

HISPANICS IN AMERICA: IN BRIEF

ALTHOUGH SPANISH language and culture provides a common denominator, Hispanic-Americans have a diversified geographic background, ranging from nearby Mexico and the Caribbean to Peru, half a globe away. Already the United States has more than 30 million Hispanic residents—another 6-8 million are here illegally. Soon Hispanics may become the nation's largest minority.

Most numerous are Mexican-Americans, almost 18.7 million. Puerto Ricans, U.S. citizens by birth, total more than 7 million, half of whom live in the continental United States. Cubans number 1-2 million, most having come since 1959.

CALIFORNIA has the largest Hispanic population, 10 million; Texas, New York, and Florida follow.

HISPANICS IN AMERICA

have grown in social and economic status in the United States, despite prejudice and other difficulties. Yet many need better education, employment, and living conditions.

Heritage flows deeply; Hispanic characteristics are family loyalty, dignity of the individual, courtesy, and a joy of living. Tradition plays an important role, including the religious tradition to which most cling, Catholicism. Yet less than 20 percent are active Roman Catholics; 15

percent are Protestants; the remainder attend no church.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST WITNESS to Hispanics dates to the 1800s when Texans first witnessed to Mexican-Americans. Today in the United States and Puerto Rico, we find more than 4,000 Hispanic Southern Baptist congregations with 500,000 members.

THIS IS BUT A BEGINNING. Thousands of new Hispanic churches are needed. You can help:

- * Pray for those who work among Hispanic-Americans.
- * Increase your support for home missions outreach to Hispanics.
- * Become involved in missions and ministry to Hispanic-Americans

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

4200 North Point Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176



A Southern Baptist Convention agency supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie

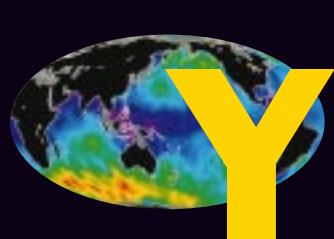
Armstrong Easter Offering

For general information call (770) 410-6000, or visit www.namb.net; to order materials, call Customer Service Center, 1 800 233-1123, or fax, (615) 251-5983

For more information contact Moises Rodriguez (770) 410-6227 mrodriguez@namb.net

Working with Hispanics

**CHURCH PLANTING
GROUP, NAMB**



You don't have to know "dos, tres," to know Hispanics are "uno." In American society, Hispanic-Americans are a

charter-member minority. Their ancestors settled in the Southwest United States long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. And they have continued to come from Central and South America, across the Rio Grande from Mexico, over the Caribbean from Puerto Rico—millions of legal and illegal immigrants, all seeking to escape the desperation of their homelands for a new beginning in the "land of promise." Over the decades, by their numbers and by their diligence and by their pride, they have influenced the social, cultural, and economic development of the nation.

Yet until recently, despite their pervasiveness and their growth, Hispanics were as invisible as the earth: ever present, but never seen—domestic workers in Southern California; clerks and laborers in Florida; crop-gatherers scattered by wind and weather, their migrant bands for years the calloused hands of farm labor. They still are. But now they're also doctors, lawyers, even politicians. They flood every city, seeking jobs, better lives, permanence. And in the process, they are building a bilingual, bicultural society. The decade of the 90s was one of growth for Hispanic Southern Baptists. The

Convention's largest minority, they grow in number and in influence. "If we respond with openness," says a SBC leader, "the result will be uncontainable. We are going to affect a lot of the Spanish-speaking world for Jesus Christ."

