

ANNIE ARMSTRONG



In the late 1800's women were not expected to be leaders, to speak up, to be visionaries... But Annie Armstrong was never concerned with what the world expected.

Born in Baltimore in 1850, Annie's father died when she was an infant. Her mother, a devoted Christian, encouraged her five children to see the needs around them and to act.

With fervency, Annie dedicated her life to sharing Christ through compassion ministry to orphans and the poor. Her boldness soon helped ignite a missions movement.

Annie and the women of her church began a "Missionary Union" with other churches to unite in missions work. This effort spread to the state level. Despite opposition to women organizing by male SBC leadership, the national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) was formed in 1888. Churches across the U.S. were now linked in their missions' efforts with Annie as the first executive leader.

Traveling throughout the United States and frontier, Annie encouraged missionaries and challenged churches. She rallied women to pray, give to the missions' offerings and teach their children to do the same. She was a fierce advocate for the needs of immigrants, Native Americans and was instrumental in the appointment of the first black female missionaries.

Annie often toiled long into the night writing to pastors and SBC leaders. In one year alone she hand-wrote 18,000 letters. She sacrificially refused a salary expressing she would, "never give to the Lord that which costs me nothing."

Today, over one billion dollars has been raised through the offering renamed in Annie's honor in 1934. All gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® for North American Missions—100 percent—supports more than 5,000 missionaries in church planting and compassion ministries across the U.S. and Canada.

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