

Prayer must undergird compassion, missionary doctor insists

May 1, 2008

GARLAND—Whether in the streets of Bangalore, India, or northeastern Dallas County, the sight of people in need compels Christians to respond in compassion, veteran medical missionary Rebekah Naylor said.

“God is a compassionate God. When Jesus saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion. The New Testament epistles tell us we are to be clothed in compassion,” said Naylor, who served 35 years as a Southern Baptist medical missionary in India.

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Naylor spoke to a May 1 prayer breakfast sponsored by [Hope Clinic](#), a Christian health care provider serving the uninsured and underserved working poor in Garland.

Compassion spurs Christians to action, Naylor said. But every response needs to be bathed in prayer, she insisted.

“Our efforts must be preceded and supported by prayer,” she said. “Pray believing that God answers prayer.”

Naylor described the crushing poverty and spiritual darkness she

encountered in India, and she challenged Christians in Texas to recognize the less obvious but no-less-urgent needs close to home.

“We need to focus on the needs of people around us—to look outward and not at ourselves,” she said.

The United States faces a health care crisis, said Steve Arze, head of the emergency department at Baylor Medical Center at Garland and medical director of Hope Clinic.

For example, two hospitals in nearby communities closed in recent years, creating an increasing burden for the Garland hospital—and an increasing opportunity for Christian ministries such as Hope Clinic, he noted.

Faith-based free clinics not only can relieve suffering and promote physical well-being, but also can provide spiritual comfort and the hope of everlasting life, said Arze, a member of Lake Pointe Church in Rockwall.

Barbara Burton, executive director of Hope Clinic, reported more than 200 people professed faith in Jesus Christ last year as a result of their contact with the clinic, and several home Bible studies have grown out of the ministry.

“When people are treated with dignity and respect, so many of them are receptive and willing to listen to the good news of Jesus,” she said.