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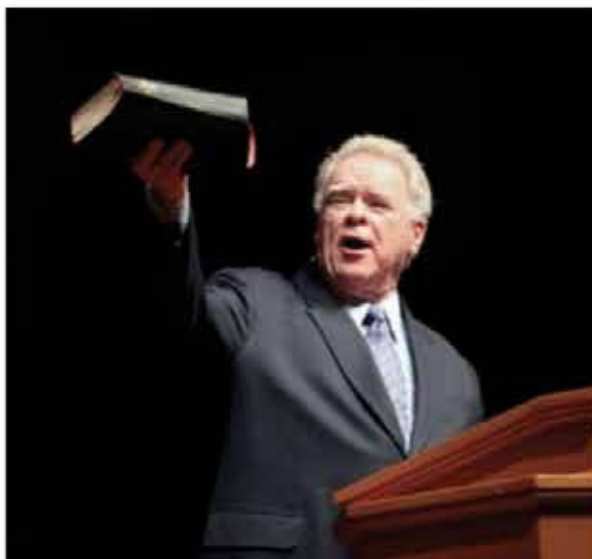
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SOUTHWESTERN
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a letter from **THE PRESIDENT**

Missions is much like rodeo with a certain romance and a lot of adventure; and it looks a lot easier than it is. The Antandroy of Madagascar are a wonderfully friendly, outgoing, unreached people group who live in the south part of this vast island off the southeast coast of Africa. In a day of modern communications and conveyance accessibility,



you can get easily anywhere in the world today—except to the Antandroy. You can get close by air; and if Southwestern Seminary had a medium-sized boat that would sleep about 10-12 people from which to operate, we could certainly make the approach up any one of a number of navigable rivers. But, Interstate 1 in Antandroy land is a relatively wide super highway paved with mud; and anytime it rains, those interstates—if they may so be called—become quagmires and lakes restricting access by any but the heartiest. Cactus abounds in the land where lemurs

rule and leap from every tree limb. There are a thousand ways to be pricked by those cacti and other plants native to the country. Huge baobab forests, certainly the most unusual tree on earth, can still be readily observed in the land of the Antandroy, and the people abound, numbering some 850,000, all desperately in need of Christ.

The Christianity to which they have been exposed is hardly of a pure vein. As a matter of fact, though many parts have received literally no witness at all, other parts have received such a confusing message that most have no idea what genuine biblical Christianity is all about.

So, Tom Elliff of the International Mission Board asked us if we would embrace the Antandroy as an unreached people group. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is not funded to take on such a project; and to be quite candid, I do not know how we will do it financially. However, our first crew just returned from there. That crew, consisting of Vice Presidents Thomas White and Jason Duesing, Dean of the Fish School of Evangelism and Missions Keith Eitel, along with photographer Matt Miller and logistics and missions specialist Art Savage, penetrated as far as they could in that relatively short time to the heart of the Antandroy homeland. They came back awed by the immensity of the land to be covered and the villages to be reached but confident that God had given us a wonderful assignment.

The students and faculty of Southwestern are 100% prepared to take this challenge. They understand the physical

demands, the potential sickness, the strategic and logistical challenges they will face; and they are prepared to go. This issue of the *Southwestern News* magazine will acquaint you thoroughly with the Antandroy people and remind you that Southwestern Seminary is still

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counting on you to be a part of this missionary outreach. Consequently, we solicit your prayers on behalf of the faculty and students as we undertake this unbelievable challenge. How marvelous it would be if God moved greatly among the Antandroy people so that the spread of the Gospel within three years time would produce 40 or more congregations in southern Madagascar. I believe such a miracle can happen. Will you join me in praying to that end?

Until He Comes,

Paige Patterson