

MAKING THE MOST OF THE TIME

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5).

"Conduct yourself wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time" (Revised Standard Version).

"Behave yourself wisely toward those outside the church. Buy up every opportunity" (William Barclay).

Opportunities to witness to those outside the church do not come easily. Because we spent so much time with our fellow-Christians, we do not have much time to spend with others. Therefore, it is imperative to "make the most of the time" that we do have.

Few people, if any, are ever argued into becoming Christians. The use of tact is never more important than at those times when we relate with those who are outside the church, and we must ever guard against leaving an impression of superiority or self-righteousness. It is not by our words so much as by our lives that we attract people to Christianity, or repel them from it. Let us make the most of the time which is allotted us to persuade or influence others to become Christians.

In this service we are going to center our thoughts on State Missions.

The term State Missions usually causes us to think about the work of the Direct Missions Department. We think about Associational, District, County, Local, Communities, or Special Ministries missionaries. Sometimes we think about Student Summer Mission workers, Student Pastors, Baptist Center workers, or Directors of In-Service Guidance.

From every one hundred dollars sent through the Cooperative Program from our churches, seven dollars and seventy-two cents is used by the Direct Missions Department. With this money we help support the ministry of thirty-four Associational Mission programs, fourteen District programs (in twenty-seven associations), nine County Mission programs, twenty-six Local Mission programs, five Communities Mission programs, a Ministry to the Deaf, work in eight Baptist Centers, three In-Service Guidance programs, and approximately forty special and student missionaries.

Last year our missionaries traveled one and one-fourth million miles and made forty-three thousand visits. They were in seven thousand Conferences, two hundred thirty-one Revival meetings, one thousand three hundred thirty-three Training Schools, one thousand six hundred Radio and TV programs, twenty-one World Missions Conferences, seventeen Church Surveys, and one hundred eighty-nine Vacation Bible Schools.

These missionaries preached thirteen thousand times, distributed two hundred eighty-nine thousand pieces of literature, helped start forty-four new units of work, organized seven new missions, and helped constitute four new churches. They counselled with five thousand people and led eight hundred fifty-four people to public professions of faith and baptism. They conducted services in which five hundred people moved their church letters and more than three thousand people made other decisions for Christ.

By our gifts through the Cooperative Program and by our faithfulness in prayer, we had a share in all this work and the results from it.

Our Direct Missions Program is a vital part of the outreach of our local churches to the various areas of need and opportunity in our state. This department is guided by the able and dedicated leadership of A. B. Colvin.

The main financial support of the program comes through the Cooperative Program gifts of the churches, plus income from the annual offering for State Missions and other special funds. The total State Missions budget for the year just closed was \$712,208. Of this amount \$351,514 was allocated to Direct Missions. Since we did not reach our budget goal, this allocation was reduced proportionately.

Areas of work included in Direct Missions are: Metropolitan Missions in Long Run Association and Northern Kentucky Association, fourteen District Missions programs, thirty-two Associational programs, four Communities programs, nine County programs, and twenty-five Local programs, and Special Ministries.

Special ministries of the Direct Missions Department include:

1. Church Extension, in which aid and encouragement is given to churches to start new work and form new churches.
2. Student Missions and weekend missions by which use is made of dedicated students for summer work in the church and mission. This is a cooperative work with the Home Mission Board. Students usually serve ten weeks in the summer.

This department cooperates with seminaries and colleges in providing students to serve in mission endeavors on weekends.

3. Other cooperative work with the Home Mission Board:
 - a. Baptist Centers in Louisville, Lexington, and Hellier.
 - b. Juvenile Rehabilitation programs in Louisville and Covington.
 - c. Weekday programs in Louisville and Pippa Passes.
 - d. Special ministry to deaf and retarded.
 - e. Mountain Missions involves thirty-four counties in Eastern Kentucky.
 - f. Pioneer Missions in Eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.
 - g. In-Service Training, by which schools such as Clear Creek, Cumberland college, and Campbellsville College cooperate in offering training for pastors, prospective pastors, and other workers.
 - h. Conferences on Mountain Missions are conducted at Oneida and Mountain Youth conferences at Cumberland College and at other strategic places in the state.

Some churches in Kentucky are having special services for the elderly. Others, like the Oak Grove Baptist Church, adjacent to Fort Campbell, are having visitation programs in the wards of the Post Hospital. Others are working among the uprooted,

like those who live in mobile homes. A unique program is carried on by the First Baptist Church, Danville, which is a ministry to the deaf in and around Danville. From 150 to 175 attend the worship services each Sunday.

Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville ministers to the Kentucky School for the Blind. Other churches sponsor services in the Rest Homes.

Our three Baptist hospitals have planned religious programs with a trained chaplain in charge. Many brokenhearted are comforted. Our Child Care Program is designed to meet the needs of homeless and dependent children who live in Kentucky, most of whom have living parents. Here is a category of the work: services of the children's commission include foster family care, mother's aid, help for the unwed, expectant mothers, adoptive planning and placement, family counselling to prevent home break-ups, and group care for children. One of the important mission activities is that of Vacation Bible School. At the close of one of these two-week sessions of a Vacation Bible School one little boy asked the principal, "Why do we only get to have Bible School just two weeks out of the year?"