

# Associated Baptist Press

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## **Bible readers more joyful, content, at peace, survey says**

CHICAGO (ABP) -- People who read the Bible regularly experience more joy, contentment and peace than those who seldom or never read the Scripture, according to a recent survey by Tyndale House Publishers.

According to the study, 64 percent of frequent Bible readers described themselves as feeling full of joy. More than 81 percent said they feel content, 87 percent said they are at peace and 92 percent agreed their life has a clear purpose and meaning.

Among those who seldom or never read the Bible, 35 percent said they are joyful, 67 percent feel content, 58 percent are at peace and 69 percent sense a clear purpose and meaning in life.

Eighty-five percent of those who read the Bible more than once a week said they were "extremely satisfied" with their spiritual life. That compared to 41 percent of those who read the Bible less than once a month or never who said they are extremely satisfied.

Those who read the Bible often also expressed more satisfaction with life in general and were more optimistic they could make a difference in life. They also worry less about being accepted and were half as likely to worry about death as those who read Scripture less than once a month.

The survey of 1,000 adults was conducted by Market Facts for Tyndale House Publishers to celebrate the first anniversary of the release of the New Living Translation of the Bible.

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-- By ABP staff

## **North Carolina Baptist leaders propose compromise with college**

RALEIGH, N.C. (ABP) -- North Carolina Baptist leaders have approved a compromise plan that would modify the state convention's ties with Meredith College, a 106-year-old women's school in Raleigh.

Under the measure, adopted July 15 by the convention's executive committee, Meredith would no longer receive funds from the unified state budget and the convention would no longer elect the school's trustees.

The school would maintain Baptist ties by establishing an endowed scholarship fund for Baptist students and creating an office of church relations. Meredith would become a non-voting "associate member" of the state convention's council on higher education.

The compromise, which must be approved by the full general board and the state convention in November, is aimed at ending an impasse created in February when Meredith College trustees decided membership on their board would no longer be determined by the state convention.

State Baptist leaders responded by escrowing the \$1 million in annual funding earmarked for Meredith.

Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem has a similar arrangement. The school has a "fraternal relationship" with the state convention but is run by an autonomous board.

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-- By ABP staff

## **Groups call for Lyons to resign amid new spending allegations**

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (ABP) -- Regional groups in Nashville, Tenn., and Philadelphia have called for National Baptist Convention USA president Henry Lyons to resign amid new revelations that he used church money to finance his private home.

In Nashville, where the 8.5 million-member convention is headquartered, members from Stones River Association voted unanimously to ask Lyons to step down. Earlier, 50 ministers in Philadelphia issued a similar call.

Meanwhile, the St. Petersburg Times continued a series of investigative reports into allegations of lavish spending and marital infidelity by Lyons. The paper reported Aug. 14 that Lyons used \$90,000 from a convention account as a down payment for a \$700,000 home he purchased with Bernice Edwards, a widow whom Lyons hired as a public relations official.

The scandal broke in July when Lyons' wife set fire to the home, telling authorities she suspected her husband and Edwards were having an affair. Later, she recanted, saying she had been misunderstood and that she did not suspect Lyons of adultery.

According to recent reports, in order to secure a loan for the house, Lyons presented a signed document showing that the National Baptist Convention would pay \$4,000 a month to rent it as a "national guest house." But one of two convention officials whose signatures appeared on the lease said he did not sign it.

"I didn't know nothing about it," said A.H. Newman, convention chairman. "I had nothing to do with it."

On at least two occasions, Lyons paid water and sewer bills on the Tierra Verde house with checks drawn on convention accounts, the paper reported. The checks were from the convention's Operation Freedom fund, which is intended to retire a \$4.5 million debt on the convention's headquarters in Nashville.

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-- By ABP staff

## Jesus freaks, buzz-cut teens rock together at Harvest Crusade

By David Finnigan

ANAHEIM, Calif. (ABP) -- Jesus is still just alright with 142,000 believers who gathered for a four-night Harvest Crusade concert series, part of it a tribute to the 1960s Jesus movement.

"I was a Jesus freak, and I still am," said Terry Hanratty, a hippie carpenter whose flowing hair and mustache frame a craggy face.

He came for one of the four nights of this Aug. 14-17 "Godstock" at Disney-owned Anaheim Stadium. Saturday night's "youth jam" alone attracted 36,000 people, with another 10,000 watching the stage show on parking-lot video monitors.

Hanratty, 45, came of age with Woodstock and Neil Young. Now, with kids and responsibilities not imagined during endless summers of love three decades ago, he resonates with Harvest Crusade's message -- the song remains the same.

"What they're saying is Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever," Hanratty said. "I think they said that back in the '60s, and they said that about Jesus back in the New Testament. It's never changed."

Now in its eighth year, Harvest Crusade is a free series of concerts. A July 10-13 Harvest Crusade in Philadelphia attracted 38,000.

"I have two stepchildren who really need the Lord in their life," said Gabrielle Beaudoin, 33, an accountant who attends the huge Harvest Crusade Fellowship Church in Riverside, Calif., the event's sponsor. While she doesn't force the gospel on them, the concert is "a good beginning," she said. "The music -- they're used to that sort of thing."

Teenagers with buzz cuts and beepers merged with both long-haired and clean-cut middle-agers to hear Colorado preacher and Rock 'n Roll Hall of Famer Richie Furay play at the opening Thursday night show.

Teens were especially attracted to a Saturday lineup of twentysomething band Audio Adrenaline's electrified sound and Big Tent Revival's youngsters singing, "All I have in this world is the promise of your grace."

The event brought a classic Southern California mix of working-class whites sitting alongside Chicanos and some Asian-Americans. An ex-biker and ex-con turned welder sat on bleachers six rows behind divorced-and-remarried moms.

Ashlee Huitt, 14, her twin sister, Candace, and their junior-high friend found the sound better out near the wide, less-crowded stadium walkway. Nearby, other teens hung out, some sneaking cigarettes.

"I didn't think there was gonna be this many different kinds of people here," she said. "I thought there's, like, only a certain kind. But it's pretty cool to see everyone here."

For '60s refugee Gary Burnett, in his second marriage with kids in tow, following Jesus is a straighter path than the long, strange trip his former life had been. If that's what it took to bring him here, would he do the sex, drugs and rock and roll again?

A pause summoned his answer: "I'd do it again. If that's what it takes to get me here."

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