

February 2019

Cheyenne Frontier Days bills itself as the “World’s Largest Outdoor Rodeo and Western Celebration.” With more than 200,000 attendees heading to Wyoming every July, it’s no wonder rodeo fans refer to it as the *Daddy of ‘em All!*

I got acquainted with the rodeo years ago when our church had a partnership with the Frontier Baptist Association. We would work with local churches during the event to pass out 60,000 scripture-wrapped bottles of cold water at the parades on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, as well as at the big pancake breakfast on Thursday.

While serving the huge crowds was a wonderful opportunity for ministry, what impacted me most was the privilege of getting to know the pastors in the association. Some of them were lifelong Wyomingites, but many had moved there decades earlier from other parts of the country. They all carried a common passion to see lost people coming to faith in Christ and believers growing in their walk with Jesus.

If being a cowboy in Wyoming is hard work, being a pastor in the state is more so. Wyoming has less than 600,000 residents, and although it’s the 10<sup>th</sup> largest state in the country, it is the least populated. There are only 105 SBC churches in the entire state.

But even in the most remote parts of a rural state, a local Baptist church needs a pastor.

Mel Sudduth was one of those pastors. He and Doris served small congregations in three different states. But most of their 30-plus years of ministry were in southwest Wyoming which they still call home. The Sudduths received their first Mission:Dignity grant when Mel retired in 1998 and we’ve continued that help the past 21 years.

Today, at age 89, Mel still writes to us with a shaky hand but strong heart, and you can read his most recent note on the back of this letter. Of all the things Mel has said across the years, I still recall what he shared on one of his renewal applications:

*When I surrendered to preach, I made a full surrender to God’s will and I believe He provides me with what He wants me to have. I’m especially grateful for the Christmas*

*check. It made it possible for us to give some help to a very destitute family at a crucial time. Thank you so much!*

Like Mel and Doris, you know first-hand the joy that comes from giving sacrificially to help someone else. Through your gift this month, a longtime pastor or his widow will be able to buy groceries, assure their home has heat during the winter, get a much-needed prescription and not have to struggle with various other essentials.

Although we are extremely grateful for your generosity, the deepest thanks comes from nearly 1,700 individuals or couples nationwide — faithful and sacrificial servants like Mel and Doris Sudduth — whose lives are made more comfortable and secure because of your care and compassion.

Thanks again for being part of our Mission:Dignity family! We appreciate you!

Grace and peace to you,



John Ambra  
Director of Development

*My Dear Friend,  
I don't know you but you are a great blessing in my life. I was thirty years old when I surrendered to God and He called me into a ministry on the Pioneer mission field. I spent thirty years as a Pastor of struggling churches in Montana, Wyoming and Washington State. I was never in any thing like a retirement program or even a good salary. However, God always supplied all our needs and we have survived. My social security is very small but with your help through Guidestone we are making ends meet. Thank you so much.  
Mel Sudduth  
Lesmer, Wyoming*