

## LESSON 11

# MIDDLE AMERICA

Middle America comprises Mexico and Central America. This area contains a population of 91,000,000, made up largely of Indians, Negroes, and Mestizos (a mixture of Spanish and Indian). There are minorities of Whites and Orientals. After Columbus discovered the New World Spain colonized this area. Negroes were brought into the southern part of Middle America to work on sugar and banana plantations and on the Panama Canal. Guatemala and Mexico have a population which is more than half Indian. Roman Catholics began mission work in these countries in the sixteenth century, but multitudes of Indians are as superstitious as when the white man brought them Christianity. Most of those who profess Christianity are only nominal Christians. There is not a part of this vast area that is not a valid mission field. The response to the gospel message in this area increases year by year.

### **Mexico**

Mexico, with its 68,200,000 inhabitants, borders the United States on the south. Mexico's population is 60 per cent Mestizo, about 30 per cent pure Indian, and the rest of unmixed European or Asian origin. Principal Indian languages are Aztec and Mayan; but more than fifty dialects are spoken. Spanish is the official language. Mexico was under Spanish domination from 1519 until 1810. Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion, but its parishioners to a great degree are nominal Catholics. The Constitution of 1857, adopted under President Benito Juárez, separated Church and State, and opened the doors of the country to mission work. The Constitution of 1917, seeking to prevent any future domination by the Church, included ecclesiastical restrictions which affect Catholics and Protestants alike. Since about 1960 the government has relaxed enforcement of some of these restrictions. Foreigners are still barred from performing pastoral functions; but missionaries can still render effective service.

*James Thompson*, representative of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, already mentioned relative to South America, arrived at Vera Cruz, April 19, 1827. He led a caravan of twenty mules laden with Bibles to Mexico City. From there colportage spread to principal cities. Catholic opposition forced him to leave in June 1830, but he returned to Mexico City in 1843 and again was expelled within a year. *W.H. Norris*, of the *American Bible Society*, used American soldiers to distribute Scriptures during the War of 1846-47.

Middle America comprises \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mexico, Central, America)

Year by year, the \_\_\_\_\_ to the gospel in Middle America \_\_\_\_\_  
(response, increases)

Mexico was under \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ domination from 1519 until 1810.

The Constitution of 1857 separated \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

The Mexican Constitution of 1917 sought to prevent future d \_\_\_\_\_ by the C \_\_\_\_\_.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

J \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_ was a colporteur in M \_\_\_\_\_ from 1827 until 1830.

(James, Thompson, Mexico)

To *James Hickey* goes the honour of starting the first organized Evangelical church in Mexico. Educated in Ireland for the Roman Catholic priesthood, Hickey married an Anglican lady in England. After her death he moved to the United States where he married Elizabeth Cardwell, became a Baptist, and worked as colporteur and Baptist missionary for thirty years. In 1860 he was at Brownsville, Texas where he was employed as colporteur of the American Tract Society. He preached also to the people on the Matamoros, Mexico side of the border. In November, 1862, Thomas M. Westrup and John W. Butler invited him to Monterrey. He was already doing mission work in Monterrey, preaching in both English and Spanish, when he was appointed agent of the American Bible Society in February, 1863. On January 30, 1864 Hickey baptized Westrup, who was an Anglican, and two Mexican brothers, José María and Arcadio Uranga, and these together with the Hickeys became the "iglesia cristiana" (Capitals were intentionally not used.) Although Hickey was a Baptist, as an employ of an interdenominational agency he was not able to call this a Baptist church, but the same group from 1870 called itself Baptist. A marble slab in the vestibule of the First Baptist Church in Monterrey reads: "First Baptist Church, organized January 30, 1864, by the Rev. James Hickey . . ." Thomas Westrup was chosen pastor and ordained by Hickey.

Miss *Melinda Rankin* went to Brownsville as an independent missionary in 1852 and established a school. She likely visited Mexicans on the Matamoros side of the border, and thus was probably the first to begin a permanent evangelical mission work in Mexico. She became a missionary of the *American and Foreign Christian Union* before she moved to Monterrey in the middle of 1865. The claim made by some that she began the work in the Monterrey area is refuted by Miss Rankin's own statement of her purpose for moving to Monterrey: "Mr. Hickey had been scattering the Bible broadcast over Northern Mexico for two years, and precious fruit was apparent. There were many converts, and we had every reason to believe that much fruit was waiting to be gathered from the seed already sown."<sup>1</sup> Miss Rankin's work in Monterrey was transferred in 1873 to the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. In 1872 the A.B.C. had sent its first missionaries, *D.F. Watkins* and *J.L. Stephens*, to Guadalajara. After a church was organized in Guadalajara Mr. Stephens was killed by a priest-incited mob.

The *American Baptist Home Mission Society* called Thomas M. Westrup to New York for appointment in 1870. After a mission to Spain for this Society, Westrup returned months later to Monterrey, to find that some members of the Monterrey church had joined with Melinda Rankin and Rev. A.J. Park to form a Presbyterian

<sup>1</sup> Melinda Rankin, *Twenty Years Among the Mexicans* (Cincinnati: Chase and Hall, 1875), p. 120.

The honour of starting the first evangelical church in Mexico goes to \_\_\_\_\_.

(James, Hickey)

The "iglesia cristiana" began in Monterrey, Mexico on \_\_\_\_\_.

(January, 30, 1864)

Summarize the work of James Hickey in Mexico.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

M \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_, while living in Brownsville, Texas, started a school in Matamoros, Mexico in 1852.

(Melinda, Rankin)

Which of these statements are true?

Thomas Westrup was appointed missionary to Mexico by American Baptists in 1870. \_\_\_\_\_

Continued on the next page

church, but not under the auspices of any Presbyterian body. Westrup rallied the remaining members of his Monterrey church, and this congregation, together with six others which that church had started, declared themselves to be Baptist churches. A Baptist church was organized in Mexico City in 1884, followed by others north, west, and south of the capital.

Texas Baptists employed *John Westrup*, brother of Thomas, in 1880 to work in the Musquiz area. The *Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board* assumed his support two months before he was murdered by fanatics or bandits in December, 1880. *William Flournoy*, who had been baptized by Thomas Westrup, filled the gap until Dr. *William D. Powell* was appointed by the Southern Baptist Board in 1882. Northern Baptists worked in eastern and southern Mexico, and Southern Baptists in northern and western Mexico, by gentlemen's agreement. Leaders from both sectors united to form the National Baptist Convention of Mexico in 1903. Since then both mission boards have worked through one convention, at times jointly supporting institutions. Today American Baptists have few missionaries in Mexico and Southern Baptist missionaries work with the Convention according to a fraternal integration plan they adopted in 1972.<sup>2</sup> In 1983 the National Baptist Convention reported 550 churches with 46,000 members. It has an excellent seminary near Mexico City, one in Oaxaca and a modern hospital in Guadalajara. Other Baptists total about 5,000.

*Northern Presbyterians* (Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.) sent four couples to Mexico City in 1872. *Southern Presbyterians* (Presbyterian Church, U.S.) sent missionaries to southern Mexico the following year. These groups united to form the Synod of Mexico in 1901. The National Presbyterian Church of Mexico reported 33,263 members in 1965. They have a seminary in Mexico City and have been instrumental in translating the New Testament into Mayan and Zapotec languages. *James Gary Dale*, who since 1899 had worked with the *Associate Reformed Presbyterian Board*, in 1931 founded the *Mexican Indian Mission*, with headquarters in Tamuzanchale. It has opened some 200 preaching points in seven states.

*Southern Methodists* (Methodist Episcopal Church, South) and *Northern Methodists* (Methodist Episcopal Church) both began work in Mexico in 1873. Northern Methodists worked in the Mexico City-Federal District area, while Southern Methodists worked in Northern Mexico. The two united their work in 1930 under the name Methodist Church of Mexico. Methodists in 1980 numbered 45,000.

The *American Episcopal Church* began work here in 1875, when it reinforced the work of the *Church of Jesus*, founded by *Manuel Aguas*, a Dominican friar at the Mexico City Cathedral who was excommunicated when

His brother, John Westrup was employed by Southern Baptists in 1880. \_\_\_\_\_

The first missionary appointed to Mexico by Southern Baptists was William D. Powell. \_\_\_\_\_

The Baptist churches of Mexico united to form the National Baptist Convention of Mexico in 1903. \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Presbyterians united to form the \_\_\_\_\_ of Mexico in \_\_\_\_\_.

(Synod, 1901)

Methodists began their work in Mexico in \_\_\_\_\_.

(1873)

The American Episcopal Church began work here in \_\_\_\_\_.

(1875)

<sup>2</sup> Frank W. Patterson, *A Century of Baptist Work in Mexico* (El Paso: Baptist Spanish Publishing House, 1979), pp. 207-24.

he was converted and began preaching the evangelical message. It is known today as the Mexican Episcopal Church with about 40 congregations.

*Pentecostal* work began in 1915. *Cesario Bureiago* organized the first Assemblies of God in Mexico, beginning at Músqiz in 1919. Another group of churches which Dr. Donald McGavran calls *Assemblies of God II* began in 1935. The *Apostolic Church* which began about 1914, had 425 churches with 16,500 members in 1965. *Assemblies of God II* reached 25,000 members in 1952 but a split reduced them to less than 10,000. They were at 15,000 in 1965 with some 450 churches. These with numerous other Pentecostal groups in Mexico total about 400,000 members. Among these groups the best known are the *Pentecostal Holiness Church*, the *Church of God* (Tennessee), and the *Foursquare Gospel Church*. Pentecostals make up about 64 per cent of the Evangelicals in Mexico.

*Seventh-day Adventists*, beginning in Mexico in 1910, began to grow in 1925. Since then they have increased from a few hundred to more than 50,000 members. The *Church of the Nazarene* arrived in Mexico in 1936. It had a phenomenal growth between 1962 and 1966 from 5,900 to 13,500 members, due in part to the return of graduates from their Bible Institute in San Antonio, Texas and the zeal of these in beginning new work.

*Wycliffe Bible Translators*, in Mexico since 1942, have missionaries working among the more than fifty Indian tribes. Portions of the Scriptures are now available for twenty tribes.

A few of the 125 mission groups with work in Mexico are: *Free Methodists*, the *Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*, *Latin American Lutheran Mission*, *Reformed Church in America*, the *Salvation Army*, *World Mission Prayer League*, the *National Holiness Missionary Society*, *Central American Mission*, *American Friends*, *Conservative Baptists*, and various *Independent Baptist* groups. Pedro Rivera in 1962 placed the Protestant population in Mexico at 645,145, with 45 denominations at work.<sup>3</sup> By 1980 there were 66 denominations. Protestant population was more than a million.

## Guatemala

Home of the ancient Maya Empire, Guatemala has 7,000,000 people: 55 per cent pure Indian, 40 per cent mixed Indian and Spanish, and the remainder of European descent. Spanish is the official language, but Quiché, Cachiguel, Kechí and other Indian tongues are spoken. Ninety per cent profess Catholicism. Complete religious freedom exists.

At the invitation of President Justo Rufino Barrios,

Pentecostals in Mexico total about \_\_\_\_\_ members.

(400,000)

The Wycliffe Bible translators have made the Scriptures available to \_\_\_\_\_ tribes of \_\_\_\_\_.

(twenty, Indians)

Guatemala is home of the ancient \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.

(Maya)

<sup>3</sup>R. Pedro Rivera, *Instituciones Protestantes en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, S.A., 1962), pp. 25-27.

the *Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.*, sent Mr. and Mrs. *John C. Hill* to Guatemala City in 1882. Presbyterians founded the American Hospital, later nationalized, the Quiché Bible Institute, and the Mam Christian Centre. In 1961 the work of the Mission was integrated with that of the National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala. Since then, such missionaries as are invited to return at furlough time are called fraternal workers. Its 60 churches, plus organized congregations, reported 15,000 members in 1980.

The *Central American Mission* has work in Mexico and each Central American country. Its work in Guatemala is the largest. Mr. and Mrs. *A.E. Bishop*, who had worked in Honduras since 1896, came to Guatemala in the spring of 1899. The C.A.M. work is indigenous, with emphasis on the training of national leaders. For this purpose Robinson Bible Institute was established at Panajachel for Indian workers and the Central American Mission Bible Institute in Guatemala City. *W. Cameron Townsend* (founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators) finished translation of the New Testament into the Cakchiquel dialect in 1931. Since then the C.A.M. has worked at translations into Mam, K'anjobal, and other dialects. C.A.M. has operated radio station TGNA in Guatemala City since 1950. In 1954 the Mission reported 101 churches and 320 preaching places. In 1980 the C.A.M. churches reported 23,000 members.

The *Friends Mission* (California), entered Guatemala in 1902. Their work is centred around Chiquimula where they have schools and a daily radio broadcast. In 1969 one thousand professed faith in Christ. They recently reported a community of 7,300 believers. *Primitive Methodists* who came in 1922 work almost entirely with Indians and have about 1,000 members. They cooperate with the Presbyterians in the Quiché Bible Institute. The *Church of the Nazarene*, in Guatemala since 1910, has 66 churches. The *Church of God* (Tennessee) has 287 churches with 10,250 members. A Pentecostal church which is entirely indigenous is the *Prince of Peace*. Its growth since 1950 has been phenomenal. Assemblies of God, which came to Guatemala in 1937, have 311 churches and almost 11,000 members. The combined membership of eight Pentecostal bodies was 80,000 in 1980.

The *Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*, which came to Guatemala in 1947, has work in Guatemala City, Antigua, Zacapa, Puerto Barrios and various villages where agricultural missions is practised.

*Southern Baptist* mission work in Guatemala came through use of literature from the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas. Pastors of independent churches wrote asking for books on Baptist belief and practice. They later declared themselves to be Baptists. In 1943 *Paul Bell*, Southern Baptist missionary in Panama, visited their churches baptizing some 300 persons. In 1946 the Baptist Convention of Guatemala was

Is the following statement true or false?  
In 1882, the president of Guatemala invited Presbyterians into the country. \_\_\_\_\_

(true)

The Central American Mission has work in Mexico and each country of \_\_\_\_\_

(Central, America)

What are the ministries of the C.A.M.?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Answer true or false.

The Friends Mission in Guatemala does not seek to make converts. \_\_\_\_\_

(false)

An entirely indigenous Pentecostal church is named \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

(Prince, Peace)

Answer true or false.

Some independent churches in Guatemala, through use of Baptist literature, became Baptist churches.  
\_\_\_\_\_

(true)

organized at San Pedro, on Lake Atitlán. Since 1948 the *Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board* has had missionaries in Guatemala. It has work among the Quechuas at Quetzaltenango, among the Kechis at Coban, and maintains a Bible institute and bookstore at Guatemala City. In 1981 the Convention reported 71 self-supporting churches, with 7,350 members.

Other organizations with work in Guatemala include: the *International Church of the Foursquare Gospel*, *Christian Missions in Many Lands*, *Latin American Mission*, *Seventh-day Adventists*, *United World Missions* *Wycliffe Bible Translators*.

## Honduras

Honduras is second largest in size among the Central American republics, with 3,800,000 inhabitants. Most are Mestizos, but there are English-speaking blacks who work on farms and coconut plantations along the coast. Evangelical Christians total less than 40,000.

The *Central American Mission* sent five missionaries to Santa Rosa de Copán in 1896. The C.A.M. has a hospital at Siguatepeque. It had 100 centres of worship with 1,279 members in 1967. The *Friends Society* (California) began work in Honduras in 1909. The *Evangelical and Reformed Church* (now the United Church Board for World Ministries) centred its work at San Pedro Sula, where it has a bookstore. Membership was about 600 in 1960. The *American Moravians* began work among the Miskito Indians at Kaurkira in 1930. In 1967 they had 28 preaching places with a total of 1,560 members. The *World Gospel Mission* (Holiness) came to Honduras in 1943. It has a Bible school, printing press and colportage work.

The *Assemblies of God* entered Honduras in 1940. Their Bible school at Santa Rosa has furnished leaders for 41 churches, which reported 1,250 members in 1967. The *Church of God* (Indiana) had 1,279 members and the *Church of God* (Tennessee) about 2,100. Combined Pentecostal membership in 1980 was about 5,000.

The *Methodist Missionary Society* (British) has work with the Jamaican workers on banana plantations on the Bay Islands and on the coast. *Wesleyan Methodists* also work in Honduras, as does *Christian Missions in Many Lands* (Plymouth Brethren). *Conservative Baptists* entered La Ceiba in the 1940s to work with the English-speaking West Indian workers on banana plantations. In 1947 they extended their work to the Bay Islands, and since 1960 have operated Radio Station HRVC in Tegucigalpa. *Baptist Mid-Missions* entered the Bay Islands in the 1950s to work with the English-speaking black people.

*Southern Baptists* began sending evangelistic teams to Honduras from Guatemala in the 1940s. The first resident missionaries were sent in 1954. Its 33 missionaries include a medical team which conducts

Southern Baptists have had missionaries in Guatemala since \_\_\_\_\_.

(1948)

The Central American Mission opened work in \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

(Honduras, 1896)

The Assemblies of God entered Honduras in \_\_\_\_\_.

(1940)

Name three groups working with English-speaking congregations in Honduras.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Southern Baptists began working in Honduras in the \_\_\_\_\_s, but the first resident missionaries were not sent until \_\_\_\_\_.

(1940, 1954)

clinics in remote areas. Thirty-two churches report a total of 2,742 members.

*Seventh-day Adventists* are the largest body in Honduras with 26 churches and about 6,000 members. Other bodies in Honduras are the *Pioneer Bible Mission* and the *International Church of the Foursquare Gospel*.

## El Salvador

Of El Salvador's 4,800,000 population, about ten per cent are Indian and the rest Mestizos or Ladinos.

The *Central American Mission* entered El Salvador in 1896. Churches resulting from this work became the Evangelical Church of El Salvador. These churches number about 60 with a membership approaching 5,000.

The *Assemblies of God* came to El Salvador in 1929. After ten years of prayer for revival it enjoyed a growth from 2,650 in 1952 to 14,000 in 1980. Pentecostals make up 73 per cent of the Evangelicals in El Salvador. The *Independent Pentecostals* claim more than 10,000 members. Other Pentecostal churches are the *Church of God* (Tennessee) with 4,300 members and the indigenous *Prince of Peace Church*. *Seventh-day Adventists* who came in 1925 now have more than 8,000 members.

The *American Baptist Home Mission Society* which began work in San Salvador in 1911 has built an indigenous organization known as the Baptist Association of El Salvador, which reports 2,500 church members. It has an elementary school and a high school in Santa Ana. At the invitation of the Association in 1975 *Southern Baptists* opened a bookstore and literature ministry in San Salvador. The *National Baptist Convention* (Negro Society) has 60 places of worship, with some 2,200 members. The *Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* began work in El Salvador in 1956. Anglican work is promoted by the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*.

## Nicaragua

About 70 per cent Mestizo, 15 per cent White and 15 per cent Negro, Nicaragua's 2,600,000 inhabitants are largely Roman Catholic, but religious freedom is guaranteed.

The *German Moravians* sent their first missionaries to Nicaragua in 1849. They were compelled in 1941, during World War II, to transfer this work to the *American Moravian Mission Board*. Moravians have worked with the Miskito Indians and English-speaking people along the Caribbean Coast. With 84 national pastors they had a membership of 13,000 in 1980 with a believing community of about 25,000.

The *Central American Mission* opened work here in 1900. It has had few missionaries. These worked towards self-supporting and self-propagating churches.

The first evangelical mission society to enter El Salvador was the \_\_\_\_\_

(*Central, American, Mission*)

The church with the most members is the A \_\_\_\_\_ of G \_\_\_\_\_

(*Assemblies, God*)

The N \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ in El Salvador is composed of Negro churches.

(*National, Baptist, Convention*)

G \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ brought the gospel to Nicaragua in 1849.

(*German, Moravians*)

With a membership of \_\_\_\_\_ it is the largest evangelical work in Nicaragua.

(*13,000*)

After 50 years it had twenty-two churches, but in 1955 eleven of these declared their independence. C.A.M. membership had grown to 2,000 by 1980.

The *American Baptist Home Mission Society* has been in Nicaragua more than half a century. Prior to the earthquake that levelled Managua, American Baptists had one of the finest church buildings in Central America in this city. They were able to re-establish their high school and hospital in Managua. A bookstore was built in 1976. The Convention reports 47 churches with 5,232 members.

The *Assemblies of God* began work in Nicaragua in 1926. Their work is indigenous. They have a Bible school at Matagalpa. They report 60 churches, with 2,700 members. Neither this group nor the Seventh-day Adventists with 3,200 members have had growth commensurate with that in most Latin American countries where they work. The *Church of God* (Tennessee) and the *Church of the Nazarene* have several churches each in Nicaragua.

### Costa Rica

When Columbus discovered the shores of this land in 1502 he called it Costa Rica, "Rich Coast." Its 2,000,000 inhabitants are 95 per cent Spanish. There are a few Indians in the interior and about 25,000 Negroes on the coast; but there has been little intermarriage in Costa Rica. After long domination by the Roman Catholic Church, Costa Rica had an anti-clerical government from 1890 to 1940. While there is complete religious freedom, conditions have not been favourable to a prosperous mission work.

The *Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society* sent *E.G. Hewitt* and *J.H. Sobey* to Puerto Limon in 1888 to preach to Jamaicans in labour camps. A chapel was built at Puerto Limon. In 1893 *James Hoyter* was sent to preach in Spanish. This he did with "great success, and the work continued to expand."<sup>4</sup>

Costa Rica was the first country occupied by the *Central American Mission*. Scotch Presbyterians had an English-speaking church in San José in the 1880s. Nothing was being done, however, to reach the nationals, so two women in the church began to pray for missionaries. Simultaneously, *Dr. Cyrus I. Schofield*, pastor of the First Congregational Church of Dallas, became burdened for Central America. Inquiries revealed that other denominations had no plans for evangelizing these countries. Dr. Schofield laid the matter before three prosperous business men and the interdenominational *Central American Mission* was formed in November, 1890. Mr. and Mrs. *W.W. McConnell* were sent to San José in 1891. Others followed, and the

<sup>4</sup> Inez Knibb Sibley, *The Baptists of Jamaica* (Kingston: Jamaica Baptist Union, 1965), p. 27.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society has been at work in \_\_\_\_\_ for more than \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.

(Nicaragua, half, century)

The Assemblies of God work is \_\_\_\_\_.

(indigenous)

Name three missionaries sent to Costa Rica by the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Is the following statement true or false?

The Central American Mission can trace its origin to the prayers of two women in a church in San José, Costa Rica.

\_\_\_\_\_

(true)

work of the C.A.M. spread to other Central American countries. It has planted relatively few churches in Costa Rica. Due to a division, membership dropped to 250 in 1940, but the number had grown to 1,400 in 1980.

The headquarters of the *Latin American Mission* is in San José. Mr. and Mrs. *Harry Strachan*, after 18 years in Argentina, came to San José in 1921 to launch a mass evangelism programme in Latin America. It was their purpose to co-operate with other Missions in organizing and projecting evangelistic campaigns. Their purpose was not to create another denomination, but when a campaign in San José in 1927 left 400 converts who did not care to unite with C.A.M. or Methodist churches, the L.A.M. organized an *Association of Bible Churches*. In 1968 the L.A.M. had more missionaries in Costa Rica than all other missions combined, due to their seminary, radio (TIFC), publication, and administration work; but they had only two missionaries dedicated to planting churches.

*American Methodists* entered Costa Rica in 1918 after *Francisco G. Penzotti*, agent of the American Bible Society, and at that time a Methodist, had between 1886 and 1891 raised up a group of believers of the Methodist faith. In 1918 *Eduardo Zapata* was appointed pastor-in-charge, and later missionaries were sent.

Pentecostal bodies in Costa Rica include *Assemblies of God*, *Church of God*, (Tennessee), *International Church of the Foursquare Gospel* and a few independent congregations. The Pentecostals with about 3,000 members make up about 25 per cent of the Evangelical population.

The *Southern Baptist Home Mission Board* began work here in 1945. This work was transferred to the *Foreign Board* in 1949. The *American Baptist Association* (California) also has work here, as do the *British Methodists* and the *Church of England*. *Seventh-day Adventists* were the largest body with 3,000 members in 1980.

## Panama

Panama, discovered by the Spanish in 1501, unites Central and South America. Its 1,900,000 inhabitants are about 60 per cent Mestizo, 20 per cent Negro, and 10 per cent Indian. Although Panama is considered Roman Catholic, separation of Church and State is maintained.

In 1884 thousands of West Indian Negroes migrated to the Isthmus of Panama to work on the construction of the Panama Canal. The *Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society* sent *J.H. Sobey* who in 1910 organized the Colon Baptist Church. The *Southern Baptist Home Mission Board* came to Panama in 1905 and Jamaican Baptists transferred their work to them in 1908. The *Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board* took over the work of the Home Board in Panama in 1975. The Baptist

The Latin American Mission was begun by the \_\_\_\_\_s.

(Harry, Strachan)

Why did the L.A.M. in Costa Rica decide to establish churches?

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Connect related items in the two columns.

Cyrus I. Schofield  
Harry Strachan  
Puerto Limon

Jamaican Baptists  
Central American Mission  
Latin American Mission

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Convention of Panama has 56 churches, with 6,315 members. There are congregations of Blacks, Mestizos, Whites and Indians. A seminary is maintained at Arraijan, and a bookstore in Panama City. The total number of Baptists in Panama is about 11,000.

American Methodists sent J.C. Elkins to Panama in 1905. The *International Church of the Foursquare Gospel*, although it came in the mid 1940s, has become the largest evangelical body with 13,288 members in 1967. *Seventh-day Adventists*, depending entirely on national leadership, had 6,210 members, and the *Protestant Episcopal Church* 4,682. The *Latin American Mission* and *World Radio Missionary Fellowship* operate radio station HOXO jointly.

Other organizations with work in Panama include: the *Central American Mission*, *Gospel Missionary Union*, the *Church of God* (Tennessee), *Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society*, *New Tribes Mission* and *Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*.

Summarize the history of Baptist work in Panama.

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(Compare your answer with the text.)

## Home Study Exercise

**Basic activity** (Levels 1,2 and 3). After reading the study guide, answer the following questions.

1. What countries are included in Middle America?

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2. Describe the people and religions of Middle America.

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What response has the gospel had there?

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3. Relate the work of James Hickey in Mexico.

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4. Pentecostals make up what per cent of the Evangelical population in Mexico?

Name the principal Pentecostal bodies.

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5. What was the origin of the Central American Mission and in what countries of Middle America does it work?

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6. List the ministries of the Central American Mission in Guatemala.

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7. List the mission bodies that have work in Honduras.

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8. What German missionary society pioneered in Nicaragua? What have been the fruits of its labours there?

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9. When and how did Jamaican Baptists take the gospel to Costa Rica?

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10. Tell of the founding of the Latin American Mission and of its work in Costa Rica.

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11. Why is there so much English-speaking work in Panama?

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12. What organizations are translating Scriptures in Middle America and where?

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13. Name the evangelical radio stations in Middle America and their sponsoring bodies.

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**Supplementary activity** (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read pages 479-507 in *A Global View of Christian Missions* by Kane and answer the following questions.

1. Observe the map on page 491, noting that Mexico accounts for more than one-half the territory and two-thirds of the population of Middle America.
2. List the scope of Protestant and Evangelical mission work in Mexico. (Cf. Kane, p. 480).
3. Update Kane's treatment of Baptist work in Mexico (pp. 480, 483). In the thirteen year lapse between Kane's work and the study guide there has been much change. Note that the history of missions is a changing picture. Do you see here a shift towards nationalization and accelerated growth?
4. Update the story of Pentecostal mission work in Mexico using Kane (pp. 483,484) and the study guide text.

**Advanced activity** (*Level 3*).

1. Why did the Mexican government restrict the powers of the church, both Catholic and Protestant (Cf. Kane pp. 479,480)?
2. What signs are there of relaxation of restrictions by the Mexican government? (Take into account Kane's discussion of evangelism by radio, p. 485.)
3. Note the nature and scope of the Wycliffe Translators in Mexico (Kane pp. 484, 486). In May of 1983, under heavy pressure from the leftist press, the Mexican government advised the Wycliffe Translators their work must be phased out. Do you think this might portend further restrictions of evangelical mission work in Middle America, under pressure from either leftist or rightist political groups or by para-military groups?
4. Discuss the impact of the Latin American Mission on evangelism in Costa Rica and other countries of Middle America.
5. The Assemblies of God work in El Salvador demonstrates the wisdom of establishing indigenous work. Outline the strategy, methods, and accomplishments to be found in this work.

### **Seminar Discussion**

1. Discuss the pros and cons of the indigenous missionary methods of the Assemblies of God in El Salvador.
2. Discuss the missionary methods of the three old line denominations which have been in Mexico for a century. What changes should take place for greater national participation and faster growth?
3. What effect does guerrilla warfare have on mission work as experienced in Nicaragua and El Salvador?
4. Discuss missionary method changes occasioned by guerrilla warfare. Consider the dilemma of Christian communities pressured by both guerrilla and government forces.
5. Consider the possibilities and successes of mass evangelism in Middle America.
6. Consider the power and possibilities of the printed page for reaching the masses.