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Study: Television depictions of God and faith usually focus on negative

Los Angeles (RNS)—A study of television's treatment of religion has found that matters of faith are addressed more in broadcast networks' shows, but mostly in a negative manner, the Parents Television Council has announced.

The Los Angeles-based council worked in conjunction with the National Religious Broadcasters to release the study, titled "Faith in a Box: Entertainment Television and Religion."

Researchers found that NBC led other major networks in negative depictions of faith, with 9.5 negative treatments for every positive treatment. It was followed by Fox, with 2.4 negative depictions for each positive one and 1.2 negative for each positive treatment by both WB and ABC.

"Religion and the public expression of faith is a crucial element in the lives of most Americans," council president Brent Bozell said in a statement. "Our findings should challenge Hollywood to accurately reflect this in television content."

Council analysts reviewed prime-time entertainment programs on seven commercial broadcast networks—ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, PAX, UPN and WB—between Sept. 25, 2003, and Sept. 24, 2004.

Analysts found that 2,385 hours of programming on those networks contained 2,344 treatments of religion—ranging from a brief prayer to "the actual presence of God in a scene." That demonstrated a marked increase from the council's last study on religion in 1997, when researchers found 551 treatments of religion in 1,800 hours of programming.

While references to faith were the most common related to religion, the study also looked at depictions of clergy and devout laypeople.

When clergy were depicted, 36.2 percent of the time they were negative, compared to 14.6 percent positive. Depictions of devout laity were 33.3 percent negative and 20.4 percent positive.

Frank Wright, president of the National Religious Broadcasters, said of the findings: "This comprehensive study shows a clear disparity between the religious beliefs of most Americans and how these beliefs are reflected in television programming."

Grim work



COFFIN BUILDING In the wake of the tsunamis that killed thousands across southern Asia, the mayor of Krabi, Thailand, has asked local businesses and organizations to build larger coffins. Thai coffins are not big enough to hold the bodies of many of the westerners. Members of Krabi Baptist Church are among those who have responded. (BP photo)

Baptists focus on least-helped disaster victims

Krabi, Thailand (BP)—Just a small cement building, Krabi Baptist Church is still adorned with colorful lights and tinsel decorations from Christmas.

A banner proclaiming "Joy to the World" hangs in the baptistery.

Outside in the parking lot, several of the laymen are busy sawing and nailing together rectangular pieces of plywood. Rough coffins are taking shape.

"We are doing what we can," said Pastor Dusit.

He explained that the mayor of Krabi asked local businesses and organizations to build larger cof-

fins. The standard local coffins are not big enough to hold some of the larger-framed foreigners killed the day after Christmas by one of the worse natural disasters ever seen.

In Thailand, the body count continues to rise in the coastal areas decimated by a fierce tsunami triggered by the cataclysmic earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, on Dec. 26.

While much of the world's attention focuses on the damage and death at world-famous tourist destinations such as Thailand's popular Phuket Island, Southern Baptist relief workers have begun to mobilize

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to reach areas virtually untouched by even local governments.

The coordinator for Southern Baptist disaster relief in Asia said that while the tragedy is terrible everywhere, those areas that attract the most capital will rebuild fastest.

□ See Baptists focus on ... *Page 6*

Cumberland College has become 'University of the Cumberlands'

Williamsburg—Cumberland College officials announced last week that the school's undergraduate program and several other entities now will be referred to under a new name: University of the Cumberlands.

"The mission of our college will not change; only the name, which is more reflective," said Jim Taylor, president of Cumberland College.

Trustees approved the name change at their October board meeting but waited to announce the new name to coincide with the anniversary of the school's founding, Jan. 7, 1889.

The university name will refer to four entities: Cumberland College, the undergraduate liberal arts program; the Center for Leadership

Studies, which involves students in service opportunities; the Hutton School of Business; and a graduate and professional education program.

University of the Cumberlands offers four baccalaureate degrees and a master of arts in education.

Because of the collection of entities, the school has long qualified as a university, Taylor said. "We've just never used the term before."

Taylor said the new name will coincide with a more expansive offering of Internet learning opportunities.

Internet-based classes will help the school be more responsive to Kentucky Baptists, he said, because bivocational pastors will have more access to courses in religion, Greek

and Hebrew.

"The world is changing rapidly, and we have to change with the times," he said. "We have one little program on the Internet. It has over a hundred students and several of them are from California.

"It doesn't matter whether you're in New York City or the hills of Appalachia. You now have access to the world via the Internet."

According to an article in the May 6, 2003, issue of the Washington Post, more than 160 colleges have changed their name to become universities over the past decade.

"In Kentucky, Bellarmine, Brescia, Campbellsville, Kentucky Christian, Spaulding, etc., have all gone through this metamorphosis," Taylor said.

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, January 5

McCall, Chapman square off over BWA

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (ABP)—Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and Duke McCall, one of his predecessors, continue to publicly debate funding for Baptist World Alliance.

Chapman says the fact that retired SBC leaders are now raising money for the Baptist World Alliance from SBC churches is "astounding and regrettable." McCall says Chapman and others opened the door for those solicitations by defunding BWA.

"You should have told the SBC Executive Committee that severing connections with the BWA would leave us free to ask Southern Baptist churches and individuals to replace the funds withheld," McCall told Chapman in an open letter Dec. 21.

McCall affirms BWA funding

McCall, former president of BWA and former president of two SBC seminaries, convened a meeting of retired SBC leaders Dec. 4 in Atlanta to find ways to replace the money—until recently \$425,000 a year—the Southern Baptist Convention formerly provided BWA.

The SBC was a founding member of the alliance in 1905 and its largest member and fund-provider. But conservative Southern Baptist leaders who led the defunding effort say

BWA harbors theological liberalism, a charge denied by BWA and many of its member groups worldwide.

Chapman, in a statement released Dec. 13, said the makeup of the Atlanta meeting, as well as other indicators, demonstrate the moderate theological slant of BWA. "When you connect the dots, it is clear that the BWA leadership will remain moderate-leaning in its relationships and theology and opposed to the best interests of Southern Baptists," Chapman wrote.

In his open letter of response, McCall said Chapman "invented charges" of liberalism against BWA and Denton Lotz, its general secretary, in order to convince Southern Baptists to end their 99-year relationship with the group. The SBC's real motivation for the break, McCall said, was that it opposed admission of the rival Cooperative Baptist Fellowship into BWA.

"The truth is that Chapman and his colleagues were members of the BWA General Council," McCall wrote. "But they could not run the BWA as they do the SBC."

McCall, 90, who retired as president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1982, said the SBC leaders misrepresented the views of CBF, American Baptists and other BWA member groups. Chapman, he added, "attacks Dr. Denton Lotz, the general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, with innuendoes

and untruths. Lotz is a biblical fundamentalist, as am I, who believes the Bible should be read under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is not an ammunition dump of verses and phrases to defend one's turf or attack opponents.

"Remember, 'mud slung is ground lost,'" McCall added. "The SBC is a great body of Christians who ought to make decisions on the basis of truth."

Chapman: "Unwarranted" attack

In a statement Dec. 29, Chapman responded, "I regret that McCall chose to speak against the decision of the committee and the convention and in support of the BWA, but I honor his right to do so.

"At the same time, his personal attack upon the integrity of the committee members and the process is unwarranted," Chapman added. "McCall is speaking from a vacuum. He has not been an active participant in the BWA in recent years. He is parroting what he has been told by BWA officials.

"In contrast, most of the study committee members have been active participants in the BWA and have had close interaction with those from whom McCall is getting his information," he declared. "His charge that the committee recommended withdrawal because its members could not run the BWA has no basis in fact."

LifeWay to host ministry seminars at SBC

Nashville (BP)—Messengers to this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Nashville will have opportunities to attend ministry training sessions and participate in door-to-door evangelistic efforts.

The seminars will be held June 23-24 as part of "Fast 50 ... 50 Seminars for Growing Leaders," hosted by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

LifeWay also will serve as a co-sponsor of Crossover Nashville June 17-19 along with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Crossover leaders anticipate more than 12,000 participants including 10,000 volunteers who will

conduct door-to-door evangelism June 18.

Fast 50 will target pastors, church staff, denominational leaders and lay leaders. The event will feature 50 seminars led by specialists from SBC entities and successful ministry practitioners. Seminars will cover such topics as evangelism, discipleship, Sunday school, general church leadership, age-group leadership and mission leadership.

The program will include addresses by SBC President Bobby Welch and LifeWay President James Draper as well as programs for children and youth.

Fast 50 participants will have the opportunity to attend four seminars

each day. Online registration is available beginning Feb. 1 at sbc.net. The registration fee is \$50 per day per person or \$80 for both days. Registration for children's and youth programs is \$12 per child with a limit of \$24 per day per family.

Crossover Nashville will feature Southern Baptists from across the nation conducting door-to-door evangelism in conjunction with 200 Nashville-area churches.

Increased attendance is expected partly in response to Welch's "Everyone Can Kingdom Challenge for Evangelism" national bus tour.

To register for Crossover Nashville, call 1-877-324-8498 or e-mail everyone@lifeway.com.

Chapman invites Baptists to offer SBC nominations

Nashville (BP)—Southern Baptists across the nation are urged to recommend individuals to serve on various Southern Baptist Convention committees and boards of trustees, according to SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman.

Through a newly-posted Web page option, the SBC Committee on Nominations has begun receiving names to consider for the trustee and committee vacancies that will occur at the end of the SBC's June 21-22 annual meeting in Nashville.

Individual Southern Baptists can visit the convention's Web site, www.sbc.net, and click on the option, "Recommend SBC Trustees or Committee Members." A recommendation form will appear on the screen, and it can be downloaded and faxed or filled out and filed electronically.

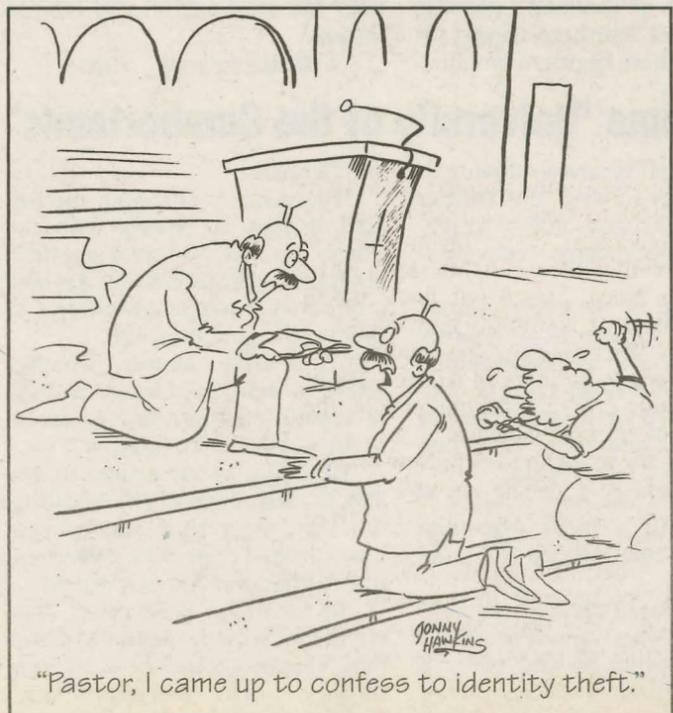
"The strength of the Southern Baptist Convention is its people," Chapman said. "None are more important than grassroots Southern Baptists who faithfully serve the Lord, often in anonymity, in their churches and communities. This process is open to any and every Southern Baptist who is a member in good standing of a Southern Baptist church."

The nominations process, as dictated by the SBC Bylaws, begins when the SBC president appoints the Committee on Committees. That committee then nominates two Southern Baptist church members from each qualified state to form the Committee on Nominations. Once approved by SBC messengers, the Committee on Nominations reviews potential nominees and presents a slate of nominees at the next SBC annual meeting.

The Committee on Nominations typically seeks candidates who embrace the Baptist Faith and Message as the representative confession of faith among Southern Baptists and candidates whose home church has regularly given a substantial percentage of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program.

"Trustees have a critical role in the life of the Southern Baptist Convention," Chapman noted. "Year after year, trustees are needed who come with a love for our Lord Jesus, a desire to please Him, strong biblical convictions and a determination to review each issue upon its own merit and prayerfully conclude how to vote on matters before the body that ultimately could affect the entire convention and beyond."

In addition to trustees, individuals may recommend names for the Committee on Order of Business, a standing committee of the convention.



BAPTIST DIGEST

College controversy escalates.

Trustees of embattled Louisiana College will meet Jan. 17 to try again to elect a president, but they likely will be sued to prevent him from taking office. Joe Aguillard, chair of the Louisiana Baptist school's education division, will be nominated as president, trustee chair Timothy Johnson announced Jan. 6. Critics say Aguillard's nomination—and likely election—are in violation of the school's bylaws, claiming the search committee was illegally appointed. A group of school alumni and supporters plan to file suit this week to stop the election.

Billy Kim retires from pastorate.

Billy Kim, outgoing president of Baptist World Alliance, retired Dec. 19 after 45 years as senior

pastor of Suwon Central Baptist Church near Seoul, Korea. Since 1960, Kim has led the church to grow from 10 members to more than 15,000. Kim, BWA president since 2000, will preside over BWA's centennial Baptist World Congress in England this July. David Coffey, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, has been nominated to succeed Kim as BWA president.

Price named seminary dean.

Craig Price has been named dean of students at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. A pastor of churches in Arkansas, Florida, Georgia and Texas for 25 years, he is a graduate of the University of Florida and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

'Quiet servant' Watts retiring from ministry of details

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Louisville—B.J. Watts' ministry at the Kentucky Baptist Convention has been one of details.

Described by colleagues as a "quiet servant," Watts' work involves blueprints, bids, postage, mileage, inventories and other minutiae that equip ministries to and through Kentucky Baptists across the state and around the world.

After more than 15 years with the KBC, Watts retired at the end of last month.

"I've always considered him one of the most loyal servants I've ever worked with," said Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC's business services team.

Watts joined the KBC in 1989 as director of administrative services. In 1994 he became director of support services.

He has tracked 647,000 miles traveled in one year by 32 KBC-owned vehicles. As supervisor of the mailroom and switchboard, he has overseen the journeys of more than 415,000 pieces of correspondence each year and 800 telephone calls every day. Whether it was a water leak, major renovation or construction, he has maintained two ministry centers in Eastern

Kentucky, the Baptist buildings in Louisville and Baptist student centers on 10 Kentucky college campuses.

Tennessee to Indiana to Kentucky

A native of East Tennessee and graduate of Carson Newman College, Watts' full-time Baptist service began in Indiana. He said Harmon Moore, former executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, encouraged him to enter denominational work.

Previously employed by the Stokely Van Camp company, Watts was a Gideon, active Baptist layman and treasurer of the Central Indiana Baptist Association. Moore retired in 1980 and his former associate became executive director. Moore encouraged Watts to apply for the vacant position.

Watts said fulltime Christian service was gratifying because it is work "that can make a difference in someone else's life."

His service in Indiana was cut short when he and six colleagues learned their positions were being eliminated. Watts found himself out of work with only a few

months' severance pay.

Barry Allen, now president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, was KBC business manager in 1989 when he hired Watts.

Allen said he was impressed by Watts' faith-filled response to his job crisis. "One of the best testimonies I got on B.J.," Allen said, recounted how Watts "bore that burden with grace."

Allen said Watts and his wife, Jan, "were convinced that this vocational crisis was an opportunity to find God's will for their future. They never wavered."

God's provision did not seem to surprise Watts. "The Lord just takes care of those He loves," he said with a smile.

A "minister's heart"

Allen said that as KBC ministries expanded, demands on the business services team to support those ministries also grew tremendously, but Watts' servant mindset remained consistent.

"B.J. had the ability to stay connected to the mission even though he wasn't out there on the front lines," Allen said. "The mission was his motivation for doing what he

was doing."

Ashby agrees. "He's always had a minister's heart," he said. "He will drop anything at anytime to help."

Watts said one of his favorite duties was working with college ministers to maintain the Baptist student centers. During his tenure, he guided the construction of three new centers from blueprint to ribbon-cutting.

"They do a great work," Watts said. "I've been able to experience that."

Even in retirement, Watts will be a KBC detail man, continuing to serve on a contract basis. One of his duties will be to travel to the disaster relief facility in Lincoln County where equipment and vehicles are stored.

"I'll be driving (the vehicles) a hundred miles a month, just to keep them going," Watts said. Some people might consider the task small, but the next time a flood, tornado or other disaster compels the Kentucky relief team to spring to action, the engines will be humming thanks to Watts.

Even though they may never meet him, future disaster victims—like so many people affected by his work—will be glad Watts was there.



Watts

Disaster relief training available

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's men's ministry department is planning three training sessions for prospective disaster relief volunteers.

The free training is required for many jobs at disaster relief operations.

Upcoming training will be held in:

■ **Bowling Green**, Jan. 25, 6-9 p.m., at the Warren Baptist Association office. For more information, call (270) 842-4160.

■ **Middletown**, Jan. 29, 9 a.m.-noon at Woodland Baptist Church. For more information, call Charles Gregory at (502) 339-0150.

■ **Harrodsburg**, Feb. 17, 6:30-9:30 p.m., at the Mercer Baptist Association office. For more information, call (859) 734-9682.

Louisville church raises awareness, hoping to reduce violence

By Scheri Smith
The Louisville Courier-Journal

Louisville—The 69 white crosses that stood in front of Highland Baptist Church in memory of Louisville homicide victims in 2004 were removed Jan. 2 in the hope that the new year will bring peace.

The crosses, which were hammered into the front yard of the church on Cherokee Road at Grinstead Drive about a month ago by members of the congregation, were reminders of those who died, said Pastor Joe Phelps. But now the church wants to start fresh, he said.

"We're here today to say goodbye to 2004 and to start with a clean slate," Phelps said during the cross-removal ceremony. "These crosses also symbolize power—the power of love over hate."

Phelps, who said his church has been displaying such crosses since 1997, is a member of the No Murders Metro campaign, which is a coalition of ministers who call attention to violence.

Since February, the group has held vigils a week after each homicide at the site of the killing, and some of the churches have displayed crosses.

Although such vigils may continue, Phelps said churches should do more.

"We can't simply be reactive in the face of violence," he said. "Simply locking people up is not enough."

Phelps announced that his congregation and other churches involved with No Murders Metro will initiate three programs this year to try to prevent violence.

First, they will create a mentor/sponsor program for people getting out of prison. Second, they will challenge at least 100 people to



CROSS REMOVAL Members of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville remove crosses from the church's lawn. The crosses represented each of the 69 homicides in Louisville last year. The church participates in the No More Murders metro campaign. (© Louisville Courier-Journal photo by Durell Hall Jr.)

get involved with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. And last, they will set up partnerships between 10 churches in high-crime areas and churches in the suburbs.

This year, No Murders Metro also is asking at least one member church in each of the eight Louisville Metro Police divisions to display crosses.

Although most of the violence occurred outside the church's neighborhood, it has touched the congregation, said member Heidi Stoll. Stoll, who lives in the Tyler Park neighborhood, said the August murder at the Arcadia Apartments in southern Louisville of James Kuch Mangui, a 24-year-old Sudanese refugee who was a member of the church, opened people's eyes.

"It has happened here, and I think it really brought it home," Stoll said. "We're doing this because it raises awareness in our community."

Clay Calloway, who is a member of No Murders Metro and is the head of the Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition, was guest preacher for the Jan. 2 event. Calloway spoke to the Highland Baptist congregation and then read the names of homicide victims as members pulled the crosses from the ground.

"I'm so glad that we wanted to have an interfaith response to those murders," Calloway said during his sermon. "We're putting the right foot forward."

In addition to the initiatives,

congregation members also were asked to take a Christian vow of nonviolence. Terry Taylor, who represented the group Interfaith Paths to Peace, passed out fliers asking people to commit to nonviolence.

"We're always responding; we need to be more proactive," Taylor said. "We're teaching people the power of nonviolence."

Taylor, who lives in New Albany, Ind., said people throughout the Louisville area can find strength in nonviolence.

"They need to go to their churches, synagogues or mosques," he said. "Only when we're spiritually connected do we see how we're all connected to each other."

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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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Candid convictions

I'm amazed at the sense of outrage expressed by some of the letters concerning Hershael York's appointments. I hope that people aren't so naive as to think that all these years when "non-conservatives" were being elected president that they were bending over backwards to maintain theological balance in their appointments. The main difference between many past presidents and York is that he was very candid about his convictions and intentions before being elected.

Let's not be naive, since a Kentucky Baptist Convention president only has a year of tenure, the only way he can do justice to those who voted for him would be to nominate people consistent with his convictions.

For those who think his appointments will create imbalance, you have to look at it from a five- or 10-year perspective. Some years you will have a score of non-conservatives appointed and some years you will have conservatives.

I sincerely hope that the same people concerned about York's appointments are also concerned with

the perceived imbalance within the trustees of certain Baptist colleges as well as the Western Recorder. Perhaps things are just now becoming balanced.

Kevin Hash
Bowling Green

SBC's exclusivity

I am Baptist by choice and a member of Southern Baptist Convention churches since accepting Christ at age 8.

Faith is personal and individual and it is not likely that any two Christians understand, practice or express their faith exactly the same.

I believe most Christians agree that the Bible is inspired by God and if we study it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is a perfect tool for directing our lives. This is an important area of agreement.

On the other hand, I don't feel it is important for us to all agree on whether the Bible is inerrant or infallible. As Christians, we can always find areas of theological disagreement. However, I think we earnestly and diligently should seek common ground that will allow us to work harmoniously with all Christians

even if we have some differences.

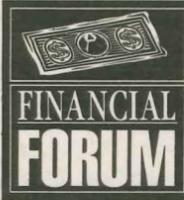
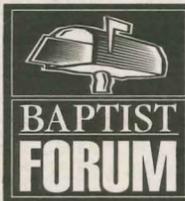
Southern Baptists share with other Christian denominations important tenets of our faith. On that basis we should join with other Christians in the U.S. and worldwide in following Christ's Great Commission and Great Commandments.

Leaders in the SBC, however, led a campaign to withdraw from the Baptist World Alliance because some Baptists in that organization did not meet SBC standards.

Further, to Christian Churches Together in the USA, a fledgling ecumenical organization that aims to bring Catholics, mainline Protestants, Orthodox Christians, black churches, evangelicals and Pentecostals together, Martin King, spokesman for the North American Mission Board, said the SBC is not interested in joining with you because, "We don't do ecumenism."

Do Southern Baptists further the cause of Christ when we take actions that isolate us from other Christian groups? Do we only have interest in souls that will become Southern Baptists first? Will God ask if we trusted His Son or welcome us into heaven simply because we are Southern Baptist?

Terry Ashbrook
Louisville



FAMILY

More money is not the answer to life's problems

By Jeremy White

Have you found yourself wondering, actually wishing, about receiving a large lump-sum of money?

It's fun to consider what you might do with it, all. However, avoid the seductive trap of thinking more money will solve your problems.

Consider the recent difficulties of Jack Whittaker. We first heard his name when he made history on Christmas Day 2002 as the winner of the richest undivided lottery jackpot in U.S. history. With his \$113 million after taxes, he promised to give to churches and not let the money change him.

I am not judging Mr. Whittaker. And I certainly do not wish him any more trouble. But his life—with its extremes—reminds us that more money does not bring more peace.

In the two years after his winning, Whittaker says he is constantly barraged by charitable requests. He has endured several thefts—one where \$545,000 in cash was stolen outside a strip joint. He has been arrested twice for drunken driving and has been ordered to go into rehab.

Two separate lawsuits claim he assaulted or injured others at bars and racetracks. He threatened and assaulted a bar manager, was fined \$100 and ordered to attend weekly Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. Most notably, his only grandchild, Brandi, recently was found dead from an apparent drug overdose.

Still, many of us would like to try the high life on earth just to see what it is like. Jesus reminds us of the truth, however, in Luke 12:15, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

The Bible does not condemn prosperity, but Jesus said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

Mrs. Whittaker was quoted in recent news accounts as saying, "Had I known what was ahead, I would have torn up that lottery ticket."

May we pray for the Whittakers. May we also be reminded of the psalmist David's words in Psalms 16:2, "You are my Lord; apart from You I have no good thing."

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. See his free weekly financial tip on his Web site at www.consultcpa.com.

New lumps for the new year

By Judy Woodward Bates

Dora, Ala. (BP)—On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being "I can't juggle one more thing," how crammed-full is your life?

With a new year under way, maybe it's time to sit down and make a list of all your responsibilities and see which ones can be eliminated or better managed.

One of the greatest sins running rampant among the people of God is the sin of busyness—we're so busy "gettin' while the gettin's good."

We take time to go to work at our secular jobs, but do we take time to witness while we're on the job? Many of us take plenty of time and money to have our hair done, nails

done, even facials and massages, but do we take time to participate in worship or to attend classes that help us understand and draw closer

to the Creator of the universe? How financially generous are we with others when we are so liberal with ourselves?

In the midst of a fiery chapter concerning immorality within the church, the Apostle Paul admonishes the believers to clean up their acts. Before Paul concludes with, "Expel the wicked from among you" (1 Corinthians 5:13), he warns the church about being prideful and about dealing with the clutter in their lives. Sexual immorality and busyness: you mean either sin is dis-

FIRST PERSON

Disaster relief amid world tragedy

"The devastation in the areas hit by the Asian tsunami was greater than any war or disaster area that I have ever seen," Secretary of State Colin Powell said. Some people have indicated that the tsunami is the world's greatest tragedy.

It is hard to get our minds and hearts around something so massive and so unlike anything we've ever experienced. I am reminded of the destructive power of flash floods in Eastern Kentucky. Water can rush out of a large hollow with enough force to move houses and bend railroad tracks.

But this doesn't compare to the loss of more than 150,000 people. Our hearts are especially broken over the loss of so many children. Some estimates are that as many as one-third of the victims were children.

Many of us have wondered how we can best help during this difficult time in our world. We can respond

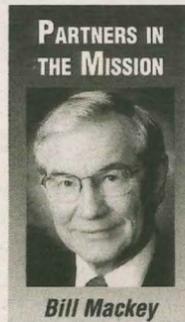
through prayer, giving, participating and seeking the face of God.

We must pray for the relief who are in shock and for all relief efforts. Pray for the Southern Baptist international missionaries and relief workers who are facing more destruction and death than anyone can imagine.

It is gratifying to know that we as Southern Baptists already had missionaries in place who were ready to respond as soon as the tragedy occurred. This in itself is a tribute to the missions focus and faithfulness in giving by Baptists over the years.

Pray that God will raise up people, corporations and organizations who will help with long-term recovery. Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin has expressed his concern about long-term recovery after the initial waves of assistance.

Pray also for the arrangements



Bill Mackey

Couples who 'stay connected' can enhance communication

Q: My wife and I aren't having the greatest communication. Can you give us some hints?

Stay connected—the emotional bridge to communication. Try these two simple steps: Kiss each other for at least 10 seconds when one of you leaves for the day. Go out on a date together once a week.

MARRIAGE

Practice positive communication—it simply works better than negative. Keep at least a 5-to-1 ratio of positive to negative statements.

Couples are in the danger zone when they practice the "harsh start-up," where the first three minutes of a conversation are words of anger and accusations. Such patterns greatly hurt a relationship.

David Olson, in the book, "Empowering Couples," gives a good reason why positive communication is so much more effective than negative: "It takes the average person about 48 percent longer to understand a sentence using a negative than it does to understand a positive or affirmative sentence. This is confirmation of something every successful person knows: The secret of good communication is positive affirmation."

Take turns talking and listening. Remember, communication has two basic parts: assertiveness and active listening. Assertiveness is giving "I" messages, owning your own feelings and sharing your preferences. Active listening is paraphrasing back until the speaker knows that you "got it."

Couples often argue because they really didn't get what the other person was trying to say in the first place. Generally speaking, we can make requests and give gifts in marriage. Marriage is not about making demands and acquiescing.

To get good coaching in these marital skills, find a good marriage and family therapist or good marriage education options in your church or community. Marriage is too important not to invest the time to learn the skills to make it successful.—James Stillwell

Q: Should I encourage my child to play high-level competitive sports?

Chris West played on Louisville's 1986 NCAA basketball championship team. He and his wife, Robin, live in St. Matthews. Chris works for the Louisville Fire. In his spare time, he coaches the St. Matthews Elementary basketball team.

PARENTING

Not surprisingly, the two West children, Shelby and Chris, are good ball players. Shelby is playing AAU ball, and has several area schools vying for her talents.

Chris wants to encourage his children to enjoy sports. He recognizes their talent and would like to see them maximize their abilities. However, he also wants to be careful not to push them to participate. For Chris, finding parental balance comes down to three questions:

Do you want to do it? Too often, parents project their own desires and experiences on their children, especially in the sports arena. Make sure your child wants to play and is not just trying to please you and live up to your expectations. Be willing to let them pursue other interests.

Is it fun? Playing high-level competitive sports requires lots of hard work and discipline. However, sports also should be fun. Make sure your child enjoys the game and feels that the joy of playing the game makes the work of preparing and training worthwhile.

Are you learning? If your child expresses the desire to play at the next level, make sure he or she understands the importance of continuing to learn and improve. Look for coaches who are good teachers. Choose leagues, clinics and resources that will challenge your child to practice and continue to develop as a player.—David Garrard

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Tsunami relief: Aiding 'the least of these'

Do you recall when you first heard about the horrific human tragedy unfolding across South Asia two weeks ago?

Initial news reports about the Dec. 26 earthquake and devastating tsunamis placed the number of fatalities at 20,000—and even that number was hard to comprehend. The death toll quickly rose to 40,000, then 80,000 and estimates now stand at more than 150,000 men, women and children killed in a matter of hours. Thousands more are missing and countless individuals and families have lost their homes, livelihoods and such basic necessities as clean drinking water and food.

Words are inadequate to describe the incredible grief, pain and loss affecting millions of people throughout that region of the world. And the sheer scope of the tragedy is equally difficult to grasp. Imagine one of every 27 Kentuckians being killed on a single day. The tsunami death count is comparable to the combined population of Bowling Green, Covington and Owensboro—three of Kentucky's five largest cities.

More important than trying to comprehend the devastation, however, is how each of us chooses to respond to the crisis. Tsunami relief pledges approached \$4 billion last week and the amount continues to grow. Individual Christians, churches and ministry organizations should help lead the way in donating and distributing relief funds.

A primary motivation for reaching out to people in need is found in Jesus Christ's instruction in Matthew 25. While we often cite the need to serve

"the least of these," take a few moments to reflect on the context of Christ's message:

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left.

"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come you who are blessed by My Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink, I

was a stranger and you invited Me in, I needed clothes and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you came to visit Me.'

"Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? When did we see You a stranger and invite You in, or needed clothes and clothe You? When did we see You sick or in prison and go to visit You?'

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me'" (Matthew 25:31-40).

This week's tsunami coverage includes a list of relief fund options on page 6. Prayerfully consider how you, your family and your congregation can serve Jesus by ministering to "the least of these."

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Don't look away from South Asia's suffering

By Erich Bridges

Richmond, Va. (BP)—For days, maybe even weeks, many Christians will focus on the staggering human suffering in southern Asia.

You're probably one of them. You've been moved by the heart-rending stories of death and survival. You've shed some tears. Perhaps you've already contributed to relief efforts or plan to do so. You've prayed for the families who have lost loved ones.

But soon you'll grow weary of the avalanche of stories of sadness and loss. Your daily life will crowd back in with its many demands. The new year will bring new crises. The news inevitably will return to Iraq, the economy and other matters—and your attention will shift away from the people of southern Asia.

Please, don't let that happen this time.

Throughout their annual Christmas season of giving to international missions, Southern Baptists focused specifically on South Asia. They prayed for the hundreds of millions of people in the region. They gave to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and continue to give, that the people of South Asia in particular might hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"God's heart must break"

That—and the timing of this monumental tragedy—cannot be a coincidence.

"When disasters like this strike, we usually feel overwhelmed at the number of lives lost," said one

Southern Baptist worker in the region. "But to put things in a different perspective, do you realize that over 33,000 people die in South Asia every day? South Asia includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Pretty close to 99 percent of those are lost—no relationship with Christ. About 33,000 die every day—not from earthquakes, not from tsunamis, just the average death toll in South Asia. And they're lost. How God's heart must break!"

Whole villages in Sri Lanka were swept into the Indian Ocean by the tsunamis that crashed into the coast. More than a million people have been displaced there.

"The thing that tugs at my heart is, 'How many of those who died did so without knowing Jesus as their Savior?'" the worker asked. "It's one thing to grieve for the lost dead. What are you going to do for the lost who are still living? Pray. Give. Go."

In addition to being spiritually lost, many of the places hit the hardest are difficult to reach physically, cut off by rebel insurgencies, wracked by ethnic conflict. Sri Lanka, for example, has been plagued by a long-running battle between the government and the Tamil Tiger guerrilla movement.

The devastated Andaman Islands of India are very difficult for outsiders to reach without government approval. The Maldiv Islands—home to up to 400,000 inhabitants—are solidly Muslim and resist ministry by any Christian agency.

Pray for doors to open in both places.

"Reports are starting to come in that some small people groups may have been completely wiped from the face of the earth in places like the Andaman and Nicobar Islands," said Paul Hattaway, an expert on Asia's unreached tribes and peoples. "Other groups like the Mokkien (Sea Gypsies) of Thailand and Myanmar lived right in the path of the tsunami. As one of our co-workers e-mailed us, 'There are some entire tribes that have been wiped out in Burma and Thailand. My heart just broke when I heard this.'"

Sacrificial giving

In the wake of the tsunamis, the countries hit are the least capable financially to address the overwhelming needs. Yet, with a minimum wage of less than \$5 per day, one little Thai Baptist church promised \$500 to aid others. Another group of 20 church members gathered \$3,000 to buy rice to send to the affected areas.

If they can give what little money they have, we can give our hearts to the suffering and lost of southern Asia.

"The need is more than just containers of supplies," Hattaway said. "It is more than throwing mineral bottle water from moving trucks—and feeling like they have done their part. It is about sitting down with a mother who has lost her husband and children, and praying with her, and helping her to put the bottle of water on her lips and nourish her.

"Only the church can do that." Erich Bridges is senior writer for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board

How to help

Initial volunteers to help will be limited to trained medical personnel, according to Larry Koch, director of Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief.

The second wave of volunteers will be water purification teams composed of workers who have had disaster relief training, Koch added.

For more information, call the Kentucky Baptist Convention Men on Mission department at (888) 254-5720.

The following Baptist agencies are collecting funds specifically for earthquake and tsunami relief:

■ **IMB disaster relief fund.** Gifts designated "Asia Earthquake Disaster Relief" can be mailed to the International Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. Money also can be given online at the web site, www.imb.org. All funds given will go to relief efforts; none will be used for administrative costs.

■ **Woman's Missionary Union.** Funds can be sent to HEART Fund-Tsunami Response, Box 11346, Birmingham, AL 35202-1346. Contributions are also accepted online at www.wmu.foundation.com.

■ **Baptist World Aid.** Donations designated "Asian Tidal Wave Appeal" can be sent to Baptist World Aid, c/o Baptist World Alliance, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA 22046. For more information, visit www.bwa.org.

■ **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.** Checks designated "#17016 Asian Relief" in the memo line can be mailed to Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Box 101699, Atlanta, GA 30392.

■ **Samaritan's Purse.** The ministry operated by Franklin Graham is accepting donations through its Web site, www.samaritanspurse.org.

Baptists focus on least-helped victims

Continued from page 1

"The resort areas and tourist spots will be back up and running in no time. The government will protect their capital base—it's just a fact," said the director, whose name is being withheld for security purposes.

"There are other people, though, that need more help; other areas have sustained great damage but no one has been out to assess the losses and needs."

Meeting human needs as an extension of the hands of Christ means that the assistance needs to produce eternal repercussions, the director said.

The best results are reached through a degree of patience. After the first wave of aid agencies has come and gone, it is much easier to see exactly what the true, lasting needs will be for the people and communities affected by tragedy, he said.

"We are going to the devastated villages and asking the people what their needs are instead of making assumptions and throwing things at them that they can't use," the director said.

Visiting "Sea Gypsies"

After meeting with local government officials on Dec. 29, the director and Pastor Dusit traveled several hours to assess damage on the outer coast of Lanta Island. Ringed by beach resorts, Lanta also is home to a largely overlooked Muslim people group known as the Sea Gypsies.

Located in small communities along the coast, the Sea Gypsies fish for food from longboats and live on stilted houses directly on the normally calm beach.

On Dec. 26, however, most of the villagers fled to the surrounding hills as 20-foot waves shattered their lives. Amazingly, many of the wooden houses are still standing. Below the houses, however, shattered boats litter the beach.

"We can't repair any of them," said a villager who was brave enough to come down the mountain. Most of the 90-plus families refuse to come back down to the village—out of fear of more tsunamis. The villager said he watched the waves completely envelop his stilted house—more than 20 feet high.

While there was not a great loss of life, the villagers' very livelihood is gone.

"We eat fish," said Maka, another villager. "Without boats, we can't fish. Without fish, we don't eat."

After the tsunami, government aid consisted of small first-aid kits and a one-time, 2-kilogram provision of rice.

"This is a phenomenal opportunity and an open door for the local church to make a difference in these people's lives," the Southern Baptist relief coordinator said.

Even before the tragedy of Dec. 26, the members of Krabi Baptist Church had been praying for a way to make inroads with the Sea Gypsies.

Within a week, several tons of rice and replacement fishing nets will arrive at the coastal village—relief aid made possible by the generosity of Southern Baptists,



NEEDING HOPE Mada stands among the damaged fishing boats that belong to his Thailand village. The people of his village call themselves "Oo Rak La Woy," which translates to "water people." The 95 families that make up the small fishing village all survived with only minor damage to their homes that line the shore, but Mada said all of the boats that they rely on to catch fish are damaged beyond repair. With the assistance of the International Mission Board, Krabi Baptist Church will supply each family in the village with enough rice for a month. (IMB photo)

Video available

The International Mission Board has posted a new one-minute video about the Asian tsunami disaster for use by churches.

The video, "100 Percent Relief" can be used in church services to inform congregations about the relief work and need for funds.

"100 Percent Relief" can be downloaded from www.imb.org.

and given through the channels of the local church.

"(Pastor Dusit) knows this area better than anyone," the relief director said. "We want to give supplies to the church to facilitate aid to these areas so people will understand that this aid is coming from the ministry and care of Thai Baptists."

Scenes of tragedy

Krabi, a small town still balancing in the transition between sleepy fishing village and full-blown tourist haven, has become the central sorting ground for the bodies of foreign tourists killed in the tragedy. Dozens of resorts—both plush and rustic—are a short distance from Krabi. The scene takes on an element of the surreal as workers and volunteers work in an almost mechanical, trance-like state.

Schools and Buddhist temples have been transformed into morgues. Rows of bodies lay shielded from the tropical heat by tents. Proper body bags are nowhere to be seen; corpses are wrapped in plastic and tied at both ends. The numbered bags are swollen from the heat.

An announcement over a loudspeaker breaks the hushed silence. Rescue workers digging at the idyllic resort island of Koh Phi Phi have found another 400 bodies. One hundred would be arriving at the temple within an hour.

Pictures of the corpses are posted on bulletin boards in the parking lot. Family members, friends, traveling companions and co-workers looking for the dead peer at the pictures, looking past the ghastly faces

of death and rapid decomposition to try to identify the missing.

If a body is identified, only then will the bag be lifted into the rough coffin and taken away—either to be cremated locally or shipped to a home country.

"I would say it's very likely that most of the foreign dead will go into mass graves," said the Baptist relief coordinator, who surveyed the makeshift morgue as part of his assessment.

For the majority, death occurred at the beach, and people were not carrying their passports. By the time relatives and friends arrive to locate their loved ones, it will be too difficult in these conditions to identify the body, he said.

Next steps

In Thailand, the government called for Dec. 31 to be a national day of prayer.

Before the tsunami, the country was gaining notoriety for growing religious violence between the Muslim minority in the south and the Buddhist majority. Many New Year's Eve celebrations were cancelled or turned into fund-raisers for the victims of the devastation.

Officials and relief organizations in Thailand, where the number of dead has topped 2,000, are beginning to voice the understanding that the death toll will rise significantly from post-disaster disease due to contaminated water supplies—the primary carrier of cholera.

At the makeshift morgue, the number of bodies continues to grow.

"If they put all the dead bodies here (in Krabi), they won't be able to handle it. They'll have a secondary disaster on their hands," the disaster relief coordinator noted. "They need a lot of prayer."

"As Christians, we need to let every opportunity be one to show the love of God for those affected (by this tragedy)," Pastor Dusit added. "As a native of Krabi, I feel so thankful and grateful for those who share this concern. There are only a few churches here. Practically, we have very limited resources. But when we all come together we can become much more powerful and effective."

Archbishop of Canterbury shuns easy answers on God and disaster

London (RNS)—The tsunamis that have devastated countries bordering the Indian Ocean ought to upset a faith bound up with comfort and ready answers, according to the spiritual leader of worldwide Anglicans.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, made that provocative assertion in a 1,100-word article he wrote for the Jan. 2 Sunday Telegraph of London.

"Making sense" of a great disaster will always be a challenge simply because those who are closest to the cost are the ones least likely to accept some sort of intellectual explanation, however polished," the archbishop wrote. "Why should they?"

"Every single random, accidental death is something that should upset a faith bound up with comfort and ready answers. Magnitude of a disaster like this, we naturally feel more deeply outraged—and also more deeply helpless."

"The question: 'How can you permit suffering on this scale?' is therefore very much around at the moment, and it would be surprising if it weren't—indeed, it would be wrong if it weren't," he states. "The traditional answers will get us only so far."

"If some religious genius did come up with an explanation of exactly why all these deaths made sense, would we feel happier or safer or more confident in God?" Williams asked.

"Wouldn't we feel something of a chill at the prospect of a God who deliberately plans a program that involves a certain level of casualties?" he added.

Creating a buzz

Williams' willingness to openly examine God's role in the disaster has created a minor buzz in England, especially after The Sunday Telegraph ran a misleading page-one headline of "Archbishop of Canterbury: This Has Made Me Question God's Existence."

But church officials said that headline misrepresents the archbishop's essay.

"As any reading of the text makes instantly clear, the archbishop nowhere says that the tsunami causes him to question or doubt the existence of God; rather that the Christian faith does not invite simplistic answers to the problem of human suffering," said Jonathan Jennings, Williams' press secretary.

Baptist workers prepare for long-haul in many areas

Richmond Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist relief workers have shifted into high gear in tsunami-devastated southern Asia, where millions are homeless and desperate for help.

Working with local churches and officials, Southern Baptist workers are providing food, water, medical supplies and other aid to survivors in heavily damaged coastal villages in Thailand and Malaysia.

Meanwhile, assessment teams and specially trained disaster relief volunteers were heading for Sri Lanka and the Indonesian province of Aceh.

"We anticipate a long-term response—and we're going to need divine leadership," said Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

By Jan. 3, the International Mission Board had approved \$300,000 in project requests from relief workers on the field for planned aid—with more aid requests expected.

The relief funds will pay for food, clean water, water purification equipment, blankets, tents, sheeting, basic medical supplies and body bags. More than \$200,000 will go to the hard-hit Indonesian island of Sumatra and the devastated Aceh province there.

By New Year's Eve, more than \$300,000 in aid had been contributed online at www.imb.org through the IMB relief fund. That amount nearly doubles the \$170,000 given online to the IMB for all of 2003. The online total was rising rapidly and doesn't include checks sent by regular mail in the days immediately after the tsunami disaster.

Rankin appealed to churches to give "over and above" to the relief effort—not at the expense of Lottie Moon gifts to support missions.

"A massive outpouring of support for disaster relief is needed by our missionaries seeking to minister to the suffering," he said.



A DAUGHTER'S PLEA Nine days after the tsunami swept across Banda Aceh, Indonesia, a woman who has found her mother's lifeless body wedged in debris begs passersby to help recover the corpse. (IMB photo)

This need comes on the heels of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, he noted, when many churches already have given to support international missions.

Hard-to-reach areas

Gaining access to parts of Indonesia has been particularly tough, with roads and bridges destroyed, communication lines down and flooding as far inland as 14 kilometers in some areas of Aceh.

Still, assessment teams have been allowed to enter the regions most devastated by the waves. IMB disaster relief personnel are working with Indonesian Baptists to get immediate aid to stricken areas.

Food, water and plastic shelters are being shipped in and distributed by relief teams—primarily local Baptists supported by IMB resources. Southern Baptists also are sending water purification units.

Aceh lies on the northernmost point of Sumatra. This heavily populated area—closest to the epicenter of the earthquake that launched the tsunamis in the Indian Ocean

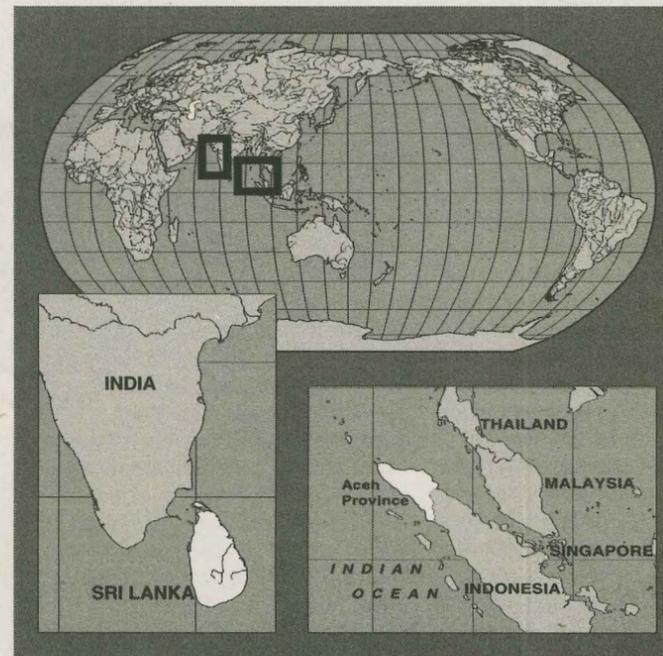
on Dec. 26—already has reported more than 100,000 deaths.

In Sri Lanka, workers and volunteers will try to respond to the most critical needs: clean water and sanitation, food, clothing and shelter. The first IMB disaster relief team was scheduled to enter Sri Lanka Jan. 9. Specially trained volunteer teams are expected to follow in the weeks to come.

"At present there are scores of government and non-government organizations at work and entering the affected areas," said a mission leader in the region. "It's difficult for outsiders to even book flights into the hardest-hit places. A month from now, 80 percent of these foreign aid agencies will be gone. However, the needs will continue for many months and even years to come, and the IMB intends to be there assisting with the rebuilding of homes and lives."

A representative from the IMB International Prayer Strategy Office asked for continued prayer.

"Pray for Christians to lean upon the Lord's strength and to be



strong witnesses of His mercy," the representative said. "Please pray for relief workers as they press on in the midst of such tragedy. ... And for all who wake up each morning wondering how they can continue in this day of trouble, please pray that they will heed the answer of God."

Volunteers urged to be flexible

Relief specialists also appealed to volunteers anxious to rush to the region to wait until the time is right.

"The first wave of response after a disaster does not always meet the most critical needs," said the IMB relief coordinator based in Southeast Asia. (For security reasons, his name was not released.) "What we need at this point is for churches and conventions preparing to help out to be flexible. Be willing to be assigned to areas that are out of your normal partnerships. A church or convention may be in direct contact with personnel in one of these affected areas, but we may need their expertise more in another area to make a greater impact."

In Sri Lanka, certain areas cut off by water and landslides have been seen only by aerial photography. Large parts of decimated Aceh in Indonesia remain inaccessible.

"As these places continue to open up, emergency response teams will continue to be needed," the relief coordinator said. "When they open up, we will be able to see where the imbalance is (in aid and supplies). While time is of the essence, volunteers need to think in terms of effectiveness accompanied by flexibility."

Many people already have offered their services. "We're grateful for the interest of Southern Baptists who want to volunteer," said IMB state and association services director Terry Sharp.

Due to the extreme nature of this disaster, the first volunteer teams will be limited to trained disaster relief volunteers. Workers won't have clean water to drink or even beds where they can rest. Those conditions—along with the need to minister cross-culturally to those who have lost their families, friends and everything they own—dictate that initial volunteer teams be limited to those trained to work in such situations, officials said.

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Atheist refiles pledge case, goes after inaugural prayers

"All he's doing is stirring up people in ways that are unfortunate and counterproductive."

Charles Haynes of the First Amendment Center

Washington (RNS)—Michael Newdow, the California atheist who sued to get "under God" removed from the Pledge of Allegiance, says he has refiled a suit regarding the pledge and filed an additional suit to try to prevent clergy from praying at President Bush's inauguration.

Newdow said he refiled the pledge suit in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California on Jan. 3. A court staffer said legal documents had been received but had not been officially recorded pending additional paperwork from Newdow.

In the new case, Newdow has been joined in the suit by three families who include atheists and claim they are offended "to have their government and its agents advocating for a religious view they each specifically decry."

Defendants in the case include the Congress, California, the United States and several school districts.

The U.S. Supreme Court determined last June that Newdow did not have standing to bring the legal challenge.

Two weeks before refiled the pledge suit, Newdow filed suit in a Washington district court to try to halt designated clergy from uttering prayers at Bush's Jan. 20 inauguration.

Newdow, an emergency room physician, said in the Dec. 21 filing that prayers such as those offered at the 2001 inauguration by Franklin Graham and Kirbyjon Caldwell made him feel like a "second-class citizen."

"He—like all Americans—has a right to view his government in action without being forced to confront governmental endorsement of religious dogma with which he disagrees," Newdow said in the complaint, referring to himself.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the case. A court staffer confirmed that a hearing has been scheduled for Jan. 14 at the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Observers and players on the church-state separation scene differ on whether Newdow is causing significant good or damage. "I absolutely think he's doing good," said David Silverman, national spokesman for American Atheists.

But Charles Haynes, a senior scholar at the First Amendment Center in Arlington, Va., said Newdow should be careful what he argues for.

He said a continuing backlash to some of his efforts—especially if they're successful—could lead



Michael Newdow

Nonbelievers, fearing Bush, organize to lobby

Washington (RNS)—Bracing for what's to come from a Republican-controlled White House and Congress, people who don't believe in God are joining forces as never before.

Group leaders say they are working to make sure their rights don't get trampled in what they perceive as a stampede of religious zeal.

Riding a post-election spike in new memberships, groups of humanists, agnostics and other non-theists are raising funds to put their first-ever lobbyists on Capitol Hill.

To shape an agenda, leaders from as many as 20 non-theistic groups will convene this weekend for their largest summit since Ronald Reagan took the Oval Office in 1981.

"A lot of non-theistic people tend to be independent and non-

joiners," said Herb Silverman, president of the Secular Coalition for America.

"Now they're starting to get worried. ... It seems we're a group of politicians can feel comfortable discriminating against."

Both the Secular Coalition and the American Humanist Association plan to launch 501c4 organizations so they can legally finance congressional lobbyists.

"There's a strong impression on the religious right that religion has been excluded" from public life, said Tom Flynn, editor of Free Inquiry, a bimonthly magazine read by 30,000 secular humanists. "Our perception of fairness is their perception of discrimination against the religious right. ... This election really seems to send us the message that we're probably going to keep losing ground."

to rewriting of constitutional law that would weaken the First Amendment's prohibition against the establishment of religion.

"All he's doing is stirring up people in ways that are unfortunate and counterproductive," he said.

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the conservative American Center for Law and Justice, said Newdow is

"overreacting" in his legal efforts.

Sekulow filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Supreme Court opposing Newdow's pledge suit and said he may do the same in the inaugural prayer case.

"Do not underestimate this lawyer-doctor," Sekulow said of Newdow. "If he's as good a doctor as he is a lawyer, he's a good doctor."

NATIONAL NOTES

Poll: Americans attend church more than Canadians. Americans attend church more regularly and interpret the Bible more literally than Canadians, according to a recent Gallup Poll. In surveys of more than 1,000 adults conducted last month in both countries, Gallup found Americans are twice as likely as Canadians to attend church every week—35 percent versus 18 percent, respectively. Twice as many Americans as Canadians also believe that the Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally—34 percent compared to 17 percent.

Former NFL coach to head Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Les Steckel, former head coach of the Minnesota Vikings will become the new president and CEO of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Steckel, 48, will succeed Dal Shealy, who is retiring. He begins the new position on March 1. The Kansas City, Mo.-based ministry works with coaches and students involved in athletics. Its "huddles" meet regularly on nearly 8,000 junior high, high school and college campuses for prayer, Bible study and other activities.

Faith groups spent \$1 billion of federal money in 2003. White House documents show "faith-based" organizations received about \$1.17 billion in federal grant money in 2003. That's 8 percent of the \$14.5 billion for which religious groups were eligible. Since taking office in 2001, President Bush has pushed to expand government's ability to fund social services through churches and religious organizations. Bush touts the plan to provide government support to grassroots social agencies previously discriminated against in funding. But an analysis of Florida grants by Associated Press showed that many of the grants went to programs that had been receiving federal grants for years and that considered themselves only nominally religious.

Arkansas judge overturns policy banning gay foster parents. A judge has overturned an Arkansas state policy banning the placement of foster children in any household with a gay adult, saying the state agency that created it had unconstitutionally overstepped its bounds. Pulaski County Circuit Judge Timothy Fox ruled Dec. 29 that the Arkansas Child Welfare Agency Review Board could not enforce the policy because it has no authority to regulate "public morality." The foster-care ban was the only one of its kind in the nation. But Arkansas law does not ban gays and lesbians from adopting children permanently.

Lawsuit challenges teaching intelligent design in schools

Washington (ABP)—Two civil-liberties watchdog groups have filed the first known lawsuit to prevent public schools from teaching the theory of "intelligent design."

Critics of the theory, including supporters of evolution, call it "junk science" and say it is a backdoor way to teach creationism. Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal lawsuit Dec. 14 against the Dover, Pa., school board to bar the district from teaching intelligent design.

The theory argues that an "intelligent agent" guided the development of life on Earth, using that assertion to explain alleged gaps or inconsistencies in the theory of evolution.

On Oct. 18, the Dover Area School District Board passed, by a 6-3 vote, a resolution requiring students to "be made aware of gaps/problems" in evolutionary theory. The district then produced a statement that ninth-grade biology teachers at Dover High School would have to read to their classes.

The groups filed the lawsuit on behalf of 11 Dover parents who oppose the teaching of intelligent-design theory in their children's classrooms. It charges that such teaching violates the First Amendment's ban on government endorsement of religious views.

The Supreme Court has previously ruled that public schools could not teach creationism, which is the belief that God created the world.



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Israel archaeologists fear backlash after charges of antiquities fraud

Jerusalem (RNS)—Some archaeologists are concerned that recent indictments leveled against members of a sophisticated antiquities forgery ring will give Israeli archaeology a bad name.

The criminal indictments followed an exhaustive investigation by the Israeli police and Antiquities Authority, which had long suspected four men of masterfully forging such important relics as the James Ossuary, a 2,000-year-old limestone burial box bearing the Aramaic inscription, "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus."

During a Dec. 29 press briefing, Shuka Dorfman, the director of the Antiquities Authority, told reporters that the activities of the ring, led by Israeli antiquities dealer and collector Oded Golan, are "the tip of the iceberg. We believe this is happening worldwide and has generated millions of dollars."

The authorities' longstanding doubts about the authenticity of the James Ossuary and several other important artifacts were made public last year on Israeli television's investigative reporting program "Uvda" ("Fact"). The hour-long report alleged that Golan and at least three accomplices forged inscriptions and markings on genuinely

ancient artifacts.

Golan continues to deny all charges leveled against him.

One of the alleged forgeries is the Yoash stone, a tablet bearing references to the First Jewish Temple, located atop the Temple Mount—the disputed holy site that Muslims call Haram al-Sharif. Jews considered the Yoash stone of great importance because it added credibility to their claims to the mount at a time when some Muslims, including the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, deny any Jewish connection to it.

The forgeries were so well done, according to members of the Antiquities Authority, that even many of the world's top experts were fooled. Further indictments are expected, Israeli police said.

Shimon Gibson, the Israeli-British archaeologist who last year announced he had discovered a cave that may have been used by John the Baptist to anoint his followers, told Religion News Service: "The entire archaeology community is reeling as a result of these indictments. It's now quite clear that if these allegations are credible, it means that some artifacts which are in museum collections are now known to be forgeries."

More Mohammeds shows Islam's rise in Britain

London (RNS)—The name Mohammed has entered the top 20 names for boys in Britain and Wales for the first time, a reflection of the growing strength and size of Britain's Muslim community.

Mohammed and Charlie bumped Adam and Alfie out of the top 20 list of baby names for 2004; last year it was 22nd. But the name can be spelled various ways—Mohammed, with 2,279 boys, came in 20th place, but "Muhammad" occurred 1,086 times and placed 54th. Other

variants resulted in a total of 4,754 boys given the Islamic prophet's name in various spellings.

Approximately 1.5 million Muslims live in the United Kingdom, according to the 2001 census, comprising about 2.7 percent of the population. There were no specifically Muslim girls' names in the top 50.

Jack continued to top the list of boys' names for the 10th consecutive year, while Emily reigned among girls for the second year.

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Let's talk about sex

Christian colleges seeking biblical approach

"It is impossible to have a normal American childhood without being exposed to countless sexual images."

David Gushee, professor of moral philosophy at Union University

By Jo Kadlecik
Religion News Service

Wheaton, Ill. (RNS)—On the first day of her "Sociology of Sexuality" class, professor Lisa McMinn asks her Christian students to anonymously answer the question, "What does it mean to you to be a sexual being?"

Most, she says, stare at the blank piece of paper, unsure of what to write.

One student admitted, "I feel as though sexuality is about repression rather than expression, especially in the Christian subculture ... so I really don't know how to be a sexual being at this stage in my life."

McMinn, who teaches at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill., maintains that student didn't know how to respond because "our Christian subculture hasn't offered any other way to think about it."

She and other Christian scholars hope to change that.

In November, McMinn joined 50 other professors, administrators and counselors from over 30 member campuses of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities for a three-day Consultation on Human Sexuality. Held in Grand Rapids, Mich., the council-sponsored conference explored a variety of sexual issues that, within the larger cultural context, are rife with diverse perspectives yet which these scholars say call for a biblically based, honest conversation.

"Think scripturally"

"Our goal is to encourage meaningful discussions in regards to sexual ethics for college students, sexual identity, homosexuality, self control and pastoral concerns," said Robert Andringa, president of the CCCU and co-organizer of the consultation with Shirley Hoogstra, a vice president for student life. "The topic of sexuality is complex, one that justifies such an effort (as this) and one that needs a full measure of grace and truth."

Of foremost concern to those in Christian higher education is the challenge of preparing students to "think scripturally" as they con-

front an over-sexualized society.

Scholars suggest today's young people no longer struggle merely with sexual matters like whom they will date or marry. Rather,



David Gushee

they also are bombarded with questions about sexual identity, tempted by easy access to pornography through the Internet and disillusioned about relationships because of rising divorce rates.

"Most, but not all, of our students come to us having experienced broad participation in popular culture, which includes sexually explicit and sexually degrading music, cheap sex talk and

activity on primetime TV, sex in the movies, etc.," said David Gushee, professor of moral philosophy and author of "Getting Marriage Right."

"It is impossible to have a normal American childhood without being exposed to countless sexual images and ideas," said Gushee, who teaches at Union University, a Baptist school in Jackson, Tenn. "This must be an immensely confusing time to try to figure out one's sexual identity, orientation and moral values."

Gushee, who presented a talk on sexual ethics, said it is fair to assume that a significant percentage of students on Christian college campuses are sexually frustrated or lonely.

But Gushee offered several solutions, such as encouraging respectful behavior and open conversation about sensitive issues.

Gushee said he also wants to see clear teaching on what he calls the "Classic Christian Sexual Ethic"—that is, "sexual intimacy designed by God to occur solely between a man and a woman within the lifetime covenant of marriage" and the strengthening of community life.

Connected to community

McGinn's research suggests that the more connect-

ed students feel to their communities, the less likely they are to participate in conduct many Christians consider sexually inappropriate, such as masturbation or viewing pornography.

"We are made for relationship, and our sexuality keeps us striving for relationship, longing for connection, pulling us toward, rather than away from others," said McMinn.

McGinn's recent book, "Sexuality and Holy Longing: Embracing Intimacy in a Broken World," explores this issue.

"While we all know that sexuality is about more than sex, we don't know what it looks like to be sexual people—especially if we are not having sex."

True Love Waits leader: Program parallels decline in teen sex rate

Atlanta (BP)—Richard Ross sees something quite interesting about new data that sexual activity declined significantly for girls ages 15-17 and boys ages 15-19 between 1995 and 2002.

Ross, one of the founders of the True Love Waits abstinence movement, noted: "The first TLW promises were made by one youth group in 1993"—promises made by teenagers in church settings to refrain from premarital sexual relations.

"In 1994, teenagers displayed over 110,000 promises of purity on the National Mall," Ross continued. "In 1995, teenage promises were becoming behavior. In addition, the national attention on TLW in 1995 was fueling the establishment of scores of abstinence organizations. Soon after came government support for those organizations."

"In many ways, the history of the decline in teenage sexual activity is the history of TLW," Ross said. "It is especially helpful that the new CDC study analyzes the years from 1995 to 2002."

Ross, now a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is a former staff member at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, which spearheads True Love Waits.

The new data, reported by the Centers for Disease Control, compares new findings from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth with the previous survey conducted in 1995.

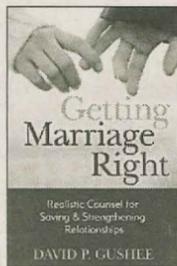
The proportion of never-married females age 15-17 who had had sexual intercourse dropped significantly from 38 percent in 1995 to 30 percent in 2002.

For male teens, the percent of those who were sexually experienced dropped significantly in both age groups: from 43 percent to 31 percent at age 15-17, and from 75 percent to 64 percent at age 18-19.

The only statistic remaining stagnant is that 68 percent of females age 18-19 had had intercourse in 1995 compared with 69 percent in 2002.

"There is much good news in these results," said Tommy Thompson, secretary of Health and Human Services. "More teenagers are avoiding or postponing sexual activity, which can lead to sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy or emotional and societal responsibilities for which they are not prepared."

The survey found that the most common reason among teens for delaying sexual relations is because it is "against (their) religion or moral values," which was picked by 37.8 percent of girls and 31.4 percent of boys.



DAVID P. GUSHEE

Crossings International starts in summer

Teens and adults needed to help with Moldova camp

During the next several articles, I will explain our 2005 summer camp opportunities in detail. Each article will be devoted specifically to one of our different camps. I pray that these will help answer any questions you might have and help all Kentucky Baptists see the variety of opportunities that exist to help support our churches.

Crossings International is a new offering for 2005. This partnership began last year as we collected offerings throughout the summer to fund camps in Moldova by sponsoring youth to attend. This partnership was founded with the hopes that future years would include opportunities for our ministry to send workers to serve in the camps.

Sending workers will become a reality this summer. We are excited to be finalizing schedules this winter. Two sessions will be offered. Mission workers will live at one of five camps in Moldova where they will do various tasks, from serving meals to helping facilitate the camp program. These camps are all Baptist related and

were united with our ministry by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board presence in Moldova last summer. The Moldovan people are truly a blessing as the youth are friendly and intensely interested in Americans, which makes for great evangelistic opportunities:

Crossings International participants include students who have completed the 11th grade through adult age. During 2005, we hope to have equal numbers of students and adults comprising the mission teams as we lay the foundation for years to come.

Total costs for this camp will be affordable, with approximately \$900 for air travel and less than \$300 for in-country costs. The camps are somewhat primitive, but the harvest field to see many youth accept Christ is great. More than 2,100 youth accepted Christ last summer alone in these camps.

If you have questions about Crossings International, please contact us at Jonathan Creek at (270) 354-8355 or visit www.crossingsministries.org.

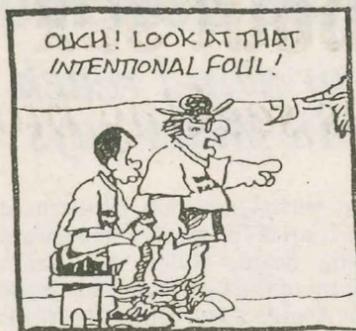
David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at 3043 Beal Road, Hardin, KY 42048; phone (270) 354-8355.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



David Melber

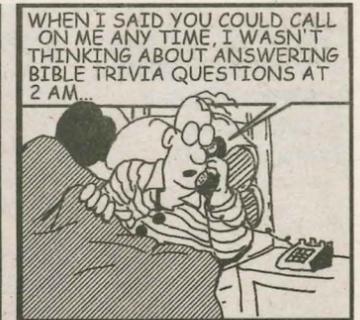
Kudzu



Doug Marlette

Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

Janet W. Adkins

Across

- 1 Exclamation of sorrow
- 5 Catalog promise (abbr.)
- 8 "But ____ found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8)
- 12 Greek form of feminine name that means "princess"
- 13 ____ wife
- 14 ____-Lebanon (mountain range in W. Syria, which includes Mt. Hermon)
- 15 Not ready to turn pro (abbr.)
- 16 Bone
- 17 Cave dwellers
- 18 New Testament epistle
- 22 The green, green grass of home?
- 23 ____ of the above
- 24 Like a sprinter
- 27 1/1000th of an inch
- 28 Exodus character
- 31 "For ____ be called, but few chosen" (Matthew 20:16)
- 32 Prevent
- 33 "Diana ... should be destroyed, whom all ____ worshipping" (Acts 19:27)
- 34 Employ
- 35 Biblical verb
- 36 "Let us ____ before the Lord our maker" (Psalm 95:6)
- 37 Greek letter
- 38 "And the ____ gave up the dead which were in it" (Revelation 20:13)
- 39 "The Lord hath given you the land, ... all the ____ faint because of you" (Joshua 2:9)
- 44 Concept (comb. form)
- 45 Historical period

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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	39	40				41			42	43
44					45			46		47
48					49			50		
51					52			53		

- 46 Tiny amount (colloq.)
- 48 Bereft; desolate (arch.)
- 49 Beam of light
- 50 Masculine name
- 51 Healing plant
- 52 Affirmative
- 53 "Simon ____"

- 21 Under the weather
- 24 Texas institute of higher learning (abbr.)
- 25 Had been
- 26 Suffix used to form feminine nouns
- 27 Welcome ____
- 28 Enzyme of vegetable origin (suffix)
- 29 Grain mentioned in the Old Testament (Isaiah 28)
- 30 Suitable for (suffix)
- 32 "And fire shall consume the tabernacles of ____" (Job 15:34)
- 33 Husband of Sapphira
- 35 "And there was war between ____ and Baasha king of Israel" (1 Kings 15:16)
- 36 Greek island in the Aegean
- 37 Single speech sound
- 38 Corset (Brit.)
- 39 Matinee ____
- 40 Notorious emperor of Rome
- 41 Dies ____
- 42 Brother of Job (Genesis 46:13)
- 43 Don't leave!
- 44 Longshoremen's org.
- 47 Solution (abbr.)

Down

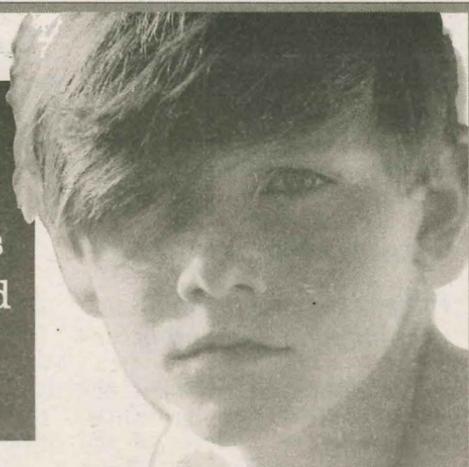
- 1 Old Testament king whose name means "physician"
- 2 "For thou art my ____ the Lord will lighten my darkness" (2 Samuel 22:29)
- 3 Son of Ulla (1 Chronicles 7:39)
- 4 "O ____ us early with thy mercy" (Psalm 90:14)
- 5 Progenitor (colloq.)
- 6 With "down," way to meet the bed
- 7 "We are perplexed, but not in ____" (2 Corinthians 4:8)
- 8 Husband of Abigail (1 Samuel 25)
- 9 Second son of Judah (1 Chronicles 2:3)
- 10 Members of the bar (abbr.)
- 11 Possessive pronoun
- 19 His wife turned into a pillar of salt
- 20 Part of the psyche

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
A	R	I	A	S	D	E	B	A	C	R	E
S	E	L	F	U	R	E	T	R	U	E	
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Author advocates new model for preaching sermons

Three points & poem won't reach person in pew, Calvin Miller says

"People listen to preachers they like—and they want to know that you internalize what you tell them."

Calvin Miller, professor of preaching at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala.

By George Henson
Texas Baptist Standard

New Braunfels, Texas—Three points and a poem might offer a familiar formula for preachers, but it might not be the best way to reach the person in the pew, according to preacher and author Calvin Miller.

"I never advocate three-point sermons," said Miller, speaking at an associational event in New Braunfels, Texas.

Miller, a professor of preaching at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., has written such books as "The Empowered Communicator" and "The Sermon Maker."

"It's easier to jam three points into the text rather than saying what the passage itself is really saying," he said. "Besides, people can't remember three things, and you can't preach on three things with equal intensity, so why not pick one."

One of the most important things a sermon must do is hold the congregation's attention, he said. Miller suggests using visual aids—and it doesn't hurt to keep those hidden for a bit.

"Boxes and bags are great," he said. "No matter how boring you are, you are going to hold their attention—at least until you open the bag."

Knowing that the preacher is a

real person who has experienced the trials of life also is a step toward being heard, Miller said. Paul's "thorn of the flesh" was what made the Apostle Paul believable to his hearers, he said.

"If you can manage to bleed with them, you will never want for job security," he said.



Calvin Miller

Many preachers may have been taught to leave themselves out of their illustrations, but Miller disagreed.

"The strongest kind of preaching is confessional," he said. "When you confess, people listen."

However, "there is a limit to how far you unzip the viscera," he added.

Never confess to more people than you have wronged, Miller said.

He also cautioned against falling victim to the "sin-as-entertainment syndrome," where the sin takes center stage instead of the grace of God.

Audience analysis

Another of the tips Miller offered was "make every sermon an apocalypse. ... Save something back for the end."

"It's not how well you explain anything; it's how well you help them experience the mystery of God," he said.

Preachers should learn audience analysis, Miller said. "Figure out

who these people are, what they will hear and how they will hear it."

That becomes even more crucial for pastors who have a long tenure with a congregation, he said.

"Churches are not the same from Sunday to Sunday. Things happen between Sundays. Your job is to figure out what those things are and how it affected them," Miller said.

Part of that is done through "the speech before the speech—what you say before you get to what you wrote down," Miller said.

Relate back to current events that have affected members of the body, he suggested.

Preachers have to connect with people to be effective, he said.

"If you don't keep your humanity, you can't do much," he said. "People listen to preachers they like—and they want to know that you internalize what you tell them."

It is important for congregations to know the preacher doesn't just believe his sermon, but lives it out.

Components of storytelling

Narrative preaching is the key to reaching many people, Miller suggested. It has a visual component that paints a picture in people's minds that they can relate to and hold on to.

But preachers should use both components of telling a story: plot and character.

Plot, he suggested, is easier. It simply tells what happened. Take the Good Samaritan for example. Jesus didn't say whether he was short, tall, bald or overweight.

Adding that detail or character is harder for most preachers, Miller

said, and it is important that it not detract from the truth of Scripture.

But storytelling can be a way to offer up truth in a way that it sticks with the hearer.

"Storytelling scratches an itch everyone has," he said. "It is the barb that snags the three-minute attention span of modern churchgoers."

Miller noted that movie theaters are filled with people of varying ages, races, income levels and backgrounds, but all are drawn to the telling of a story.

Preaching vs. reading sermons

When preaching, Miller said he makes a manuscript, but only carries an outline to the pulpit. "I don't believe in read sermons. Talk to your people; have a conversation—but don't read to them."

Going against a popular trend, Miller said he also would counsel against providing outlines to the congregation or putting an outline of the sermon up on a screen.

"If they are writing, they have to take their eyes off your eyes—it weakens the sermon. When it comes to the point of making a decision, it's a lot more likely if they haven't been writing. That's what I believe," he said.

He also told pastors to consider using metaphor over alliteration, just as Jesus did.

Ending the story or sermon on an upbeat also is important, Miller said.

"When Jesus walked out of the tomb, He stamped a happy ending on the story. If you don't put the happy ending into the story, you haven't preached the whole gospel."

The Christmas present

Christmas gifts help Oneida student from inner city experience love of God

By Judy Lawson
Oneida Dean of Students

As I write this, it is still December 2004, and I cannot leave for Christmas break yet. I must write this while emotions of the moment remain freshly embedded in my mind, while the remain of the Holy Spirit is still present in the memory.

Every year a church or two will ask for the names of some of our students who need and would appreciate a Christmas gift. Sometimes it is a Sunday school class, and sometimes the whole church participates in this Christmas project. This year, three such churches contacted us and received names for this purpose.

Our students come from all over the world and all over the United States, learning of our school from former students, pastors, churches and the Internet. They have cultures far different from that of our rural Kentucky community, many being from large metropolitan areas. We are 40 miles from the nearest Greyhound station.

One of the students who received a Christmas gift this year is an older boy from the inner city. He has known, seen and experienced violence and the hardness of the city where everyone is suspect and not many are to be trusted. Love does not abound. "Andy" (not his real name) came to Oneida this school year with a protective shell covering a longing heart, and a few weeks ago he invited Jesus into his heart. He has a hard time understanding why we even care about kids we hardly know when in his home surroundings it seems that no one cares.

When the students were called to Principal Stockton's office last night to receive their Christmas gifts, Andy was quiet and for a moment slipped out of the room. Some of the students are often shy or embarrassed, so we handed out the gifts and they chose to take them to their rooms to be opened. Andy remained standing by the door, speechless. I had to leave the room for a minute or two, and when I returned, this big high school boy was hugging Mr. Stockton with his face buried, crying. He was overcome

by the idea that someone who did not even know him would care to give him a Christmas gift. After a few minutes, Andy went to his package, wrapped in bright red paper with a beautiful wide, gold ribbon. He was reluctant to open it, not wanting to damage the ribbon. I helped him keep the ribbon intact, and he opened his gift.

A short while later after all the excitement was over, Mr. Stockton, with tears in his eyes said, "Andy told me

he has not had a Christmas present in six years." Upon leaving, as Mr. Stockton was turning out the light, he said to his son, "Son, this is why your mommy and daddy work at Oneida." I had the same feeling as we walked out crying, not having adequate words to express thanks to a God who loves us all so unconditionally. I saw Andy today; he was wearing a new sweater and jeans and proudly told me the other things that were in his Christmas gift.

Thank you to all those who contribute to helping our students at Oneida experience the love of Christ in this season and throughout the year.

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



W.F. Underwood

Among the big dogs

Reflections on attending an accreditation convention

Last month, I attended the annual Atlanta meeting of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. My experience was like a small country dog among the big dogs at the Westminster Kennel Club Show.

COCSACS is the regional accrediting agency for 685 institutions in 11 southern states stretching from Virginia to Texas. The institutions vary from technical schools, community colleges, Christian liberal arts colleges and Bible colleges to multi-campus state universities. I attended a forum presented by a staff member from a Florida university with 41,000 students.

Size is relative, for accreditation affirms that an institution has met the standards of peer review. Our faculty must have the same basic educational qualifications as other undergraduate schools.

A bigger school might offer more options, but they might not be any better in the area of our specialty. Kentucky Baptists have four colleges; four options for training. We want to be the choice for God-called individuals who desire

undergraduate ministry training that is Bible-centered and practical. Prospective students in your church need encouragement when they decide, with God's leadership, to attend a Bible college.

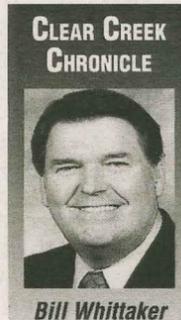
Several speakers emphasized the development of character, the issue of integrity and an education that makes a positive impact on society. A Bible college should have the lead on character, integrity and changing the world. Yet "sin crouches at the door" of every school and each generation must decide on core values.

Standing in line to thank a speaker, I met Betty Siegel, president of Kennesaw State University, near Atlanta. When

I told her my place of service, she smiled broadly and talked about her beginnings in Harlan County and her education at Cumberland College. "My mother gave money for girls to attend camp at Clear Creek," she said. "She dearly loved your school." Betty Siegel, a college president impacted by a mother who was touched by Clear Creek.

Size is secondary. Commitment to do God's will, wherever He puts us, will make a difference.

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



Bill Whittaker

Fort Campbell moms get new book from Christian author

By Ken Walker
Baptist Press

Fort Campbell (BP)—After watching talk show host Oprah Winfrey lead “The World’s Largest Baby Shower,” author Rebecca Ingram Powell wanted to get a message of eternal value to mothers in the military.

“I thought, ‘They need my book,’” said Powell, author of “Baby Boot Camp: Basic Training for the First ‘Six Weeks of Motherhood.’”

In October, Powell saw Winfrey presented diapers, strollers, high chairs and other merchandise to 600 expectant mothers at Fort Campbell.

“They need the stuff she was giving, and I know what a difference this made for these women,” Powell added. “But the Word of God being planted in this new mom when they’re vulnerable—this is important. I thought if Oprah can go down there and do that, why can’t we?”

That was the inspiration for “Mission: Military Moms.” So far, the effort has generated donations to provide approximately 400 free copies of “Baby Boot Camp” to new mothers.

The 42-day devotional features military themes and is designed to let women know they aren’t alone in their grueling new routine. One entry reviews the plan of salvation.

Iraq return fuels baby boom

Initially, copies have been donated to chaplains at Fort Stewart, Ga., and Fort Campbell, which are in the midst of baby booms fueled by the return of soldiers from duty in Iraq.

Fort Stewart first saw birth rates zoom in May and June, when they rose nearly 30 percent compared to last year, according to Laurie Kemp, public affairs officer at Winn Army Community Hospital.

At Fort Campbell, near Hopkinsville, the average monthly birth rate of 130 babies jumped to nearly 200 in November.

It was projected to be at 218 for December, 206 in January and stay above 170 through May, according to Laura Boyd, public affairs officer at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital in Fort Campbell.

Boyd said the national attention originated with a story last summer in the Louisville Courier-Journal about an anticipated baby boom after the return of some 20,000 soldiers who were deployed in early 2003.

The “Today” show and “Inside Edition” are among other national media that have spotlighted the situation and provided donations to mothers.

In addition, author Rick Warren has donated 100,000 copies of a military edition of “Purpose-Driven Life.” And psychologist

Greg Smalley—son of popular author Gary Smalley—led a marriage conference for 350 couples in mid-November, said chaplain David Trogdon.

Trogdon called Powell’s book “another piece of the puzzle” to help Fort Campbell’s efforts to strengthen families who face separation during wartime and economic pressures.

About 70 of the 225 copies they have received had been distributed by early December, the chaplain said.

A show of care

Many young mothers, Trogdon said, couldn’t afford the book because of tight finances, so they are excited and appreciative to receive “Baby Boot Camp.”

“The military is a close family,” Trogdon said. “I was in Iraq, and when we received goodies or items from people we didn’t know, it was exciting to know that people outside the military cared.”

Thus far, churches or ministries that are participating have had personal ties to Powell, such as her home church, Parkway Baptist in Goodlettsville, Tenn. Parkway has purchased nearly 200 copies to give to all new mothers—military and non-military—since its original release three years ago, said Pastor Jimmy Moore.

The mother of three children, ages 7 to 13, Powell has made two trips to Fort Campbell to meet new mothers and hand out books.

One mother she prayed with in November was expecting her fifth child and was caring for her disabled mother-in-law while her husband is in Iraq.

“It was wonderful to pray with her and encourage her,” Powell said. “I found out later in the day ... (that) her husband is a chaplain. So the Lord ministers to His own. He’s got encouragement for everyone.”

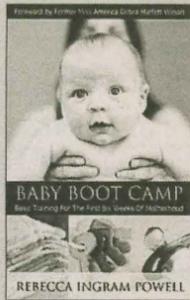
The demands of the constant care and feeding for an infant can overwhelm mothers, Powell said.

“Even though you have nine months to get ready, it’s so difficult,” Powell said. “You’re not expecting to be so fatigued. Being so tired affects the way you view things. Getting over the hump of the first six weeks is so hard because you think it’s always going to be this way.”

Powell said her goal is to help new mothers look to God for strength and develop a relationship with Christ if they don’t already have one.

Powell said she’s hearing that the book is having an impact—even in unique ways. One chaplain told her that a single mother had decided against abortion after seeing the cover of her book.

“To be part of someone choosing life, that’s awesome,” Powell said.



Writer offers faith-filled way to find fulfilling work

By Shawn Hendricks
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville (BP)—If your job has become about as much fun as being lectured in the boardroom by Donald Trump, you may need a new career path.

Author Dan Miller says work doesn’t need to be a bad word—especially for Christians.

Miller specializes in creative thinking for personal and business development. He helps people go from the job they hate to finding their “calling”—or perhaps just making a simple attitude adjustment.

His book, “48 Days to the Work You Love,” addresses the topic. It was recently published by Broadman & Holman, the trade book division of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

“Seeing so many people who hate their work has been a constant motivator for me to focus on this,” Miller said.

Work, he said, “is a blessing and a gift from God. Our work should be our most meaningful form of ministry and obvious fulfillment of God’s purpose for our lives.”

Miller’s book includes ideas for cover letters and resumes, as well as tips on finding the right kind of work and going through the interview process.

“Dan’s insight and actual hands-on implementation of discovering and developing a calling has influenced thousands of lives, including mine and many of my team members’,” Dave Ramsey, a national syndicated radio host, writes in the book’s forward.

Whether people keep the job they have or decide to seek out a new career path, Miller encourages them to set a timeframe for finding personal fulfillment in the work they do.

“Forty-eight days is an adequate timeframe to identify one’s strongest God-given areas of competence, evaluate the available options, choose the best one and act,” Miller

said. “Forty-eight days was chosen ... to remove excuses for months and years passing with no positive changes.”

Christian example in workplace

Miller, who has overcome his own personal business failures, knows the stress and struggles that can come in the work force. He said he believes God has a unique path for each person and that Christians should be setting the example in the marketplace.

“I saw plenty of people who had an eternal hope but did not seem to have hope and fulfillment in this life,” he said. “I think this malady is a blight on the Christian community and on our witness and attraction to the rest of the world.”

In today’s fast-paced society, where a person might have as many as 15 jobs in a lifetime, Miller urges readers to discover what they enjoy doing. Just because someone is good at doing something doesn’t mean he or she is going to enjoy it.

Many people see their jobs as a “necessary evil” or as something that defines who or what they are, he said. They may view hating their job and boss as a “badge of honor.”

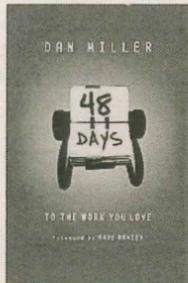
“Money is never enough compensation for investing time in something you hate,” Miller writes. “Having a job that only provides safety and security is not enough.”

People should discover what they are passionate about and develop a life plan to get to where they want to be, Miller said, adding that many people who are dissatisfied with work begin looking for a quick fix.

Miller, who lives in Franklin, Tenn., said finding a dream job or one’s calling in life takes more effort than flipping through classified ads or searching online.

Finding one’s calling rarely is easy, but it is worth the effort, Miller says.

“Jobs will come and go,” Miller said. “But a vocation or ‘calling’ will provide a continuing direction.”



Group uses newspaper to distribute Bible

Colorado Springs, Colo. (BP)—The International Bible Society is taking some heat for one of its latest efforts to spread the Bible message.

The group paid the standard advertising rate to insert 91,000 copies of the New Testament in the Dec. 19 issue of The Colorado Springs (Colo.) Gazette as a Christmas gift to the community.

More than 125 local churches, businesses, individuals and organizations contributed for the endeavor. But, in response, some Jews and Muslims have complained that they felt like they were being proselytized in their homes, The New York Times reported Dec. 24.

The distribution method also has raised questions in journalistic circles regarding freedom of speech.

“I do think it’s important that any newspaper that engages in new or different types of advertisement approaches think carefully about

how their independence from this particular product is achieved,” Aly Colon, an ethics in journalism professor at The Poynter Institute, told The Times.

Bob Burdick, publisher of The Gazette, said he doesn’t think papers should back away from ideas just because they’re religious ideas, just as they shouldn’t back away from ideas because they’re political ideas. He also reported that the paper received 195 positive messages about the insert and 69 negative messages. Five people canceled subscriptions.

The Times said the International Bible Society inserted the Gospel of Luke into The Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, Miss., to correspond with the release of “The Passion of The Christ” in theaters, and the group distributed more than 420,000 copies of Luke via The Houston Chronicle when the film was released on DVD.

“I saw plenty of people who had an eternal hope but did not seem to have hope and fulfillment in this life.”

Author Dan Miller

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

Student ministry at Hyland Baptist Church in Henderson. Under the leadership of Jason Cowan, minister to students, Hyland Church held a D-Now Weekend earlier this month with more than 115 students participating. Desiring for God to do an awesome work through the ministry, six of the ministry's student leaders were led to fast and pray for seven days prior to the event. Pray that students attending the D-Now Weekend will continue in their daily pursuit of God. Pray also that students will see God as alive, vibrant and ready to work in their lives.

Mission Service Corps Missionary Bobby Lewis of Taylorsville. Lewis serves as chaplain for a new ministry with the Spencer County fire, police and EMS. Lewis ministers to families and individuals involved in crisis situations and also serves as chaplain to the emergency personnel and their families. Pray that God will give Lewis clear direction and guidance as he develops this ministry. Pray also that county personnel and families in crisis will be open to receiving Christ and the hope He offers.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org or call (888) 263-5080.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **ASHLAND**—Rose Hill Christian School celebrated its 25th anniversary Dec. 17. **Charles Stewart**, retired pastor of Rose Hill Church, was honored for his role in founding the K-12 school. **Greg Gibson**, a former student at Rose Hill and major league umpire, was the keynote speaker.

■ **BUFFALO**—**James Smith** retired as pastor of Buffalo Church in November after 12 years of service. He plans to make his residence in Auburn. **Grant Jones** was called as interim pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Rosedale Church recently ordained **Seneca Gray** as a deacon. **Brian Stephens** is pastor.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—Victory Church recently called **Alan Morris** as pastor.

■ **LONDON**—Calvary Church recently called **John Avera** as minister of music. **Harlan Avera** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Walnut Street Church will host a series of conferences live via satellite this month. Topics include "Developing Leaders in a Postmodern Culture," Jan. 13, 11:30 a.m.; "Turning Questions into Transformational Discussions," Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m.; and "Understanding Other Religions: Islam," Jan. 25, 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 589-5290.

■ **MELBER**—Melber Church ordained **Paul Wilkerson** to the gospel ministry Dec. 5. He has been serving as minister to students and youth.

■ **PRINCETON**—Eddy Creek Church recently called **Leslie Joyce** as pastor.

Students with Kentucky ties earn degrees from Baptist seminaries

Several people with Kentucky ties received degrees during recent commencement ceremonies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Southern Seminary graduates:

Paul Anglin, Walton, master of divinity.

Peter Bahng, Louisville, master of divinity.

Thomas Baker, Louisville, master of arts in theological studies.

Joshua Basinger, Walton, master of divinity.

Barry Corder, Irvington, master of divinity.

Glen Espy, Prospect, doctor of philosophy.

Craig Johnson, Louisville, master of arts in worship.

Jeffrey Kukuk, Louisville, master of divinity in pastoral counseling.

Donny Mathis, Corbin, doctor of philosophy.

Fabio Moreira, Louisville, master of arts in Christian education.

Daryl Pepper, Elizabethtown, master of divinity.

Nathan Platt, Erlanger, doctor of musical arts.

James Brandon Shields, Louisville, master of divinity.

Randall Tan, Louisville, doctor of philosophy.

Jammie Vance, Louisville, master of divinity.

Stephen Weber, Louisville, master of arts in Christian education.

Bradley White, Paducah, master of divinity.

Michael Wilder, Magnolia, doctor of philosophy.

Jarvis Williams, Red Fox, master of theology.

Southeastern Seminary graduates:

Anthony Tinoco, Elizabethtown, master of divinity.

Jason David Wilson, Mount Vernon, master of divinity.

Southwestern Seminary graduates:

Allison Anderson, Paducah, master of arts in marriage and family counseling.

Jennifer Ross, Elizabethtown, master of arts in missiology.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

13-15 Shepherding the Shepherd Conference, Lexington.

25 Pastors' Forum, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

27-28 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Maple Grove Baptist Church, Louisville.

28-29 Preschool/Children's Ministry Meeting, Trinity Baptist Church, Lexington.

February

4-5 Great Commission Prayer Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

11-12 Deacon/Pastor/Spouse Retreat, Cave City Convention Center.

15 Regional Annuity Conference, Baptist Building, Middletown.

15 Regional Annuity Conference, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

17 Regional Annuity Conference, Broadway Baptist Church, Lexington.

17 Regional Annuity Conference, First Baptist Church, Hazard.

19 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

26 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

26 Regional Keyboard Festival, First Baptist Church, Murray.

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

28-March 1 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Valley View Baptist Church, Louisville.

March

4-5 Creative Ministries Festival 2005, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

5 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Sand Springs Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

5 RA Congress Region 3 & 7, White Plains Baptist Church, Scottsville.

5 RA Congress Region 5, Mays Lick Baptist Church, Mays Lick.

5 RA Congress Region 8A, Oakland Ave. Baptist Church, Catlettsburg.

5 Ring & Share—East, Sand Springs Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

5 VBS Clinic, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

11-12 Creative Ministries Festival 2005, Hillvue Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

12 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

12 RA Congress Region 1, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.

12 RA Congress Region 3, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Shepherdsville.

12 RA Congress Region 7, Stanford Baptist Church.

12 Ring & Share—West, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

12 VBS Clinic, First Baptist Church, Owensboro.

18-19 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Cedarmore.

19 RA Congress Region 2, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

19 RA Congress Region 6, Red House Baptist Church, Richmond.

19 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Jonathan Creek.

26 RA Congress Region 4, TBA.

26 RA Congress Region 8B, Camp Howard, Wallins.

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



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WESTERN RECORDER

CLASSIFIED ADS

NEEDED: Mission teams. Coastal Empire Ministries of Savannah Baptist Association needs mission teams who are on fire for the Lord to do ministry Jan.-Oct., 2005. Opportunities include: incarcerated, resort, sports, service, construction, family and urban. See Web site at www.sbassociation.org. Call Martha at (912) 354-5831, or e-mail: MLJ10CEM@comcast.net.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of administration and part-time minister of praise. Please send resumé to: Search Team, Red House Baptist Church, 2301 Red House Road, Richmond, KY 40475.

SEEKING: Bivocational youth minister for a growing, suburban Northern Kentucky church. This ministry position could potentially become full-time in the future. A love for Christ and teenagers a must. Please send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Union Baptist Church, PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091, by Feb. 1, 2005.

SEEKING: An experienced, full-time senior pastor to lead a missions-focused Southern Baptist congregation in a growing community in central Kentucky. Send resumé with references to: First Baptist Church, 111 Main St., Lawrenceburg, KY 40342, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Director of missions. The Personnel Committee of Elkhorn Baptist Association, Lexington, Ky., will be receiving resúmes in January and February, 2005. Resúmes and letters may be sent to: Terrence Freeman, 811 Bryan Ave., Lexington, KY 40505.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister (paid position; grades 6-12) for Mexico Baptist Church in rural western Kentucky. Also seeking a part-time music minister. 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. turnerchandler@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/children's pastor. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, PO Box 239, LaCenter, KY 42056.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/education minister. Hopedale Baptist is a growing church located in the fastest growing community in Southwest Missouri. We are looking for a person with great relational skills who is willing to be a part of a close, hard-working team. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for God's person. We are praying for you and your family right now. We will accept resúmes through Jan. 30, 2005. Please send to: Hopedale Baptist Church, 5370 N State Highway NN, Ozark, MO 65721, Attn: Terry Kendrick.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister. Edgewood Baptist Church in Nicholasville, Ky., is seeking a person for Wednesday evenings and Sunday worship services. Call: (859) 885-6211, or send resumé to church at 717 South Main St., Nicholasville, KY 40356.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for New Hope Community Baptist Church of Jackson, Ky. Please submit resumé to: New Hope, 1621 Highway 30 W, Jackson, KY 41339.

SEEKING: Full-time office manager for a fast-growing, 600-member church in Lexington, Ky., to assist the pastoral staff and congregation in their administrative needs. Two years of related experience is required with proficiency in Word, Excel and desktop publishing. Salary and benefits are negotiable. E-mail resumé to wddowns@insightbb.com, or fax to (859) 335-3137, attn: Personnel Committee. Respond by 1/15/05.

SEEKING: An experienced pastor to lead this missions-focused church located in a growing community. Referrals are welcome and encouraged. Send resumé with references, in confidence, by Jan. 31, 2005, to: Ballardville Baptist Church, 4300 S Highway 53, Crestwood, KY 40014, Attn: Search Team.

Passion '05

Organizers: Nashville event represents national youth movement for God

By Amy Green
Religion News Service

Nashville (RNS)—With a pop band on stage and more than 11,000 young adults singing along, the scene looked more like a concert than a worship service.

But the band and audience were singing praises to God at Passion '05, a four-day event in this city known as the "Buckle of the Bible Belt."

The event, which concluded Jan. 5, drew high school and college students from across the country and eight other nations to a downtown arena.

Featuring Christian bands and nationally known speakers, Passion '05 was designed to invigorate campus ministries nationwide by building enthusiasm among the most faithful students.

"We are here for one purpose: to taste and see that the Lord is good," organizer Louie Giglio told the crowd. "To see what it means to 'taste and see' and discover the hope of glory, Christ in you."

It was among the largest assemblies in recent years that have fed a surging youth interest in Christian spirituality.

"We really see a movement of college students who really want to live for God in a significant way," said Matt Morris, a volunteer program

coordinator for the event.

The passion behind Passion '05 came from Giglio, who in 1996 left his ministry at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and founded Choice Ministries.

Choice has been the parent organization for similar events throughout the country, including OneDay, which drew some 40,000 students in 2000 for a single day of prayer in Memphis. Organizers say the events are inspired by Isaiah 26:8, which states, "Your name and renown are the desire of our hearts."

Choice Ministries also is a parent organization to a record label with four Christian artists. Seven albums inspired by the Passion and OneDay events together have sold more than 1.2 million copies.

Stop dating church

In Nashville, students sang and swayed as the label's artists—Charlie Hall, David Crowder Band, Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman—performed amid a swirl of lights and video images. The students in turns cheered and prayed as Giglio joined John Piper and Beth Moore, both authors and speakers, to address the crowd.

In a breakout session, Joshua Harris, author of "I Kissed Dating Good-bye," told students in a breakout ses-



sion to stop "dating the church."

He described church daters as those who visit church to church and never settle on one congregation.

Students gathered in smaller groups to discuss Scripture and pray in sessions that were led by pastors and campus ministers from across the country.

Chuck Phillips of Cafe 1040, an organization that trains missionaries, was looking for recruits. He said he was struck by the number of students who at such a young age already had plans for a life of international mission work. He said students are even choosing college majors such as computer science and construction because they want skills they think will be valuable to the work force of a country, such as China, that does not welcome full-time missionaries.

Phillips called Passion '05 just a small representation of what is happening coast to coast.

"It's just scratching the surface," Phillips said. "There is a huge movement afoot on college campuses. These are just the ones who were

able to get here."

Some students are choosing a life of ministry because, unlike previous generations, fewer are expected to follow their parents' career paths, said Michael Devall, 24, a graduate student in accounting at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, La.

"Our lifestyles aren't set for us," he said. "We just don't know what the future holds for us, and so conferences like this help us answer those questions."

Lane Wood, 23, attended church with his family as a youngster in Carnegie, Okla., but felt a stronger nudge to ministry while studying the recording industry at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro. He graduated in August and traveled to East Asia to do mission work. After four days of worship and prayer at Passion '05, he was overwhelmed.

"You walk away thinking, and you can't stop thinking," he said. "It will take the next several days to unpack what I've learned."

With additional reporting by Erin Curry of Baptist Press

WORSHIP ASSEMBLY

Louie Giglio, who helped found the "Passion" movement among college students in 1997, told the 11,000 collegians gathered Jan. 2-5 in Nashville, that the only way to be victorious in the Christian life is to die to self and allow Christ to live in them. (Photos courtesy of Hoganson Media Relations)



WORSHIP IN SONG Musician Charlie Hall leads worship for 11,000 students at the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville.

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A VERY MEGA CHRISTMAS The choir for Fellowship Church in Grapevine, Texas, sings during one of two Christmas services held at the American Airlines Center in Dallas. More than 34,000 people attended two Christmas Eve services sponsored by the church. Leaders said members were able to invite their friends to a "neutral site" with greater success. (BP photo)

January Is Make Your Will Month

WHY DO YOU NEED A WILL?

"You own stuff; you will die; someone will get your stuff."

Jane Bryant Quinn

- To be a good steward — a good estate plan reduces death taxes and probate expenses leaving more for you to pass to your family and charitable causes at your death.
- To avoid the "Will" the state has written for you — Kentucky's "Intestate Succession Statute" — the state's plan of asset distribution may not meet your family's needs or accomplish your estate planning objectives.
- Making a Will allows you to say who will get your "stuff" (your assets) and how they'll receive your "stuff" at your death.
- Making a Will allows you to designate whom you want to be appointed as guardian for your children if both parents die before your children reach age 18.
- Making a Will assures smooth administration (probate) of your estate at your death.
- Making a Will allows *you* to name an executor who will handle the tasks of determining what you own at death, paying your final debts and expenses, managing the assets in your estate, preparing all required tax returns and distributing your assets as your Will directs.

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The Kentucky Baptist Foundation's "**Christian Estate Planning Basics**" seminar can provide more answers about why you need a Will. Contact Barry Allen at barry.allen@kybaptist.org to schedule this one hour, free seminar at your church.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation's private, no cost, confidential estate planning consultation service is a great way to get started on putting an estate plan together or updating an existing estate plan. Contact Laurie Valentine at laurie.valentine@kybaptist.org to arrange a time to meet in person or by phone.