Taking charge of one's life paves way for using talents, potential.

TEXAS--Caldwell: all clergy must administrate.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Death, the loss of a parent, a spouse or a child, personal tragedy. Nearly all of us experience it sooner or later. But how does it feel when it happens far away on a mission field, thousands of miles from home, family and friends? The four stories below reveal how some Southern Baptist foreign missionaries deal with grief and loss.

**Missionaries losing loved ones
feel grief, love on mission fields** By Julie Nall

Baptist Press
9/6/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Dana Nottingham was living her lifetime dream -- serving alongside her husband as a missionary to Burkina Faso in west Africa.

Then, in what seemed the twinkling of an eye, her world shattered. Everything was gone -- her house, her friends, her new language and culture, her calling. But all that paled in comparison to the greatest grief of all: the loss of her husband, Barry.

The Nottinghams, from Texas, completed nine months of language study in France and their first year of service in Burkina Faso as Southern Baptist missionaries with the Foreign Mission Board. Then Barry fell ill with hepatitis Oct. 21, 1989. He died two days later.

Dana returned to the United States with her three children, ages 10, 7, and 1.

"I hated what grief did to me -- the constant sorrow, the being overwhelmed by the simplest of tasks, the uncertainty of what God was about," she said. "I needed to find out if God really keeps his promises. If he didn't, I wasn't going to make it."

Gradually, Dana discovered a God she had never really known before.

"When my life totally crumbled, God put it back together piece by piece in a whole new way, full of new hopes and dreams," she said.

She met Bryan Bullington, a former "missionary kid" from Africa, and they married in October 1990, making Axle, Texas, their home. Today she's back in Africa, where they serve as Foreign Mission Board missionaries in Namibia.

Far away from family and friends in the United States, foreign missionaries may feel overwhelmed when dealing with the death of a loved one or other personal tragedy. The grief they experience is real -- just as they, themselves, are real, rather than "superhuman," as Christians back home in America sometimes view them.

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The ways missionaries deal with personal tragedy and grief are as different as their experiences. Family members die from diseases, accidents, occasionally even murder overseas. Some missionaries decide to stay or return to the mission field after such losses. Others choose to return to the United States. Many admit they do not "understand" the reasons for such tragedies, but they believe that God remains in control of the situation.

For Ted and Sue Lindwall, the death of their oldest son, Tim, sent them through times of faith and patience, love and sorrow. The Lindwalls, from Novato and San Francisco, Calif., respectively, serve as missionaries in Guatemala.

Tim, 36, a vibrant Christian and a chaplain for a police department in North Richland Hills, Texas, died from Hodgkin's disease (cancer of the lymph glands) Sept. 18, 1993, after a long and excruciating battle with pain.

"Sorrow remains, and will do so until our final glorious Family Reunion," Ted said. "In all of the trials, we felt God's strength and blessing. The Father knew our sorrow, greatly magnified, in the death of his own Son. We do not ask why Tim's death was necessary: but we do ask what should be done as a result of it."

They are waiting for the answer.

Who comforts grieving missionaries? Fellow Christians and mission colleagues often reach out with open arms, seeking to sympathize and often being comforted in return. This proved true for missionaries Wayne and Elinor Pennell from Lenoir, N.C., and Atlanta, respectively, who served in Indonesia for 21 years before transferring to the Philippines.

When their oldest son, Mark, was in graduate school in 1983, he came to Indonesia for the summer. After a day with friends, he was hit by a truck and killed while riding home on a motor scooter.

Missionaries and Indonesian friends heard about the accident and rushed to the hospital to help Wayne and Elinor face the situation. Looking back on that time of shock, confusion, grief and loss, the Pennells also remember the warmth and love that surrounded them.

Friends handled the police report. Their house helper and two pastors' wives prepared Mark's body for burial, required within 24 hours in Indonesia. Other friends made funeral arrangements. Church women decorated the simple wooden casket with satin and garlands. Others notified people in Indonesia and around the world of Mark's death. Two couples stayed with the Pennells. Many people came from other towns and cities at significant expense.

"At a time when it was hard to find reason to praise the Lord, we could let the Psalms express praise for us," Elinor said. "Mark had brought a greeting card with him which a friend said he bought just before he came." Verses quoted on the card were from Isaiah 61: "He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted ... to comfort all who mourn"

"We knew the Lord had led Mark to bring it to comfort and strengthen us."

When missionaries Richard and Carmela Bartels' 2-year-old daughter Victoria Rose drowned in Nov. 23, 1991, grief came with sudden intensity.

"I thank God for the shock we went into automatically," Carmela said. "It buffered us from the profound grief at first and gave us opportunities to minister to those who were trying to share our grief." But after the Bartelses, from Elizabethtown, Ky., returned to mission work in Benin two months later, Carmela was overcome with sadness and hopelessness as she tried to organize Victoria's toys and clothes. It grew to an overwhelming crescendo before gradually subsiding after the first anniversary of Victoria's death.

"I no longer wanted comfort -- I wanted Victoria," she said.

A missionary friend told her to not be afraid of what she felt. So each day she went to her room to pray, read her Bible and meditate. She spent time with the Lord, seeking his comfort and asking him why.

"I was especially comforted as the Lord revealed the depth of his love to me," she said. "(I) gave my sorrow, anger and bitterness to Jesus. He took it, destroyed it, comforted me and gave me peace, joy and hope."

Jurhee Philpot of Cherry Hill, Ark., didn't expect to endure life on the mission field alone. But on Oct. 11, 1985, her husband, Jim, was murdered in his car while driving home in Mexico City -- shot after being sideswiped.

"This type of thing doesn't happen to modern-day missionaries," Jurhee later said. Suddenly she was dealing not only with the death of her husband, but also with questions about her own life and work.

Driving home one night, Jurhee passed the place of her husband's death and once again had to deal with her emotions. She went home and shouted and cried. The worst part was not having her best friend, Jim, to talk to.

She still feels angry at times about her husband's senseless death. But Jurhee stayed in Mexico, aiding and encouraging churches around Mexico City before transferring to Costa Rica, where she is a language orientation coordinator for new missionaries studying Spanish.

For 15-year-old "missionary kid" Trevor Woods, who was dying from leukemia in Colorado, faith ousted his fear of death. His faith also helped his missionary dad cope. Trevor grew up in Japan where his parents, Tony and Marsha Woods, from Evergreen, Colo., worked as Southern Baptist missionaries.

"I'm a Christian, so I'm not afraid of dying," Trevor said. "But live or die, I want to go back to Japan."

That took a lot of faith for a 15-year-old, his father said, more faith than Tony could find in his own heart. Trevor died Feb. 22, 1992, before he could make it back to Japan.

"My heart seemed incapable of producing anything, as if it were just a mass of shattered pieces, its sharp edges working their way into every part of my being," Tony said of the days after his son's death.

"The grief isn't so gut-wrenching now as before, but it runs deep and is never far from the surface. But I realize something now that I hadn't known before:

"My heart didn't break back then, nor is it broken now. God still holds it in his hand just as securely as always, and will keep it for his glory."

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Julie Nall, a senior student in journalism at Oklahoma Baptist University, was summer intern this year in the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's news and information office. (BP) photo (horizontal) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Sept. 2 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline available on SBCNet News Room.

FIRST-PERSON

Triumph in tragedy:
what God has taught me

By Jan Johnsonius

Baptist Press
9/6/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--What some people see as tragedy, others see as triumph. My journey toward understanding that truth began Aug. 1, 1993.

My husband, Jim, and I had been seeking appointment by the Foreign Mission Board for nearly eight years when we set foot on Costa Rican soil in 1991 to begin the Spanish-language learning process. Less than a year later, in August 1992, we headed to our long-awaited destination: Argentina. We hoped to spend the rest of our lives there serving the Lord.

We struggled with Spanish, and learning another new culture. We lost nearly our entire shipment of earthly goods before it even reached Argentina. We toiled to learn how to live in a small village, and how to meet the overwhelming needs of a rural province.

We discovered that although God had called us to music missions, the true need was for pastoral ministry and church development. The Lord certainly had different plans for us, but we joined him in his work and knew the joy of being completely in his will.

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It was that assurance that helped sustain me the following August, when Jim and I were involved in an auto accident as we traveled the remote rural roads between our new home of Villaguay and the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires.

An ambulance rushed us to the nearest clinic, and we ended up in intensive care -- two beds with a sheet hung between them. As I lay in one bed, I could hear lifesaving equipment and hospital personnel rushing frantically around Jim's bed. Then ... silence.

No one said anything to me, but I knew. A missionary at my bedside confirmed it. Jim had died.

In that moment, God filled me with a peace that's hard to put into words. For me, the only experience that could come close is when I received Christ as my Lord and Savior. What I didn't realize was that the serenity I felt was physically visible to others -- at least to the Argentine physician caring for Jim and me.

Shortly afterward, I thanked the doctor for all he had done to save Jim's life. It was then that he said to me, "I've never seen anything like this before. The peace, the tranquillity ... in you and your husband."

My next impulse was to ask him if he knew Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. But before the words could leave my mouth, God clearly spoke to me and said, "No. I want you to ask him if he believes in God."

I paused for just a moment, pondering why he would have me ask that, and then said, "Do you believe in God?"

"No, I don't," the doctor replied.

"After what you've seen here tonight, are you beginning to believe there really is a God?"

"Yes," he said.

Physically unable to continue the conversation that night, I told him I would return to talk to him about my God.

Looking back, I realize even more clearly it had to be God working through me. With 13 fractures, internal injuries, and severe bruising, it was three months before I could walk well enough to return to that town and speak with the doctor.

When I did, Alfredo and I talked for nearly three hours. He was full of questions about my faith, and how God was working in my life. I shared Christ with him. He listened. I would love to tell you he accepted Christ that day, but he didn't. Faith is a difficult concept for this young physician, but God is obviously working in his life, and I pray that Alfredo will come to know the Lord I serve.

Word of the accident spread quickly in Argentina, through U.S. churches and the Foreign Mission Board communication system. As a plane evacuated me from that rural clinic to the British Hospital in Buenos Aires, as I lay in intensive care for four days, as I continued a four-week convalescence unable even to sit up in bed, and in the months of recovery that followed, I knew that many people were praying for me. I knew because I could literally feel God healing my body.

I was bathed in God's love, from the nearly 1,500 participants at the 1993 Jericho missions week at Glorieta (N.M) Baptist Conference Center -- who interrupted their worship service to pray for me -- to our "family" of Argentine Baptists in the little village of Villaguay and our missionary colleagues around the world. I've never experienced anything like it.

God is faithful, and I'm here today through his grace -- a living, breathing, walking product of prayer.

But there's still much confusion. I often ask the Lord why -- when Jim and I were serving him on the mission field and living in his will -- did the accident happen? I've heard it said that we shouldn't ask questions, but it's only then that we can find answers.

As I lay in that hospital bed in Argentina for weeks on end, God had a captive audience. No distractions. No pressing mission tasks to complete. He spoke in a "still, small voice," as he's done countless times before in the mad rush of my life. But this time I was listening.

I struggled with the assurance from many people that God must have spared my life for a reason, that he must have some great task for me. I searched for what that might be. One afternoon, God directed my attention to the pitcher of water on my bedside table. Then he said, so clearly, "My purpose for your life is the same as it has always been, the same as it is for all my children, that you share the living water of Jesus Christ with the world around you."

He made it as clear as the water.

He revealed something else, too. Proverbs 2:3-5 says: "Yes, if you want better insight and discernment, and are searching for them as you would lost money or hidden treasure, then wisdom will be given you, and knowledge of God himself; you will soon learn the importance of reverence for the Lord and of trusting him."

There was the answer. One simple word: trust. It's been said that time heals all wounds, but to me it appears that the grief and pain -- the feelings of loss -- don't grow fainter as much as we grow stronger in the Lord. He only asks that we love him, and that relationship is built on trust.

Many people, my missionary colleagues included, assumed Jim's death would mean my immediate resignation and return to the United States. The Lord, however, never told me that. I knew God had called me to missions as Jim's wife -- but also as an individual. Instead of my questioning my mission direction, the Lord created in me a much stronger "call" -- perhaps because I didn't have my companion in the ministry to encourage me.

He opened the door for me to take an early furlough and use my journalistic background as a special assignment writer in the news and information office at the Foreign Mission Board. He continues to direct my path, and I find myself waiting upon him as I've never done before.

My heart remains firmly in missions. In contemplating the needs of the world around me and recalling our brief time on the field, I know the struggles and demands of career missions. I also know that the Lord wants me to be more prepared to serve him. He's leading me toward seminary at the end of my furlough. Another major step. Another challenge. More questions. But always the word comes back: trust.

I've recounted my experiences so many times now, as I speak at churches, missions conferences and to new friends, that the words seem to come out almost mechanically.

The emotions and pain, however, remain very real.

Even more real is the knowledge of God's unending love for me, the depth of which I never truly knew before he revealed himself to me -- through life's trials.

I don't call it tragedy. There's a reason.

I see victory in the lives of people forever changed, both in the United States and Argentina, by a man with a servant heart who answered God's call and reflected Christ's love. I see it in the Argentina missionaries who united around me as God's family in those months of recovery. I see it in the lives of Christian brothers and sisters in Argentina, the United States and around the world who prayed on my behalf.

Despite times when I endlessly ask why -- why God chose to take someone so young, with such a mission heart, so early in his service -- I really can't look at any aspect of Jim's life, or death, and see tragedy.

I only see victory, and the joy of a life lived fully for the Lord. It would have been a tragedy if Jim had not had a personal relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior, if Jim had not surrendered his life to full-time Christian ministry, if Jim and I had not answered God's call to missions.

That would have been a tragedy.

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Jan Johnsonius, currently on missionary furlough, is working in the Foreign Mission Board's news and information office. (BP) photos (two vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Sept. 2 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outlines available on SBCNet News Room.

Disease takes her loved ones,
but not missionary's faith

By Mary Jane Welch

GUATEMALA CITY (BP)--Marfan's Syndrome -- a potentially deadly disease -- strikes only 15 of every 1 million people.

That statistic provides little comfort for Southern Baptist missionary Judy Billings of Bryan, Texas. Five of those 15 are in her family.

Judy's comfort has had to come day by day as she has coped with the impact of the disease on her family.

There was Herb, her 6-foot-11-inch husband. They met at church the day Judy arrived at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. She dated no one else after that night. With him, she responded to God's call to mission service that eventually led to Guatemala.

Then there was Kathy, their first child, born shortly after Herb became associate pastor of First Baptist Church in San Marcos in 1958. At 9 months, Kathy, an apparently healthy baby, sickened and died before they could get her to a hospital. An autopsy revealed blood had leaked between the cells of her heart. The cause of the leak remained a mystery until years later.

Herb was in his 40s and already a missionary when he was diagnosed with Marfan's Syndrome in the early 1970s. The disease affects the body's connective tissue, primarily in the skeleton, the eyes and the heart. That's why Herb was so tall. That's why Herb's heart eventually would require a new valve. And that's why Kathy's heart leaked between the cells.

People often learn of Marfan's as the disease that affected Abraham Lincoln and his children. Some victims die young like Kathy; some live a normal life.

After diagnosing Herb's condition, doctors said the Billings' other living children had a 50 percent chance of having Marfan's. Three of five children born after Kathy died had it -- daughters Kellye and Lisa and son Marshall.

Herb's condition helped the missionary couple learn to slow down. With accounting and business experience, he'd come to Guatemala in the early '60s in part to manage mission business and finances for other Southern Baptist missionaries, freeing them to concentrate on ministry. He did that -- and much more. At various times, he directed the Baptist book deposit and bookstore and helped start several churches, including Gosen Baptist Church in Guatemala City, where Judy attends today. Judy worked with him in every area.

Herb also faithfully spread the gospel, demonstrating the unusual patience for which he was known. Miguel Gomez, for instance, was a 17-year-old receptionist at the Chevrolet dealer where Herb took mission cars for servicing. He witnessed to Miguel for 15 years before he became a Christian. Today Miguel is pastor of a church he started -- and the mission's mechanic.

Judy still remembers the day Herb was told he might have to have his heart valve replaced. As they left the doctor's office, he asked her, "What if we have to have that surgery?"

"We'll do it," she said.

From then on they took life one day at a time, learning to "stop and smell the flowers." Herb had surgery, and the next years were a special gift, said Judy. They came to value even more the time they spent together and with family. People became the emphasis of their activities.

"Herb used to say he wouldn't worry about something if it wouldn't make any difference 20 years from now," she said.

Five years after the surgery, when he received his 25-year pin for missionary service, Herb announced he felt better than he had in years. A few weeks later, he and Judy took their youngest, Marshall, to Texas to enroll in college. They were staying in a missionary home.

One afternoon in 1988 Judy found Herb there, dead of a probable ruptured aorta, the most common cause of death for those with Marfan's. He was 58.

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There's no way to describe the support her fellow Guatemala missionaries have given to her since that day, Judy said. Herb's death was hard on them too. They had to deal with their own grief over losing him and pick up the tasks he handled with no warning and no training. Y t "I've never felt anything but support from my mission family," Judy said.

A missionary who loses a spouse always faces the question of whether to return alone to the mission field. Judy wanted to go "home" -- to Guatemala. That Christmas all her children came to Guatemala, a gathering Judy says was both necessary and special.

She stayed in Guatemala another two and a half years. One night she was talking by phone with Lisa, one of her daughters back in the United States with Marfan's.

"Mom, I need you," Lisa said during the conversation.

Judy didn't respond immediately, but the next month she got up one morning and knew she had to return to the United States to be with her daughter. She made a call that day to the dean of San Marcos Academy, where Lisa worked as a resident assistant, to discuss plans and to check into job possibilities. The dean paused; 30 minutes earlier she had gotten a resignation notice from the school's dorm director. She offered Judy the job.

Over the next three years, Judy and Lisa became best friends. They developed a "neat relationship that not all mothers and daughters have," said Judy. Many of the girls at the school commented to them that they wished they had a similar relationship with their mothers.

"We had a ministry to those girls in just being able to relate to each other," says Judy.

Just as she had sensed when it was time to move to Texas, Judy began to sense it was time to return to Guatemala. She talked with her children. They were excited about her going "home" once again. Missionary George Hardeman, Herb's successor as mission treasurer, was swamped. The mission needed someone to help him.

Lisa died before Judy left Texas. Lisa's dream had been to coach basketball. She had gotten a scholarship to play basketball at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. But when the trainer learned she had Marfan's, she was sent to a cardiologist, who decided she couldn't play.

Lisa was devastated by the decision, but she decided to live life like she wanted to for as long as she had it. She died Jan. 8, 1993 -- on a running track -- with a ruptured aorta.

After the initial shock and grief, Judy stayed with her decision to return to Guatemala, where she tackled new tasks, like using the computer and learning how to handle treasurer duties.

She's also in great demand as a speaker, especially for women's groups. Their No. 1 request: her presentation on children's needs. Most Guatemalan women's primary responsibility is rearing their children, but they've been taught little about how to do it, she said.

She also speaks on other topics -- including a recent talk on lessons learned from suffering. Only after she arrived to deliver that talk did she discover two women in the group had recently lost children in their extended families. One woman's grandchild had just died, struck accidentally by his father's car.

Although her life is full, Judy admits she gets a sinking feeling sometimes when she climbs the stairs in her home past photos of her family. But Herb helped prepare her for what lay ahead, she said, making her feel capable instead of dependent.

"He was a very affirming person," she said. "He even said I was a good driver. How many husbands do that?"

And, she says, "I've felt a peace that can only come from God I have times when I'm sad and lonely, but the peace and joy don't leave. They're two different things."

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(BP) photo (vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Sept. 2 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet News Room.

When autism silenced her son,
missionary mom found ministry

By Betty Poor

SALTO, Uruguay (BP)--What does a mother do when her 18-month-old son suddenly stops speaking, and can no longer drink from a cup or hold a spoon?

What does she do when it happens on the mission field -- only six months after her arrival as a new missionary?

Southern Baptist missionary Iracema Kunkel in Uruguay faced that crisis with her husband, Tim, and their two older children.

At first they assumed -- and were told by doctors -- that their son Steven suffered simply from "culture shock." Iracema is Brazilian-born and speaks Portuguese as her native language. Tim Kunkel, from Oakland, Calif., speaks English. When the family came to Uruguay after appointment by the Foreign Mission Board in 1990, they were immersed in a third culture and yet another language: Spanish.

But then Steven's real problem was diagnosed: autism, a severely incapacitating developmental disability caused by physical disorders in the brain.

"I didn't accept Steven's autism when I first found out," Iracema admitted. "I went through a denial stage and had grieving times."

When the shock subsided, though, she began studying about the problem, and turned what could have been a family tragedy into an opportunity for ministry.

First she searched for other autistic children in Salto, the northwestern Uruguayan city where the Kunkels work in evangelism and church planting. She found 62 parents of autistic children who desperately needed help.

For five years the parents had been trying to start a school for autistic children; their children weren't accepted in regular schools.

"They asked me to talk to their group, and I opened with Jeremiah 33:3: 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know,'" Iracema said.

"I told them I was shocked with the news about Steven, but that God had given me peace, and I knew he had a plan in this. No one else there was an evangelical Christian. Some were Catholic, some atheistic. But they said, 'Yes, God has a plan, only God.'"

They had not been a support group before -- their meetings were strictly business. Iracema soon changed that.

The missionary invited the other parents to her home, and about 15 came to the first meeting. She began teaching them what she had learned through books, articles and videos -- sent by the Foreign Mission Board and an American doctor -- about teaching and communicating with autistic children.

Iracema focused on "facilitated communication," a technique in which a "facilitator" supports the hand of an autistic person, enabling him to tap letters on a keyboard or specially designed cardboard alphabet.

The parents have reported encouraging benefits. One 16-year-old autistic daughter is also blind, but her mother has learned to treat her like an adolescent rather than a 5-year-old. The daughter is much happier and behaves better. The mother of a 13-year-old autistic girl once did everything for her. Now the girl is learning to do things for herself.

Until she left for a U.S. furlough in June, Iracema met with the parents every Tuesday night. She prayed for each of the children and their families and told them God loves them.

She's also seen many changes in Steven. He's learned to communicate much better with his family. His brother and sister understand his problem and help him rather than resent him.

The Kunkels now use only English at home for family conversation. Steven, now 5, has learned his responsibilities like putting away his toys. After home schooling her 6-year-old, John Glenn, all morning, Iracema spends two hours each afternoon teaching Steven. She keeps a daily journal on his progress, and now he's working on the same subjects other 5-year-olds learn in school.

During the Kunkels' year-long furlough, Steven is attending special education classes in public school in Kennewick, Wash. Iracema is working as a special education volunteer at his school to learn more about techniques for teaching autistic children. She's also taking special education classes on autism at a community college.

She feels her ministry in Salto has only begun. When the Kunkels return there next June, she hopes to use her new training and experience to help the parents of autistic children fulfill their dream of a special school.

"It's easier for me to accept Steven's autism because I know God has a plan for each of my children," Iracema said. "God has a plan for Steven, and I know he's going to use him."

Considering what's happened among the desperate community of parents and autistic children in Salto, you could say God already has.

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Betty Poor and her husband, Wally, are Southern Baptist missionaries in Uruguay. (BP) photo (horizontal) mailed to state Baptist newspapers Sept. 2 by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline available on SBCNet News Room.

Summer missionaries
receive, give in Cuba

By Mary E. Speidel

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Lana Lyon treasures her seashell from Cuba.

It's more than a souvenir of the seven weeks she spent on the island as a Southern Baptist student summer missionary. It's a symbol of children who changed her life.

A Cuban boy gave her the shell after she taught Vacation Bible School in a Baptist church in western Cuba.

"It's a huge, beautiful shell," said Lyon, a student at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. "(The boy) said, 'I don't want anything for it. It's just for you, for coming and teaching us.'"

She understood the gift's value: "Anything Cubans have, even a shell, means a lot of them. I knew his giving that to me wasn't easy for him."

Lyon saw the same spirit of giving often in Cuba. So did the five other Texas Baptist students who worked there this summer as Baptist Student Union summer missionaries. They are Sandra Gonzalez, a student at the University of Texas at El Paso; Anna Maria Rojas, University of Texas at San Antonio; David Vassar, Texas Christian University in Fort Worth; Victor Hinojosa, Baylor University in Waco; and Tina Capallera, Angelo State University in San Angelo.

Rojas also served in Cuba in the summer of 1993, the first time BSU summer missionaries were allowed into the country in nearly 30 years. This year she and Gonzalez saw the spirit of giving at a Baptist church in Cuba's Pinar del Rio province.

During Sunday morning worship church leaders read names of sick church members who need medicine and asked if anyone had it. Someone always had the medication and gave it to the one in need.

"When you read the (New Testament) book of Acts and you see the (early) church, that's the church in Cuba," said Gonzalez, originally from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

"They continually pull together and work for each other. Everything they have is not theirs, it's the whole body's. Everything they have they share . . . They don't hold it back thinking, 'What if I need it or want it or what if someone in my home needs it?' They know that when they need it, it's going to be provided. And it is."

Gonzalez and Rojas both experienced that kind of generosity when they contracted parasites from drinking impure water. They were so sick their Cuban Baptist supervisor considered sending them back home.

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When Amick discovered money was not buying him happiness, he left his high-paying job in Boston, with no knowledge of where he was headed. "I did what I preach no one should do -- leave a job without having a job," said Amick who facilitated the seminar, "Take Ownership of Your Life in Five Lessons," at the Single Adult Labor Day Weekend at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, Sept. 2-5.

While he had no job prospects, Amick said he knew God was with him in his decision to resign. Flipping through TV stations while traveling, he hit on a Christian station and heard the testimony of a man who had also lost all he loved to career.

"God spoke to me through TV, and later he came into my life in a small church in Concord, N.C.," Amick said.

As a career counselor, Amick realizes most of America's workforce is not happy.

"Eighty-seven percent (of Americans) are in some degree cynical about going to work every morning," Amick said. "Only 13 percent know they are doing what they should be doing."

One of the problems, Amick said, is "that people associate who they are with what their occupation is."

"Your work day is only eight hours long. The rest of the day is yours. You need an identity outside of your job."

In the early 1980s, Amick said the average American worker stayed with the same company 25 years. Presently, the length of tenure with one firm is 4.8 years, and by the year 2000, it will be 2.5 years, he said.

"It doesn't pay to attach your identity to your job."

Many Americans are unhappy, he said, because "they see their own great potential as one of life's biggest burdens."

"To know you have potential and to be doing something you don't like doing is a waste. You know you're not using your potential," he said, adding taking control of your life paves the way to using God-given talents and potential. Five lessons Amick believes a person must learn before mastering his or her life and using it to the fullest potential begin with quit blaming others.

To take control of your life, Amick said, "you must quit blaming someone else for all that goes wrong and for your unhappiness. Quit defending your position and quit seeking praise for where you're at."

Those unhappy in their jobs regularly blame others for everything that goes wrong, he said. They also seek praise for any task they perform well.

He urged seminar participants to "become realistic and responsible for your choices and actions" and to "do a job well" for self-satisfaction, not for praise.

Lesson two, Amick said, is to understand that attitudes or "I" make each day better or worse.

"I make the difference between a better day tomorrow and a bitter day tomorrow. When you're in control as you can be of your life, it's up to you to make each day a better day.

"God has given us two ends -- one to sit on and one to think with. Our success is in direct proportion to the one we use the most," he said. "But remember success has a very individual definition. To me, it means what my kids say about me to their friends when I'm not in the room."

Lesson three, according to Amick, is "excellence is not optional." "Excellence has no time clock. There is no stopping and starting it. You must do your best mentally, physically and spiritually today. And tomorrow morning, you have to get up and do it all over again."

An individual has his or her own definition of excellence, Amick said. "Don't stress out over trying to meet others' expectations of excellence." Part of not stressing out over the expectations of others, he said, is to "Like yourself," lesson four in taking charge of your life.

When Amick discovered money was n't buying him happiness, he left his high-paying job in Boston, with no knowl dge of where he was headed. "I did what I preach no on should do -- I ave a job without having a job," said Amick who facilitated the seminar, "Take Ownership of Your Life in Five Lessons," at the Single Adult Labor Day Weekend at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center, Sept. 2-5.

While he had no job prospects, Amick said he knew God was with him in his decision to resign. Flipping through TV stations while traveling, he hit on a Christian station and heard the testimony of a man who had also lost all he loved to career.

"God spoke to me through TV, and later he came into my life in a small church in Concord, N.C.," Amick said.

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"We cannot love others if we first don't love ourselves," he said, adding feeling good about our personal decisions and expectations comes with feeling good about oneself.

"Learning from the rookies" or learning from everyone is lesson five of Amick's self-written instructions for taking control of one's life.

"I am here as a facilitator this weekend. I am here to learn from you. If we slow down and listen, there is a lesson to be learned every day of our lives," he said.

Amick led a four-part career track at the Single Adult Labor Day Weekend Getaway. The other seminars he facilitated included: "Get a Job!", "12 Strategies for 'Fire-proofing' Your Career" and "Practice Makes Perfect," (interviewing tips and salary negotiations).

Labor Day weekends are sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division. Other Labor Day events were held at: Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center; Arrowhead Springs, Calif.; Destin, Fla.; Galveston, Texas; and Branson, Mo.

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Caldwell: all clergy
must administrate

Baptist Press
9/6/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--In his keynote address during Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's 1994 Convocation last week, William G. Caldwell said the proper attitude of a church administrator is Christ-like caring that combines discipline and consolation in building up the body of Christ.

"Remember this phrase: joy is important in administration," Caldwell said. He is the current Hugh Seborn Simpson professor of administration at Southwestern.

"I think the concept of servant leadership grows out of this idea. Jesus was the model of this concept," Caldwell said. "In the book Effective Leadership for Today's Church, Adams says, 'The nature of the authority in the church is defined by the Lord. Jesus deliberately turned his back on all of the ideas of power held in His world and proposed something new: servanthood.'"

All clergy can be gifted administrators, Caldwell emphasized.

"All clergy are not prophets. All clergy are not even gifted preachers. They're not all gifted teachers, but they all can be seen as gifted because they can use all of the gifts in the fellowship as a part of their administration," he said.

"The term 'administration' points to that which unifies rather than that which sets apart," Caldwell noted. "It is, in God's grace, a widespread gift."

Quoting another popular author, Caldwell said one of the best definitions of administration is also the simplest: "getting things done through people."

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