



*Pam 2603*

# Christmas For Christ

Vital Facts About  
the  
Christmas Thank Offering



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION  
NASHVILLE, TENN.

# Christmas for Christ

And they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother; and they fell down and worshipped him; and opening their treasures they offered unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. Matt. 2: 11.

In an effort to bring into the Christmas season of 1928 the spirit of worship and the right kind of giving, which marked the visit of the Wise Men to the infant Son of God in the long ago, the Southern Baptist Convention is suggesting to the nearly 4,000,000 members of the co-operating churches that they make this season a "Christmas for Christ." This can be done by reducing their usual expenditures for Christmas gifts for one another to an amount that will enable them to make a worthy offering to their Lord, who not only bought them with his own precious blood, but through his abundant loving kindness from day to day permits them to enjoy the innumerable blessings that are theirs.

Have you ever made Christ a Christmas present? Ever denied yourself some convenience, comfort, or indulgence in order to make a gift to him which will enable others to come to know him as Saviour and Lord? If not, you have never known one of the highest joys that a Christian can experience on earth.

In order that you may know just what this effort to observe Christmas for Christ, represented in a special thank offering for \$2,000,000, is, the following questions are anticipated and answered:

## ***1. What is the Christmas Thank Offering?***

It is an effort to raise \$2,000,000 in cash at the Christmas season, 1928, to be applied on the debts of the general boards and other agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention.

## ***2. How is it proposed to raise this amount?***

Through voluntary thank offerings by individual members of Southern Baptist churches. The appeal is being made through the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention,

in co-operation with the various state offices. No new machinery is set up for this purpose and no additional salaries are created.

### **3. Why is this thank offering necessary?**

The debts of the boards and agencies are greatly crippling them in their work, and their regular receipts are not sufficient to enable them to continue their operations and pay the debts under a period of several years.

### **4. What are the debts of the Southern Baptist Convention agencies?**

According to the reports to the convention these debts, as of May 1, 1928, were as follows:

Foreign Mission Board—		
Current obligations at banks..		\$1,065,791.18
Home Mission Board—		
Current obligations at banks..\$	425,492.44	
Bonded indebtedness .....	1,192,500.00	1,617,992.44*
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Education Board, chiefly in bonds on Ridgecrest		371,378.72
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, building account .....		1,060,575.55
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary....		441,047.11
Baptist Bible Institute .....		362,758.03
New Orleans Baptist Hospital—		
Current .....	\$298,508.08	
Bonded .....	537,000.00	835,508.08
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Total .....		\$5,755,051.11

\*This does not include the defalcations of the recent treasurer, the amount of which was estimated by the auditors at \$953,000 at the time this was written. It was planned to restore this loss through special offerings on November 11 but the returns from that day were not available when this pamphlet was written.

The Relief and Annuity Board, the W.M.U. Training School and the American Baptist Theological Seminary have no debts, but inasmuch as they are greatly in need of additional funds for their current work, and are accustomed to share in the regular receipts of the Co-operative Program, the convention voted that they should participate in this special thank offering. Offsetting the debts of the Southwide agencies are assets in the sum of \$24,000,000.

### **5. How will the Education Board share in this offering, since it has been abolished by the Convention?**

In voting to discontinue the Education Board the convention directed its own executive com-

mittee to close up all the legal and financial affairs of the Education Board, including the payment of its debts. The Education Board's share of the receipts, therefore, will go to the convention's executive committee and by that agency be applied toward the reduction of the board's indebtedness.

**6. How will the \$2,000,000 raised through this offering be divided among the various causes?**

On the same ratio that the causes share in the distributable Southwide receipts of the Co-operative Program, viz:

Foreign Missions .....	50	%
Home Missions .....	22½	%
Relief and Annuity Board .....	9	%
Education Board .....	2	%
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.	5	%
Southwestern Seminary .....	4½	%
Baptist Bible Institute .....	3½	%
New Orleans Hospital .....	2	%
W.M.U. Training School .....	1	%
American Baptist Theological Seminary.	½	%
Total .....	100	%

**7. Since the \$2,000,000 sought will not be sufficient to pay off the entire indebtedness, why was this goal agreed upon?**

Several reasons prompted the decision upon this amount. First, it will be sufficient to retire the most pressing portion of the indebtedness of the several participating agencies; second, it was believed Southern Baptists could be led to lay \$2,000,000 on the altar as a thank offering to God, while many felt the entire amount of the debts was too large a sum to be undertaken at one time; and, third, it was believed that the raising of \$2,000,000 toward the payment of the Southwide debts would so enspirit the co-operating Baptists as to bring about larger regular giving on their part, thus increasing the receipts of the Co-operative Program to the point where it will be possible for the agencies to take care of probably the remainder of their obligations out of their regular income.

**8. What efforts are these agencies already making to get rid of their debts?**

All have reduced their staffs and operating expenses to the minimum and are applying 10 per

cent of their cash receipts each month toward the reduction of their debts. In the case of the Home Mission Board it is now applying 40 per cent of its current receipts and all special offerings to the reduction of its debts.

**9. *What assurance have the churches that if the present debts are paid new debts will not be incurred in the future?***

These agencies are under specific instructions of the convention to keep their expenditures within their cash receipts.

**10. *Are Southern Baptists able, without inconvenience, to contribute \$2,000,000 in cash for this special thank offering?***

Yes. There are nearly 4,000,000 white Baptists in the South today who have a combined annual income of \$1,600,000,000. If this income were faithfully tithed, there would come into the treasuries of Southern Baptist churches at least \$160,000,000 annually. The record shows, however, that all Southern Baptist churches together gave to all objects, local and general, last year only \$40,000,000, or only two and one-half cents on the dollar. The amount sought in this Christmas thank offering is less than an average half-day's income for Southern Baptists.

**11. *Why should Southern Baptists give this amount to be applied on the Southwide debts?***

They should do so, first, as an expression of their gratitude to God for his continued favor upon them individually, their churches and their organized work. In the second place, these debts were incurred in carrying forward the work entrusted to these agencies by the churches, and constitute, therefore, an obligation upon the churches and their individual members. In the third place, this sum of money should be raised and applied on the Southwide debts because these agencies can never function as they ought until they are relieved of the burden of their present obligations. Finally, a considerable reduction in

the indebtedness by means of this special offering will greatly encourage the workers and the churches and stimulate them to larger endeavor.

**12. Will this thank offering interfere with the regular Co-operative Program?**

It will not unless churches and individuals compel it to do so. Everywhere it is made plain that this offering is to be really and truly a SPECIAL THANK OFFERING, given over and above one's regular contributions, and if this understanding prevails everywhere the money received will serve to *reinforce* rather than *hinder* the Co-operative Program, because it will represent that much *new* money received. In order that there may be no confusion to the Co-operative Program, the convention has directed that all undesignated receipts from the offering shall be disbursed on the same ratios that prevail in the distribution of the Southwide receipts from the Co-operative Program.

**13. Will this Christmas thank offering conflict with the annual Lottie Moon offering for foreign missions, sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union?**

No. The Lottie Moon offering will be taken during the annual week of prayer for foreign missions early in December, and will be out of the way before this special thank offering is sought. The women of the W.M.U. plan to do a large part by the Lottie Moon offering, but they are equally loyal to and enthusiastic for this special thank offering to be applied to the Southwide debts, and will give liberally to it also.

**14. Will the special Christmas thank offering interfere with the usual Christmas gifts of the Sunday schools to the Baptist orphanages in some of the states?**

Not necessarily so. In order to avoid a conflict here and give everybody a chance to share in this special Christmas thank offering for Southwide objects, some of the states are moving forward their orphanage offerings to another date.

**15. *How is one who feels he is already giving all he can to the Lord's work to share in this special offering?***

He should make a careful re-study of his resources and contributions and see if somehow he cannot find somewhere some amount which he can give to this purpose. He should ask God to help him to have a worthy part in this great undertaking. Even if he has to make a real personal sacrifice in order to share in this offering he will in so doing enjoy one of the greatest blessings he has known. In order to have a worthy share in this great effort many Baptists are already planning to wear their old clothes a while longer, reduce their amusement and recreation expenditures a bit, make some extra money somewhere, and reduce the number of their Christmas greeting cards and unnecessary gifts to a minimum.

**16. *Who should have a part in this offering?***

Every Baptist man, woman and child who loves God and his cause and can possibly make a contribution of any size, large or small.

**17. *What will be some of the effects upon the work of the boards and agencies of the Convention if this full amount is raised?***

The load upon the workers and agencies will be greatly lightened, enabling them to do more efficient work; and money now spent on interest will be saved for the work of kingdom building in various directions, thus winning additional people at home and abroad to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**18. *What are some of the blessings that will come to individual givers who help make this achievement possible?***

The consciousness of having had a worthy share in thus winning one of the greatest victories in the recent history of Southern Baptists will rejoice the heart of every giver throughout his life, while the gift will constitute a treasure laid up in heaven that will bring rich dividends throughout eternity.

**19. What are some of the things which Christ said about giving, which should encourage every loyal Baptist to do his best at this time?**

Freely ye have received; freely give. Matt. 10: 8.

It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20: 35.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. Luke 6: 38.

In addition to what he said about giving, Christ set us an immortal example that is more effective than any words he could speak when he gave himself for us.

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### HIS GIFT AND MINE

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Over against the treasury  
He sits who gave himself for me.  
He sees the coppers that I give  
Who gave his life that I might live.  
He sees the silver I withhold  
Who kept for me his throne of gold.  
Who found a manger for his bed,  
Who had nowhere to lay his head;  
He sees the gold I clamp so tight,  
And I am debtor in his sight.

—*Edith B. Gurley.*