

The image shows a title slide with a parchment-like background. The text is centered and reads: "LUTHER RICE:" in a large, white, serif font, followed by "The Man Who Forsook All to Follow Christ" in a smaller, brown, serif font. The background has faint, illegible text and a circular stamp that partially reads "URD".

LUTHER RICE:

The Man Who Forsook All to Follow Christ

Luther Rice was born in Massachusetts in a Congregational home in 1783. Even as a young man he sensed God's call upon his life. Responding to that call, he enrolled in Williams College where he committed his life to foreign missions. After graduation, he entered Andover Seminary where he met Adoniram Judson, who had also committed his life to foreign missions. Rice's determination to become a missionary would eventually cost him the girl he loved and planned to marry. In 1812, Rice and the Judson's sailed for India on separate ships. The Judson's, after an extensive study of baptism, adopted the Baptist principles of Believer's Baptism and were immersed upon their arrival by William Carey. Rice, unaware of the Judson's change of sentiments, was also wrestling with the validity of infant baptism. Four months after his arriving in India, and after much prayer and study, he was immersed by William Ward. Judson and Rice determined he should return home and enlist Baptist support for their missionary enterprise. Upon his return to the States, he explained their change in sentiments of the Baptists who received them with enthusiastic acceptance and financial commitment. In 1814 the Baptists organized "The General Missions" and asked Rice to become their agent and promote missions in Baptist Churches. Rice planned to return to the mission field at the conclusion of that year, but he was destined to spend the next 22 years of his life traveling, preaching, and raising funds for Baptist missions and education. Rice's sacrifices have seldom

been equaled and probably never surpassed. **He never owned a home, or a bank account, or a wardrobe except what he carried with him, and when he received an inheritance, he gave it all to missions and education.** His travels and hardships are beyond comprehension. He once traveled by horseback 93 miles in one day to fulfill an appointment, breaking John Wesley's record of 90 miles. He was forced to swim rivers, endure blizzards, searing heat, and was in jeopardy of Indians and bandits, and the open sky was often his roof. The story is told by his friends that he would arrive to preach wearing a shabby, threadbare suit and, knowing his personal sacrifice and frugality, they would give him money to purchase new clothes. But the money was never spent for clothing. When questioned by his benefactors, he would confess he had contributed the money to missions or education. Rice was not only a popular and effective speaker but also a man of prayer who spent much of his time in communion with his God. His daily regimen of praying seven times a day is both a rebuke and a challenge. He began his day at daybreak with prayer. Before breakfast he prayed with the family, and before retiring, more personal prayer, and at midnight he would arise for prayer. Rice's life ended in his 53rd year on his way to an association meeting where he was scheduled to speak. Becoming ill, he stopped at a friend's home in Edge field, South Carolina. When he became aware that he would not survive, he gave instruction that all his earthly goods, which consisted of one worn-out horse and a rickety old sulley, should go to the college. One historian, evaluating Rice's ministry, stated, "The coming of Luther Rice was the most important event in Baptist history in the 19th century."

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