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WMU Kentucky Notes



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FOR THE RECORD

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Most Americans don't blame Jews for Jesus' death

Washington (RNS)—The vast majority of Americans do not blame Jews for the death of Jesus, according to an ABC News poll that also showed most Americans believe in a literal interpretation of biblical stories such as Moses parting the Red Sea.

The ABC News PrimeTime poll found that six in 10 Americans surveyed consider biblical accounts of Moses parting the Red Sea, Noah's Ark and God creating the world in six days to be true, "word for word." Evangelical Protestants were most likely to hold this view, at about 90 percent.

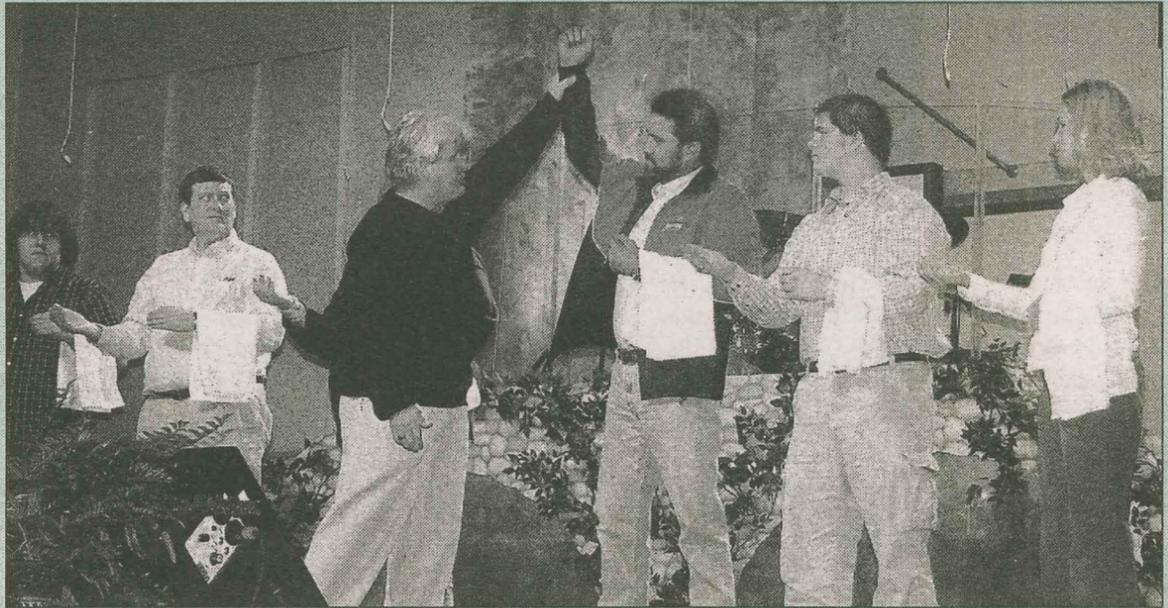
About 30 percent of those surveyed said the stories are not true "word for word," but are meant "as a lesson, not to be taken literally."

Fewer than one in 10 Americans surveyed said Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus, a question thrust into public debate by the Mel Gibson film, "The Passion of the Christ."

Church attendance was proportionally related to responses, as was denominational differences. Evangelical Protestants were most likely to hold literal beliefs, and more so if they said they attend church every week. They also were most likely to blame Jews for the death of Jesus, with 12 percent laying blame on the Jews for the Crucifixion.

Catholics followed a similar pattern. About half of all Catholics surveyed said all three stories are literally true. Only 6 percent of all Catholics blame Jews for the death of Jesus, the least likely to do so of all the denominations.

Building bridges



Exploring the theme, "Build a Bridge, Be a Witness," the 2004 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference was held Feb. 23-24 at Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green. **Above:** Rick Ousley, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., invited several people on-stage for an impromptu illustration showing the difference between a self-centered church and a healthy, serving church that is dead to the world. "We've got to have a transformation where we start thinking like heaven and stop thinking like earth," Ousley urged. **Right:** Brock Gill rides a motorcycle down the platform steps of Hillvue Heights Church after being blindfolded and then having a bag duct-taped over his head. Brock, an evangelist/illusionist with Vertical Ministries in Birmingham, will perform and speak at four regional "Soak A City" youth evangelism conferences throughout Kentucky beginning in Mount Washington March 31-April 2. **See additional articles on pages 6-7.**



Youth ministry leaders promote new model including parents

By Brent Thompson
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—Concerned that the late-20th century model of youth ministry is flawed, a group of prominent youth leaders has issued a call for a new model that they hope could lead to a shift in church youth ministry philosophy, training and leadership.

"For around 60 years, student ministry has focused almost exclusively on teenagers," said Richard Ross, professor of youth and student ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

In a letter sent to youth ministry gatekeepers around the nation last year, Ross pointed out that an increasing number of youth leaders are coming to believe that model falls short.

"We now have enough history to know that the majority of students who stay on mission for a lifetime are those from emotionally and spiritually vibrant homes," Ross wrote.

Noted author and speaker Josh McDowell added, "The most powerful impact upon a child's ethical, moral and spiritual development is the relationship with the parents. It is 300 times greater than the church."

The question of how to turn student ministries more toward impacting parents and families brought together a group of 22 well-known youth leaders at the National Network of Youth Ministries Forum in Glorieta, N.M., in January.

Some were present by telephone, some in person. The meeting succeeded in joining leaders such as Ross, McDowell, Barry St. Clair, Sue McAllister, Rick Lawrence, Jim Burns and Randy Phillips.

While these leaders represented a variety of evangelical denominations and para-church ministries, they were unified around the issue of the need for a more intergenerational approach to youth ministry.

The result of this conference was a document titled, "The Call to

Youth Ministers and the Church."

The document calls on churches to intentionally draw youth and parents together as much as possible in youth ministry programs.

"Any broad design for student ministry for the future must include a powerful focus on parents and families," Ross said.

The document asks youth ministers to acknowledge parents "as the primary spiritual leaders of their children" and to "consistently ... involve parents with leaders and resources that equip parents for biblical parenting and primary discipling of their children."

It also asks youth ministers to "include events and experiences that bring parents and teenagers together when it best achieves ministry purposes."

Churches are called to "encourage existing youth ministers to make a transition toward parent ministry."

"More than any other factor (by far), parents are responsible for help-

ing their teenagers grow deeply in Christ," said Rick Lawrence, executive editor of GROUP magazine. "It's just as important for us to invest in parents' spiritual growth as it is to invest in our youth group members' spiritual growth."

Lawrence called the renewed focus on parents a "crucial turning-point" for youth ministers. "If we can get parents to see themselves as the primary catalysts for faith growth in their kids' lives, our ministries will explode."

Sue McAllister, southeastern regional coordinator of the National Network of Youth Ministries, agreed.

"As you work with parents, there is a maturing that comes for the youth pastor as well as for the students," she said. "There is a trust factor that is built."

The document's text, along with a list of denominational, organizational and local church leaders who have signed it, can be found at <http://youthworkers.net/parents>.

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, March 3.

Welch to be nominated as SBC president

Woodstock, Ga.—Bobby Welch will be nominated as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and Gerald Davidson will be nominated as first vice president during the June 15-16 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

Welch's nomination was announced Feb. 20 by Johnny Hunt, pastor of the Atlanta-area First Baptist Church in Woodstock. The announcement follows a June 2003 news story noting the possibility of Welch's nomination.

Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church in Daytona Beach, Fla., said last summer that he told various Baptist leaders he would pray about it to "see what the Lord would have me do" but also said at the time that reports about his nomination "seem premature to me."

Welch, pastor of the Daytona Beach congregation since 1974 and co-creator of the FAITH/Sunday School Evangelism Strategy, spoke at last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green.

In an interview with the Western Recorder, Welch said he was approached a year ago by the pastor of a small North Carolina Baptist church who asked Welch if would pray about being nominated as SBC president.

While "past (SBC) presidents have since come to me and encouraged me to run," Welch said God used "just a regular guy out there to prick my heart about it."



Bobby Welch



Gerald Davidson

If elected in June, Welch said one of his primary goals will be "to emphasize and accelerate evangelism" across the SBC.

Noting that the majority of SBC churches are plateaued or declining, he said, "I have a deep conviction that we must move away from incremental improvement to a huge transformation in order to break out of this plateau."

"We have to find a way to create mass and focus spiritual synergy on evangelism," he added. "We do not have one problem that soul-winning will not solve."

Welch, a former president of the Florida Baptist Convention and a former SBC vice president, is a decorated Vietnam War veteran. He is a graduate of Jacksonville (Ala.) State University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Welch has written two books, "Evangelism Through the Sunday School, A Journey of Faith" and "The Sacrificed Life." He has served as a trustee of LifeWay Christian Resources and a member of the SBC Committee on Resolutions and

Committee on Nominations.

Davidson, pastor of the St. Louis-area First Baptist Church in Arnold for 27 years, is a past president of the Missouri Baptist Convention. During his tenure at Arnold, church membership has grown from about 400 to more than 4,600.

"The former presidents (of the SBC) have decided that Gerald Davidson should be first vice president, and Dr. Adrian Rogers has been asked to nominate him," said Bailey Smith, president of the SBC in 1981 and 1982.

Smith made the announcement Feb. 19 at a Real Evangelism Conference hosted by Davidson and First Baptist, Arnold. Davidson said it came as a bit of a surprise even though he knew he had been under consideration in past years.

"All I can say is this: If that's what the Lord would have for me, I'd be more than honored to be able to serve in that capacity," said Davidson, 68.

"He's taken a strong stand in Missouri," Smith said. "He has not compromised. He has built a great work."

Davidson "has certainly never wavered from what the conservative movement is about," Smith added. "We have some secret soldiers out there, but Gerald Davidson has been vocal in his opposition to liberalism and support for conservatism."

Based on reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson and Baptist Press

BWA membership vice chairman: BWA shares blame for SBC pull-out

Nashville (ABP)—Baptist historian Albert Wardin, vice chairman of the Baptist World Alliance membership committee that recommended including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in the worldwide fellowship, said blame for the reaction from Southern Baptist leaders can be placed on several shoulders.

"If there had been more Christian charity and sensitivity on all sides, the division would not have occurred," said Wardin, emeritus professor of history at Belmont University in Nashville, in a letter to the editor of Baptists Today.

Wardin, author of the book, "Baptists Around the World," said many share the blame for the planned departure of the Southern Baptist Convention from the BWA, including the committee on which he served.

"The membership committee ... is to be seriously faulted," said Wardin, the only committee member to vote against CBF acceptance. "It is a committee created by the administration of the BWA and was particularly influenced by individuals from Western Europe who had no sympathy for the SBC leadership, and its concerns were more ideologically in tune with the CBF."

Wardin charged that the membership committee broke its own rule of not recommending membership of any Baptist body if there was objection from a current BWA member.

Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary, disagreed with Wardin's assessment of the committee's process and conclusions. "That's the first I've heard of it," said Lotz to the charge that the membership committee's recommendation violated the BWA constitution. "The (BWA) General Council thought it was constitutional."

Lotz said there has never been "a written rule" about not including member bodies if any other member objects. In countries where there is only one member, he said, special consideration has been given to the current member before bringing in a second body if there is conflict.

"But there are 14 member bodies in the U.S.," said Lotz. Strong efforts were made to work with both SBC and CBF leaders, he added.

In the membership committee report presented last July in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, chairman Ian Hawley of Australia wrote that the committee "in bringing this recommendation has not done so lightly or easily." He added that "we believe that this recommendation is the only fair and right decision that could be made."



Annuity Board changes endorsed

Nashville (BP)—The process of changing the Southern Baptist Annuity Board's name and expanding its ministry opportunities moved forward during the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee's recent meeting.

Executive Committee members voted Feb. 17 to amend the Annuity Board's charter and the charter of its affiliates. Committee members previously approved a proposal to change the Annuity Board's name to GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. A recommendation to permit the entity to serve evangelical ministry organizations outside the SBC also was approved.

The name changes of the Annuity Board and its affiliates and the amendments of the charters will require two successive annual votes of the convention to change the SBC bylaws, beginning at the June 15-16 meeting in Indianapolis. The original recommendation by the Executive Committee included a provision to allow the Annuity Board to begin using the new name after the first vote of the convention.

The amendment to the Annuity Board's ministry assignment would include other evangelical organizations in addition to the churches and denominational entities it already serves.

BAPTIST DIGEST

CBF may double BWA contribution. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's contribution to the Baptist World Alliance will increase from \$20,000 to \$40,000 next year if participants at the CBF general assembly adopt the \$16 million budget approved Feb. 20 by the CBF Coordinating Council. The additional funds would make a slight dent in an anticipated funding gap for the BWA. Southern Baptist Convention messengers are expected to cut the final \$300,000 in SBC funding for the BWA in June. The CBF's election to membership in BWA last year is considered a primary reason for the SBC's planned defunding and withdrawal from BWA.

Olympic ministry volunteers needed. Southern Baptist volunteers are needed this spring to help prepare for ministry opportunities during the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens, Greece. The first team will be needed

in March to begin setting up a welcome center and housing for future volunteers, said Bill Cashion, director of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's Volunteers in Missions department. Other teams are needed in April, May and August, including volunteers to work in sports evangelism, creative arts and other ministry projects. For more information, contact Anita Mahoney at (804) 219-1501; e-mail: amahoney@imb.org.

N.C. church dismissal challenged. A North Carolina Baptist pastor has filed a formal complaint with the North Carolina attorney general, charging the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina with violating its constitution by expelling a church over the issue of homosexuality. Gene Scarborough, pastor of North Rocky Mount Baptist Church, asked the consumer pro-

tection department to render an opinion on whether the state convention violated its constitution by using a subsidiary financial policy to exclude McGill Baptist Church in Concord, N.C., from membership. Jim Royston, state convention executive director, ordered the church removed from convention rolls last spring after Cabarrus Baptist Association withdrew fellowship from the church, which came under fire for baptizing two men believed to be homosexual.

Logan named SBTS vice president. Clark Logan has been appointed vice president for administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He previously was Southern's director of development. Logan, 37, is a graduate of Delta State University in Mississippi and Southern Seminary.

Building turnaround teams

California pastor & author shares ideas at annual leadership retreat

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Cave City—Gene Wood says many churches don't grow for the same reason middle-aged couples don't have children: they practice birth control.

The California pastor, who has a ministry aimed at helping revitalize churches, said turnaround is only possible if a congregation first decides it wants to grow.

A failure to decide to grow might explain why more than 70 percent of all U.S. Protestant churches are said to be either plateaued or in decline, he said.

"It's all about lost people," said Wood, senior pastor of an independent Baptist church. "There is no other secret to turnaround than this."

Wood was the featured speaker for the recent Kentucky Baptist Convention Pastor-Deacon-Spouse Retreat at Cave City.

"I'm not telling you everyone of you should grow," Wood added. "But if you want to grow, you must address the question: Do we want to grow? The 'want-to' must precede the 'how-to.'" Wood, author of "Leading Turnaround Churches," has written a follow-up book, "Leading Turnaround Teams." It will be released in April.

The principles underlying such turnaround teams were the focus of this retreat.

Wood said turnaround begins with the leader (who he defines as the pastor), but added that it will be implemented through teamwork.

In order to see progress, Wood said, churches must understand three qualities the pastor offers:

Convictions. The importance of strong beliefs can be seen by looking at Iraqi Muslims, Wood said. While Americans may not agree with their beliefs, Iraqis clearly have convictions, he said.

Likewise, many church members are craving leadership from their pastor, who must take stands against doctrinal error and misguided beliefs, Wood said.

"I think laymen get frustrated with pastors who won't lead," he said. "They're sitting there saying, 'Good night, do something, even if it's wrong. We're paying you to do something.'"

Commitment to location and philosophy. A pastor (and family) should lead the way in demonstrating commitment to the church's ministries by participating in them, Wood said.

"If you work at Ford, you better not drive into the lot in a Chevy," he said. "This seems so brain-dead simple, but a lot of people don't get it."

As for philosophy, Wood said the pastor is a key to church promotion and evangelism, discipleship and

Wood: Let pastors build the staff

Cave City—Gene Wood's emphasis on strong pastoral leadership doesn't fit all Kentucky Baptist churches.

While the California pastor makes hiring decisions in his church, across the commonwealth this process often starts with a personnel committee, deacons or other decision-making body.

But Wood suggests churches modify their hiring process. He compares congregations making personnel choices to an arranged marriage where the senior pastor is expected to get along with a spouse he or she had no voice in selecting.

"With responsibility goes corresponding authority," Wood said. "If you're going to hold the pastor responsible for day-to-day operations, ... you've got to empower him with some say-so as to the choice of that staff."

The best way to hold a senior pastor responsible for daily operations is to allow the pastor to find staff members with complementary skills, Wood said.

In such a scenario, congrega-

tions still can retain veto authority by requiring candidates to face a congregational or deacon vote to be hired, he added.

"I have the unilateral authority to hire and fire," said Wood, pastor of Grace Church in Glendora, Calif. "But every significant decision I take to the board, explain why the person is the right person, and see if they have serious objections. I have a responsibility to the person and the church to make sure I didn't miss it."

Wood said churches that entrust all personnel decisions to a personnel committee have written a prescription for keeping their churches small.

He questioned why a potential staff member would want to work for multiple bosses or one who changes from year to year.

Such scenarios lack consistency and security for employees, Wood said.

Wood, the pastor of an independent Baptist church, noted that in larger Baptist churches, pastors are more likely to function as his church does.

"(The other) tends to be small-

church thinking," Wood said. "They tend to view that second or third pastor as (similar to) a senior pastor, without realizing the moment you bring that staff member in, you have a very different dynamic."

This approach reflects what the author of "Leading Turnaround Teams" said is the first application of the "Carver Model" to local churches.

The model is a philosophy Wood said is common among numerous non-profit organizations, mission agencies and universities.

Wood said the model calls for non-profit boards to set expectations and boundaries, then hold the chief executive officer responsible for meeting them.

Labeling the pastor as a CEO might sound offensive, but Wood said he defines the term as meaning a person of great influence who holds an office of trust and carries out plans, purposes or a vision.

"It's logical and biblical," Wood said. "The senior pastor is the logical, logistical leader of a local church. I think it's the best way."

assimilating new members.

Courage. Wood said every church that turns around goes through some kind of conflict. Wood recalled confronting a bully at one church. When the angry man left, connections resulted in another 150 members departing.

But several months later a member who had tired of that family's intimidating tactics gave a substantial donation.

"(Pastors), you don't know how much money you're losing by not confronting issues," Wood said.

The veteran of 26 years in ministry said pastors also can help set the stage for renewal by insisting on certain membership requirements.

Membership requirements

He said a belief in Christ as Savior, willingness to support the church financially and a plan to participate in its ministries should be prerequisites of membership.

"At Grace (Church) we require everyone to go through four to six hours of instruction," Wood said. "There's nothing more important than telling new members what they're getting into."

The same kind of expectations should be placed on lay leaders, he said.

Wood said leaders should be known as workers instead of critics, have adequate time to serve, and set good examples in giving, worship and church participation.

These kind of people are necessary for turnaround, Wood added.

"Key leadership needs to be 100 percent committed to the church. If a leader has split allegiances, what can you expect from the rest of the people?"

Selecting staff members is also important. Wood said candidates must be rated for such qualities as

character, competency and the ability to function with the pastor and lay leaders.

"The senior pastor is like a jigsaw puzzle," Wood said. "He's not perfectly rounded. He has strengths and weaknesses. You don't want a clone of the senior pastor. Together we form a mosaic of God's leadership team."

In addition, teams must avoid being too large if they expect to function well, he said.

On large boards, most members become passive, surface harmony becomes more important than

achievement and meetings become overly long and contentious, Wood said.

Recognizing that many Kentucky Baptist churches don't have boards, Wood suggested substituting whatever term describes the congregational leadership.

More important than terminology is what churches are doing to reach the world, he said.

When people reach the judgment seat, "Jesus will stand there with the nail prints in His hands and say, 'Who did you tell?'" Wood said. "Who did you reach?"

"You don't want a clone of the senior pastor. Together we form a mosaic of God's leadership team."

Gene Wood, author of "Leading Turnaround Teams"

Meeting with governor



Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher (center) listens to Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Bill Mackey during a recent meeting between the governor's staff and KBC officials and members of the KBC Committee on Public Affairs. KBC leaders met recently with the governor at the state capitol building in Frankfort to lead a time of prayer for the new governor and to urge his opposition to efforts to expand gambling in the state. Fletcher has said he personally opposes expanded gambling, but he said during his campaign that he would not oppose a referendum on a potential amendment to the state constitution to do so. (KBC photo by Robert Reeves)

WESTERN RECORDER

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*Earnestly contend for
the faith which was once
for all delivered to the
saints.—Jude 3*

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A position of faith

I beg to differ with the conclusions drawn by Tim Gooch in his Feb. 17 letter.

Bible study at Southern Seminary still "applies well-known techniques for literary criticism and analysis" that are as rigorous as ever. Now professors assume, for instance, that the Pentateuch was indeed written by Moses. Those professors weigh the evidence that disputes such claims and call on students to evaluate whether or not the claims against Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch are valid or sufficiently strong to prove claims against Mosaic authorship.

Before, it appears professors assumed the Pentateuch was not written by Moses. Those professors weighed the evidence that disputed such claims and called on students to evaluate whether or not the claims for Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch were valid or sufficiently strong to prove the claims for Mosaic authorship.

The obvious conclusion was and is that one cannot prove Mosaic authorship if one assumes he did not write the Pentateuch. Likewise, one cannot prove non-Mosaic authorship if one assumes that he did write the Pentateuch. The truth is that no one alive today was there. Therefore, if someone claims or is claimed to have produced something in the past, then the burden of proof obviously lies with those who seek to disprove the claim.

I, as an adherent to Christian faith, am glad that we now have professors who approach their rigorous study of Scripture from a position of faith, rather than from a position of skepticism. Let the skeptic professors apply their trade from institutions that claim no faith. If the institution claims faith, then the professors ought to share that faith as the starting point of their work. The majority of Southern Baptists have always expected Southern Seminary to operate from a position

of faith in God and His Word.

John D. Newland
Grayson

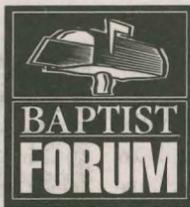
Major changes needed

There have been several things on my mind lately, especially since the Feb. 3 issue of the Western Recorder arrived. The letter condemning all the professors at Southern Seminary before the political takeover is anything but the truth. I graduated there in 1985 and I have yet to hear any one of those professors say that the Bible had error in it. Yes, they did want us to study and learn something besides what they told us in class, which is the only way to get an education.

There also was the mention that Baptists in the pews have voted every single year since 1979 to have a conservative president. I beg to differ with that view. It was not the Baptists in the pews who voted the fundamentalists into office, but some of the misguided pastors and staff people. If anyone doubts this, just look at the way the people in the pews have stopped funding everything the way we used to. And if there is not some major changes soon in the other direction, I see a much greater shortfall of money for Southern Baptist Convention causes.

At one time I was glad to say I am a graduate of Southern Seminary, but today I shudder when I am asked about it. I for one have no use for the "bastion of truth" that exists there today, and would not encourage anyone to go there.

Thanks to the Western Recorder for printing something besides the fundamental information that some in the SBC say is the only thing



STEWARDSHIP

True stewardship includes one's life, time, talents

By Doug Strader

When the word stewardship is used, most Christians think of money. And in our day, stewardship can be and is used in the sense of money and giving to the Lord.

However, the Greek word used in the Bible is *oiknomos* which means a manager of something that belongs to someone else. In his book "Managing Your Money for the Master," Lee Davis says

"steward" and "stewardship" are never used in the Bible about giving. They usually are used in reference to sharing the gospel. This can help us understand how money management and the Great Commission are related. But most Christians probably never associate the Great Commission and stewardship.

The Bible states in more than one place that everything in the world belongs to God. Everything we have that we claim as our own actually belongs to Him. He is kind enough to us to allow us to manage His things for Him. As Christians, we are accountable to Him for everything we have ever had, have now or will have in the future.

Our very life is a gift from God, and He sustains our life. We could not draw another breath if He did not make it possible. Our minds and our ability to think, reason and act are direct benefits from Him. He makes our hope in Jesus as Savior possible. As the lyrics of a popular gospel song state, "Without Him, how lost I would be." In Colossians 1:16, Paul states, "For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him."

Therefore, we are managers of all the things we call our own, which actually belong to Him. The way we spend our time, the way we use our talents and spiritual gifts, as well as the way we handle our money are all accountable to God.

As Christians we need to live our daily lives as if we were going to give an account to God at the end of every day. Because one day we will give an account of the stewardship of our life to God our Father. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:2, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville



you should print. Continue to print all the news of Southern Baptists, and hopefully, some day we can see the tide change back to where it should be.

Joe Pat Winchester
Murray

Let us be faithful

I saw "The Passion of the Christ" last week and was blown away by the extreme violence of the suffering Jesus endured in giving His life "a ransom for many." Several friends also commented on how this movie shows such an incomplete picture of Jesus' total ministry.

This is true, but then again, it was not Mel Gibson's purpose to give a complete picture. In several interviews Gibson has said his main purpose was to portray in vivid detail the extent of humanity's cruelty and brutality as suffered by the Christ in His passion. Obviously, he did this as only a professional moviemaker can do.

Now, it is the church's task to answer the obvious question: Why did Jesus Christ have to die? As an atonement for humanity's sins? As the ultimate expression of God's love and Self-giving? As an example of how humans should live in love for one another? To ultimately and completely defeat the powers of evil and death through death itself?

Yes to all of the above.

Gibson's movie is tremendous in that it presents in such shocking, realistic detail the brutality of Christ's suffering and thus the need for His sacrifice, but it remains our task to explain to all the full significance of what He accomplished through His ministry as God's Messiah. Let us be faithful, even as was He.

Jeff Wise
Louisville

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 244-6474; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

God at work in Kentucky

Occasionally I am asked to share where I see God at work in Kentucky. Recently I had an opportunity to share such a testimony before the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

It is a privilege to share, but I must recognize that God is at work in more places and ways than I can even begin to imagine. I recognize that we all see as though it were through a glass darkly (2 Corinthians 13). I also acknowledge that we are completely dependent on Jesus Christ (John 15:5). However, the question does deserve a response in praise to God for what He has done.

I see God at work in the lives of people through renewed spiritual vitality and prayer ministries. The "If My People ... 100 Days of Prayer" emphasis initiated through the Kentucky Baptist Convention along with the "40 Days of Purpose" emphasis from pastor and author Rick Warren have had a significant impact on

individuals and churches. This past fall I experienced God's renewal in my own life and I am so grateful for His patience and grace.

I see God at work in revitalized and growing churches. We have read in denominational publications about the growth of Valley View Baptist Church in Louisville, where Kevin Hamm is pastor, and Northside Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, where Chad Burdette is pastor.

However, you may not have heard about Macedonia Baptist Church in Mount Sterling, where Kevin Strausbaugh is a bivocational pastor. The church has grown from 30 to 60 people in the past two years with more than 45 youth and children in the lay-led ministries on Wednesday nights. Kevin works full-time and takes Southern Seminary classes. Macedonia is one of hundreds of churches where God is at work in supernatural ways.

God is also at work through

the mobilization of lay volunteers in ministries and missions across Kentucky and around the world. Thirty-four ministry centers have developed across Eastern Kentucky. Some of the greatest modern-day faith stories have come because volunteers have been radically obedient to God. Volunteers are involved in the Mississippi River Ministry, Mission Service Corps, partnership missions, urban and rural ministries and a host of other ministry opportunities.

I wrote last week about how God is at work through our institutions of higher education. God is also at work in the camps and assemblies where 5,000 people participated in youth camps last summer and hundreds made life-changing decisions for Christ.

God is at work among Kentucky Baptists as we continue to faithfully support missions and ministries in Kentucky and around the world. Pray that we will continue to fulfill the prayer and mission of our Lord expressed in John 17 as we work together for His honor and glory! Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



How can newlyweds help beat the odds of failed marriages?

Q: Why is it that so many marriages fail in the first few years? As newlyweds, what can we do to fortify our marriage?

Multiple factors converge to make the early years a high-risk time for divorce. First, many couples have bought into the "romantic love lie," which leads them to believe that true love is based on the way they feel. In our Western society, couples begin relationships based on passion, make a commitment and then may or may not ever grow beyond a pseudo-intimacy to a deep and abiding friendship. With the ebb of passion, many couples assume that the marriage is over and end their commitment.

A second factor that contributes to a high risk of divorce in the early years of marriage has to do with a cultural narcissism that buttresses our personal selfishness. If I am special and life is all about me, doesn't it make sense that my partner should recognize and accommodate this fundamental reality?

If you want to fortify your marriage, spend time reflecting on what God's Word has to say. To be blunt, it's not all about you. God's eternal holiness is more important than your temporary happiness. In Ephesians 5, notice that Christian marriage is to be an example to the world of God's faithfulness to His people and an earthly picture of the love of the Heavenly Bridegroom (Christ) for His Bride (the Church). As such, marriage becomes a marvelous earthly mirror pointing beyond itself. At the same time, marriage represents a crucible in which God gives us the opportunity to develop maturity and grow up into the very image of His Son.—Scott Wigginton

Q: My grandmother worries about getting Alzheimer's disease. How worried should she be?

For many older adults, the primary concern about aging is the possibility of losing one's mental capabilities. But do we really know what this means?

First, a general term for the weakening of mental abilities is dementia. Dementia, which is caused by disease, is not an inevitable part of aging. It also can be temporary in nature. Accurate diagnosis is an important first step.

Second, dementia is not necessarily the same thing as Alzheimer's disease. There are many forms of dementia; Alzheimer's disease is one of them. One of every three people over age 90 has moderate to severe dementia. But only about half of those people suffer from Alzheimer's disease.

Individuals with Alzheimer's demonstrate impaired memory and orientation; short concentration; poor planning and judgment; personality changes; and perceptual, speech and walking disorders. In the final stage, other body functions also are affected by the disease.

We don't yet know what causes Alzheimer's. The destruction of nerve cells in the brain leads to its symptoms. Losing nerve cells is a function of normal aging, but the loss occurs more rapidly in individuals with Alzheimer's. We do know that, although Alzheimer's can strike younger people, the chance of getting it increases with age and is higher for women and people with less formal education.

As with many other illnesses, there is not yet a cure for Alzheimer's disease. However, more medications are becoming available to control and reduce its symptoms. Other factors such as care and personal environment are important for people with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. Physical, emotional and mental activities such as music therapy and exercise also are helpful.

Remember that people with Alzheimer's should never be reminded that they are "not themselves." Try instead to be with them in their world.—Jon Rainbow

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MARRIAGE



Christ's Passion: 'Don't ever let me forget'

This is not a movie review. So much has been published and broadcast in recent weeks about both the content and intent of "The Passion of the Christ," few fresh insights could be added at this point.

Rather, this is a personal reflection on the powerful and painful worship experience of viewing "The Passion."

Obviously, one's personal worldview makes a tremendous impact on how the film's message and meaning are perceived. Whether a viewer is Jewish, Catholic, evangelical Christian or atheist will strongly influence how he or she interprets and internalizes what is being played out on the screen.

For me, the bulk of the viewing experience rang true with my theological perspective that has been shaped by Sunday school, seminary, Scripture and soul-searching. From the Garden of Gethsemane to the Resurrection, the movie captured glimpses of the historical Christ marching resolutely across the sands of time and eternity.

Rather than focusing on the film's impressive technical effects, the subtle mix between biblical history and creative license or trying to determine which scenes included Mel Gibson's hands or feet in cameo roles, I sought to spend two hours in a fresh encounter with the Christ of Scripture. His words, actions and willingness to endure excruciating pain for my sin became the primary focus of my worship experience.

I recall a brief news item the Western Recorder ran in October 2002 about Gibson's plan to direct a movie about "the last 12 hours in the life of Christ." The article noted that the movie would "feature limited dialogue in Aramaic—the language spoken in Palestine at the time of Jesus—and Latin."

I remember thinking at the time that a movie about Jesus in Aramaic likely would not play well at the box office—which is only one of many reasons I'm not a successful Hollywood film producer.

Rather than the authentic 1st century lan-

guages being a barrier, they were part of the film's gripping, gritty reality. After sitting through the movie, I realized that the real distraction would have been hearing Jesus, Mary and Peter speaking English.

Our church's youth ministry reserved a 481-seat theater in Louisville on the movie's opening night. The auditorium was filled with hundreds of young people and their guests as well as a few dozen adult youth workers. Initial responses to "The Passion" included lots of tears and sniffles during the movie and lots of lingering hugs afterwards.

Among the comments I heard as the crowd slowly exited the theater were: "I can't believe we're in Tinseltown and everyone is talking about Jesus." "This was more than watching a movie." "You could sense the presence of the Holy Spirit ministering in the theater."

Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, said after viewing the movie, "The film will teach them what Jesus did. We must teach them why He did it." I wholeheartedly agree.

Build a bridge & be a witness

"The Passion" offers no direct evangelistic appeal like the "Jesus" film. If the connection is to be made between Christ's sacrificial death and glorious resurrection and every person's need for repentance and salvation, it is up to believers—in the words of last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference theme—to build that bridge and be a witness.

As I sat in the theater for several minutes after "The Passion" concluded, seeking to absorb what I had experienced, my first conscious thought was a brief silent prayer: "Dear God, don't ever let me forget."

As you experience Christ's Passion—whether in a crowded movie theater or in the pages of the New Testament Gospels—I pray that you also will never forget all that Jesus has done for you: "For with His stripes we are healed."

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

God's purpose in suffering

By Rick Warren

Lake Forest, Calif. (BP)—"For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son" (Romans 8:29, NIV).

Was Jesus subject to suffering? Was Jesus sometimes lonely? Was He tempted to be discouraged? Was He misunderstood, maligned and criticized unjustly?

If you see Mel Gibson's movie, "The Passion of the Christ," then you'll know the answer to all these questions is yes.

So, what makes any of us think we will be exempted from suffering or loneliness or discouragement or unjust criticism?

The truth is, God is developing within you the character of Christ, and in order to do this He must take you through all of the circumstances in life that He took Christ through.

This means God is more interested in your character than your

comfort, and He's more concerned about your holiness than your happiness.

So, the question is not if you'll go through dark times in life; rather, it's when you'll go through them.

Now, does God cause these tragedies? No. God is good, and He cannot cause evil or do evil.

But God can use these dark and stressful times for good; He will use them to build a Christlike character within us.

So what should you do when you go through difficult times?

Refuse to be discouraged. King David said, "I will fear no evil" (Psalm 23:4). Will implies a choice, an act of decision. In the final 12 hours of Christ's earthly life, you clearly see that He made a choice to follow God's will; He made a choice to face down fear; He made a choice to ignore despair.

Remember that God is with you.

David said, "For you are with me" (Psalm 23:4). God not only promises His power; He promises His presence. We will never go through a dark day alone. Jesus knew He wasn't alone as He walked out His passion.

Rely on God's protection and guidance. David said in Psalm 23:4 that God's rod and staff comforted him. The rod and staff were basic tools a shepherd used to protect and guide the sheep. God will be with you, and He will protect and guide you. Jesus could have called down 10,000 angels; He could have called His disciples to arms. Instead, He relied on God to protect and guide Him.

No matter who you are, whether you're a believer or not, we all eventually go through difficult times. The difference for the Christian, then, is not the absence of the shadow but the presence of the Light.

Rick Warren is pastor of Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., and author of the best-selling "Purpose-Drive Life."

Speakers urge Baptists: 'Build a Bridge, Be a Witness'



"You always get more out of it than you expect when you do it in the name of the Lord."

Bobby Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla.

By Trennis Henderson & Ken Walker
Editor & State Correspondent

Bowling Green—Addressing such issues as prayer and fasting, servant evangelism and the sanctity of marriage, the 2004 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference challenged participants to "Build a Bridge, Be a Witness."

Conference coordinator Dan Garland, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention church development/evangelism team, urged the crowd to "find some ways to do some new things. Find some passion. Find some ways to reach boys and girls and teenagers and men and women for Christ."

The annual conference was held Feb. 23-24 at Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green. In addition to sermons, testimonies and high-energy praise music, the two-day conference featured more than 20 breakout sessions and dialogue lunches.

Bobby Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., cited three key reasons for seeking to build a bridge and be a witness:

■ *The blessings are beyond belief.* "If we go with the gospel, the power of the gospel guarantees blessings beyond belief," he said. "You always get more out of it than you expect when you do it in the name of the Lord."

■ *Because of the worth of a soul.* "You can't get around the worth of a soul," he emphasized.

Citing the buzz about "The Passion of the Christ," Welch said, "What should the church do at this time? The church ought to do everything they can.

"Everybody out there is asking about Jesus and I've got the answer."

■ *Because of the horrors of hell.* "You don't hear hell preached about much," he noted.

Emphasizing that the horrors of hell last "forever, forever, forever," Welch said that should be sufficient motivation for Christians to build a bridge and be a witness.

O.S. Hawkins, president of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board, noted that 1st century churches in the New Testament multiplied because they "were walking in the fear of the Lord."

Warning that today's churches "live in a no-fear culture," Hawkins



PRAISE The praise team and choir from Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, the host congregation for last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, led praise and worship during the Feb. 23-24 meeting.

said, "Could it be in the busyness of the church that we have lost the concept of the very nature of God; that He is a holy, holy God?"

Hawkins said authentic fear of God leads believers to "stand before Him with reverence and respect so much so that it becomes the motivation in your life."

Rather than fearing "that God was going to put His hand of retribution on me," Hawkins said the greater fear for Christians is "that He might take His hand of blessing off of me."

"Every time you come across the fear of the Lord in your devotional reading, circle it," he urged. "It will amaze you. ... The thing we should fear the most is doing anything that would dishonor or displease Him."

Ken Ellis, associate director of chaplaincy for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, highlighted the joy of a Christian life.

Citing the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 1:21, 3:14 and 4:13, Ellis said, "Here is a man who in his lifetime never ceases to amaze me. Problems are on the left side and problems are on the right side, but Paul always finds a way to keep his eyes on the prize."

Sitting in a jail cell in Rome, Paul "is not preoccupied about his own circumstances," Ellis said. "He has a spiritual connection with God."

"Too many of us focus on the problems of life and not on the promises of God," he added. "We've not living up to the potential we have in Christ Jesus."

"You've got to have a relationship from the inside-out," Ellis said. "Once you come in contact with Jesus, you can't ever be the same again."

Ronnie Floyd told conference participants that Kentucky needs more congregations to proclaim they are "Jesus churches," committed to following the Savior.

Referring to Christ's final words in Acts 1:8 before returning to heaven, Floyd said effective churches are built on the Holy Spirit.

"The power is not in the cute little diddies we think it's in," said Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark. Lamenting what he sees as a tendency to glorify church-growth models, he said, "You can't come to Jesus unless you stumble over the cross. ... The cross still leads home."

Floyd said "Jesus" churches will be empowered by such tools as a Spirit-filled pastor, Bible-centered teaching, praise and worship, and prayer and fasting.

Finally, they will form strategic plans for reaching their communities, the nation and the world, Floyd said.

"Yes, we believe God has called us to reach this world for Christ," he said. "We do it with the authority and power of Jesus Christ."

Bret Robbe, a former Kentucky pastor, urged Christians to stand firm in support of moral standards by drawing a line that defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Noting that some people will

term him bigoted for his stand, the former singles minister said more than 100 young adults he helped deal with sexual struggles can verify that is not the case.

Robbe, pastor of Clearview Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn., said Christians must reach out to homosexuals and others unsure of their personal identity.

"You know why we're not making a dent in that society?" he asked. "Because we never took time to build a bridge."

"People in our churches are dying for pastors to stand up and say, 'We need to build a bridge to people who are dealing with nauseating sexual struggles,'" he added. "Right now our society needs people who are willing to build bridges and draw lines."

Evangelist **Junior Hill** used a brown paper sack and seeds to illustrate his message about the parable of the sower in Luke 8:4-15.

Christians are familiar with the story, Hill said, but most overlook Satan's leading strategy, which is to prevent God's Word from being sown.

To do that, the devil uses discouragement, distractions, diluting the gospel message and delays, Hill said.

But the Apostle Paul promises a harvest follows reaping, Hill said. "That means if you plant this morning you're not likely to see a harvest this evening," he added. "Be patient and it will come to pass."

Motivational speaker **Charles Lowrey**, president of the Lowrey Institute for Excellence, emphasized that "we have a generation that's hurting" and that "we've got to make some changes to reach the world for Jesus Christ."

Citing the example of Job, Lowrey said, "Sometimes we forget that we are in a battle, folks."

Noting that "Job understood that Jesus is the most important thing in the world," he added, "Anything that gets in the middle between you and Jesus will steal your joy. Jesus is the only thing that will last."

"Focus on the purpose, not on the pain," he urged. "Discouraged pastor, all you've got to do is stay on the job. You're going to win in the end. ... Never, ever give up; we are the winners."

Rick Ousley: 'Die to this world ... for the cause of the King'



"I'd rather die trusting God than live trusting flesh."

Rick Ousley, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, Ala.

By David Winfrey & Trennis Henderson
News Director & Editor

Bowling Green—A church's effectiveness is directly proportional to its willingness to die to the world, Rick Ousley told pastors and church leaders during last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference.

"The Scriptures give us over and over again the description of people who choose to either live for this world or die to this world," said Ousley, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala.

Preaching from John 12, Ousley noted Jesus' statement that a grain of wheat by itself is just a seed, "but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

"Understand the lack of fruit might be connected to the lack of deadness," he noted.

Ousley pointed to the Apostle

Paul as a prime example of someone who died to self and served Christ. As a result, beatings, sinking ships, prisons and even being stoned couldn't dissuade him from God's purpose in his life.

"If the world can't stop you, Satan has a major problem," Ousley said. "Think of what it is that causes us to retreat instead of advance, and I submit to you that it's because we haven't learned how to die to self."

Too many churches are like the people of Israel, who were delivered from Egypt, sustained through the desert and then chose not to trust God to enter the Promised Land.

"I'd rather die trusting God than live trusting flesh," he added.

Some churches, he said, are filled with critical members who would rather focus on their own needs

than serve those who don't know Jesus.

"They know better how to be a Baptist than to be a believer," he said. "We wonder why they get upset so easy. They're in the meeting, but not in the body."

But a "dead" church is one that's filled with members willing to give of themselves to use the gifts God gave them for prophesy, teaching, leadership, giving, mercy and service, Ousley said.

"Go back to your zip code and die," Ousley urged pastors and church leaders. "Don't try to figure a way out of a human mess, be determined to die for the cause of the King."

During a breakout session on building an evangelistic church, Ousley recounted how his congrega-

tion has grown from 37 members in 1990 to more than 4,000 today.

"Unashamedly we see worship as the priority of our church," he explained. "What we believe will affect the way we behave."

Noting that he is more committed to "a passion-driven life" than "a purpose-driven life," Ousley added, "Everything God did for us is passion-driven and purpose-defined and people-directed."

"Evangelism is a love issue," he pointed out. "Evangelism was never meant to be a program; it's a lifestyle. It's the way we breathe, the way we talk, the way we act."

An evangelistic mentality "is not about empire building; it's about Kingdom building," he added. "I want to be anchored to the 1st century and alive to the 21st century."

Sjogren: Reach beyond 'Christian ghetto'

By David Winfrey
News Director

Bowling Green—Before he led a megachurch in Cincinnati, Steve Sjogren was washing cars with fellow Christians in a liquor store parking lot.

That simple act of service helped launch a ministry and a movement for "service evangelism" that continues to attract followers around the globe.

But Sjogren, pastor of Vineyard Community Church in northern Cincinnati, said God revealed to him that the way to reach people wasn't to build a building and wait for people to come.

Still, he admits the idea of serving others didn't sit well with some of those attending his home Bible study in 1984.

"We had a full one-third of the people leave," he recalled.

But those who stayed realized they had been in a "Christian ghetto," hanging out with other Christians, Sjogren added.

After positive reactions from that first free car wash, members decided, "We're going to be a 'go and do' kind of church."

Today, Sjogren's Web site (www.servantevangelism.com) lists more than 300 ideas for servant evangelism projects. His congregation has grown to 7,000 in attendance each weekend.

Through service evangelism, "we've touched close to 5 million people," he said, adding that church members go out every week to distribute water bottles, clean toilets, paint address numbers on curbs, fill bird feeders or perform any number of other projects.

The simple acts of compassion, always done for free, aren't always understood by skeptical recipients, he noted.

That's why participants distribute church business cards that read: "This is our simple way of saying



SERVANT EVANGELISM Steve and Janie Sjogren discuss the role of servant evangelism in their ministry through Vineyard Community Church in Cincinnati.

that God loves you. Let us know if we can be of more assistance."

Early on, Sjogren said, members realized God already had been at work in the lives of those who were served.

It wasn't unusual, he noted, for people to say, "You're the third person this week who's talked about God's love."

"We were the last straw that broke the camel's back in their spiritual formation," Sjogren said.

Servant evangelism can be a starting point for any church to grow, he added.

The ideal for building a growing church is having one-third of the attendance being mature Christians, one-third new Christians and one-third non-Christians.

"How do you get one-third of your people to be non-Christians?" he asked. "You go out there in the city and invite them to come to your church constantly."

Sjogren listed common objections churches might have to performing servant evangelism projects:

Fear of lacking adequate gifts to evangelize. Servant evangelism projects are so successful because they let everyone use their own gifts.

"This is something that your people can do and that's reproduc-

ible," Sjogren said. "How much gifting does it take to give out a bottle of water?"

Fear of rejection. Sjogren said he's been rejected more times than anyone, recalling the reaction he often gets from restaurant managers when he says he wants to clean the restrooms.

"They look at us like we're from Mars or something," he said to the laughing audience. "We've actually had people say we have a policy against free toilet cleaning."

But such rejection doesn't bother him, Sjogren added. "I know that the next several people in a row will say 'Yes.'"

Fear of success. Some people are uncomfortable with attracting uncommitted people and having their congregations change, Sjogren said, adding that it's a legitimate issue to address early.

"I think that's exactly what the Holy Spirit has in mind: to disturb your cozy little church."

Sjogren encouraged churches that want to grow through servant evangelism to begin by looking at what might need to change to attract unchurched people and by praying. "You need to start praying, 'God send us the people you want us to love.'"

Evangelists issue call for personal ministry, revival

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Bowling Green—Evangelist Dale Rose believes that while pastors and evangelists are good at proclaiming the gospel, they sometimes forget that people need personal ministry.

Rose, the keynote speaker at the Kentucky Baptist Vocational Evangelists Conference Feb. 23 at Hillvue Heights Church, emphasized his point with a heartfelt story.

Serving as an evangelist in Kentucky since 1995, he told of recently revealing a secret he had carried for most of his 44 years.

While preaching at his home church, First Baptist of Monticello, Rose shared with the congregation his struggle with the pain of being molested as a child.

Saying he finally overcame those difficulties last year, Rose noted that others have sought him out for counseling since his public revelation.

"A lot of this stuff could be purged if we'd allow people to be themselves and get it out without condemning them," Rose said. "Some of you have been wounded. You have past failures and present fears."

The mental instability resulting from such problems is one of three clouds that often ensnare preachers, he said. The others are:

Moral impurities. While that includes the pitfall of immoral relationships, he said it also includes the handling of one's finances. When a pastor fails to pay his bills, it damages a community, Rose said.

"I preach 25 meetings a year and sell shoes wholesale," he noted. "It's not easy, but there's no room in ministry for laziness."

Ministry insecurities. The Apostle Paul warned not to think too highly of oneself, Rose emphasized, reminding the crowd there is a fine line between a healthy self-worth and pride. An insecure pastor can wreck a church by teaching people to rely on self instead of God, he added.

"When we stand, if we don't let the clouds blot out the light, we'll have the authority and the proclamation," Rose said.

"Feed my lambs"

Campbellsville University student Kenny Rager also addressed the meeting, pointing to John 21:15-17, where Jesus told Peter to feed His sheep.

Many people overlook verse 15, when Christ told Peter to feed His lambs, Rager pointed out.

Lambs are baby sheep; the modern application is the need to teach young people, Rager said.

Millions of young people are familiar with immoral pop stars and "shaking their booty," yet they don't know about Jesus' saving power, he added.

"If they're going to know, you've got to show them love," the 20-year-old evangelist said. "How are you going to do that? You just love them. Jack Daniels will love them; the bars will love them just as they are. If you love Jesus, you will love everyone."

Rager also encouraged pastors—the majority of the audience—to remain faithful to God's call to ministry.

Acknowledging that, like sheep, congregations are sometimes noisy, smelly and draw blood, he said the sacrifice is still worth it.

"Don't give up or give in," Rager urged. "For my generation, don't do it. If you really love Jesus, you'll feed the sheep."

Wyman Copass, former president of the vocational evangelists group, preached from Ephesians 4, in which Paul lists evangelists among the gifts God gave to help people mature spiritually.

Listing several recent revivals he has preached, where dozens of people became Christians, Copass said revivals are still valuable.

"I read (comments) like, 'Revivals are no longer necessary' or 'I don't want evangelists in my church,'" Copass said. "Then you don't believe in God's call."

After the session, the group selected officers for the coming year. They include Glenn Dawson of Lexington, president; Rager, vice president; and Joe Mobley of London, secretary-treasurer.

A Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference also was held in conjunction with last week's KBC Evangelism Conference.

Lori Salierno, founder of Celebrate Life International, was the keynote speaker at a women's luncheon Feb. 24. The event also featured breakout training sessions.

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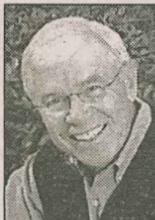
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Kentucky pastors, churches honored for CP giving

By Robert Reeves
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Bowling Green—Three longtime supporters of the Cooperative Program were among those recognized by Kentucky Baptists at a banquet celebrating the unified giving plan through which Southern Baptists support mission work around the world.

David Nelson, Franklin Owen and James K. Pierce each were recognized for lifetime achievement in supporting the Cooperative Program during a special dinner held at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green. Several churches and associations also were honored for their giving.

Nelson, 77, served three Kentucky churches during a 43-year career as a pastor—Vine Street Baptist Chapel (1949-1955) and Highland Baptist Church (1956-1961) in Louisville and then, for 30 years, First Baptist Church of Owensboro. He also served in numerous positions of leadership in the association, Kentucky Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention. He served as KBC president in 1965-66.

In the 30 years he served at Owensboro First Baptist, he baptized more than 1,000 people and led the congregation to give more than \$2.6 million to support Cooperative Program missions.

Owen, 90, served for 47 years in pastoral and denominational ministry in Missouri, Georgia and Kentucky and as a U.S. Army chaplain during World War II.

Owen's service included 18 years as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington and 10 years as executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

During his tenure as executive secretary-treasurer, he led Kentucky Baptists to move from an indebtedness of more than \$1 million to having reserve funds of more than \$4 million. Annual CP giving increased from \$4.3 million in 1972 to \$11.8 million when he retired in 1982.

Pierce, 70, has served Kentucky Baptists through a long career that continues today as he serves as pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Lexington.

Pierce served pastorates in Mississippi and Louisiana before coming to Kentucky to be pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington where he served from 1974-1999. His pastorate at Porter saw nearly 4,000 additions to the church, of which nearly 2,000 were by baptism.

Pierce also led Porter to become a strong supporter of missions through the Cooperative Program. During his 25-year pastorate, the church moved from giving just over \$30,000 through CP in 1975 to more than \$301,000 through CP when he retired in 1999. Porter Memorial Baptist Church remains the top giving Cooperative Program church in Kentucky.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention also recognized other churches with high total and per capita giving records for 2002-2003, as well as churches passing million-dollar milestones.

Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, was recognized as the

top church in total giving to the Cooperative Program. Also recognized for total giving were Living Hope Baptist Church in Owensboro and Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

Raikes Hill Baptist Mission in Elk Horn was recognized as the top church in per capita giving. Briensburg Baptist Church in Benton and Countryside Baptist Church in Morganfield also were recognized for high per capita giving.

Cumulative million-dollar milestones

Thirteen churches also were recognized for passing million-dollar milestones during the past year for cumulative giving to the Cooperative Program. Those honored were:

■ Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, which surpassed \$5 million in cumulative giving.

■ Central Baptist Church in Corbin, which passed the \$3 million mark.

■ First Baptist Church of Central City, which has exceeded the \$2 million mark.

Ten churches surpassed \$1 million in Cooperative Program giving:

■ Hillcrest Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.

■ Crestwood Baptist Church in Frankfort.

■ Oakland Avenue Baptist Church in Catlettsburg.

■ Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville.

■ First Baptist Church in Benton.

■ Macedonia Baptist Church in Owensboro.

■ First Baptist Church in Madisonville.

■ Southside Baptist Church in Princeton.

■ First Baptist Church in Whitesburg.

■ Kings Baptist Church in Mt. Washington.

Associations recognized

Several associations were also recognized at the Cooperative Program banquet, based upon the giving of their member churches.

Elkhorn, Long Run and Daviess-McLean associations were recognized for total dollars given through the Cooperative Program.

Anderson, Taylor County and Owen County associations were honored for per capita giving.

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Registration fee is \$20.00 per person.

3 Plenary Sessions featuring
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KENTUCKY NOTES

A quarterly publication of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union
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Supplement to Western Recorder

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2004 Annie Armstrong
Easter Offering for
North American Missions

Mission Study Theme:
The World at Our Doorstep
Offering Goal: \$54 million

Kentucky Baptist churches gave
\$1,600,115 to the 2002-2003
Offering for North American
Missions.

Can we give at least 15% more
this year?

Spring 2004

Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville March 26-27, 2004

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Friday Morning 9:45 a.m., Central Time

*From Generation to Generation
Around the World*

Music for Worship: Cristi Cobban
Theme Interpretation: *Sisterhood*
Program Guests: Bill Clark & Ruth Thomas,
Jeff & Cecelia Thomas Wallace

Friday Evening 6:45 p.m.

Wear Red, White & Blue on Friday evening
*From Generation to Generation
through Kentucky Missionaries*

Music for Worship
Theme Interpretation: *Sisterhood*
Special Recognition: U.S. Service Personnel
Program Guests: David Coram, Chaplain, 101st
Airborne; WMU Volunteers

Friday Noon - GA
Alumnae & Friends
Celebration - Picnic
Lunch by reservation
Celebration Program,
12:30 p.m.

*From
Generation to
Generation*

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

*From Generation to Generation
through Children and Youth*

Music for Worship: Dixon Facility, KBHC
Program Guests: Acteens Panelists, Acteens
Activators, KBHC "In-Home" Missionary,
Last Frontier Missionary.
Closing Theme Interpretation: *Sisterhood*

Friday Afternoon 2:15 p.m.

*From Generation to Generation
through Kentucky WMU*

Music for Worship: Cristi Cobban
Theme Interpretation: *Sisterhood*
Program Guest: Tim Bender, Catalytic
Missionary to the Deaf

KY WMU Business Session & Election of
Officers

*GA/Children in Action Missions Event
Christian Life Center, 9 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*

Friday 5:00 p.m. - Executive Board Reunion
Dinner (All former Executive Board members
are invited to attend. Advance ticket purchase
required.)

Saturday Noon - Luncheons
- Acteens / Youth on Mission Pizza Party
- Baptist Nursing Fellowship Luncheon

A Personal Word

Three topics are competing in my heart for this column. I will touch on each briefly and ask you to understand how vital each one is to WMU.



Joy Bolton
Executive
Director-
Treasurer

The 2004 Annual Meeting promises to be one of the best. We will explore through speakers, drama, music and testimonies the importance of passing the missions call *From Generation to Generation*. We will also celebrate the 90th birthday of GA during a special picnic lunch and program. GA is a vital part of WMU missions education and is instrumental in passing on the missions call to our children.

On Friday evening you will not want to miss the patriotic service and recognition of our U.S. military. As a new feature, we are including a ministry project as part of the Annual Meeting. On Saturday afternoon you are invited to participate in a prayer walk in the Oak Grove community, where many of our 101st Airborne families live.

Sisterhood, a Christian drama ministry of women, will do theme interpretations in each session. Our missionaries all have Kentucky ties, including one Last Frontier new appointee who spent part of her growing up years in Hopkinsville. We will have emeritus missionaries whose children are now missionaries and in the ministry share their perspective on passing on the call. You need to be there from the opening session on Friday morning through noon on Saturday!

Close to my heart is the **relationship of WMU women with women around the world**. For many years, we have joined with our Christian sisters for a Day of Prayer on the first Monday of November and taken an offering to help with ministries by and for women around the world. Recently, at the January Board meeting of national WMU, we joined with the representatives from other states in affirming these historic relationships through Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance.

Cedar Crest, the WMU camp at Cedarmore, is a wonderful facility with 11 cabins, a dining hall, chapel, service building, unit shelters, recreation area, and trails in the great outdoors. Cedar Crest is a special place where many girls have accepted Christ as Savior and/or heard the call of God to missions. This great facility is in need of some significant repairs and upgrades.

You are invited to volunteer during a work week, May 10-14 or attend a special overnight, May 14-15. All kinds of jobs are available, from cleaning out gutters and cabins to jobs requiring "fix-it" skills. We are also giving WMU members an opportunity to give for camp repairs and to replace the cabin bunk beds, tables and chairs.

Information about the work week and overnight event have been mailed to WMU directors, as well as information about giving to replace a roof section on Ware Chapel or buying a bunk, table or chair. If you would like a copy of this information and/or learn how you can be a camp volunteer in May, please contact Kentucky WMU.

We want Cedar Crest to continue as a wonderful camping facility for years to come. Let's invest in the future today by working and giving to maintain Cedar Crest for our children.

Meals, preschool child care and interpretation for the deaf will be available during the Annual Meeting by pre-reservation only. Call Kentucky WMU toll-free at (888) 254-5726 or (502) 244-6485.

Special Annual Meeting Ministry Opportunity:
Ministry to the Military
Join Roy and Mary Callahan, MSC Missionaries, for a prayer walk in the Oak Grove community on Saturday at 1 p.m. and/or bring a copy of the book *The Power of a Praying Wife* to be used in ministry to military families (101st Airborne, Fort Campbell).

*Directions to First Baptist Church from
Pennyriple Parkway, Exit 7:*
Follow US-41 A. North towards downtown Hopkinsville. Continue on US-41A to a T-intersection. Turn left onto 9th (US 68/41). Cross the railroad track. Go to Main Street. Turn left. Go four blocks to the church (on the left).

Kentucky WMU Welcomes Three New Staff Members in February



Joyce Thompson is our new
receptionist/data specialist



Wanda Walker is our
Adult Consultant



Stacy Nall now serves as
Camp Director



Information for WMU Directors

What are your most important concerns for March, April and May?

✓ Have you (or your leadership team) talked with all your age-level coordinators, leaders and teachers about serving for the 2004-2005 church year?



✓ Have you (and your team) made projections as to the number of magazines that you will need beginning in September? This involves checking to see how many will be in each age level after "promotion time."

✓ Have you projected the number of Resource Kits that will be needed for all age levels including Women on Mission?

✓ Are your Acteens going to Exalt at Campbellsville in April?

✓ Are GAs and Acteens going to camp this summer?

✓ Have you passed information on to all your leadership team about World Missions Unlimited in July? These training conferences will be at Shelbyville July 17, London July 24, and Madi-sonville July 31. You get a \$5 discount on the registration fee if reservations are made by June 25.

✓ Are you encouraging your age-level leaders to continue at least monthly missions activities during the summer (if you are in a church that discontinues the music program for the summer)?

✓ Are you and others going to be a part of the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting at Hopkinsville, March 26-27? It is not too late to make plans.

✓ Are any adults from your church going to be a part of MissionsFEST at Prestonsburg, April 18-23? Your women will grow from the experience.

—Anna Mary Byrdwell

Adults

Nurses and everyone interested in medical missions are invited to the **Baptist Nursing Fellowship** luncheon on Saturday, March 27, following the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville. We will be sharing information on ministry opportunities and give an update on our summer CEU conference. Pre-registration required for lunch. See the form on page 4.



MissionsFEST is coming to Prestonsburg, Kentucky, April 18-24. Many Kentuckians volunteered in the

2003 MissionsFEST in Cincinnati. For many it was their first mission trip. Now, you can come along and "Discover the Joy of Missions." This is a wonderful opportunity for Women on Mission and Adults on Mission to be involved in hands-on mission work. If you have never taken a mission trip, MissionsFEST is a great way to have your first experience doing missions away from home. All you have to do is register and prepare by reading the suggested preparation materials. A variety of ministries have been planned, and you will be assigned to a work site based on your registration information.

Registration information is available from Kentucky WMU. Cost per person varies by number of people per room. You may also register for fewer days. Just indicate the days you can attend with your registration. Cost per person will be pro-rated by national WMU.

We are excited to welcome **Wanda Walker** as our new **Adult Consultant**. Please be in prayer for Wanda as she plans for our fall retreats, summer training, and other missions opportunities for adults in Kentucky.

—Joy Bolton



Youth

Exalt will be here before we know it. Exalt is a weekend of fun inspiration for all girls in

grades 7-12. This year we will be at Campbellsville Baptist in Campbellsville, Ky., April 16-17. Our speaker will be Casey Hartley Gibbons, former

Miss American Teen and author of the book *A Girl's Life with God*. The Campbellsville University BSU praise band will lead us in worship. We will have a massive scavenger hunt on the CU campus on Friday evening and a prayer walk on Saturday morning. It will be great! Make plans to attend. By now, you should have received an Exalt brochure with all the information that you need.



Congratulations to **Laura Freeman** of Campbellsville Baptist. She has been named a national Top Teen by WMU. Laura served on the Kentucky Acteens Advisory Panel last year. She is a senior and is planning to attend Campbellsville University in the fall. You have made us proud, Laura.

Applications for the 2004-2005 **Kentucky Acteens Advisory Panel** are due **April 23**. Applications have been sent to all Acteens advisors. This year's panel

will host a seminar about the panel at Exalt to answer any questions.

Be sure to join us for the **Acteens/Youth on Mission Pizza Party** March 27 in Hopkinsville. The Saturday morning session of Annual Meeting will focus on Acteens and involvement in missions. The cost is \$3.00 per person. Call KY WMU for registration information.

It's not too early to plan for **Mission Adventure Camp** and **Acteens Splash**. The theme this year is "Real World, Right Now" and you can find information about it on this page.



—LaRaine Dail

PRESCHOOL

"Will you read me a book?" How many times have you been asked that question as a parent, grandparent, teacher or friend of a preschooler?

Adults can play a vital role in how preschoolers respond to books. As we respond to young children, feelings of warmth, acceptance and a foundation for the love of books and a foundation for the love of books are created. National WMU has produced a number of books that will give preschoolers stories to treasure. Among the wonderful collection is the "Missions and Me" series, a set of ten books which give preschoolers a great start to knowing and loving God. Most books in the series are now offered at a special price of \$4.99. Check out the details, as well as other available resources, at www.wmystore.com. Remember—preschoolers are worth it!



CHILDREN

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS OF GIRLS IN ACTION AND CHILDREN IN ACTION! The GA and Children in Action Missions Event is scheduled on Saturday, March 27, 2004 at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville. Because both Girls in Action (girls, grades 1-6) and Children in Action (boys and girls, grades 1-6) are a part of WMU, this special event is planned during the WMU Annual Meeting.

The event begins at 9:00 a.m. and concludes around 12:00 noon (CST). While the general meeting is in session for everyone else, the children and leaders will be having their own event with opportunities for meeting missionaries, singing and presentation by Sisterhood, a Christian drama ministry. The event will be held in the Christian Life Center of the church, located across the street from the front entrance to the church. Watch for signs to direct you to the CLC entrance.



See directions on page 1.

No pre-registration for the event is required. However, the cost is \$2 per person to be paid on arrival.



Children and leaders attending the event can be involved in a ministry project by bringing one canned food per person to the event. The food collected will be distributed to programs for needy families in the Hopkinsville area. For further information contact Kentucky WMU.

Don't forget camp! Two state camps, **Cedar Crest** (at Cedarmore) and **Jonathan Creek**, offer opportunities for all girls. Girls in Action members, as well as girls who are not members of GA, can attend. Inform your girls and their parents about the dates and cost of camp. The 2004 camp booklet was mailed to church GA, Children in Action and WMU directors in January.

—Brenda Price



Summer Camp News

Summer is just around the corner and that means it is time to make plans for C-A-M-P!

Kentucky WMU will host camping opportunities at two locations.

There are week-long camp opportunities as well as overnight options at Cedar Crest, which is located on the grounds of Cedarmore Baptist Conference Center in Bagdad, Ky. **Mission Adventure Camp for Girls** offers exciting opportunities meeting missionaries from around the world, Bible study, worship, adventure recreation, and cultural encounters!



WEEKLONG CAMP

June 14-18	Grades 4-6
June 21-25	Grades 4-6
June 28-July 2	Grades 4-6
July 5-9	Grades 4-10
July 12-16	Grades 4-10

MOTHER/DAUGHTER OVERNIGHTS

Grades 1-3 & moms or mom substitute	
June 18-19	
June 25-26	
July 9-10	

Three overnight opportunities are available in one missions-packed weekend at **Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center**, located near Hardin in the western Kentucky lake area.

June 25-26

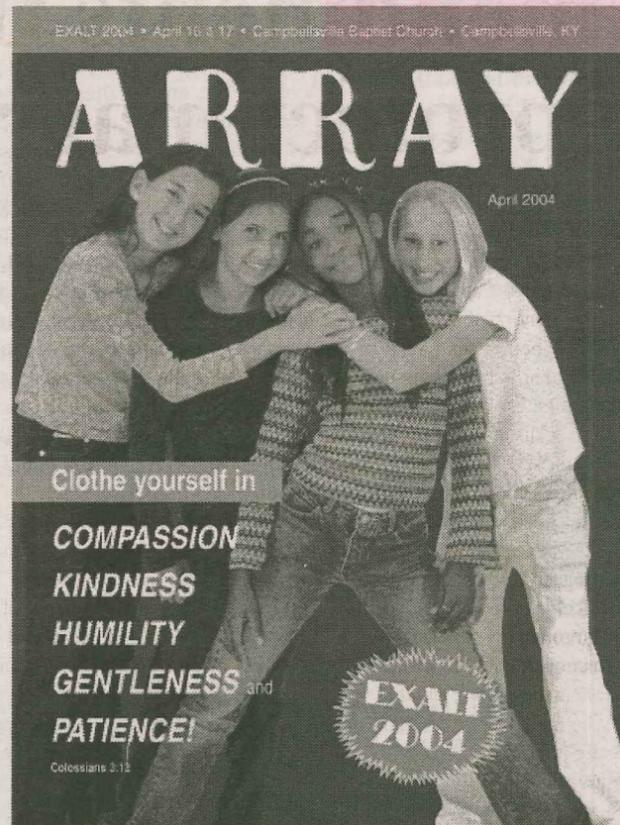
Mother/Daughter Overnight
(grades 1-3 moms or mom substitute)

GA Overnight
(grades 4-6 & chaperones)

Acteens Splash
(grades 7-12 & chaperones)



Call the Kentucky WMU office to request a brochure explaining costs and details for both camping options!



WORLD MISSIONS UNLIMITED 2004

- Training
- Inspiration
- Motivation
- Fellowship

July 16-17	First Baptist Church, Shelbyville
July 23-24	First Baptist Church, London
July 30-31	First Baptist Church, Madisonville

Friday, 6:30 p.m.-9 p.m. (Associational Leaders Only)
Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (Associational & Church Leaders)

How can YOU become
a better missions leader?

Attend conferences for basic training or advanced leadership skills at World Missions Unlimited. Conferences for church and associational leaders of all WMU organizations and Brotherhood organizations will be provided. Special interest conferences will also be offered.

Cost: \$15 if registered by June 25; \$20 after June 25
(includes: Saturday lunch and resources*)

Registration materials will be mailed to all church/ associational WMU leaders in early April. For more information, contact Kentucky WMU.

Missions LINK

Linking Involvement, Needs and Knowledge is at the heart of Missions LINK. What drives LINK is a dream—a dream to do more for God, to impact a lost world, and to involve women in significant ministries. We are seeking to grow WMU because of the outcome of our work.

We are in the midst of year one of LINK. Our primary goal for this year is to let everyone know about our WMU expansion plan and get WMU groups involved in praying and setting goals for growth. Dr. Larry Michael, author of *Spurgeon on Leadership* says that "a goal is a dream with a deadline."

Have you spent time in prayer, seeking God's dream for WMU in your church? Have you taken a look at how many people are involved in missions groups in your church? Have you planned hands-on missions activities to involve people in missions? Have you made plans for

new groups or ministries? Have you set deadlines for implementing God-directed plans?

Operation Missions LINK is a special Missions LINK feature. Through Operation Missions LINK, churches promote state missions and conduct church-wide community ministries. The exciting reports of the first Operation Missions LINK projects have confirmed our belief that the very best way to get new people involved in missions is through hands-on missions.

Missions LINK is our commitment to expand WMU in Kentucky. It will take all of us who believe in WMU and what we stand for. Under God's leadership we can start new missions ministries, teach our children, and Link Involvement, Needs and Knowledge for Missions.

To receive a copy of the Missions LINK Planning and Goal Setting Form, please contact Kentucky WMU.

Amendments filed to protect marriage

Each clearly defines marriage as one man and one woman.

Across the nation, the question of whether marriage should be re-defined has grabbed the headlines and the attention of citizens and public officials alike. Whether we like it or not, every American is going to face this issue time and time again in the months and perhaps years to come.

In Massachusetts, the Supreme Court actually ordered the state legislature to re-define marriage to include same-sex marriage. In San Francisco, the mayor directed the city's courthouse to issue same-sex marriage licenses even though such marriages violate California law. The debate will likely shape the national landscape through this fall's presidential election, but Kentucky has its own role in the debate, and that role may be more important than anyone might think.

Though Kentucky's legislature passed a Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1998 in anticipation of such a debate, legislators recognize that a state's constitution is its ultimate authority.

Any state that has a clear traditional definition of marriage — that of one man and one woman — in its constitution cannot have its culture, customs or laws hijacked by rogue judges who wish to rule in favor of their own biases as was done in Massachusetts. Any state without clear definition in its constitution is vulnerable, even one with a DOMA.

This legal reality, as well as the current national debate, has precipitated the introduction of two proposed amendments to the Kentucky constitution in this General Assembly session. One is in the House of Representatives, intro-

duced by Democrat J.R. Gray, and the other is in the Senate, sponsored by Republican Vernie McGaha. Both amendments aspire to do the same thing: protect traditional marriage from any kind of re-definition.

Proponents of an amendment point to the radical gay agenda as the primary initiator of the movement to re-define marriage, but they also are aware that the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas* may energize those who desire to legalize polygamy.

Opponents generally attempt to make the issue one of civil rights, saying that gays and lesbians are discriminated against when heterosexual marriage is the only legal model for marriage.

If Kentucky moves quickly, passing an amendment, there will likely be a domino effect, energizing other state legislatures to move forward. If that happens, the intensity can only rise in the 2004 election campaigns.

If Kentucky fails to act, observers believe the local wranglings, whether on the state level, as in Massachusetts, or on the municipal level, as in San Francisco, will likely continue, leading to an erosion of laws favoring traditional marriage across the nation.

During the Civil War, Kentucky was known as a "border state," unable to decide to be a "slave" or a "free" state. In this brief moment of history, our Commonwealth has the opportunity to lead the nation with the plumb line of American culture — the health and welfare of marriage and family. ■



Re-definition of marriage is all about power

He who holds the power to re-define marriage holds the power to entirely re-shape society.

When I was growing up — high school in the late 60s, college in the early 70s — it was the time of the Sexual Revolution, when the slogan was "free love," but everybody knew it really meant "free sex." Now, the next generation of ideas from those activists are being disseminated and the ramifications of their message will be devastating.

Then, the message was predicated on the perspective that sex outside of marriage was okay because "All you need is love." In fact, advocates

maintained, "You don't need a marriage license; it's just a piece of paper. You just need love."

Today, the same people who brought us that message are far more militant because they're not just offering ideas, they're demanding that the force of government be used to impose their values onto everybody else: "Any kind of sex outside of marriage — gay, lesbian, bisexual — is okay. And, we demand that you give us the license

to prove it. (And when you do, everyone who disagrees with our ideas will be breaking the law.)"

When history is written it will confirm that this effort to amend the state constitution to protect marriage was the most important issue Kentucky encountered during this generation.

Marriage is the foundation of the family and family is the foundation of society — any society. Everyone knows you dare not move the founda-

tion of a building lest the building crumble.

If we allow those who wish to re-define marriage to triumph, we will find that we've allowed the re-definition of a host of other terms, all of which are pivotal to future generations. Indeed; if we say that two men can effectively raise a young girl to become a well-adjusted young lady, then we've re-defined, perhaps rendered useless, the words "mother" and "wife." The same would be

Today they're saying: "Any kind of sex outside of marriage — gay, lesbian, bisexual — is okay. And, we demand that you give us the license to prove it."



Kent Ostrander is the executive director of The Family Foundation

true when two women raise a young boy. How can he become a "man's man," a "good husband" or a "loving father" when he's never seen any of these roles demonstrated?

Fortunately, we can act now and change the course of history, not only for our families, the next generation, and the Commonwealth, but also for the nation. Clearly, this nationwide debate will be won in one locality at a time. The questions for us are "Will our locale take a stand?" "Will we take the lead?" "Will our state protect marriage through its highest authority, the constitution?"

OR, will it allow local mayors (as in San Fran-

cisco) or local justices (as in Massachusetts) to confuse the issue, create precedent, and erode that which has made our nation great — great families raising leaders generation after generation.

If we do not stand and win this cultural battle, we can begin to write the history of the demise of this nation.

I, for one, desire to start a new chapter of Kentucky history. Yes, even a new chapter of American history. One that describes how the people stood against those who would engineer a new world based on how one desires to reach sexual climax, rather than through healthy parents raising healthy children for a healthy tomorrow for all. Where adults were more interested in the children's right to have both a mother and a father than in their own rights to have sex with whom-ever they got the urge. We ought to use this debate to turn America back to its roots, its foundations.

It can be done. It can start here in Kentucky. And it can start now.

Kt

Across the nation, traditional marriage is in jeopardy. **YOU** can make the difference in Kentucky.

And Kentucky can make the difference for the nation.

Please Act!

NOW is the time to call the toll free legislative message line in Frankfort. Leave a message for leaders of the Senate and House and **for your own** senator and representative. Call 1-800-372-7181 asking that they:

#1 "Please protect marriage from re-definition by passing a constitutional amendment"

The receptionist can help you determine who your two legislators are. After you leave your message for them, ask the receptionist to "copy" your message to Senate leaders David Williams and Dan Kelly, and House leaders Jody Richards and Rocky Adkins.

The message line is open Mon. thru Thurs. from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM (Eastern) and on Fri. until 6:00 PM. Your call will protect Kentucky families from re-definition.

#2 Marriage Protection Rally — March 10 Capitol Rotunda 10:30 AM (bring photo ID)



To help in this critical battle or for ongoing daily updates, please contact The Family Foundation:

Call us at: 859-255-5400 Email us at: tffky@mis.net Web site: www.tffky.org

U.S. House passes unborn victims bill

Washington (BP)—The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation Feb. 26 that would recognize an unborn child as a crime victim when he or she is injured or slain during the commission of a crime against the mother.

The representatives voted 254-163 for the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, also known as Laci and Conner's Law, H.R. 1997.

A companion bill is in the Senate, but that chamber has failed to act on the legislation after House passage in both 1999 and 2001. President Bush has indicated he will sign the bill if it arrives on his desk.

The House passed the bill after defeating a substitute amendment by Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., that would have stiffened penalties for a crime against a pregnant woman but would not have recognized the unborn child as a victim. The vote against Lofgren's amendment was 229-186.

The House bill is named after Laci Peterson and her unborn son, who were killed in December 2002. Sharon Rocha, Peterson's mother, has urged Congress to adopt the measure.

'Love the sinner, hate the sin'

Former homosexual: Phrase doesn't communicate beyond church walls

By Michael Foust
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—It's an adage that has become part of the national debate over homosexuality—"Love the sinner, hate the sin."

But does it get the point across?

Focus on the Family's Mike Haley thinks the phrase is harmful, at least to homosexuals.

"That makes sense to those of us that sit in the pews, but to those in the gay community it doesn't make sense," said Haley, a former homosexual himself who is now a Christian.

Haley spoke last month at Focus on the Family's Love Won Out conference in Nashville. His address focused on reaching homosexuals with the gospel.

"Because what you're saying to them is, 'I love you, but I don't love what you're doing.' They don't cognitively process that. They are defined by what they're doing," he said.

What to say vs. what to do

So, what should be said?

"You don't say anything," Haley said. "You show them that you love them. ... You show them that they're important to you."

Other oft-used words can be just as harmful, such as "choice" and "lifestyle," he said.

"The last thing I wanted was to be homosexual," Haley said. "Most people I know in the gay community don't desire to be homosexual. They found themselves there through the developmental processes, and it has gotten them to (a) place where they have adopted a homosexual orientation."

But the word "choice" isn't always a no-no. Haley said it can be used in conversations with a homosexual person who has begun dealing with his or her sin.

"Once we realize and find ourselves struggling with homosexual orientation, then we have the ability to choose. 'Are we going to respond to that temptation, or are we not going to choose to respond to that orientation?'" he said.

Haley said he uses the word "lifestyle" when talking to Christians but avoids it when debating homosexual activists. The word is confusing to homosexuals, he said, because everyone has a different lifestyle.

"Your lifestyle is different to them," he said. "Replace (lifestyle) with the word homosexuality. It fits every time."

The words that Christians use are key, Haley said.

"The language that we use in the Christian community is very, very important," he said. "What makes sense to you and me doesn't make sense to the gay community."

Christians must perform a balancing act when befriending and sharing the gospel with a homosexual person, Haley said, adding that in some instances there can be a fine line between ministering to a homosexual and condoning homosexuality.

For example, he said, a Christian working alongside a homosexual woman could minister to her if she breaks up with her partner. But that would not involve praying for the partner's return. Haley said it would be OK to pray with the woman by asking God, "Lord, you know



GAY MARRIAGE Joy Galloway (left) and Keltie Jones are married by Jim Illig, deputy marriage commissioner, in San Francisco's City Hall in February. As the debate over gay marriage heats up, a spokesman for Focus on the Family urged Christians to be careful about how they communicate their beliefs outside the church walls. (RNS/Reuters photo by Kimberly White)

how much she is hurting. Would you come in and show her how much you love her?"

Hand up and hand out

Christians must have a "hand up and hand out" approach in reaching homosexuals, Haley said. The hand up symbolizes standing for biblical truth that homosexuality is a sin. The hand out symbolizes welcoming homosexuals—as well as all sinners—into the church.

Joe Dallas, a counselor from California and a former homosexual, said the Christian church has failed in its outreach to homosexuals.

"If we are to effectively address homosexuality in the culture, the church must first repent of whatever immorality exists within her own ranks and she must recommit herself to biblical standards of holiness," he said.

The church, Dallas said, must repent of its hostility toward homosexuals and recommit to "bold love." In addition, the church must repent of being intimidated by homosexual activists and recommit to its prophetic role.

Small things can make a big difference, Dallas said. For instance, Christians can encourage leaders who take unpopular public stands on homosexuality. Christians also can take part in the national debate by calling talk shows and writing letters to the editors of newspapers. Dallas said that can help put a good face on conservative Christianity.

"Aren't you tired of letting somebody else speak for you?" Dallas asked. "You have a good mind, you know how to string together a few sentences. Give a balanced, compassionate, wise, relevant expression of the faith on this issue."

Churches playing key role in marketing 'The Passion'

Los Angeles (ABP)—Once upon a time, pastors warned churchgoers against the evils of the silver screen. Now they are packing believers and unchurched guests alike into movie houses across the land.

The difference is what's playing—"The Passion of the Christ" by Hollywood heavyweight Mel Gibson. With its R-rated, bloodstained recreation of the last hours of Jesus' life told in English-subtitled Aramaic and Latin, film insiders predicted Gibson's project would be a box-office flop. Instead, the movie opened with numbers rivaling Hollywood's biggest blockbusters—an estimated \$117.5 million on its first five days.

Churches are buying out entire movie houses to encourage their members to attend "The Passion" and take their unchurched friends with them.

Using Gibson's widely publicized movie for evangelism is part of a multifaceted promotional effort by Vista, Calif.-based Outreach magazine. The magazine's Web site offers a variety of products based on the film, ranging from direct-mail postcards to "affordable Passion-themed New Testaments."

Accompanying the information are endorsements by prominent evangelical leaders, including Billy Graham, James Dobson, Jerry Falwell and Southern Baptist Convention President Jack Graham.

In early January, Outreach screened the film at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif., where Rick Warren is pastor. Warren's church subsequently bought 18,000 tickets to offer members. When it made the tickets available on the church Web site, Saddleback sold nearly 10,000 in the first 48 hours.

Salvation Army unit's faith stance draws suit

New York (RNS)—Staffers of the Salvation Army in New York state have sued the government-funded organization, alleging that it has preached religious and sexual intolerance to its employees.

Current and former employees filed suit Feb. 24, accusing the charity of creating a hostile work atmosphere for employees who provide social services for thousands of children in the state, Associated Press reported.

The lawsuit filed by the New York chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union said the Salvation Army required employees to identify their church affiliation, promise to preach the gospel and permit their religious leaders to reveal private information to the Salvation Army.

In addition to its identification as a charitable organization, the Salvation Army is an evangelical church.

Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, said the Salvation Army may have a right to promote its religion but cannot do so with government money. She called the suit "the first major challenge to the coming wave of faith-based initia-

tives" of the Bush administration.

The organization receives \$89 million in government funding, much of which is used for child care.

Margaret Geissman, one of 18 plaintiffs, said she resigned her human resources management job last year after being harassed by her supervisors for declining to reveal the religions and sexual orientations of staffers.

Martin Garbus, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said the Salvation Army was mandating that all employees complete statements revealing their religious histories by the end of February.

In a statement reacting to the suit, the Eastern Territory of the Salvation Army said it is reviewing the complaint. "Our policies and procedures are entirely consistent with all applicable local, state and federal laws—all of which have been in effect for many years—applying to employment practices of religious organizations."

Reclaiming "ecclesiastical turf"

The lawsuit comes as the Salvation Army of Greater New York moves to reclaim what one official called "the ecclesiastical turf."

In the racially and religiously diverse mix of New York City, the Salvation Army has more often been seen as strictly a social service agency that assists the homeless and impoverished and runs a network of thrift shops.

Within the wider national organization, the New York division has often been seen as an anomaly because it tended to play down the group's religious tradition, a former employee said.

A story by The New York Times reported that some employees fear being fired, including Hindus, Jews and Muslims, an atheist, a self-described "lapsed" Salvation Army member, and several gays and lesbians.

Salvation Army officials have reiterated that organization—which calls itself "the Army of Compassion" and traces its roots back to the mission work of 19th century British evangelist and social worker William Booth—is a religious entity and is not shy about its distinct Christian identity.

"Everything that we do is related to our ministry, and is in fact our ministry," Maj. Guy Klemanski, a New York division official, told The New York Times.

Why give through the KBF?

59th anniversary good time to look at top 10 reasons

On March 8 the Kentucky Baptist Foundation will have served Kentucky Baptists for 59 years. As we begin our 60th year as Kentucky Baptists' only trust agency, I wanted to share with you the top 10 reasons people give through the KBF.

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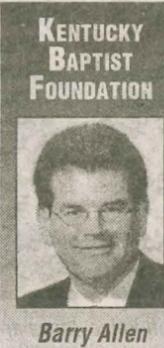
■ There is no cost for our gift planning consultation service, and our funds administration costs are below the market.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Put not your trust in money; rather put your money in trust." What better trust than one that honors Christ

and provides a perpetual benefit for His mission in this world through one or more of your favorite Baptist and other charitable causes?

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Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (888) 254-5701; www.kybaptistfoundation.org



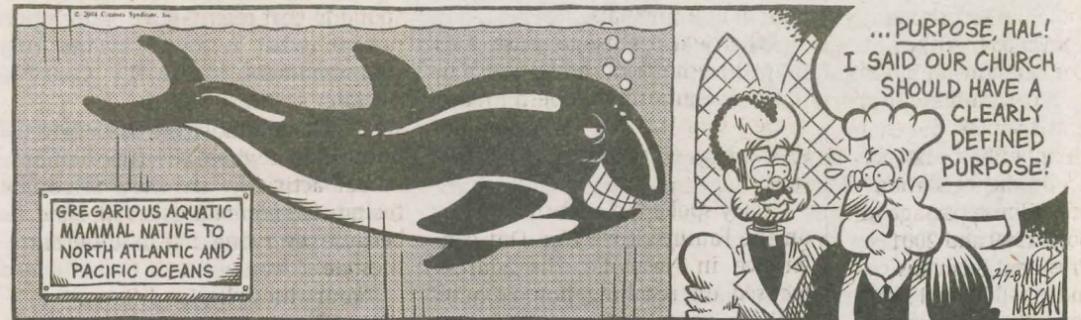
Barry Allen

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Across

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10		11	12	13	14			
		15			16	17		
18	19			20	21		22	
23		24		25		26		
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39			40		41			42
		43		44 45		46 47		
48 49			50	51				
52		53 54		55		56		
		57						

1 "We should be made ____" (Titus 3:7)

5 "Now I have prepared ... all manner of precious stones, and ____ stones in abundance" (1 Chronicles 29:2)

10 Each, abbr.

11 "I entreat thee also, true ____ fellow, help those women" (Philippians 4:3)

14 Federal Aviation Agency, abbr.

15 "This ____ said, I am able" (Matthew 26:61)

17 Laughter sound

18 "A meat offering baken in a ____" (Leviticus 2:5)

20 Unit of verse measurement

22 District of Colombia, abbr.

23 Letter after em

24 Timothy, for short

25 Hare

27 Railway, abbr.

28 Do, ____, mi

29 Kilogram, abbr.

30 "This ____ the day which the Lord hath made" (Psalms 118:24)

31 "All things ____ together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28)

32 The self, according to Freud

34 Common Era, abbr.

36 Louise, for short

37 Matured

38 Springfield's state, abbr.

39 "A time to weep, and a time to ____" (Ecclesiastes 3:4)

41 Pierre's state

42 Paid, abbr.

43 Capital of Tibet

46 "I, John ... was in the ____ that is called Patmos" (Revelation 1:9)

48 "As many as they found, both ____ and good" (Matthew 22:10)

50 "My fellow ____ in Christ Jesus" (Philem. 23)

52 "Thou shalt not muzzle the ____ when he treadeth out the corn" (Deuteronomy 25:4)

53 Gym class, abbr.

55 Iridium, chem. symbol

56 To-do

57 Joined himself to a ____ of that country (Luke 15:15)

19 "Lest at ____ time thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:6)

21 Tattered

22 "And the ____ were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26)

24 "Emptied her pitcher into the ____" (Genesis 24:20)

26 Two, prefix

31 "They ____ have repented long ago" (Matthew 11:21)

33 Exclamation of pain

35 "The four and twenty ____ ... fell down and worshiped God" (Revelation 19:4)

36 Californian city, abbr.

39 Work

40 Sound of laughter

44 South America's language, abbr.

45 Western state, abbr.

46 Independent Order of Foresters, abbr.

47 A blunt nose

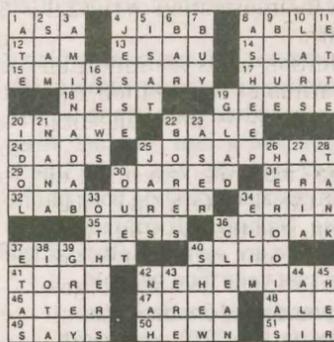
49 "Now also the ____ is laid unto the root of the trees" (Matthew 3:10)

51 Anger

53 Greek letter used for the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter

54 And, Lat.

Last week's solution



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Bush supports constitutional amendment barring gay marriage

Washington (RNS)—Adding to the fierce debate over the legality of gay marriage, President Bush announced his support last week for a constitutional amendment that defines marriage as a union of a man and a woman.

"Today I call upon the Congress to promptly pass, and to send to the states for ratification, an amendment to our Constitution defining and protecting marriage as a union of man and woman as husband and wife," the president said in remarks from the White House's Roosevelt Room. "The amendment should fully protect marriage, while leaving the state legislatures free to make their own choices in defining legal arrangements other than marriage."

The president's statement was immediately cheered by conservative Christian groups, who had been growing impatient for such a stand from the White House, and condemned by supporters of marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Bush said this kind of action is necessary in light of plans by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court to recognize gay marriages in May and the recent issuing of marriage licenses to same-sex couples in San Francisco and New Mexico.

"If we are to prevent the meaning of marriage from being changed forever, our nation must enact a constitutional amendment to protect marriage in America," the president said in a five-minute speech.

"Marriage cannot be severed from its cultural, religious and natural roots without weakening the good influence of society."

Tony Perkins, president of the conservative Family Research Council, welcomed Bush's remarks and pledged to work for the passage of an amendment by Congress.

"The president was right on target when he said activist courts have left the American people no other recourse," said Perkins, who is based in Washington. "The president was right to say enough is enough."

Aware of the range of opinions on this controversial issue, Bush called for a civil debate.

"Our government should respect every person and protect the institution of marriage," he concluded. "There is no contradiction between these responsibilities. We should also conduct this difficult debate in a manner worthy of our country, without bitterness or anger."

High court rejects theology student's suit

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court ruled Feb. 25 that states may not be compelled to fund college scholarships to study religion, a decision that could have implications for President Bush's "faith-based initiative" and voucher programs.

In a decisive 7-2 decision, the court also upheld the so-called "Blaine Amendments" in 37 state constitutions that set stricter standards for church-state interaction than what is found in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The court's larger-than-expected majority rejected the appeal of Joshua Davey, who saw his Washington state scholarship revoked after he declared a major in pastoral ministries at Assemblies of God-affiliated Northwest College.

"Training someone to lead a congregation is an essentially religious endeavor," Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote for the majority. "Indeed, majoring in devotional theology is akin to a religious calling as well as an academic pursuit."

The Washington state constitution prohibits public money from being spent on "any religious worship, exercise or instruction, or the support of any religious establishment."

The majority said Davey's rights to religious freedom and expression were not harmed by the state policy, as he had argued. "It imposes neither criminal nor civil sanctions on any type of religious service or rite," Rehnquist said.

The court, however, did not say

states were prohibited from offering such scholarships, only that they were not required to.

Justice Antonin Scalia, dissenting for himself and Justice Clarence Thomas, said being "singled out for special burdens on the basis of one's calling ... can never be dismissed as insubstantial."

"Let there be no doubt: This case is about discrimination against a religious minority," he wrote.

Davey, now a law student, was denied a \$1,500 Promise Scholarship in 1999 after he declared a double major in business administration and pastoral ministries. A lower court ruled for the state, while the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled for Davey in 2002.

That same year, the high court upheld controversial public voucher programs for use at private religious schools. Unlike the vouchers case, the Davey case did not ask whether

government could fund religious education, but whether it was compelled to.

In oral arguments last December, Justice Stephen Breyer warned that forcing states to fund theology studies would have "breathhtaking" consequences on voucher programs, and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor similarly worried about "a major impact."

Davey's lawyers at the American Center for Law and Justice, a law firm founded by religious broadcaster Pat Robertson, said the decision "clearly sanctions religious discrimination."

"It is troubling that the decision is irreconcilable with more than a half-century of Supreme Court precedent regarding the free exercise of religion," ACLJ chief counsel Jay Sekulow said. "In this case, Josh Davey simply wanted to be treated equally on the same terms and conditions as other scholarship recipients."

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Spring is an excellent time to schedule your visit to Oneida's campus

Each spring, summer and fall, many of our friends plan a trip to Oneida. In just a few weeks there will be signs of spring everywhere. The dogwood and redbud will be in bloom, new leaves will be on the trees and wildflowers will dress the forest floor. A scheduled spring trip to Oneida is a really great way to shake off the winter doldrums.

Let me tell you how easy it is to visit our campus. Some guests come with a friend. Others come in groups. Given enough time to plan, a church may want to encourage a Sunday school class or other group to come.

For those who are retired or want to take a day off work, a weekday visit may be best. Many will find a Saturday visit to be more convenient. Remember that most guests plan their visit to include our daily chapel service, but there will not be a service for our Saturday visitors. On weekdays we encourage you to arrive between 10:30 and 10:45 a.m. so you can use the rest rooms and stretch your legs before going to chapel. All of our students and teachers attend chapel every school day. We also have chapel services during the summer months when summer school is in session. At the end of this article I will give the number of a contact person to call about which days during the summer we have chapel.

Travel time varies from group to group, depending on the number of stops, the route chosen and whether or not the driver knows where he or she is going. Two of the most common reasons for late arrivals are traffic delays

on the interstate and the driver who thought he knew how to get here. I suggest caution with a driver who says he knows how to get here because he came 15 years ago. Memories can play tricks on us, so we will be happy to provide you with a map.

After chapel you will begin your tour, stopping in the dining room for lunch. The buffet-style meal is always free. The tour also includes a trip to our farm. Since many of our visitors were raised on farms or earned their livings from farming, this brings back many memories. If you choose, you can visit the gestation barn where nearly 1,600 pigs are born each year. It is not uncommon to see piglets actually being born. Our Saturday visitors will often be given a tour of the farm by one of our students.

You will end your tour at the craft shop. Most of the items in the shop have been made by volunteers who visit throughout the year. The sale of those items helps provide additional scholarship money for our students. From experience we know that most men would rather not spend much time in the craft shop, so they often fellowship outside.

Well, there you have it. It is not hard to plan a refreshing, informative visit to our campus. We do request that you schedule your trip so we will be prepared to give you a tour. Contact Missy Nichols at (606) 847-4111, ext. 248. If the line is busy, leave a brief message including your phone number and name. Nichols will contact you to confirm your visit. We are saving a place at the table for you. Don't let your food get cold.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; www.oneida-school.org; e-mail: president@oneidaschool.org

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

A God-led experience

North Carolina student continues learning at age 54

"I was in church nine months before I was born," North Carolina student Michael Plemmons states. Converted at age 11, he is grateful for the influence of Christian parents and followed Christ until high school.

"Sports was one of my downfalls. I was a good athlete in three sports and became popular with an older crowd," Michael said. "I allowed it to take me off course. In my junior year my father came down with cancer and my coach, who really looked out for me, left the school unexpectedly. It seemed everything that mattered crushed in on me, and I rebelled against school. In college I got into the party life and wasn't prepared to handle the world outside of Christ." Michael didn't attend classes much or officially withdraw. In the middle of the Vietnam conflict, he was drafted.

"I served two years in the Army, injuring a knee in Germany," Michael said. "I thought maybe it could be repaired, so I could play ball in college. I discovered they had removed all the cartilage."

While working in Charlotte, he

met Lana Rutledge; they married in 1977. In 1988, in the middle of a 14-year maintenance job, Michael was called by the Lord into ministry. He resisted for eight more years, returning to school to study electrical engineering and developing his own business.

"In 2000 I faced surgery on both knees," Michael said. "It was like the Lord saying, 'If you don't have any legs, what will you do?' I surrendered and enrolled at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute" in Hendersonville N.C.

Nearing graduation at Fruitland with an associate degree, Michael recalled the talk of younger students. "They had all these plans, and for many of them it didn't include school. It is ironic that the two oldest members of our class are at Clear Creek. The Lord told me I needed more equipping," he said. "It was a God-led experience. Once you start following Him, you know His will when He speaks."

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, KY 40977; (606) 337-3196

Relics or fakes?

Documentary claims ossuary owner planned antiquities fraud

By Michele Chabin
Religion News Service

Jerusalem (RNS)—Israeli police are publicly accusing “James ossuary” owner Oded Golan of leading an international counterfeiting ring that they say has produced and sold fake “antiquities” to private collectors and museums for more than a decade.

Golan is the antiquities collector who claimed to have the James ossuary—the burial box of Jesus’ brother—in his possession.

Members of the Jerusalem police and the Israel Antiquities Authority made the accusations during a television documentary prepared by the investigative news program “Ouvda” (“Fact”) with the assistance of the IAA.

But police have filed no formal criminal charges against Golan, and he has continued to insist on his innocence.

In 2002, Biblical Archaeology Review reported that an ossuary—an ancient stone burial box commonly used by Jews between 20 B.C. and 70 A.D.—bearing the Aramaic inscription “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus,” had been found.

The discovery touched off wide excitement, especially among Christians, and people flocked to view the relic when it went on display at a Canadian museum.

Although some archaeologists at first believed the ossuary was genuine because the stone box actually dates back to the time of James and Jesus, in 2003 experts from the IAA and elsewhere argued the inscription was a sophisticated forgery.

During the documentary, police and archaeologists recalled the trail of evidence that led them to the conclusion that Golan heads a forgery ring.

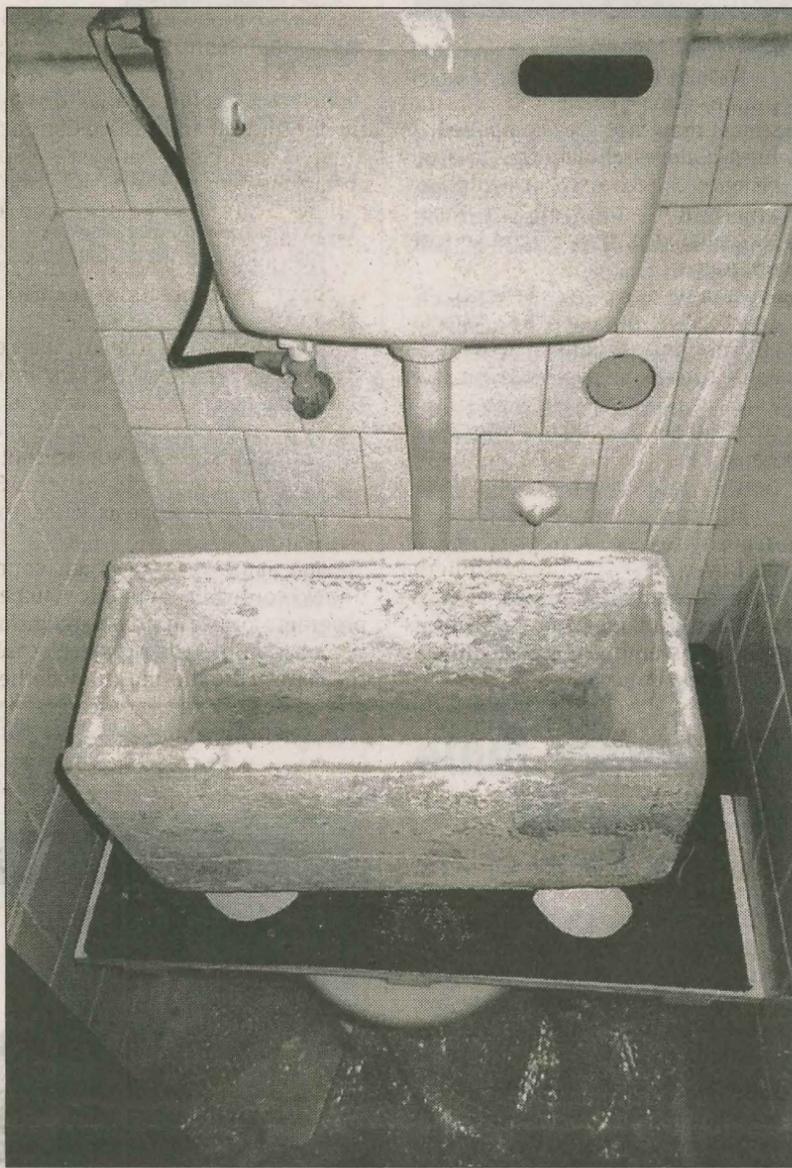
One document obtained by the program shows a letter from Golan to his lawyer, authorizing the lawyer to sell the Joash Inscription, a tablet—now considered by some experts to be a fake—that bears an inscription attributed to the biblical King Joash, to the Israel Museum.

The museum decided not to purchase the tablet, fearing it was not authentic. When the IAA attempted to examine it, the tablet could not be found. Acting on a tip, the police searched Golan’s home for the tablet but did not find it.

“Tools of the forgery trade”

Still, in the process of searching a storeroom located on the roof of Golan’s building, investigators discovered what they described as “tools of the forgery trade.”

“We discovered boxes and boxes of antiquities, and that wasn’t all,” Amir Ganor, director of the anti-theft unit of the IAA, said during the TV program. “Suddenly we saw materials, tools used by forgers, including molds, carving tools and chemicals used to artificially age artifacts.”



FLUSH WITH EVIDENCE? When police searched the home of “James ossuary” owner Oded Golan, they found the prized “relic” sitting on a toilet in a part of the house with what they called “tools of the forgery trade.” Golan, who has not been charged, insists the tools are the same that any collector would have. (RNS file photo)

Holding one of the molds discovered by the police that contained part of a small bronze statue still inside, Ganor said that an authentic ancient statue of this kind would cost “tens of thousands of dollars.”

Golan contends the tools are the same ones “you’d find in the possession of any collector. They can be used for preserving and repairing artifacts. I can’t imagine anyone using them to commit forgery.”

Gazing around the storeroom, Golan stressed it is accessible to the building’s other tenants, and noted “it doesn’t even have an electrical outlet. Look at this room. This is a big joke.”

Police said they believe Golan has been working with a master scribe from Egypt, whom they identified only as “R.”

“He (the scribe) has no knowledge of Hebrew, certainly not ancient Hebrew,” said Yonatan Pagis, deputy chief of the Jerusalem Police Department’s fraud division. “He only knows how to copy. He received the text, which he then copied onto the artifact.”

“Originally we were investigating only these two instances,” Pagis said, referring to the ossuary and the Joash Inscription. “Now it looks like we’re talking about dozens of artifacts, in partnership with others and over many years. This is a Pandora’s Box.”

“I’m being falsely charged,” Golan insisted.

Uri Steinberg, a spokesman for the Justice Ministry, said the case is still in police hands and would neither confirm nor deny an indictment was pending.

“We don’t yet have the case, so obviously we cannot inform the public whether we will press charges or not,” Steinberg said.

Magazine editor: Jury still out

Steven Feldman, managing editor of Biblical Archaeology Review, said in an interview he had not seen the program and therefore could not comment on its contents.

But he did say “we have not found the evidence presented against the authenticity of the artifacts in question, and in particular the James ossuary, persuasive so far. We have called for them to be re-examined by an international committee of scholars.”

He said the report questioning the ossuary’s authenticity released last summer by the Israel Antiquities Authority “has flaws in it. It contains contradictory statements and some of their scientific assertions have been challenged by other specialists.”

Uzi Dahari, deputy director of the IAA, insisted there is no need for the artifacts to be re-examined.

“We had two committees whose members unanimously agreed that the James ossuary is a forgery, 100 percent, without any doubt.”



KIRK CAMERON The former star of the TV show “Growing Pains” now hosts “The Way of the Master,” a show that offers evangelism ideas. (BP photo by James Dotson)

Former teen star Cameron now advocates for evangelism

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

Charlotte, N.C. (BP)—Many people will see him forever as the teen heartthrob of television’s “Growing Pains,” but today Kirk Cameron wants you to think of him as an evangelist who teaches Christians to help people recognize their need for Jesus.

The church too often has tried to sell non-Christians on the benefits of a relationship with Christ, Cameron noted, without first convincing them that they desperately need salvation.

Through a new reality-based TV series, “The Way of the Master,” Cameron relays evangelism strategies that can make the process natural and effective.

Cameron, who starred as Buck Williams in the movie version of the best-selling “Left Behind” novel, was one of the speakers during Elevate 2004 Feb. 19-21 in Charlotte, N.C.

Cameron shared his testimony of how he first was introduced to Christ at age 17 after accepting an invitation to church from a girlfriend.

“I can tell you that of all the things I’ve done in my life, of all the people I’ve met and the places I’ve been, absolutely nothing compares to the joy of knowing Christ, of being forgiven of my sin and of being in a right relationship with my Creator,” Cameron said. “There is nothing more important than that.”

It was through his own experiences sharing his faith with others that Cameron discovered some frustrations with contemporary evangelism. Too often, he said, the focus is more on worship of God than on being obedient to God’s command to share that relationship with others. He used the analogy of a firefighter at a burning building standing outside and watching while the building burns, hesitant to bother the people inside.

And when Christians do try to share their faith, the approach often is based on “selling” the benefits of Christianity rather than convincing people that they are lost without Christ.

“Until a man is humbled and brought to his knees in repentance, he will never experience the grace that God has extended to him on the cross,” Cameron said.

“When you talk to someone about how Jesus died on the cross ... how many times have you had them say, ‘Hey, I’ve got my own set of beliefs that I’m comfortable with,’” he said. “You feel like a salesman trying to sell them Jesus over and over and over, trying to find new ways to package Jesus so that they will want Him. It can be frustrating.”

Jesus’ method, however, was to point them to the law and let it convict them of sin, Cameron said.

“He was using the moral law to strip man of his self-righteousness, ... humble him and bring him to the point that he realizes that he has sinned and fallen short of God’s glorious standard,” he said.

“The Way of the Master” will air on NAMB’s FamilyNet network beginning this fall and currently is airing on other Christian networks. Downloadable resources are available through www.thewayofthemaster.com.

The conference was sponsored by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board to help adults ages 18-29 integrate faith and work and see their profession as part of God’s calling on their lives. Speakers included Sean Hannity, actress Victoria Jackson, Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and a range of other speakers from media, business, entertainment, law and other professions.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Wayne Jones

With the movie "The Passion of the Christ" currently in theaters, many Christian believers have the opportunity to talk about Christ as never before. The awareness that the movie is creating is providing an open door to speak about Christ openly and genuinely.

Simply asking the questions: "Did you see the movie?" or "What do you think about Mel Gibson making a movie like this?" can be the beginning of a significant discussion about who Christ is and the difference He can make in our lives.

The key to such a discussion is not to get bogged down in the peripherals, but go straight to the heart of the matter: What did you think about the Jesus presented in the movie "The Passion"?

Other questions and comments that can open the door for witnessing to friends, neighbors and co-workers include:

■ Do you think the Christ presented in the movie is like the Christ presented in the gospels of the New Testament? The Christ I know is like the one presented in the gospels because I have experienced the enormous love He shared with me.

■ Can you imagine facing a death like the one that Jesus experienced and a willingness to die for someone else's sins? Once I truly realized that Christ died for me to forgive my sins, then the whole thing made sense to me.

■ Jesus died a terrible death so that I would not have to spend eternity paying for my sins. He paid the price so you and I could live eternally with Him. What do you think about what Christ did for us?

Wayne Jones is associate team leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention church development/evangelism team

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BAGDAD**—Frank Heberlein, former manager of Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, died Feb. 6 in Alexandria, Va. He was 89. Heberlein joined the Cedarmore staff in 1972 as assistant manager and served as manager from 1977 until he retired in 1979. He is survived by his wife and three sons.

■ **GILBERTSVILLE**—East Marshall Church recently called **Rex Jones** as pastor.

■ **GREENVILLE**—Macedonia Church will hold revival services April 4, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m., and April 5-8, 7 p.m.

■ **KEVIL**—Providence Church recently called **Jeff Stewart** as pastor.

■ **LOYALL**—Martin Spicier resigned as music director of First Church to become associate pastor/music director of his home church in Texas.

■ **MARION**—Wayne Carter recently resigned as pastor of Emmanuel Church.

■ **MORTONS GAP**—Salem Church ordained **Guy Gibbons** to the gospel ministry Feb. 15.

■ **OLMSTEAD**—Dripping Spring Church will hold revival services March 14-18, 7 p.m., with **Steve Rutherford** as evangelist. For information, call (270) 726-3344. **Jeff Noffsinger** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Friendship Church will celebrate five years of ministry March 14. The **Hawkins Quartet** will lead in worship during the 9:30 and 11 a.m. services. For information, call (270) 534-1900. **Jason Browning** is pastor.

West End Church will hold revival services March 21-24 with **Jeremy Short** as evangelist. **Terry Sills** is pastor.

■ **SMITHLAND**—David Rogers recently resigned as pastor of Fellowship Church. He is available for supply, phone (270) 928-2488.

Southern Baptist missionary Janie House dies in Kenya at age 56

Nairobi, Kenya (BP)—Janie House, a Southern Baptist missionary in Kenya, died Feb. 21 in Nairobi after a brief illness. She was 56.

House was appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in 1981. Prior to missionary appointment, she directed Acteens and Baptist Young Women's programs for South Carolina Woman's Missionary Union.

Her life's passion was to get the gospel to those who had yet to hear, said Jon Sapp, leader of IMB work in East Africa.

"Janie House lived her life to get the good news of Jesus Christ to the people," Sapp said. "Her life was an example that I will use to illustrate points for years to come. She was an example of a woman who lived on 'living hope.'"

Several years ago, House had to return to the United States to battle cancer, Sapp said. Though many colleagues didn't think she would be able to return, she beat the cancer and went back to the

mission field in Africa she loved so much.

"Janie loved and was committed to people—and she was a giving person," Sapp added. "She gave her time, and she even gave her personal things to people in order to meet their needs."

House, a native of Tennessee, was a graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

She served as an administrative assistant to IMB regional leaders. During more than 22 years on the field, she also served as a missionary in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Cyprus and Thailand.

A memorial service was held Feb. 23 at Parklands Baptist Church in Nairobi, Kenya. Two memorial services in the United States are planned: March 13 at First Baptist Church of Mount Juliet, Tenn., and March 20 at Second Baptist Church of Liberty, Mo.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

5-6 Creative Ministries Festival-West, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

5-6 State Handbell Festival, Cave City Convention Center.

12-13 Creative Ministries Festival-East, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

12-13 Mission Service Corps Basic Training, KBC Building, Louisville.

13 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra auditions, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

10-20 Kentucky Changers, collegiate, Morehead.

19-20 Great Commission Prayer Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

19-20 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Cedarmore.

20 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra Auditions, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

20 Regional Keyboard Festival, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

20 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Jonathan Creek.

22 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, Trace Creek Baptist Church, Mayfield.

22-23 Welcome to Kentucky, KBC Building, Louisville.

23 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, First Baptist Church, Princeton.

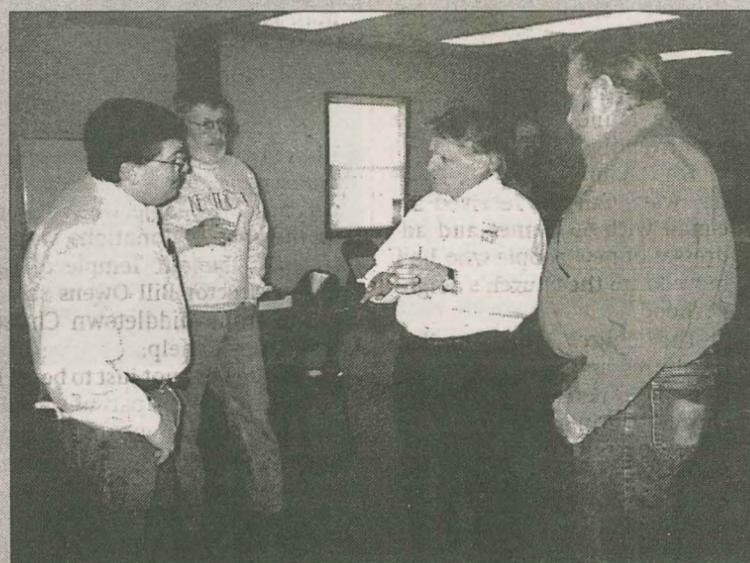
26-27 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

27 Girls in Action/Children in Action missions event, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

29 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, First Baptist Church, Morgantown.

30 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, Immanuel Baptist Temple, Henderson.

For more information, call (888) 266-6477 or click www.kybaptist.org



RACEWAY MINISTRIES John Roberts (right), director of Kentucky Raceway Ministries, and Barry McGee (second from right), chaplain for Racers for Christ, visit with participants at a recent prayer breakfast at Paint Lick Baptist Church in Warsaw. McGee, who also is chaplain for the National Hot Rod Association, was the speaker for the breakfast which helped kick off Kentucky Raceway Ministries' 2004 outreach efforts to fans attending Kentucky Speedway races. For information about the raceway ministry, contact Roberts at (859) 567-8601 or visit the ministry Web site at www.go2krm.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Older minister seeking pastorate. For resumé: Ted Nicholson, 321 Fox Lane, Jamestown, KY 42629, or (270) 343-3497.

FOR RENT: Two-bedroom/two-bath condo in Destin, Fla. Available March-August. (850) 837-8832 or 538-6769.

FOR RENT: Gatlinburg 2/2 condo. Close to town. Owners rent by day. (251) 666-2175, 689-9982. pdw@worldnet.att.net.

FOR SALE: Used theological books bought and sold. Contact Brent Cloyd, 25100 Indian Ridge Road, Sterling, IL 61081. (815) 622-7899, Cloyd@essex1.com. List sent e-mail only. Will buy pastors' libraries.

FOR SALE: 1989 Ford 15-passenger church van. \$2,800. (270) 358-4500.

FOR SALE: Religious books (thousands). Send e-mail for list: dudley@dam.net. Evangelist Bill Dudley, 1116 Lacy Drive, Lebanon, MO 65536. (417) 532-2665.

FOR SALE: Two deluxe, side by side crypts. Evergreen Cemetery. Garden of flowers. \$10,000 value, sell both \$5,000 to settle estate (terms). Call (502) 935-4042 or 593-4588.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister (paid position; grades 6-12) for Mexico Baptist Church in rural western Kentucky. Average Sunday school attendance: 135. Send resumé to MBC Youth Council, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064, Attn: Brent Highfil, or call (270) 965-2149. turnerhandler@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Northside Baptist, a steadily-growing church, is seeking an interim part-time minister of worship (salary) and a full-time minister of worship (salary and benefits package available). If interested, please send resumé to: Northside Baptist Church, 1800 Pear Orchard Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701. Resumé deadline: March 15.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader. Must be energetic, able to motivate and read music. For more information, call (270) 554-5148, or contact information@hardmoneybaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Brookside Baptist Church, 1351 Wilmore Road, Nicholasville, KY 40356. Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pulpit Committee, Cumberland Missionary Baptist Church, 408 Spring St., Cumberland, KY 40823.

SEEKING: Full-time associate minister of youth and families. Salary related to education and experience. Prior church youth ministry experience required; seminary degree preferred. Send resumé before March 31 to: Personnel Committee, Woodburn Baptist Church, PO Box 38, Woodburn, KY 42170.

SEEKING: Music director for Hustonville Baptist Church. Job description available upon request. If interested, call (606) 346-4931.

SEEKING: Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, Ky., is presently seeking a discipleship and evangelism pastor. Beacon Hill is a purpose-driven church with an average worship attendance of 600 and Sunday school of 525. You may visit our Web site at www.beaconhillbaptist.com for more information. If interested, please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, 274 Old Monticello Road, Somerset, KY 42503.

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LifeWay service has demographic data to help any size church

By Shawn Hendricks
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville (BP)—Matt Cannon used to think big-time ministry strategies were only for big-time churches.

The bivocational pastor of Cardiff Baptist Church in Rockwood, Tenn.—a church that averages 70 to 80 people in Sunday school each week—changed his opinion after logging onto LifeWay Prospect Services' Web site last fall.

LifeWay Prospect Services, produced by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, is designed to help leaders of all size churches transform their old-school outreach tactics into high-tech strategies.

"At first, I didn't know if (the service) could help us because we are so small," Cannon said. "I figured it would be more beneficial for big churches. We found it to be really user-friendly."

For about \$10 and a two-day wait, Cannon received an e-mail with 60 names and addresses of new people who had moved into the church's neighborhood.

The church then mailed brochures and other information to the new neighbors. The church continues to follow up on prospects, Cannon said, and leaders plan to gather more names in the coming months.

The Internet-driven service can be accessed at any time, not just during business hours. Church leaders can create custom-made lists of prospects for a variety of church gatherings.

Jacqueline Swartz, marketing supervisor for LifeWay Christian Stores, said effective community outreach should be a natural part of every church. Many churches don't get the results they want, she said, because they set their goals too low.

"Let's say a church orders 30 names and mails a letter to those people inviting them to worship," Swartz said. "The standard response rate in direct mail is only 2 percent, which measured on a mailing of 30 people only yields .6 of a person—not exactly what the church was hoping for."

Increasing the number of names in a list will help, she said. Another tip is to look beyond general types of lists and get more specific.

"The great thing about this system is it equips churches with the ability to reach out to anyone for any purpose," Swartz said.

For more information about the service, visit the LifeWay Prospect Services Web site at <http://lifeway.conclusivestrategies.com>.

Two churches meet as one

Black, white congregations try to bridge racial divide

By Scheri Smith
Louisville Courier Journal

Louisville—Temple of Faith Baptist Church was filled with the upbeat gospel sounds of the Disciple Choir of Middletown Christian Church as the two congregations gathered recently to celebrate their budding partnership and raise money for future projects.

Temple of Faith, located in what was once Bicknell Avenue Baptist Church, is a predominantly black church that is working to open its doors to different cultures, Senior Pastor Joel Bowman said.

Bowman teamed up with Pastor David Emery of Middletown Christian Church, which has a predominantly white congregation, to begin building relationships across cultural and geographic lines, Bowman said.

"The body of Christ has always been multiethnic," he said. "Our vision is to be a place for all people."

More than 60 members of the Disciple Choir sang multicultural praise songs for a packed house of perhaps 250 people. During a break in the music, donations were collected to benefit Temple of Faith. Choir director Bill Owens said the group from Middletown Christian was happy to help.

"We're here not just to be an East End church, but a part of the whole community," Owens said to the audience.

Emery said members of his church have been impressed with the community work Temple of Faith is doing. The church offers food, clothing and other support to its neighborhood.

"Our church is able to look at Temple and see an example of what we can be for the community," Em-



ery said. "I think we live in a time when we too easily separate ourselves."

Bowman said his church needed to have a benefit to help raise money for a variety of projects ranging from repairs on its building to purchasing choir robes. Plans for expanding parking space and the church building also are being considered, he said.

A reception was held after the concert, and both pastors said more programs and exchanges between the congregations are in the works. They are considering pulpit exchanges, in which the pastors preach at each other's church, and more concerts.

Former members of Bicknell Avenue Baptist were invited to the recent benefit as well. Those church members gave their building to Temple of Faith in 2001.

George Crowe of Fairdale, who attended Bicknell Avenue Baptist

for more than 40 years, said his former congregation just could not survive.

It was the first time he had returned to the church in almost four years. "There's a lot of memories here," he said. "I've seen miracles happen here."

Crowe, who was treasurer of the church for 12 years, said although he misses it, he's glad to see the new leaders working to include all people.

"You need to get all the people you can because that's why the church is here," he said. "I'm proud to see them do good."

Former Bicknell member and deacon Donald Tucker agreed.

"I think he's absolutely right," Tucker said of Bowman, whose goal is a multicultural congregation. "After all, we're all one body."

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INSPIRED A woman raises her hand in the air as the Disciple Choir of Middletown Christian Church sings. (© Louisville Courier-Journal photo by David Lutman)

Author: U.S revival begins with Christian men

By Joe Conway
Baptist Press

Orlando (BP)—A reformation of Christian manhood is necessary for North America to experience true spiritual revival, according to an author and men's ministry specialist.

"It really is about the men," Patrick Morley recently told a gathering of mission education leaders from across the U.S. and Canada.

"Can you imagine any way of getting society right without getting the church right? Can you imagine any way of getting the church right without getting the family right? Can you imagine getting the family right without getting marriage right? Can marriages be right without men being right?" Morley asked.

"Unless we address the issues of Christian manhood, the other systemic problems in the church will not go away," said Morley, who chairs the steering committee for the National Coalition of Men's Ministries.

Morley's Man in the Mirror min-

istries focuses on serving pastors and church leaders who reach men. A former business executive, Morley founded his men's ministry in 1991 after writing a best-seller with the same name, "Man in the Mirror," which has more than 3.5 million copies in distribution.

Speaking to state mission education leaders last month in Orlando, Morley noted that Jesus encouraged followers to make disciples, not workers.

"You can't stop a disciple from wanting to serve the Lord," he said. "They can't wait to get to work."

The major spiritual hurdle with men, however, is that they don't have the abundance and power of God in their lives because they are not rooted in their relationships with Christ, Morley said.

"They don't have enough Jesus for themselves, much less some left over to give to someone else," he explained.

As a result, he said, men in the average church in the United States are beginning to look too much like the average men in the world.

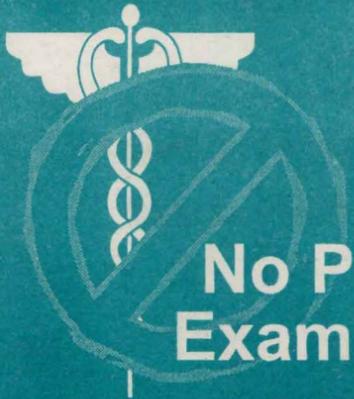
"What happens when a man's relationship with Jesus is not right?" Morley asked. "For every 10 men in U.S. churches, nine will have children leave the church, eight will not find their jobs satisfying, seven will look at pornography, six will pay only the monthly minimum balance on their credit cards, four will get divorced and all 10 will struggle to balance work and family. Only one of the 10 will have a biblical worldview," he said.

The church's role is crucial in helping men disciple other men, Morley said. "A man can't worship a God he doesn't know. How can a man share his faith unless he understands the gospel personally?"

"It's the same with loving one another and raising a godly family and serving in missions. I believe a disciple is someone who is called to walk with Jesus, equipped to live like Jesus and sent to work for Jesus," Morley said. "God is a sending God. How are men ever going to understand that unless we reach out to them and challenge them to follow?"

"Unless we address the issues of Christian manhood, the other systemic problems in the church will not go away."

Patrick Morley, founder of Man in the Mirror Ministries



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