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SOUTHERN BAPTIST MISSIONARIES
40 YEARS IN BRAZIL

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THE COMPLEXITY OF BAPTIST MISSIONARY WORK IN BRAZIL

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ADIEU. Tomorrow I shall be seventy. I began preaching in 1906 and shall preach tomorrow and on and on. I began teaching in 1904 and taught my last class here day before yesterday. We sail Oct. 18 arriving in New Orleans Nov. 1. From there on life is a blank. Not a blank, no. It is, rather, a panorama, distant and dim in detail, but with faith's beautiful and heavenly glow upon it. I was a home missionary before being a foreign missionary. Under Oklahoma's double alignment, I was a missionary of our Home Board and the Northern Baptist Home Mission Society, through the State Board of Oklahoma Baptists, when a Seminary student in Fort Worth. When we turn our faces homeward, we shall not look back, in futile longings. My text now is: «No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.» We are missionaries still, in witness and work, and shall look straight ahead, not backward, in our work as God wills it to be.

THE COMPLEX BAPTIST SETUP. I wonder if you know, in your missionary prayer life and sympathy, the delicately complex Baptist missionary situation in Brazil. God has set Baptist tides flowing from every direction on behalf of Brazil. The first Baptist endeavor on this continent, Dr. Bagby used to say, was by a Chinese Baptist, who sold himself into slavery or peonage, to evangelize his fellows who were in that state, in one of the Guianas, I believe. I asked Dr. Rankin, when we used to travel together, if he knew of that tradition in China and he said he did. The first missionary to Brazil, Dr. Kalley, was greatly indebted to Spurgeon, and came halfway to the Baptist position, a Congregationalism without infant baptism. Mrs. Kalley, after his death, founded the «Friends For Brazil» mission and from it we won Solomon Ginsburg, a Niagara of missionary power and zeal, aggressive against Baptists till Z. C. Taylor convinced him. Other Spurgeon men have touched our life, but mostly without much Baptist emphasis, in various union organizations in Brazil that include British and Canadian Baptists among their supporters and missionaries. Such unionism is largely fruitless, and its little fruit has all been gathered by others, so far as I know.

We have now around 200 Southern Baptist missionaries in this half a continent. Not many, so far as their possibility of evangelizing sixty million Brazilians, but marvelously fitted, located and dedicated, in cooperation, to a full New Testament Christianity in churches of that mind and mold. Most of Brazil's capital cities are on the coast, or very near. They are all partly manned. Then as the land climbs up to the hills, inland centers grow. We have missionaries in those. Then farther back, long distances away, are smaller inland centers, with wide reaches of influence. We have men there, up and down the far borders of the West. We have a great educational and training work, in key cities all over the land, themselves marvelous centers that radiate gospel influence and the power of religious liberty in all classes, and train workers for us, while they are largely self-supporting through the splendid and eagerly sought education they offer the general public.

From the pioneer times and thinkers of such mission work, there has come to be a strong Brazilian Baptist denomination, with a National Baptist Convention, state conventions and a few associations, and around 1300 churches all over the land, each a center of volunteer evangelism and New Testament Christianity. This denomination has a wonderful Home Board with far over a hundred missionaries out in the neediest places, among the Indians and on the great inland water-

ways. I have with joy helped train in Seminaries and Training Schools many of those missionaries and their foreign missionary colleagues, as well, in Bolivia and Portugal. They are wonders of devotion, not hesitating at the sacrifice of life itself. We cooperate with Brazilian Baptists, in and under this Convention, in these mission boards, in publications, theological education, Woman's Missionary Union's varied work as nationally organized and oriented, in benevolences and so on. I have known all the generations of missionaries in Brazil and unhesitatingly affirm that the new generation is under as keen a sense of a divine call, sacrificial in spirit and life, speaks the language far better than we older ones, and goes joyfully to the farthest and most difficult fields we have ever occupied, counting no sacrifice as any obstacle to their work. They enrich Brazilian Baptist life with new features, from our older and more experienced Baptist life in the homeland, to the delight of those who learn these better methods here. Thus on the double line of penetration to the uttermost parts and strengthening the things that are already strong, they help.

THE OTHER VARIED FORCES. 1. Latvia. Decades ago there arose a spiritual migration in the little republic that owed its life to Woodrow Wilson and others who sought to «make the world safe for democracy». An old patriarch (now) moved among those Baptists visited by Mullins, Love and Gambrell and said: «We can't be long free. This won't last. We have been now under the heel of Russia, now under the German heel, and we shall be again. Let's go to Brazil, where there is real liberty and get ready for the evil days to come.» There were some evils of prophetism and Pentecostalism mixed in with that faith. But they came. As the time drew near, all who cared to were invited to take ship with the rest at the common expense. Many women came, with no home ties at all, went into the sands of far western S. Paulo and there founded a communal sort of life, slandered as communism, at first. A thousand of them gathered around the Lord's table in Varpa, where I have preached to the still large church that meets in that original building, also their school's home. Soon they settled as families and built homes. But these single women, some elderly men, too, with no homes to build, and a few families with concern for them, moved on over to Palma, by a river, set up a mill and grew white chickens under peach trees and have homes on the hillside and a common dining room down in the valley. Mrs. Taylor and I spend a month with them, as I was teaching in the Seminary Extension Course and preaching to Russian, German, Bulgarian and Lettish churches round about. They at Palma are dear old people, mostly. There have gone out other colonies that are good farming communities that enrich Brazil and our churches. In their intense devotion, many are called to preach. I once estimated that seven preachers come from a Lett church where one comes from any other church in our ranks, but, of course, their churches are far larger, being colony churches.

RUSSIANS. There are also large Russian Baptist Churches, sprung from refugees, many of whom came out through China, then free. These Latvians and these Russians grow quietly. They hear from their loved ones — some of them. They know there came that dreaded knock at the door in the dark hours before dawn, and menacing figures took the father and husband away in the dark, to Siberia maybe, never to be seen again. But some escape and come out through Sweden or Finland or Norway or the Orient; and no expense, no sacrifice is too great or too long to bring back to their arms once more their living dead. The wounds communism has made in our souls in Brazil are very deep and they can't be soft-soaped by apologetic intellectuals or beguiling soothsayers of the World Council of Churches crying «Peace, peace, when there is no peace». I asked a distinguished Lett deacon and college professor the other day: «Have you news from Latvia? I saw a news note about four Baptist churches in Riga recently.» His reply was: «Oh yes! There are Baptist churches there, under Soviet control. They even have a civil official of the dictatorship who calls a Baptist Convention when some pronouncement or other measures are to be promulgated.»

CONGLOMERATE SETUPS. Dictators simplify things. It seems to have been a common policy with Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and Hirohito to have tried to force all immersionists together into one unholy and false church, except the triple immersionists of the Greek Orthodox (orthodox in what, pray?). In Japan the forced union was at the top, and general, though Episcopalians and Adventists resisted, I believe, and Romanists, to be sure. But the Baptists of several countries still retain that artificial, forced union of Pentecostalism, Plymouth Brethrenism and other immersionists that nazism, facism, communism and the divine right of an emperor imposed on consciences that had lost the Baptist gift for martyrdom in preference to sacrifice of truth. Just suppose that Mr. Tyrant, by promising «mundos e fundos» («worlds and funds», as our Portuguese phrase goes), were to win the presidency of the United States, abolish Congress, laws and courts, set up his will as law, with a soviet dictating to his will, behind the scenes, and then force all Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, Immersing Pentecost-

als, Jehovah's Witnesses, Campbellites, Dunkers, Plymouth Brethren and what-have-you into one unholy conglomeration and called that the Baptist Church. Would calling it Baptist make it so? Yet a good deal of that kind of nominal Baptist mixture has crept into our Baptist World Alliance and poses as Baptist. And its representatives go to a Soviet-governed «peace conference» and tell the most hellish lies against the United States and our Baptist sons who fought for Korea's freedom, with their fellows of like loyalties and altruism. Then they come to American countries as official spokesmen for the Soviets, praising all in that enslaved land as full religious liberty. That sort of hypocrisy, and the gullibility that takes it all in, like baby birds swallowing a worm put in their mouths, troubles many Latvian and Russian Baptists about their American brethren. And, of course, as kindred elements come in here, for freedom, but bring along that Holy Roller or Brethrenism influence with them, they prove to be a disturbing or neutralizing influence in these Baptist colonies, here in Brazil. Our people don't meddle in these colonies. A language wall seals them off. But, during the war, Brazil, because of its vast German colonies, forbade all worship in a foreign tongue. They allow the great Russian churches to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the basement of their church in the speech that is all most of the old folks know. I helped in that celebration once and preached for them in Portuguese up stairs to a vast throng for a whole week. That decision of the government united our people as never before. Brazilian Baptists were kind and helpful in every way. Missionary Paul Porter became an omnipresent influence to aid all and sundry in all these foreign colonies and is loved as few men on earth, anywhere. They have come into our Brazilian Baptist fellowship increasingly. We train their preachers and young women volunteers. We love them all, and, work by their sides in the Brazilian churches.

GERMANS, SWEDES, JAPANESE. Similar factors, in other states of Brazil, are the colonies of German Baptists, Swedish Baptists, whose relationship to the Orebro Mission (Orebromissionsforening) is not clear to me, and other groups. I have preached to German Baptists in several cities. All these groups are troubled, some more, some less, by the admixture of Baptists and alien groups of immersionists in their homelands, and the entering of such elements in our midst here. The German Baptist president of their Baptist Union visited us recently and has promoted Baptist fellowship. Some groups of our churches won't fellowship the churches of these colonies that seem to them Pentecostal. We lost the only Japanese church we had. They made so much noise, of a Sunday afternoon in their worship in the building of a Brazilian church, that it asked them to calm down, as the neighbors were protesting. They simply went over to the Holy Rollers. I had thought of the Japanese as calm and intellectuals. But the evangelicals who have come over here, in the quarter of a million Japanese immigrants, are about the most deeply emotional people in Brazil and go mainly out on Holiness lines. You see by this scant notice what mighty factors, but with problems attached, are the vast foreign colonies in Brazil, and their Baptists. Brazilian Baptists cultivate both their cooperation and our own abiding unity of faith, fellowship and life, on a Biblical basis of voluntary cooperative life.

OTHERS BAPTIST MISSIONARY BOARDS. A vastly different problem is that presented by other, and sometimes bitterly rival, Baptist missionary boards that have entered Brazil, some of them at the eleventh hour, to claim and gather what they may. A variety of «faith missions» have come in around the rim of things. Faith missions mainly go where the people aren't. I have studied closely faith missions, so-called, all over South America, these forty years of my missionary life. My deliberate judgement is that they are the most fruitless type of missionary endeavor known on the face of the earth. The name is insulting, presumptuous and false, like a Campbellite monopolizing the word **CHRISTIAN** as his sectarian name. I have never seen any faith mission that wasn't highly deficient on faith. We don't care for the divisive and misleading name. But Southern Baptist missionaries are far more genuinely faith missionaries than any others I know. They, too, have left family, homeland and friends, on faith, going out they knew not whither, to do they knew not what, on faith, blindly and obediently at God's call. They have a clear experience of saving grace. For «this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith». And that is not some attic faith, over and above salvation, a second-blessing whoopee, or «I-am-holier-than-thou» pietism or Keswickism. **IT IS THE SAVING AND SANCTIFYING FAITH THAT WELDS THE SOUL ETERNALLY TO JESUS, OUR CAPTAIN IN ALL THE BATTLES.** Our Board's missionaries have the faith that serves and the faith that indoctrinates in the veritable «faith once for all delivered to the saints» and faith in their brethren and the faith that cooperates biblically and a multitude of other forms and manifestations of faith. If any missionaries deserve the name of «faith missions» for their endeavors, they do. But they seek no monopoly of the name. «Oh! But you have a salary.» Yes, I am that Biblical in my life. That is a fundamental item in my faith in Jesus. He said: «The laborer is worthy of his hire», and our Portuguese Bible correctly

translates that salary. Not knowing where the next meal is coming from doesn't constitute one a faith missionary. As a matter of fact many of these so-called «Faith» missionaries rake in far more money than my salary, from all over the world, in some cases. And when they go back home they pose as Baptists and rob gullible Baptists of their money and then they come out here and spend their time fighting Baptists and proselyting their members and say: «It is a sin to be sectarian: therefore it is a sin to be a Baptist.» I know many cases of such hypocrisy.

VEST-POCKET SECTS OF THE ANTI-SECTARIAN BREED. They swarm like flies, around the edges of our work. A lot of the Union Bible Institute type of Baptists are in them. They are «undenominational», «indenominational» or «interdenominational» but always anti-denominational. The dozen or so converts they get are isolated from all the Christians in the world. They don't belong. They are the vest-pocket sect of that anti-sectarian breed, its private property. A whole colony of these styled themselves «The New Testament Missionary Union», so went by the name of «Unionists» among the Brazilian brethren. We had a church, now prospering, but then struggling along with 45 members. They set up two immersionist churches, one on either side of that Baptist church, one led by a Presbyterian who immersed himself in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the other with an unimmersed Presbyterian pastor. I went and took tea with them and said to them: «Our people are confused. They think you are Baptists. Are you?» And I went the rounds of the social circle: «Are you a Baptist? Are you? Are you?» One was from my own Seminary, in Forth Worth, nearly all were Baptists. One was a member of two Baptist churches back home. The leader, however, replied surlily: «No. I once was, but I got over that foolishness.» My beloved colleague who was with me stirs early. He met a deacon next morning and told him of our «tea». A few minutes later this same leader met him and said: «I'm a Baptist. I immerse.» The Brazilian deacon looked him in the eye and said: «Quit lying. You denied what you are now saying only yesterday.»

I have publicly warned the people, in outlying districts, of these chronic deceivers. Our Baptist paper outruns our missionaries. I have written to these lonely readers: «Wait. We are coming. Examine a man's credentials. Sound out his doctrines. Don't be taken in. Wait for the Baptists to reach you. We are on our way. Start a Baptist work in your own home, till we get there.» I was a member of the Garanhuns church once, when men began to bring in baptismal certificates stating they had been baptized into the Garanhuns Baptist Church. They were not received and we asked who fooled them. It was a Campbellite missionary or two who would meet a Catholic along the road, ask him to make the fake «good confession» (not in the genuine text) and baptize him — pardon me, immerse him — under the pretext that he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Who of Brazil's sixty millions doesn't believe that? Dr. Carver wrote me they were Bollite Campbellites, whatever that may be. One came to me and demanded that we take his dupes in. He denied utterly being a Campbellite. I asked him: «Do you believe that faith comes before repentance, faith being mere belief that Jesus is the Son of God? Is your repentance a Spirit-wrought inner charge or merely an outward reformation? Do you believe that salvation comes by such faith plus such repentance plus immersion? Do you practice open communion? Do you believe in the doctrine of apostasy, in the sense of the loss of salvation? Do you make the word Christian your group name instead of leaving it to describe all the people of our Lord?» He confessed those tenets. And when I said: «You are just a plain Campbellite and it is a moral outrage that you should be immersing unregenerate hellions, picked up on the highway, and pretending to put them into Baptist churches», he cried like a baby, but they were not tears of repentance, but of a thwarted proselyter, utter conscienceless. He became a Holy Roller.

Just yesterday I re-read the tract by Pastor Raymundo Nobre, helper to Nelson in Pará, telling how the Pentecostals came in there and stole much of the fruit of Nelson's life there and in other places. They came to Nelson and pretended to confess the errors of their Pentecostalism and asked to come into the Baptist church there while he sent to the Baptist church in New York, I believe, from which they had been excluded for their Holy Rollerism and got them restored and asked for their letter from there. While the letter was coming, they were in «on promise of a letter». They prayed unending hours, presented a Pharisaical holiness, lived in the homes and off of the people, gradually taught their doctrine of tongues as the «baptism of the Holy Spirit», formed secret cists that soon came to a head. When the young assistant pastor and Deacon Anacleto Vellozo discovered the facts, the church was honeycombed with Holyrollerism, which burst out into Swedish Pentecostalism after all this treachery.

ARE ALL SINCERE? If you think, my friend, that all religious life and people are utterly sincere and that we must never question a man's sincerity, how are you to explain our Lord's warn-

ing against wolves in sheep's clothing? The Bible is under no illusion that all religion is sincere. There is more insincerity and stark lying and fraud and exploitation in religion than there is in business, politics or arson. The supreme deceit is religion. The capital wasted in idolatry, altars and their adornment could stabilize the world's currencies. The gaudy clothes of the world's priests, sold and put to a useful purpose, would raise the standard of living of the human race. The union of church and state is an expensive and debasing harlotry in Caesar's house. The money spent on sacraments — a pagan word and deed — would build hospitals for millions of the sick. And the stark deceit and fraud and exploitation of millions, on the mission field — which is the whole world — would shame the history of Tammany Hall. Wake up and live with your eyes open. There are sincere men who are in error, to be sure, but their error arose from maybe their own ignorance and the insincerity of others. Read Second and Third John. That's what they were written for, to read and to heed.

THE INVASION. The Foursquare Gospel of Amie McPherson has come down to curse our land with its tents and tenets and leave the land dirty and burnt over where the tent stood and deceived the masses who went there to see poor dupes NOT BE CURED by the charlatan-preacher. All have heard of the great success of the gospel in Brazil and they rush in to take over. With loud cries of revivalism they call the people away from their churches — the real reason of the marvel of Brazilian missions — to some tent or tabernacle or theater and unionize them and leave them with a hangover of a bad taste and forlorn feeling because the wild excitement can't go on for ever. Are you aware that there is this exploitation of missions from the homeland? Are you mealy-mouthed and criminally silent while the dastardly deed goes on, because of this dogma that everybody is sincere in religions? Dear me! The commodity in which real missions deals is not religion. **IT IS SALVATION.** You will hardly find the word **religion** in your New Testament.

Dr. Rankin wrote on my final furlough and asked me to speak to the Southern Baptist Convention on «evangelizing through churches». That is what Southern Baptists are doing and it is why they have their great spiritual victories at home and abroad. He said in this letter that «preaching missions» were going abroad and following up post-war good will and returning home with glowing reports. And one brother had said, to a Baptist state convention, that we didn't need any more missionaries. The pastors could go out in these preaching missions and win the people through an interpreter and wouldn't have to waste time, like the missionaries do, learning the language. My last letter from Dr. Rankin was of thanks for what I said at Houston about «EVANGELIZING THROUGH CHURCHES».

Now don't think we have set up any monopoly on any mission field. We have no comity contracts or distribution of territory. We never said to any man or board: «Stay out. This is our territory. You can't come in here». All are free. But all are responsible, too, and God and men judge us and them. «By their fruits ye shall know them.» «The Association of Baptists for World Evangelism», which I somehow associate with Mrs. Peabody's name, came to Brazil, went far from other Baptist work, to unoccupied territory and did a splendid work. Some of their best have become some of our best. The Mid-Missions group have likewise met real need and, so far as I know, have attended to their own business and let others do the same. Brother Neighbors, once under our Board, was one of their leaders. British Baptists have a missionary in the interior, son of one of our Board's missionaries who was a Spurgeon man. The son works in harmony with our missionaries. There are various Southern Baptists who came out independent and cooperate as fully here as at home. For all such I have no criticism.

But the NABA, a sort of Union of Texas B.M. A. and the old B.G.A. and other elements, has come and run all over the land trying to divide and steal all they could from the churches that cooperate in the Brazilian Baptist Convention. They have set up standards such as Closer Close Communion, no woman at the Lord's table with lip-stick or shoulder-length hair, and a lot more stuff of that kind. I read «The Baptist Progress» in our Seminary libraries, while on furlough. One NABA missionary wrote: «I was called to Brazil. Now I am called to leave it». May his tribe increase, if he was thus deceived.

The Conservative Baptist Board rushed in to take over, both here and in the Brazilian Baptist Mission field in Portugal. I was in Portugal later on. The Pres. of our Seminary told me how the secretary of this organization for that region came and called the workers together and said: «How much do you get? Well you will get half as much again», and so on down the line. Later, when

some did not do to please him, he said: «You are cut off. You don't get any more.» It is an outrage to take rich men's money to do «mission work» and buy, steal or proselyte Brazilian, Portuguese and Southern Baptists. These Conservative Baptists are ultra-conservative on some doctrines, utterly missing on other notes, «liberal» on baptism and the Lord's Supper, and radical pre-millennialists. To call that conservative is like calling a dime a dollar. How any sensible and sincere Northern Baptist can countenance such an invasion, by such methods, of a work so richly blessed of God as our work has been, is beyond me. I gladly record that there is a newer approach now. At first, in one field, the new Conservatives made the inroad, led off all pastors and churches but one, held a veritable public orgy of open communion, against us and our work, and so started off. Now newer men, some of them southern themselves, are doing better work, some in dangerous places they have opened up, and they are leaving it to the churches to decide their policies. They visited our Mission and invited questions. I asked: «On what doctrinal basis do you organize your new churches?» The reply was: «Well we organize them on the doctrinal confession of faith that is in Dr. W. C. Taylor's Church Manual». Of course, the laugh was on me, and I joined in. But I reminded them that there was no obscurity in said Manual about the Lord's Supper or baptism.

The Brazilian Convention appointed a committee to answer their questions as to their cooperating in the national Convention. My pastor, Dr. John Soren, was the chairman. I have given my convention minutes to one of our institutions so cannot quote his report, but my memory of it was this, that Brazilian Baptists would raise no obstacles to their cooperating in our general Baptist work, maintained by the Convention, and would seat messengers from their churches if genuinely Baptist. If any obstacles arose, they would be from their own raising of doctrinal issues or some such divisive departure from the generally accepted Baptist basis of fellowship and cooperative life. There it rests.

You can't imagine the floods of money and men that are being drained from Baptist sources back home to produce confusion and conflict here. To the same language school for missionaries go missionaries from all these groups and from some «Bible Church» and «Bible Baptist Churches» and all such confusion. It is Babel all over again, all the yearlings bawling, each in a different tongue.

Now why it is that I say that «faith missions» and such similar efforts are the most fruitless of all? It is because they don't know what spiritual missionary success is. They think it is to cover the earth with Americans. IT IS NOT. The success is real only where the people are converted and grow their own churches and their own national ministry and lead on in their own advance, by our aid, perchance, but under full responsibility and by the joy of witnessing. The glory of Southern Baptist mission work is this vital and vigorous Baptist life that men who think only in terms of American men and money in missions are trying to divide, tear down and destroy. It is an iniquitous procedure. If it be blameworthy to say so, blame me, who say it as I leave, and not the Baptist forces who stay on and glorify God in Brazilian life.

Complexity is just now the supreme characteristic of Brazilian Baptist missionary life. We ought to have no missionary here whose false word or witness would be a handle with which to divide and beat down our cooperative Baptist life. And we ought to keep on in this blessed fellowship, witness and cooperation, on New Testament lines, which have made Brazilian «EVANGELIZING THROUGH CHURCHES» the marvel of the world.

Your not entirely retiring co-worker,

W. C. Taylor.

