

SOUTHERN BAPTIST AGRICULTURAL MISSIONARIES:
THEIR SITUATIONS AND SUCCESSES

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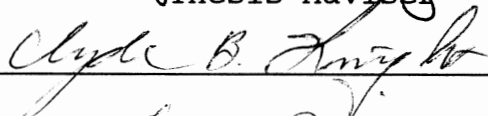
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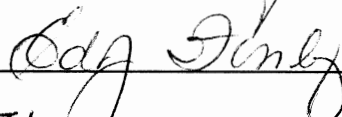
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Thesis Approved:



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PREFACE

This report spawned out of my long standing interest in Southern Baptist Foreign Agricultural Missions efforts. When I contacted the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Virginia when researching this report, I found, as I had thought, that there is no definitive body of information pertaining to what the denomination's agricultural missionaries do overseas. Who are these missionaries? What are the operations like? And most importantly, what skills and practices do the missionaries find useful in improving local agricultural conditions and in effectively administering their theological message.

I wish to thank my committee, Dr. Gary Oakley, Dr. Eddie Finley and Dr. Clyde Knight, for their time and consideration in reviewing this report and for the advice, direction and encouragement they have given me.

I would like to thank Kay Porter for her invaluable help in assembling it.

I would like to thank the missionaries who participated, and I would like to thank their wives and children for not demanding an easier road.

I, finally, must extend my unending thanks to my family and friends, because without their love, encouragement and resources, I would not have been able to finish my Master's degree.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A recent United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF) report listed some all too familiar and all too disturbing statistics. The report maintained that 40,000 children younger than five years old die every day of illnesses that could be prevented with a simple vaccine (Esquivel, 1991). Ismail Serageldin, the World Bank Director of Technical Development for Africa, said in a 1990 speech that two out of three rural Africans do not have access to potable water, and a quarter of Sub Saharan Africa's (SSA) population obtain less than 80 percent of the daily calorie supply recommended by the World Health Organization; the approximate population of SSA is 450 million people (Serageldin, 1990). The purposes of citing these statistics is by no means for their shock value, although they, along with pictures of starving children are often used for such (Hill, 1992). No, it is done instead to illustrate a point. Even if these figures were cut in half, it is obvious that there are many in the developing world whose quality of life should see some improvement. In the milieu that is Third World development policy, promoting a stable agriculture is generally accepted as a good way to get the overall

economic ball rolling in a developing nation, which in turn reduces poverty (Schuh, 1990). The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention has demonstrated a firm commitment to chipping away at third world poverty by deploying 53 full time rural, agricultural missionaries to over 30 developing countries (Social Services Department; Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board, 1992). That the Southern Baptists are doing a right thing is safely beyond question, but how successful are they at doing things right?

Statement of the Problem

Beyond who these missionaries are and what their field situation is like, what skills and practices do these missionaries employ, and what characteristics, if any, do they recommend that help bring them success on the field? What do they do to elicit a change in the practices of the local farmers and laity with which they have contact?

No definitive list of qualities and competencies exists that adequately defines a successful missionary operating from a vocational agriculture base.

Purpose of the Study

In conversations with Mission Board personnel at Richmond, Virginia, it was discovered that no definitive

body of knowledge exists pertaining to the actual scope and successful operational practices of Southern Baptist agricultural missionaries. Further, efforts have just recently been made to consider consolidating what information that does exist on the topic, and on the topics of the denominations missions efforts in general, into a central depository at the Boards main office in Richmond. It was obvious to this researcher that there was research to do on every facet of Southern Baptist missions.

It is the purpose of this study to expand the meager research base on the subject of Southern Baptist, Foreign Agricultural Missions. This will be done by a review of selected literature to identify skills and characteristics cited as beneficial to those working overseas. The purpose will further be met by examining the operations and practices of five Southern Baptist agriculture missionaries for successes in their work.

Definition of Terms

Southern Baptists - for the purposes of this study, are an evangelical protestant denomination, the membership of which is primarily located in the geographic South to Southwestern Portions of the United States, but includes all fifty states and numerous foreign countries. Southern Baptist Churches are affiliated through the Southern

Baptist Convention. Monies are sent from the local affiliates to this central organization which in turn sponsors many other organizations. Two of the largest organizations are the Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee, which produces religious educational material for the local affiliates, and the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Virginia, which sponsors well over three thousand missionaries overseas.

Southern Baptist Foreign Missionary - for the purposes of this study: any individual that has been commissioned by the Southern Baptist Denomination to represent the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as found in the Bible, to peoples in regions outside the continental United States.

International Development - for the purposes of this study, will be defined as the highly complex process of bringing agriculture, infrastructure, health and nutrition, education and industry in the Third World up to Western standards. The purpose of this is to improve the economic standing of that developing nation so that, eventually, the people living there can enjoy a better quality of life, while simultaneously supplying the West with another legitimate trading partner.

Agriculture - any practice that has do with the growing of plants and animals for human consumption as food. For the purposes of this study, agriculture will

include, but will not be limited to these practices: soil conservation, contour farming, small and large animal husbandry, organic gardening, composting, grain and legume production (legumes are usually a reference to all kinds of beans), irrigation, fish farming and basic agricultural research (which, in this case, means keeping records of certain crops and animal growth and comparing them to others for possible improvement).

Skill - for the purposes of this study: an applied learned ability, the use of which is beneficial to ones employ.

Characteristic - for the purposes of this study: an inherent trait of one's personality.

Practice - In this study, any positive behavior, method or skill, consistently applied for the purpose of achieving desired results.

Success - For the purposes of this study, success will be defined as the acceptance of the local farmers and laity of the farming methods and theology, respectively, as presented by the missionaries.

Assumptions

Before examining these missionaries and their projects on a case by case basis it is important to identify some critical assumptions about Southern Baptist Agricultural Missions. First, the primary goal of all

Southern Baptist Foreign Missions efforts is to establish an evangelical witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabited world with a greater emphasis toward people groups that, as of yet, may not have had significant access to such. Second, in keeping with traditional Christian charity, as well as sound development practices, Southern Baptists are committed to meeting the long term physical needs of the less developed in the Third World. These ends are met by several grassroots agricultural and vocational projects and otherwise social programs such as literacy and nutrition training. Finally, they actively educate the local pastors and laity in doctrine, as found in scripture, and church polity.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review was conducted through a computer search of appropriate categories on the data base for educational research (ERIC) and a comparable search of the PRO QUEST data base for resources other than educational journals and documents. All selected resources were reviewed at length.

The content of the literature has been divided into two categories for ease of comprehension. The first is the category of desirable characteristics (innate personality traits) that would be helpful in a person going to work overseas. The second category consists of skills (things learned or developed) that this literature sample noted as desirable for employment in international development.

Characteristics

Being self confident or feeling good about oneself might not be something a successful adult professional might worry about every day. But, according to the literature, self confidence plays a significant part in a persons success overseas. Kohls, cited by Copeland (1984) lists self reliance and a strong sense of self as being

important when working overseas. In dealing with what is commonly known as culture shock, Landis, as cited by Kitinoja (1988) explains that those going to work overseas should already know themselves very well. Rosensweig (1985, p. 5) echoes this by stating:

Being sensitive to a different culture does not mean that a person cannot be himself. Many inexperienced consultants try so hard to fit into the foreign culture that they end up almost trying to change their personalities. This is, of course, quite difficult to do, apparent to the hosts, and usually counter-productive.

Another desirable characteristic mentioned was flexibility. Kohls, once again cited by Copeland (1984) notes that it is important and Kitinoja (1988, p. 16) mentions it as one of her two keys to success when working overseas. The example she uses is that of time conciseness. She says, "the American clock 'runs' while in other countries it 'walks'". It should be noted that in this literature, the ability to adjust and make transitions were often referred to as just that: abilities to be employed as needed, not personality traits, as flexibility seems to be considered. It would stand to reason, however, that flexibility would precurse adaptability. Adaptability will be mentioned later as a skill.

Rounding out the characteristics list is another citing of Kohls by Copeland (1984). Whereas Kohls (mistakenly) refers to humor as a skill, he lists it as

well as empathy, curiosity, warmth, perceptiveness, open-mindedness, and finally an ability to tolerate failure, which might be considered patience.

Skills

Beginning the list of skills to have when working overseas is having a good if not fluent grasp of the host language. This particular topic was heartily agreed upon by all contributing authors. Copeland (1984) points out that showing a "willingness" to learn the foreign client's language gives companies operating overseas a competitive edge. Rosensweig (1985) gives a very strong opinion on the issue of language. He says "Incredibly, far too many consultants think they can work effectively overseas without a command of the local language. This view is not only naive but, in many cases, downright arrogant." With the overseas bulwark of the Peace Corps, it is a matter of policy: "Volunteers are expected to speak the language of the people with whom they live and work . . ." (Peace Corps Brochure PC 7004, 1991).

Another ability that could give one an edge when working abroad could be referred to as cultural literacy. The first thing Plihal & Daines (1988, p. 32) recommend before going overseas, is to "Find out what the host country is like before you get there." Study the customs, religion, politics and even climate of the region or

country that you will be working in (Kitinoja, 1988). Copeland (1984) and Plihal & Daines (1988) agree on knowing proper etiquette. While Copeland (1984) goes on to suggest history, folklore, geography, values and even art and music are also valuable things to study.

Next are three articles that mention making the adjustment or transition to a foreign country as important abilities to be learned. Evers (1983), states that teachers working overseas "need to develop adaptive mechanisms" (p. 2). She goes on to point out that "The greater their competence and expertise in these adaptive mechanisms, the greater the chance for successful survival in their work in the modern world" (p. 2). Lee (1983), echoing the Peace Corps orientation process, explains that things that bring significance to ones life at home must be included or substituted in a foreign environment as well, to ensure a smoother transition. And Copeland (1984) maintains that general cultural literacy is a key in adaptation.

The next category is miscellaneous behavioral skills. Kitinoja (1988) calls communication skills the number one key to success at anything, particularly working overseas. She says: "Failing to get things clarified can spell disaster " (p. 15). Plihal & Daines (1988) stress the importance of free dialogue and listening carefully to the locals. Second is having the

ability to adequately involve the locals, or indigenous population. "It is very important that the consultant know how to make the client feel ownership in the project. Unless the client feels that the project belongs to him, it is unlikely that he will act on the consultant's recommendations," says Rosensweig (1985, p. 5). Pilhal & Daines (1988) also agree that involving host counterparts is a good idea. Finally, knowing how to manage is identified as a good skill to possess: understanding motivation and looking and acting the part of a manager is considered important (Kitinoja, 1988). Again, Kohls cited by Copeland (1984) points to a 'people friendly' low goal/task orientation as important. This assertion is recognized as a good management technique when good relations within an organization are a priority. (Baird, 1992). Dr. Baird, of the Department of Occupational and Adult Education at Oklahoma State University (1992) explains that strict task orientation, without proper attention to employee needs (such as recognition of good performance) can often yield dissatisfied employees who are negatively motivated.

The following are professional/technical skills or trades that were mentioned in the literature review as being important to typical international development and/or commerce.

With the Earth Conference going on in Rio De Janero, it seems that managing natural resources is an increasingly popular topic. So it is in the reviewed literature as well. "Efficient use of scarce resources is imperative," says Serageldin (1990, p. 149). He then goes on to say that immediate action should be taken towards environmental issues (Serageldin, 1990). Schuh (1990, pp. 142), lends like sentiment: "Making most efficient use of a nations resources should have highest priority in taking steps to deal with sustainablity issues. The issue is to have incentives for private individuals to husband and to make most efficient use of the resources they own and/or control." Finally, the Peace Corps (1991) gives some specific descriptors that pertain to their natural resource management efforts. Reforestation, environmental education and wildlife preservation were among those listed (Peace Corps, 1991).

Agriculture, is defined by the Peace Corps (1991) as including such areas as soil conservation, crop extension, agricultural research, farm mechanics, vegetable gardening, animal husbandry, agriculture education, and economics. Serageldin (1990, p. 149) maintains that "agriculture and food security are essential" elements to sustained development. Schuh (1990, p. 139) views agriculture in this way: "In low income countries, the majority of the population spends the majority of their

income on food. It is this that makes agricultural development such a powerful means of promoting general economic development."

"A dime spent on educational assistance might be worth a dollar in conventional foreign aid." or so says an article from The Economist (1989, p. 46). This statement follows a review of a recent United States Agency for International Development report that notes the increase of nationals from less developed countries attending universities of industrialized countries (The Economist, 1989). Vensky (1990, p. 66) pointed out that with an "Each One Teach One" campaign, illiteracy was completely wiped out in one province in southern India. She gives a touching account of a ninth grader giving reading lessons to a 28 year old laundry worker because the ninth grader believes "it is a national disgrace for people to have to sign with their thumb print." (Vensky, 1990, p. 66). This is certainly a triumph for literacy education. The Peace Corps (1991), Schuh (1990) and Serageldin (1990) also point to the importance of education in development.

Serageldin (1990, p. 149) and Schuh (1990, p. 142) rail against the root effects of - and solutions to - rural poverty. Health and nutrition are held here as very important factors in the equation of rural poverty. To quote Serageldin (1990, p. 149) "How much of infant

mortality and morbidity bred of ignorance and malnutrition could be averted by better attention to basic health and nutrition? By better attention to the meaning of poverty and the means of its alleviation." Schuh (1990, p. 142) adds: "The challenge is to identify efficient means of alleviating rural poverty. In general, this will involve . . . (among other things) . . . increased availability of health services; and improved nutrition." The Peace Corps (1991) also lists health care and nutrition as needed fields.

Last is a list of miscellaneous skills that are needed in the area of international development. Isaacs (1991) gives a description of some of the skills that Intermediate Technology (a private developmental organization) brings into its projects. They include agricultural engineering, fisheries, food processing, micro-hydro-electric projects, and carpentry. The Peace Corps (1991) also actively recruits engineers, carpenters, welders, masons, mechanics, electricians, plumbers and even refrigeration specialist for work overseas.

By no means is this a complete inventory of skills needed for effective international development; it is, however, a good core. It should be noted that the literature review did not specifically list doctors, dentists and financial specialist, but this author would include them as essential to development. It is hoped

that this literature review can provide a good background from which the activities of these missionaries can be examined.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

It was not the scope of this study to tackle the myriad complexity of international development or even the Southern Baptists role therein. This was a largely, descriptive, qualitative research report on the operations of five Southern Baptist agricultural missionaries and the developmental and theological role that the missionaries played in their overseas communities. This report was precursed by a review of selected literature.

Information gathered for this report was obtained through a review of selected literature and personal interviews with five Southern Baptist agricultural missionaries.

Literature was obtained through two computerized library searches of the ERIC and PRO-QUEST data bases. Other information cited in the literature review consisted of a list of Southern Baptist agricultural missionaries that was obtained from the Foreign Mission Board. Information was also gathered from a recent Peace Corps brochure. Additional information was gleaned from an educational administration course with Dr. John Baird, as the instructor.

Four of the five missionary interviews were conducted at the current residences of the interviewees, and one occurred at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas. All of the participating missionaries were on furlough in the United States at the times of the interviews. All of these interviews occurred during the spring of 1992. Five open-ended questions were asked each missionary to elicit broad informational responses. The following is a list of the questions asked. 1) What is your name and educational background? 2) What is the size and scope of your operation? 3) What agricultural skills and practices do you find successful for your operation? 4) What theological skills and practices do you find successful for your operation? 5) What characteristics and skills would you recommend for successful execution of your job in developmental, evangelical missions?

The information gathered during these conversations that were pertinent to the study was included, at length, in Chapter IV of this study.

Whereas it was not the intent of this study to formally compare the practices advised in the literature review to that of the missionaries, an informal comparison can be observed in the conclusions in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

ACCUMULATED DATA

The information collected in these interviews falls into five categories: personal information about the missionary including family and education; size, scope and location of the project; agricultural skills and practices; theological skills and practices; and finally an advised characteristics category.

Rollie Ennis

Rollie Ennis is a sixteen year veteran of Southern Baptist agriculture missions. He is a 1961 graduate of Oklahoma State University in Animal Science and a 1973 graduate of the Mission Board's Agriculture Evangelist accreditation program from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. His wife's name is Eva and he has three grown daughters. This interview was conducted at his furlough residence in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Operation

Mr. Ennis is currently stationed in western Tanzania, Africa, in the Kasulu Province near the town of Kigoma. Kigoma is a port city on the vital waterway of Lake Tanganika and has a population of about 50,000 people,

with many living in the surrounding countryside. The 200 acre demonstration farm that Mr. Ennis supervises is near Kigoma. This project is largely oriented to provide an example of improved agricultural methods to the local farmers; nearly all of these can be accomplished using resources readily available.

The major languages used are: English, Swahili, tribal. The climate is a tropical, year round growing season.

Agricultural Skills and Practices

It took sixteen years but 150 of the farms 200 acres have been cleared of the scrub brush that infests the area. This was done by hand, using the traditional three pound hoe, paying handsfull of laborers minimum wage. Mr. Ennis says he did it this way not because he could not have brought in a tractor and made quick work of it, but instead to show the area farmers that scrub brush could be turned into productive farm and pasture land with available resources: labor and time.

While he has brought in some outside resources to the locals, such as vegetable seeds, rabbits, and an improved breed of cattle, none of them are beyond the reach of most locals. Many have local cattle that could be improved by simple cross breeding. Mr. Ennis offers the improved cattle to screened local farmers below cost. The screening

is to prevent opportunist farmers from eating or selling the cattle instead of breeding them. Whereas he has experienced mild success at improving the local cattle herd, he has had a very healthy response to his subsidized rabbits and 'at cost' seeds. The reason for charging, of course, is to give the locals a sense of ownership in the gardening or rabbit projects. If the locals pay for the rabbit and build a hutch, they are a little less likely to eat it right away. The ideas behind the rabbit projects are very sound, hence its success. Rabbits are inexpensive. In addition, they can subsist completely on vegetation, and although a ration of feed grain is desirable, no major investment in such is necessary for the rabbits to grow and reproduce. Hence the second reason, managed properly, in the local environment, four to five litters of six to seven rabbits can be grown out of one pair a year. Mr. Ennis says that the rural folk may go months without eating meat. Rabbits are a very good way of getting more high quality protein, at very low cost, to the farmer. The third area of agricultural success Mr. Ennis brought out was the favorable response from the locals to his garden. Mr. Ennis uses composting to produce an intensive organic garden which fares well there. The locals see the garden, as with everything on the farm, and purchase the at-cost seeds for their own gardens. Mr. Ennis does not use any formal methods to

instruct the locals in improved farming methods. The "demonstration" farm does what its name implies, shows the farmers, by means of example, a better way of doing things with resources readily available to them. After sixteen years, the farm is pretty well known. Widespread local initiative, which sometimes comes slow, is all that is lacking in substantially improving agriculture in that locality.

Theological Skills and Practices

In contrast to the relative unstructured nature of the training Mr. Ennis uses toward the farming end of his ministry, there is the very academic Theological Education by Extension (TEE) that Mr. Ennis swears by. TEE as it is referred to by Baptists 'in the know' is a way of extending seminary type training (albeit basic) to national ministers and laity that otherwise would have no such opportunities. The courses are in basic doctrine and church governance, along with 'how to' courses on Bible study and preaching, among others. Mr. Ennis said that TEE, in independent study fashion, is studied every day by the local pastors through a planned curriculum. This is supplemented by weekly meetings and occasional seminars led by missionaries or local ministers with substantial theological training. Since infusing TEE into the local churches, Mr. Ennis says the results are very encouraging.

Besides the qualitative factors of more pastoral maturity and commitment, better preaching and a clearer presentation of the Gospel, Mr. Ennis also pointed out that in four years, 14 churches and preaching points (places in local villages where preaching regularly occurs but where no church exists) have turned into a solid 28 churches and preaching points.

Recommended Characteristics

Mr. Ennis gave no recommendations on characteristics, but he did mention that having a life of service was a great form of satisfaction to him.

Ken Bowie

Dr. Ken Bowie is an agricultural missionary to the remote city and state of Cajamarca, Peru.

Dr. Bowie received his Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.) in Agriculture Education from Kansas State University and his seminary training from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kansas. His wife is named Linda and he has three daughters.

He is the Southern Baptist Relief Coordinator for Peru, no small task.

Operation

The project Dr. Bowie works on is a 20 acre experiment farm, situated on prime bottom land outside of Cajamarca. He works in cooperation with several other full time Baptist staff members, occupying various roles at the project. The primary function of the farm is to train local farmers in improved crop production and animal husbandry methods.

The major language is Spanish, and the usual climate is temperate, due to altitude. Crops are grown seasonally.

Agricultural Skills and Practices

Crops and Irrigation. Corn, wheat and lima beans are the primary crops grown on the farm. About 10-20 local farmers are hired on a seasonal basis and are rigorously and purposefully 'trained by proximity' in such knowledge areas as planting depths and spacing, plant populations, crop weight, production per acre, irrigation rates, leaching (water draining below a level usable by plants in the soil solum), and adding agriculture chemicals to irrigation water. All irrigation in the area is gravity flow; no sprinkler technology. Experiments involving these practices are conducted by the local farmers themselves, from start to finish so that they can see for themselves the improved yields from the improved

methods. Because of the low literacy rate of the farmers, the learning by doing method works the best. "They may not be able to read" (i.e. books), says Dr. Bowie, "but they can sure read a scale." (i.e., when the harvest is in).

Animal Husbandry. Dr. Bowie says that the local missionaries 'feed out' a couple of hogs and steers a year just to prove to the locals that intensive feeding yields a more savory meat and is done in a shorter time frame, thus making the cost of the feed recoverable on the selling of the animal. The traditional custom of the locals is to let the animal scrounge for forage and feed it maintenance rations for several years until it is big enough to sell for slaughter. Evidently, the locals still prefer this method over the missionaries' method, though in the long run the old method will cost the farmers more money.

This is not the success story however. The real inroads to getting more animal protein in the local diet has been made through the project's guinea pig and rabbit program. Using local breeds of guinea pigs, the mission and the local university have teamed up to enact a now wholly self supportive guinea pig program which provides husbandry training and breeding stock to the local participating farmers. The carefully screened farmers (eating breeding stock seems to be a problem world wide)

are given hands-on training for two full months before they are given their own pair. The pigs are free to the farmer. The only stipulation is that they return twice as many pigs to the project as they get out of their first litter so that the project can sell these animals at market value and use the revenues to become self supporting. He says farmer response to this project has been very good and a similar rabbit project, which is a year behind the pig project is having like success. Bowie says he enjoys his job: "I've had success" he says, "and its contagious."

Other. Other significant projects the mission has established are road and canal building, well drilling, literacy, nutrition, hygiene and pre-natal training as well as vocational training in sewing, weaving, blending and dying of garments and finally carpentry.

Theological Skills and Practices

Because the literacy rate is so low among the nationals the presentation of the Gospel is largely done orally. There are, however, 23 local pastors (all literate) who come to training groups twice a month, all day on Saturday. Again courses are basic. The pastors' attendance and quality work is rewarded with theological literature with which to build their personal libraries. There is 85 to 90% attendance by the pastors to these

training sessions. In 1980 there were 44 Baptists in two churches in the local population of 1.5 million. Today Dr. Bowie's local home church has 65 regularly attending Sunday School and 27 churches and other meetings. He says that the local response to the social ministries, such as well drilling, is so great that it is difficult to meet all the requests of those who ask them to return and preach the Gospel as well.

Recommended Characteristics

Dr. Bowie recommends open mindedness and curiosity as desired character traits in his line of work. "Ask questions" he says, "don't plow through like a bull in a china closet." He also advocates being open to change and improvement. He states:

When you get to the point in your development that you cannot envision better things, you are in a dangerous position. That is why countries, ministries, and organizations stagnate, because they cannot see anything good for the future.

William Thomason

William Thomason is the sole agricultural missionary at a relatively new (1985) demonstration farm in the city/province of Gagnoa, Ivory Coast, Africa. He has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and the required seminary training. His wife's name is Vicki and they have five daughters.

Operation

The two acre farm is located on the edge of the town of Gagnoa. The purpose of the small farm is to demonstrate to the local farmers sustainable, stationary farming techniques (as opposed to the traditional slash and burn), and small animal husbandry.

The major language used is French and the climate is tropical.

Agricultural Skills and Practices

Crops. Mr. Thomason intensively gardens a 30 feet by 70 feet plot of land on his compound. It serves nicely as a way to demonstrate what he calls SALT: Sloping Agriculture Land Technology. It is a way of sustainably row farming crops on a hill by using intermittent rows of crops, compost (including poultry manure), fruit trees and a unique nitrogen fixing tree called a Leucaena. The rows are cut into the hill horizontally to decrease erosion, and the trees act to hold the soil in place even more. The compost puts organic matter back into the soil, which makes it more fertile. Crop rotation with legumes and the Leucaena tree return essential nitrogen to the soil which is in turn used by the plants. Another beneficial side effect of the Leucaena is its prolific growth; it produces large quantities of biomass which can be used for mulch and firewood. This method of intensive, low input,

organic gardening is effective, says Thomason, but has not caught on at all with the locals.

Animal Husbandry. The poultry however, has caught on. After the local farmer has built a hutch (which, Thomason explained, was harder to get them to do than one might imagine) then a pair of rabbits or guinea pigs were given free to the farmer to be managed for reproduction and eventual consumption. He said initial acceptance of the program came from the local church members. Thomason says that at least 25 people are now successfully breeding the rabbits for consumption and sale. He commented that most of the 25 had never practiced the basic animal husbandry practices of feeding, watering and confining small animals. Thomason even said that many of these farmers initially thought that a rabbit or guinea pig would actually die if you watered it. He also raised chickens but had not tried to mainstream them to the farmers yet.

Theological Skills and Practices

Being the only missionary in the area and having a poorly educated laity, it was difficult at first to get a great deal of strong commitment from the laity. Thomason said that on his first tour, he instructed the village church leaders in a course in basic doctrine but many did

not teach it in turn to the local fellowships. Thomason cited a lack of maturity. On his second tour, however, Thomason stepped up the pace on teaching and preaching. Thomason would teach two days a week and preach one, rotating the meetings between six villages and three preaching points. He started emphasizing discipleship (how Christians are supposed to follow Christ's teachings) and began teaching the Bible himself to the laity. Thomason noted encouraging results, namely that people in the churches started voluntarily coming up to him and saying that Thomason was showing them how to live a Christian life, a life that they did not truly understand before.

An example is that many in the congregations did not know that adultery was not Biblically wrong until he taught them about it.

Recommended Characteristics

Thomason listed several characteristics that he would recommend a person have for doing his sort of development work: patience, not being pushy, not being so time conscience (flexible?), not forcing anything, creativity, inventiveness and most importantly, know your religious convictions, know what you believe and why you believe it. Be solid.

He also mentioned that being a "Jack-of-All-Trades" is a good thing to be, as well as advocated knowing some vocational type skills like carpentry, electricity and plumbing.

Ron Baker

Ron Baker runs a demonstration farm/training center in the woods of Bengkulu Province, Indonesia, on the Island of Sumatra. He has been there since 1984 with his wife Debbie and their four children. He has an undergraduate degree in agriculture and is presently working on a Masters of Science in Agriculture at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He has completed the necessary seminary training.

Operation

The operation was started on 62 very hilly acres, depleted of nutrients and in some cases topsoil by the local slash and burn methods. It is still 62 acres, but all of the arable acreage is under some kind of intensive conservation type tillage. The staff is comprised of eight full time Indonesian staff members, all of whom are committed Christians. They have to be in this largely (90%) Muslim country. The purpose of the operation is to act as an active, farmer training center; a station from which extension can be carried out; a demonstration farm;

and most recently, as a center from which improved seed varieties can be multiplied for the local farmers.

The major language used is Indonesian, and the climate is tropical.

Agricultural Skills and Practices

All farming is done by carefully following the horizontal lay of the land when planting the rows. This is also known as contour farming and it greatly reduces soil erosion when compared to more traditional methods.

Crops. Crops grown for seed and demonstration are field peas, peanuts, other legumes, sweet corn, grain corn, grain sorghum, sweet potatoes and casava. Vegetable crops grown are tomatoes, okra, amaranth and others. As stated earlier, farming is organic, contoured and heavy use is made of nitrogen fixing trees to help prevent erosion. Once again, The SALT method of farming is used. Improved seeds of the above mentioned crops are just beginning to be produced in large quantities and will be sold at a discount to local farmers.

Animals. The livestock grown on the farm are a local breed of goat but they are hoping to bring in some improved varieties. Their main animal husbandry endeavor is fish farming. They have about 10 small ponds in which they grow two breeds of hearty fish. One is the Talapia

carp and one is the Clarius (walking) catfish. The Talapia are an especially attractive breed because they feed on algae that can be produced by goat feces falling into the ponds from suspended pens. It makes for effective use of all available resources. Farmers are brought to on site dormitories for training sessions of up to two weeks on the various improved methods that are practiced at the farm. Participation in the program by indigenous farmers has been sparse because of heavy pressure from local Muslim leaders, and peer pressure against the Christian /American organization. However, farmers relocated to the region by the government do come through the program (200 in 1990) but few use the methods observed. The irony of it Baker complains, is that these farmers' soils are in very bad shape due to improper management and they really do need the help. There is a silver lining to this cloud, Baker tells us, in that at least everyone working on the farm (24 part time positions) are using the SALT methods to some degree on their own farms, and its working.

Theological Skills and Practices

Because of the hostile environment in which the local Christians live, particularly the missionaries, it is difficult for any of them to make any great efforts at educating the local public about the Gospel. The Indonesian staff, who are well oriented to their beliefs,

witness often of their faith, but all in all it is slow going.

Recommended Characteristics

Baker recommends that for his vocational situation, one must have a secure sense of divine calling into the area of agriculture missions. Being able to observe the local needs, having patience and flexibility, recognizing the value of local knowledge and experience from the local farmers, being able to relate to the farmers that you appreciate their input, involve the farmers in the projects, be an agriculture generalist and, finally, have a strong daily 'walk with the Lord' seeking God and His wisdom. To this author, these seemed liked sincere words from a brave and faithful individual who surely does not work in the easiest of field conditions.

Clarence Tate

Dr. Clarence Tate manages a pastor training facility in Koudougou, Burkino Faso, Africa. He has a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Soil Chemistry from Auburn University and his previous degrees at the University of Georgia. Dr. Tate and his wife Lynn have been missionaries to Africa for 3 years. He received the necessary seminary training.

Operation

Dr. Tate's operation is a training center for young local pastors. There the pastors stay for a two year training program that formally instructs them in theology and improved agricultural methods, so that they can make a living as farmers while continuing in their pastoral duties.

The major languages used are More' and French and the climate is sub-tropical.

Agriculture Skills and Practices

Crops. Crops that worked the best on the farm were Sorghum and Peanuts. Vegetable gardening was also promoted. The students learned how to plant in rows (hitherto an unheard of practice) and to intercrop or plant two different crops in alternating rows. Dr. Tate's research showed this to be a beneficial practice as far as overall yield was concerned. The students also received instruction about fertilizer rates. Dr. Tate does use locally purchased chemical fertilizers. Dr. Tate noted that local farmers would ask the students why their plots did so well on a consistent basis.

Animals. The only animal project taught at the center was poultry. Each student received 30 chicks to raise to laying hens, from which the eggs would be sold. The

project at one point was paying for the chicken's feed due to the egg revenue. The project had to be terminated however due to a disease problem in the flock.

Theological Skills and Practices

Dr. Tate used the aforementioned Theological Education by Extension as the exclusive means of theological training. Tate taught 20 different courses including Bible courses, church planting, witnessing, preaching, teaching and pastoral training. Dr. Tate said that he saw a big change in pastoral performance, as witnessed in church growth, from those taking the courses. In three years, he saw one children's Sunday School turn into a church with 30 adult members, one preaching point go from zero to 65 in attendance with 15 baptisms, one preaching point go from zero to an attendance of 50 and one church experience the growth of 15 baptisms.

Other

Another successful program Dr. Tate has helped start are literacy classes in More^h. These classes are taught in the local villages on a regular basis by the young pastors. Tate said that 30 people who knew nothing about their written language can now read at the Bible level.

Recommended Characteristics

Dr. Tate recommends the following traits as desirable to working in developmental missions overseas: patience, willingness to learn the local culture and language, persistence, a certainty of calling, a stable family situation, and a depth of spiritual life.

Dr. Tate recommended these skills as also being important: knowledge of the local language, oral communication skills, a general knowledge of agriculture and some vocational skills such as plumbing and electricity.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

It can be ascertained from the literature review that self confidence, flexibility, humor, empathy, curiosity, warmth, perceptiveness, open-mindedness and patience could be seen as desirable character traits for those who would live and work overseas.

The literature also revealed some skills that also might be useful when performing developmental work overseas. In the behavioral category these included a knowledge of the host language, cultural literacy, an ability to make transitions, involving the locals in the project, and communication and management skills.

In the professional\technical and trades areas, the literature suggested the following as desirable: natural resource management, agriculture (in such forms as soil conservation, agricultural research, crop extension, fish farming, and animal husbandry), education, health and nutrition and vocational trades areas such as plumbing and carpentry.

Comparatively, the missionaries practiced and made mention of several of the skills and characteristics listed in the literature review, while adding some of their own. Characteristics include curiosity,

open-mindedness, willingness to change, patience, flexibility, not forcing situations, creativity, persistence, a stable family and finally a deep sense of divine calling and an equally deep and consistent devotion to God.

General skills and practices mentioned or used by the missionaries as beneficial to their developing scenarios included a knowledge of the host language, oral communication skills, generalist agricultural skills, agriculture research, involving the nationals, screening the nationals for devotion to projects, literacy education, vocational skills, vocational skills training, formal and informal theological training, formal and informal agricultural vocational training, soil conservation practices, and health and nutrition education.

Specific skills and practices that were mentioned or successfully used included small and large animal husbandry (specifically guinea pigs, rabbits, chickens, beef cattle, goats, and fish farming); soil conservation practices including contour farming, sloping agriculture land technology (SALT), composting, crop rotation with legumes, nitrogen fixing trees, intercropping and organic gardening, Theological Education by Extension including courses in Bible study, preaching and doctrine, and vocational skills such as engine mechanics, carpentry,

electricity and plumbing. Special note should be made of the successes encountered by three of the missionaries in specific reference to their guinea pig and rabbit projects. Also four of the five experienced success in using formal theological education of some sort in raising the religious conscience of the local pastors and in increasing church growth. Success occurred in regards to changing farmer behavior towards implementing improved planting and soil conservation methods but such success has not been as prolific as in the small animal projects and theological education.

Recommendations for Future Study

Given the somewhat thin base of knowledge that officially and extensively documents any and all areas regarding Southern Baptist foreign mission efforts, it is my primary suggestion that a committee be formed at the national convention level to explore the possibilities of conducting missions research. It is also suggested that what information is available be gathered into a body and made available to interested affiliates through the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Virginia.

Prayer and devotion notwithstanding, it is the opinion of this author that a great deal could be learned to improve Southern Baptist missions efforts through the use of quantifiable and qualitative research findings.

This would be due, as stated earlier, to the lack of an existing substantial body of research on Southern Baptist missions efforts.

Subject areas could include: What would help out missionaries as far as successfully adapting to new environments because of their frequent travels? What agricultural programs work the best? What theological training works the best for the nationals and missionaries? What are spousal attitudes toward living overseas? Are most of the spouses of missionaries happy to be where they are? What are the reasons behind job and life satisfaction for our missionaries and their families? What are missionary attitudes toward their pay and benefits? What are Journeyman attitudes toward pay and benefits? Are there possibilities of including formalized language training in the Journeyman program. (The Journeyman program is the Board's two year volunteer program).

Implications

I would like to take the liberty to internalize my experiences with Southern Baptist missions and with working overseas.

I have been on three, one week, church sponsored mission trips to northern Mexico as well as managed a cattle/tick research project on a Caribbean island for

four and a half months. I have also been to Europe and Canada twice and even to the United Nations in New York. The point of this testament is to show at least a mild familiarity with international work, travel and missions and that I have a strong interest in all three.

When I visited Canada and Europe, I saw how similar industrialized democracies really were. Modern technology was the rule, food was abundant and of high quality, sanitation was not a question, cities were generally well kept as was the country side, freedom and democratic values were common. Opportunity abounds.

In contrast to my experience in developing nations I found that technology usually lagged behind. Phones, electricity, heating and cooling and water safety were often very real issues. Sanitation was a significant problem with everything from open sewers to no sewers to trash and junk routinely strewn along roads vacant lots and the countryside. Not that America does not have its share of carelessly strewn junk and garbage but that I noticed it was more of a problem overseas. Food was abundant but the quality was sometimes not of western standards. Opportunity, particularly for advanced education and self determination did not seem to be near as great in the two developing nations. Graft and entrenched governmental bureaucracy were routinely encountered.

As far as the local populations, they seemed to be less educated in the developing nations, mainly from lack of opportunity. The local church folk encountered were always hospitable, friendly and very devout. Probably more so than their American counterparts.

Finally, on the Island of Antigua, where I worked, I had frequent contact with an Independent Baptist couple and a Southern Baptist couple who were missionaries. I can only describe them as being very pleasant people. They were well adjusted, well liked by the locals and paid well below what they were worth. I have, however, on occasions, met three or four missions couples from my denomination that at least seemed to be experiencing some very real adjustment problems or some life and job satisfaction problems. I deduced this from observing their characteristic quiet, preoccupied, bordering on depressed demeanor. This is to be compared to other missionary couples, particularly the ones I knew personally in Antigua, who were talkative, openly positive about their work and families and were active at work, hobbies, church and family activities. They could generally be classified as jovial.

A summary of all this introspection is in order. First, I believe in competencies; that is why this research was completed. What gets the job done well in the field? There must be sound practices behind what we

as Southern Baptists do, both developmentally and theologically, for the nationals we serve overseas. For instance, literacy education and guinea pigs might serve the locals a lot better, in many cases, than seminary training and tractors. Indeed it seems from this study that we have some very competent missionaries in the field, doing some very sound and necessary work.

Although there needs to be more research done in the areas of competencies and efficiency, I would suggest that an equally important field of study would be our missionaries themselves. How are they doing? How many of them are happy? How many are experiencing unusual stress of some kind? Are the Board's policies aimed at helping to meet their needs for belonging and interacting with their peers (i.e., other missionaries and family)? I reinterate here, as in the suggestions segment, that the humanity of our missionaries be explored and policy be examined as to its effects on the people it governs. These missionaries seem to be doing a great deal of good in the field. Should a longer look be taken at what good is being done for them back home?

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