**Double Your Pleasure**

*by Alan Phillips, Associate Director*

The advertising jingle made popular by Doublemint Gum, has a ring to it today at Missions Resource Network. Thanks to the generosity of the Kathleen McGhee Trust of Jacksonville, Florida, every gift made to this ministry over the next 60 days will be matched dollar for dollar, up to $50,000.

In a spiritual sense, it means making twice the impact for reaching people around the world with the message of Jesus Christ. From a stewardship perspective, it invites you and me to make the most out of the resources God has entrusted to us for His sake.

I recently made a trip to Australia where I was able to spend time with two of our most successful mission churches in that country. Both the Northwest church in Sydney and Westchurch in Perth had their beginning with mission teams. Now, years later, they are led by Australian Christians, who in turn are reaching out to their communities and beyond.

No matter where you travel, American Christians are looked up to, in similar fashion to our political and humanitarian reputation as a nation. As perhaps the most blessed people on the globe, God expects us to use our blessings and influence to make a difference. At Missions Resource Network, our quest is to “rally our forces” as a brotherhood of believers to plant churches worldwide, to nurture missionaries and mission churches, to equip church leaders, and to advance a more strategic approach to world evangelism.

Double your pleasure with a gift to this ministry, knowing that it will be matched for the direct benefit of reaching the lost, which is His pleasure. Use the enclosed envelope or call us toll free at 888-641-2229 to learn how you can partner in this new ministry.

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**Missions Resource Network**

**Helping Churches Plant Churches Worldwide**

**Vol. 1, October 2000**

**Why Missions Education in the Bible Class?**

*by Joyce Hardin, Ed.D.*

To ask the question of why missions education should be a vital part of the Bible class curriculum is actually to ask the more basic question as to why the church itself should be concerned with missions. To answer the second question is also to answer the first. Very simply, if the church does not see its mission as that of seeking and saving the lost, it is not the church that Jesus established. And, therefore, without missions in the Bible school, the curriculum fails to perpetuate the primary reason for the church’s existence.

Children of today are the church of tomorrow. What they are experiencing in the Bible school today will shape the decisions that they will make in the future. If that experience is narrow and focused only on those around them, then missions will be defined as taking care of one’s own. If they can be taught a love for lost souls that transcends language, political borders, and race, not only will they become the missionaries of tomorrow but they will also have a Christian worldview.

Adult attitudes and values have their formation in childhood. It is in childhood that one learns to love or to hate, to be self-centered, to be other-centered, to be accepting or to be exclusive; to be faith-directed or world-driven. Positive attitudes and values do not just “happen” but they are cultivated and developed through experiences, by direct teaching, and by coming in contact with role models. Because children are so teachable, missions must be at the center of the Bible school. This means that the curriculum should provide teaching that emphasizes the role Christians must play in evangelizing the world. It must also provide opportunities for hands-on activities that teach missions through practice as well as theory. Finally, it must give young people role models by putting them in contact with real life ambassadors for Christ.

The question is not why missions in the Bible school or why the church should be involved with missions. The real question is whether or not the church will accept its ministry of reconciliation and, therefore, truly become ‘the church of Jesus Christ’ (2 Corinthians 5:18).
The Priority of Prayer
by Bob Waldron, Executive Director

The church’s greatest advances have been the result of prayer. God desires the prayers of His children and faithfully answers them. James indicated that one reason Christians have so little of the divine blessing is because they do not ask. Wesley Duwel commented, “God has tried to teach us that if we are willing to get along with minimum prayer He will send minimal blessings. Our greatest need today is not more congregations, but more prayers that pray. What we really need is not more money to finance our programs but more urgent and vital praying. How can we increase our harvest? How can we catch a vision of God’s white fields and keep up with His open doors? There is but one answer—prayer.

• Pray that the Lord will raise up evangelists for receptive fields.
• Pray that congregations will support their missionaries with loving respect as well as finances.
• Pray that knees will bow and tongues confess that Jesus Christ alone is Lord.

The kind of prayer we need is not simply the habitual roll call of the sick, nor the two-minute drill of repetitious phrases heard so often in our assemblies. What is urgent in the church today is the kind of prayer that seeks the face of God. We need agonizing, closet praying—all night vigils of sweetness in the presence of our Father.

An Interview with Don & Sylvia Petty
by Dwight Whitsett

Don and Sylvia Petty, former missionaries to Pakistan and Iran, pioneered the Missions Learning Center concept of teaching missions to children. Sylvia initially used the idea for a Vacation Bible School in 1974. Then, returning from Iran in 1979 and disturbed by the growing shortage of missionaries, Don and Sylvia began using this educational model regularly at two Dallas-area churches. We asked them to respond to four questions regarding this exciting and effective method.

Q: Why is missions learning important in the local church?
Don: It is important because we want our children to follow Christ and obey His commission. Whether or not they become cross-cultural missionaries, they must understand that the Lord wants His people to establish churches around the world. Both potential missionaries and their future supporters need to receive training as they grow to adulthood. The Missions Learning Center is an effective part of that training.

Q: What is the Missions Learning Center?
Sylvia: The MLC is a special classroom where children, three years old and above, go to learn about missions by immersion in another culture. The decorations, music, housing, food, dress, flags, etc., are as authentic as possible. They learn about the language, schools, games, animals, religion and, most importantly, their need for Jesus. Teachers bring a Bible lesson and connect everything to the Great Commission. Back in their regular classroom, the students discuss what they learned. As a bonus, regular classroom teachers and beginning teachers also learn about teaching missions. Missions learning spreads through the church as children bring home handouts to share with their family.

Q: How has the MLC concept spread?
MLC teachers regularly bring visitors through the room after assemblies. Additionally, the MLC has been taught at the Abilene Christian University Bible Lectureship and the International Bible College Mission Workshop in Florence, AL. Several churches have seen our MLC during past missions forums at Webb Chapel and gone home to begin their own. We give interested visitors a tour of the room, show them pictures of previous themes and explain the concept in detail.

Q: What resources are available for beginning an MLC?
We wrote a manual called Training Missionaries For the 21st Century. A new edition should be available soon. Meanwhile, anyone who is interested should visit Webb Chapel Church of Christ to see the MLC first hand. We would also be pleased to act as resource persons for any church interested in beginning an MLC.

Above photo: Sylvia Petty teaches a Bible class about evangelizing Okinawa.

Hardin Joins Staff
by Jamie Ballard

Dr. Joyce F. Hardin, retired Dean of the College of Education at Lubbock Christian University (LCU) and veteran missionary to South Korea, has joined Missions Resource Network as the Coordinator for Missions Education. Dr. Hardin’s primary responsibility will be to develop missions curricula and train Bible school teachers to teach missions on the local church level.

“No one in churches of Christ is as qualified to train Bible school teachers, to review missions literature, or write missions curricula as Dr. Joyce Hardin.”

Dr. Hardin’s successful longevity in South Korea as a missionary, her doctorate in education, her missions writings, and her excellent service at LCU eminently qualify her for this task,” says Bob Waldron, Executive Director for Missions Resource Network. Dr. Hardin and Waldron have long shared the same vision for missions education in the local church, so it was natural, he says, to appoint her.

Dr. Hardin will select and mentor a team of women educators who have a passion for missions. Their primary tasks will include:

• evaluating available missions materials,
• producing an annotated resource catalog for teachers,
• writing missions curricula, and
• holding workshops nationwide to train Bible school teachers.

The Board of Trustees and staff at Missions Resource Network agree that missions education in the local church is essential. The hearts and minds of children are fertile soil for planting seeds of the Great Commission. “We envision that improved missions education will increase the number of servants who answer God’s call to share the gospel with the lost,” confirms Waldron.

Dr. Hardin’s knowledge of missions and experience in education more than qualify her for her new position as Coordinator of Missions Education. She served as a missionary in South Korea with her husband, Dan, for 17 years, including 12 years as a professor at Korea Christian College. She has also taught at Abilene Christian University, Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, and Lubbock Christian University, as well as in public schools.

Dr. Hardin retired in 1997 from her position of 10 years as Dean of the College of Education at LCU.

Dr. Hardin has contributed articles to many Christian and educational publications both in the United States and South Korea. She also has written two missions books, Sojourners: Women with a Mission (Korea Press) and Three Steps Behind (ACU Press), as well as curriculum materials. Dare to Be Different (1997), and Growing in Confidence (2000). Her popular Passport to Adventure (1989), aimed at grades 4-6, is the only missions curriculum published for churches of Christ over the last 60 years. Among her honors are the F.W. Mattox Distinguished Teacher Award, Alumni of the Year from Oklahoma State University, the Sears Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the G. C. Mortan Outstanding Alumni Medal from Abilene Christian University. Others include the Neil S. Bryan Christian Education Award and the Lifetime Missions Recognition at the World Missions Workshop.

Dr. Hardin and her husband have traveled to Brazil, England, Guatemala, Chile, and Africa to work with missionary families. Most recently, they have spent time working with churches in Nairobi, Kenya, and in Pago Pago, American Samoa. Dr. Joyce Hardin serves on the Board of Trustees for Missions Resource Network.

Spotlight

The redemption of the world is the primary concern of God’s heart (John 3:16; Romans 1:16). It flows like a golden thread through the Bible from cover to cover. For this reason, it is essential to create a heart for missions in our Bible classes. Here are some ways to help children assume responsibility for world evangelism:

• Teach an entire quarter on missions.
• Utilize bulletin boards and posters for missions.
• Use games and meals to introduce the customs of other countries.
• Involve Bible classes in campaigns and mission trips. Summer and vacation trips can be used to make missions actions.
• Have Bible classes send birthday cards and letters to missionary children.
• Encourage Bible classes to assume a specific financial or prayer project.
• Encourage children to consider a missionary career.

Children today have the best opportunity of any generation to learn other languages and understand peoples of other cultures, travel to interesting places, and gain a view of the world few people experience. “Into all the world” begins in the Bible class.