

EDITORIAL: Will the 'crops' be watered_90604

September 3, 2004

Posted: 9/03/04

EDITORIAL: Will the 'crops' be watered?

During the bountiful years of my youth in Perryton, the "Wheatheart of the Nation," harvest usually was about the best time of year. On those occasions when the rains arrived at just the right time and the hordes of bugs and pestilence of hail stayed away, we rejoiced at the abundance of grain God bestowed on all our farms. I remember one great year when the grain elevators filled up, and the farmers dumped the excess wheat down the middle of Amherst Street.

Of course, a successful harvest also represented months of hard work. Farmers tilled and planted and fertilized and weeded and irrigated and sometimes grazed cattle in their fields. Even when the ground was too wet to work, they repaired machinery, tended to their finances and prepared for the next day. Along the way, farmers and townsfolk alike prayed and prayed for heavenly harvests. Growing up in a small farming community is a spiritual experience; even the backsliders pray for good crops.

The Apostle Paul understood farm life. He used the plant ... water ... harvest cycle as a metaphor for ministry: Each Christian has a role to fill, and God gives the spiritual harvest. Paul's words, "Plant ... Water ... Harvest," provide the theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Texas Missions, beginning next Sunday, and the Mary Hill Davis Offering for

Texas Missions.

We pray for God to provide a spiritual harvest in Texas: Where more than half the population has no affiliation with any church whatsoever. Where one-third of families have special needs. Where one-fourth of adults live in poverty, one-fourth of babies aren't immunized and one-fourth of adults can't read or write. Where 78 women are raped and 360 children are abused or neglected every hour. We pray God will bring a spiritual harvest, turning hearts and lives toward the purposes for which God created them.

But our job is to plant and water. A significant way we all can "water" is by contributing to the Mary Hill Davis Offering. You can't invest your money any more wisely. The goal this year is \$5 million. Every penny is vital.

Among the allocations, Mary Hill Davis funds will help present the gospel to Hispanics along the Texas-Mexico border; provide training for rural churches, enabling them to serve poor people; support a statewide evangelistic outreach to teenagers; supply scholarships for Baptist University of the Americas students who are preparing to start churches; train African-American pastors to lead their congregations to be missional churches; recruit and train retired ministers who will help churches develop and equip members for ministry; produce spiritual materials for crime victims and their families, opening doors for sharing the gospel with them; and start churches statewide.

At least 70 ministries across Texas depend upon the Mary Hill Davis Offering. Many workers are in place, planting the gospel. We need to help water so God will provide the harvest.

-Marv Knox

[E-mail the editor at marvknox@baptiststandard.com](mailto:marvknox@baptiststandard.com)

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.