



# WESTERN RECORDER

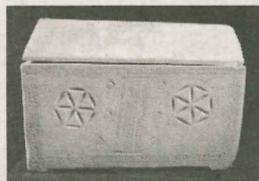
March 6, 2007  
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## IMB missionaries recuperating in wake of attack

**Nairobi, Kenya (BP)**—Southern Baptist missionaries Carl and Kay Garvin are in stable condition after two robbers attacked them Feb. 23 in Tanzania.

The two missionaries were airlifted to Nairobi, Kenya, where Garvin, 60, underwent surgery for a broken arm and lacerations. He also will have surgery to repair ligament damage to his knee. Mrs. Garvin, 56, was shot in the chest. The bullet entered close to her heart, missing the aorta by half an inch. It went through the lung and nestled against the skin on her back. The surgeon will make an incision to remove the bullet.

"She's a walking, talking miracle," Garvin said from his hospital bed. Despite being shot in the chest, Mrs. Garvin had no damage to her heart or lungs.

"We are both living miracles," she said, squeezing her husband's hand. "God was with us throughout the entire ordeal."

The attack began the night of Feb. 23 when two robbers entered their hotel room. The Garvins, first-term missionaries from Arkansas, were working with an Arkansas volunteer team in an area south of Moshi, Tanzania. The two intruders beat the hotel door down with a machete. Garvin tried holding the door, but an arm swinging the machete crashed through and sliced into his forearm, breaking it and cutting it open. The second intruder entered the room and shot Mrs. Garvin in the chest.

### Life-saving response

A nurse for 30 years in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and the National Guard, Garvin's medical training took over. He immediately applied pressure to the chest wound and treated his wife, an action that medical consultants say probably saved her life.

With no ambulances in that part of Tanzania, the Garvins' car became the impromptu emergency vehicle. A Tanzanian man stepped forward and announced he would drive them the two hours to the nearest clinic.

"God is in control of all things and He will get the glory from this," Garvin said. "Even though it was a frightening experience, God was still in that room with us. We were protected. I can't wait to see how He is glorified and His Kingdom expanded from this."

## Ministry connection



**WORSHIP LEADERS** The Speck Trio from Lebanon, Tenn., provided special music and led worship during last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green. (Photo by Dannah Prather)

## Speakers urge Kentucky Baptists to impact lost world

**By Trennis Henderson and Dannah Prather**  
*Editor and Partnerships Editor*

**Bowling Green**—Warning of the sin of "giving your first-class loyalties to third-class causes," Charles Roesel told Kentucky Baptists last week, "One of the great tragedies is we do not realize how terrible sins of omission are because they are less visible, less violent and less condemned by the world."

Roesel, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla., was one of 10 featured speakers from seven states at the 2007 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference. The Feb. 26-27 event, held at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, highlighted the theme "Get Connected—Stay Connected," a reference to the Kentucky Baptist Convention's five-year Kentucky Baptists Connect ministry strategy.

Detailing the account in 1 Kings 20 of a guard who inadvertently allowed a captive to escape, Roesel noted that the guard did not fail because of iniquity, ignorance, inactivity or inability.

"He was not condemned because of what he did," he said, "but because of what he failed to do."

"That is a telling description of our Southern Baptist Convention," Roesel declared. "Half of our churches are reporting three or less baptisms per year," he added, noting that 11,000 Southern Baptist churches reported no baptisms and 55 percent of churches in 2004 reported no teen baptisms.

"I've never seen a time when Southern Baptists have known more and done less than in our day," he la-



**MINISTRY MANDATE** Charles Roesel, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla., reminded Kentucky Baptists that ministry "is a divine mandate."

mented. "After all is said and done in the Southern Baptist Convention, there's a lot more said than done."

"I love the Southern Baptist Convention," Roesel emphasized. "But I'm deeply troubled and if we don't do something and do it soon, we're going to be history."

Describing Matthew 25:31-46 as "the defining passage of my life," Roesel recounted Christ's instruction to minister to the hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and imprisoned.

For those who fail to heed Jesus' words, "has it even dawned upon us that every sin mentioned here is a sin of omission?" Roesel asked. "Ministry is not an elective. It is a required course. It is a divine mandate."

Noting that Jesus "taught more by what He did than by what He said," Roesel told conference participants that Christ "could have talked about the importance of humility; instead He took a towel and a basin and washed the disciples' feet."

Warning that "we are not living that which we profess," Roesel cau-

tioned against practicing "gerbil Christianity" in which church members "get on that wheel and go like crazy and go nowhere."

Citing various atrocities of the past century, Roesel said, "The 20th century's greatest atrocity which continues into this century is that there are almost 2 billion people who have yet to hear the gospel a single time because we Christians have made the gospel the greatest story never told."

Telling non-Christians about Jesus Christ is "the No. 1 priority of the church and of every Christian," he insisted, adding that followers of Christ who fail to win other people to faith in Christ are "guilty of rebellion, high treason and inexcusable disobedience. Don't tell me you're in God's will if you're not winning the lost."

"We've tried all the easy stuff," Roesel concluded. "But we need to once again make the main thing the main thing. ... Don't do good things to the exclusion of the best thing."

Among other speakers during the two-day conference:

**Raul Vasquez**, retired director of the Florida Baptist Convention's language division, urged Kentucky Baptist pastors to connect through "bold faith living."

Citing the account in Matthew 14 of Jesus walking on the water, he noted that the Apostle Peter joined Jesus on the water, began to sink and was rescued by Jesus.

"Faith is not really faith until you're personally and voluntarily risking something" as Peter did  
□ See *Speakers urge KBC ... Page 3*

## Search team recommends Hammond as NAMB president

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's presidential search team recommended March 1 that Geoffrey Hammond become the Southern Baptist entity's next president. Hammond is senior associate director of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia state convention.

NAMB's trustees will vote on the recommendation at a March 20-21 called meeting in Alpharetta, Ga. If approved, Hammond will become NAMB's president-elect, officially beginning his duties at the May 8-9 board meeting and starting full-time on May 22, according to search committee chairman Greg Fauls.

### Church planting strategist

"Dr. Hammond has proven himself to be a successful leader, strategist and practitioner in church planting, missions and evangelism throughout his ministry career," said Fauls, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro. "NAMB is a missions agency in need of a strong leader with the mind of a missiolo-

gist and with a vision to strategically mobilize an army of missionaries who will spread the gospel and plant churches throughout an ethnically diverse North America."



Hammond

Hammond, 49, was born in Nigeria to missionary parents serving with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. He is a graduate of Spurgeon's Seminary in London and holds a doctor of ministry degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He and his wife, Deborah, have two sons, Timothy and Nicholas.

Hammond has served throughout his ministry career as a pastor, church planter, staff member of mega-churches, IMB missionary to Brazil, seminary professor, director of missions, NAMB-appointed missionary and church planting strategist.

For the past five years, he has served as senior associate director of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, one of three state conventions that have broken away from historic Baptist state conven-

tions. The three include the conservative SBCV and Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the moderate Baptist General Convention of Missouri.

The recommendation of Hammond follows a 10-month search that began after former president Robert Reccord resigned last year amid allegations of extravagant spending, autocratic leadership and conflicts of interest.

### Seeking "God's man"

"We determined what we were going to do was seek God's man," Fauls said. "There was never a predetermined person. We were faithful to follow our process and allow God to reveal His choice. We considered a wide variety of candidates from all corners of Southern Baptist life: pastors, seminary professors, state executives, missionaries, evangelists, as well as staff members of denominational agencies.

"Hammond understands missions at every level," Fauls said. "He has proven skills and experience planting churches and strategically directing church planting in associations and a state convention.

He is gifted in leadership and adept in the areas of business administration. He is bilingual and has a grasp of the complexity and diversity of the harvest field and clearly understands the importance and dynamics of NAMB's relationships with her state partners. In addition, he is fully supportive of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000."

"As a third-generation missionary," Hammond said, "my heartbeat has always been reaching people with the gospel no matter where they live. I believe the North American Mission Board is the greatest missionary agency for reaching North America for Christ and it is the greatest honor of my life to be nominated for this position."

"Our president search committee has been thorough and prayerful in seeking God's man for NAMB," said Bill Curtis, NAMB trustee chairman. "I can say with confidence that the search committee has worked diligently on the behalf of Southern Baptists and the board throughout this process, and they look forward to bringing a report on the journey and to presenting Dr. Geoff Hammond at the March board meeting."

## BAPTIST DIGEST

**Online registration open for 2007 SBC.** Online registration opened March 1 at [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) for churches to register messengers for the Southern Baptist Convention's June 12-13 annual meeting in San Antonio. Last year, more than 80 percent of messengers registered online. Online registration can help messengers avoid waiting in line at the convention center while a registration worker types in information. When registering online, a church receives a "messenger reference number" form to be printed out and presented by each messenger at the SBC registration booth in exchange for a nametag and a set of ballots. The appropriate church-authorized representative must complete all online registration.

**SBC preschool, children's registration open.** Registration is now open for families planning to enroll their children in the June 10-13 preschool childcare or the children's conference in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. For information about registration, visit [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) and click on "2007 SBC Annual Meeting" then "Children/Students." Childcare for infants through 3-year-olds will be available from Sunday afternoon through Wednesday. Children ages 4-12 can be enrolled in the age-graded children's conferences. The postmark deadline for registration is May 18.

**GuideStone releases annual Ministers Tax Guide.** Ministers can find help in preparing their 2006 federal income tax returns from GuideStone Financial Resources' annual Ministers Tax Guide. The 2006 guide details recent changes to tax laws and their effect on ministers. An overview of the tax change highlights was written by Richard Hammar, a CPA, attorney and author who specializes in legal and tax issues for ministers. The tax guide is available in an electronic PDF format from GuideStone's Web site, [www.GuideStone.org](http://www.GuideStone.org). Printed copies or a CD version are available by calling GuideStone's customer service at (888) 98-GUIDE (888-984-8433).

**King named president of William Carey.** Trustees of William Carey University in Hattiesburg, Miss., elected Thomas King president of the Mississippi Baptist-affiliated school Feb. 15. King had served as acting president since shortly after the death last September of Larry Kennedy, who was WCU president for eight years before succumbing to complications from Lou Gehrig's Disease. King is a graduate of William Carey and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and was named WCU Alumnus of the Year in 1980. He joined WCU's faculty in 1999 and has served as dean of the school of psychology and counseling, vice president for graduate and off-campus programs, executive vice president and professor of psychology.

## NAMB commissions 128 missionaries, chaplains

Albuquerque, N.M. (BP)—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board commissioned 128 missionaries and chaplains Feb. 25, the second-largest missionary commissioning in NAMB history.

During the service, co-sponsored by Hoffmantown Church and the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, 116 missionaries and 12 chaplains introduced themselves following a flag procession. The missionaries and chaplains represented 66 ministry locations in 29 states and one Canadian province.

Roy Fish, NAMB's interim president delivered the commissioning sermon.

"In the many things I've done in serving the North American Mission Board over the last year, the most thrilling and gratifying thing of all is to participate in one of these commissioning services," Fish said.

Highlighting the theme, "Advancing the Kingdom," Fish told the missionaries, chaplains and about 2,000 Hoffmantown members they can best advance the Kingdom through a renewal of desperate passion for the lost.

Looking squarely at the mission-

aries seated in the front rows, Fish told them to say to God, "God, if You're truly calling me, I want my passion for souls deepened. God, I want You to show me what hell is like.

"Advancing the Kingdom also requires a release of divine power," Fish said. "Where you are ministering, things are going to happen that can't be explained in terms of mere human activity. They'll only be explained in terms of God's release of divine power."

Fish reminded the missionaries that they will be caught in the crossfire of warfare between God's Kingdom and Satan's kingdom.

"Sometimes you will be tempted to grow weary and lose your vital concern for people," Fish warned. "Your compassion gauge will fall to a terribly low point. You'll be tempted to major in minors and give first-rate loyalty to second-rate causes. You'll be tempted to become discouraged and depressed. Just remember you're in a war and must resist the enemy."

Brian and Suzette Wood of Orlando, Fla., were among the missionaries commissioned. Mrs. Wood

is resort ministries director for the Greater Orlando Baptist Association, where Disney World and other attractions make Orlando one of the top tourist destinations in the world, with 50 million visitors a year.

"It's the culmination of your whole life, and how God has prepared you for this moment," Mrs. Wood said concerning being commissioned. "To be chosen to do the Lord's work and to be sent out to represent all Southern Baptists is an honor and a privilege. It's an awesome, awesome thing."

Wayne Barber, senior pastor of the 5,500-member Hoffmantown Church, said, "We have a lot of people out here who don't know what a Southern Baptist truly is, and who are learning what a home missionary is. To most people, missionaries are all in Africa. They don't realize that we have a home mission field here and that, in fact, New Mexico is a tremendous mission state.

"In hosting the commissioning service, we wanted to expose our people to what's going on, to see Baptists at their very best, and to see what missions is really about," Barber added.

## CBF council reports declining revenue, reduces budget

Decatur, Ga. (ABP)—Halfway through the organization's fiscal year, leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship were informed of a significant revenue shortfall during the CBF Coordinating Council meeting Feb. 16 in Decatur, Ga.

Undesignated receipts were 13.2 percent below the year-to-date budget, according to a financial summary of the six months ending Dec. 31, 2006. That budget already had been revised downward from an earlier adopted budget.

In order to address an anticipated revenue shortfall, council members instituted a plan last fall to operate at 90 percent of the original 2006-

2007 budget.

The Fellowship's partner organizations, such as CBF-affiliated seminaries, already have felt the budget shortfall, since partner allocations are adjusted each month to reflect current revenues.

CBF's total undesignated revenue for the first six months of the fiscal year totaled \$5.9 million, compared to the budgeted amount of \$6.8 million. The undesignated-receipts category includes general contributions, offerings for global missions and income from resource fees.

Including designated gifts, the Fellowship's total revenue for the first half of the fiscal year was \$8.5

million. CBF expenditures for the same period totaled \$10.3 million, resulting in a net loss of \$1.8 million.

Larry Hurst, financial controller for the Atlanta-based Fellowship, said the organization's staff members are reducing expenditures in light of the deficit. "We've got a gap here that we're trying to close," he said. "We're really trying to do anything we can think of to reduce costs."

While some initiatives such as CBF's Global Missions Offering remain underfunded, Hurst noted that resource income revenues are at 110 percent of the projected budget.

## Badgett urges Baptist support for Senate bill

By Robert Reeves  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

**Bowling Green**—Kentucky Baptist leaders are calling on grassroots Baptists to voice support for a bill that reinforces a marriage protection amendment to the state constitution approved by voters in 2004.

Paul Badgett, chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs, urged Kentucky Baptists to call their House representatives and ask them to vote on Senate Bill 152 before the current legislative session ends.

The bill already has been approved by the Senate and is now in the House Health and Welfare Committee.

The bill prohibits all state agencies from creating a new legal entity called "domestic partner" for the purpose of giving health insurance benefits. The University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville already have authorized domestic partnerships.

Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville and a former KBC president, said he sees the universities' actions as an "end run" around the Kentucky constitution which was amended in 2004 to say "a legal status identical to or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized."

"Although the voters spoke loud and clear in 2004, this initiative by the universities is essentially redefining marriage for all practical purposes by granting marriage benefits to unmarried, live-in partners—both heterosexual and homosexual," Badgett said. "We feel it's important for the welfare of Kentucky's families to support and strengthen the family, but we're not going to do that by watering down the definition of marriage."

"The actions by the universities have the effect of marginalizing marriage," Badgett added. "After all, people are less likely to marry if they are treated as if they are married. We believe it's in the best interest of children for them to grow up in a loving home with a mother and father who are willing to indicate their commitment by getting married. This kind of relationship deserves the exclusive support of our government."

Speaking during last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Badgett encouraged Kentucky Baptists to call the General Assembly's toll-free legislative message line at (800) 372-7181 and leave a message for their legislators.

"We believe the bill will pass if it gets out of committee but that may not happen unless the people of Kentucky speak out," Badgett said.

## Carter: Evangelism is church's top priority

By Dannah Prather  
Partnerships Editor

**Bowling Green**—Pastors, church staff members and congregations should work together to keep the gospel message clear, centered on Christ and aligned with the Bible, according to Charles Carter.

Carter, pastor emeritus of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., noted that with those priorities in place, Kentucky Baptists can connect people through evangelistic preaching.

Carter spoke at a Feb. 26 session of the Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference held at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

"The most important thing isn't my sermon," Carter told the group of ministers and laypeople. "The most important thing is: 'Did I connect?'"

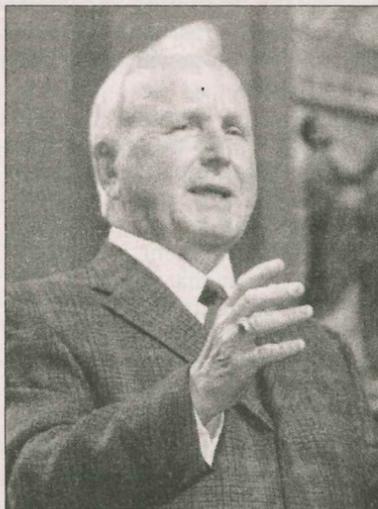
Carter said an entire congregation can affect the answer to that question.

"I'm overwhelmed ... that God is making His appeal to the lost through weak, unworthy human beings like you and me," Carter noted.

He encouraged Kentucky Baptists to return to the Bible, specifically the book of Acts, for the best examples of evangelistic preaching. He noted that although there were no bound copies of the Bible available to the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, Peter returned to Scripture himself, referencing the words of the prophet Joel as he spoke about the recently ascended Christ.

Carter reminded pastors that because Peter's words elicited salvation decisions from 3,000 people, using the apostle's approach makes sense.

"It's not about numbers," Carter emphasized, "but every number



**CLEAR MESSAGE** Charles Carter challenged Kentucky Baptists to keep the message of the gospel clear.

represents a person—somebody's father, somebody's mother, somebody's son, somebody's daughter, somebody's friend."

Another aspect of Peter's sermon was its focus on Christ, Carter said, encouraging Kentucky Baptists to review John 14:6 where Jesus says He is the way, the truth and the life and no one will enter heaven apart from a relationship with Him.

"Absolute truth is dogmatic," Carter said, challenging pastors never to compromise the core of the gospel. "It's not just biblical, it's logical," he added.

Returning to Acts, Carter said for 3,000 people to be saved at Pentecost, Peter must have drawn his message to a practical conclusion. "We would call it an invitation," he added.

Inviting people to respond to what they have heard is the most important part of the service, Carter said. He lamented the practice

of some churches that either "tack something on the end" of a worship service, or congregations that become restless because "everyone knows it's time to beat the Methodists to the cafeteria line."

"God cannot work in that atmosphere," Carter said. He also encouraged pastors to be patient, citing a survey that found "90 percent of decisions were made after the third stanza" of a hymn of invitation.

Carter said pastors also should work with the music leader beforehand to structure the invitation and discuss the use of instrumentalists or the choir. He maintained that the invitation time is not the opportunity to try out a new song on the congregation. Using songs familiar to church members helps develop a more reverent atmosphere, he said.

With humor, Carter reminded pastors and laypeople that the unchurched who visit their worship services might be unaware of common terms used in an invitation.

"Some of you who would never speak in an unknown tongue do it every Sunday," he said, referring to Christian jargon. The unchurched person hears: "come by statement," Carter said, and wonders, "Does that mean I have to make a speech?"

Many churches have "counselors" to talk about spiritual decisions a person might want to make, but Carter said he doesn't like the term. "Counselor? Am I going to see a psychiatrist?" a visitor might wonder, he said, adding that he prefers the title "encourager."

Playing the role of encourager himself, Carter said evangelism "is not the only thing about the church, but it's the No. 1 thing. ... In preaching, God is making His appeal through you."

*"I'm overwhelmed ... that God is making His appeal to the lost through weak, unworthy human beings like you and me."*

Charles Carter, pastor emeritus of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.

## Speakers urge KBC churches to impact lost world

Continued from page 1

when he stepped out of the boat, Vasquez noted.

He said the relevant question for Christians today is: "What is it that you are doing that presents a personal risk to you because you are being obedient to God?"

Emphasizing that "faith requires that you go beyond the logical, the understandable, the visible," Vasquez added, "The only way to feed your faith is to keep your eyes on Jesus."

**Dean Haun**, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Ga., focused on "Connecting through a Passion for Jesus."

"I don't believe we can really connect ... with those who are lost if God isn't doing something new and fresh in our lives," he said, warning that "we can become so busy that we get really empty on the inside and we lose our thirst and passion for the Lord."

He said problems that can rob pastors of their thirst for God include hurried schedules, a haughty spirit, hidden sin, hard churches, hateful people, heartbreaking circumstances and higher criticism of the Word of God.

Haun said keys to having "a sold-out passion for Christ" include desire, making a decision and seeking to "make a profound difference" for

the Kingdom of God.

"Our problem is we've got a teacup thirst for God, but He's a 'Big Gulp' God," Haun declared. "We can produce work in the power of the flesh, but we cannot produce fruit unless we're hooked up to the vine."

**Don Wilton**, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, S.C., encouraged fellow pastors to get back to basics, making evangelism their churches' highest priority.

"We find less and less churches with a single-hearted purpose," Wilton said. "Everybody's doing their own thing and evangelism is suffering."

Turmoil within congregations and the SBC distracts from the original purpose of the church, he said.

When Jesus drove unscrupulous moneychangers from the temple in Jerusalem, it was as if He accomplished an "Extreme Makeover," Wilton said, referring to the ABC TV show. "He re-established the original plan and purpose for His church."

Finding new, effective ways to share the gospel isn't easy, Wilton acknowledged, adding that he asks God for the kind of vision that is fresh and "cutting edge, without compromising the gospel."

"We are in a battle for the soul of the New Testament church," Wilton said. "If our Southern Baptist denomination (continues) in a down-

ward spiral ... in 30 or 40 years, I hesitate to imagine what we're going to look like, particularly in the area of evangelism and soul-winning."

Wilton challenged his fellow pastors to put personal witnessing high on their list of priorities, out of obedience to God and for the example it sets for the congregation.

"If I'm not where I want to be, how can I expect my people to be where they ought to be?" he asked.

**Jeff LaBorg**, senior pastor of College Heights Baptist Church in Gallatin, Tenn., acknowledged that many pastors are "weary of well-doing." Citing Philippians 1:6, LaBorg said Paul was "confident of an exciting finish" for faithful Christians.

LaBorg encouraged pastors to return to the basics of sharing the gospel message.

"God is not impressed with big buildings and big budgets," he said, adding that ministry is "not about the man; it's about the Master."

Conference coordinator Ross Bauscher said speakers effectively highlighted "taking the focus off ourselves and putting it on the Lord."

Bauscher, leader of the KBC evangelism growth team, said the event's overarching message was "how we can reach the lost world and build bridges to people and develop relationships through ministry."

## 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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## The Talpiot tomb theory: 5 glaring errors

By Mike Licona

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Movie director James Cameron, film documentarian Simcha Jacobovici and a few others announced Feb. 26 that they have identified a tomb in East Talpiot, just south of the old city of Jerusalem, which they believe contained the skeletal remains of Jesus Christ.

Supposedly, in the tomb also were found the remains of his family, including his mother Mary, his "wife" Mary Magdalene, his "son" Judah, his brother Jose and another possible family member named Matthew. The remains were found in burial bone boxes called ossuaries.

The group also claims they can tie the James ossuary revealed in 2002 to the tomb, which was actually discovered in 1980 but little was thought of it until 1996. At that time the BBC aired a report suggesting that it might be the burial tomb of Jesus' family, a claim that was dismissed by archaeologists and scholars. The most recent news spectacle is based on additional evidence that has emerged through DNA testing.

A book called "The Jesus Family Tomb" was released Feb. 27, and a corresponding documentary on the tomb aired this week on The Discovery Channel.

If the tomb really does contain the remains of Jesus and His family, the ramifications would be devastating to Christianity. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:17, "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."

But there are five glaring problems that immediately surface with the suggestion that the tomb of Jesus' family has been identified in Jerusalem:

■ The ossuaries are from the wrong location. In those days, family members typically were buried in their hometowns. In Jesus' case, this would be Galilee, not Jerusalem.

The traditional site of Jesus' tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher

predates the 4th century. The Talpiot tomb now being postulated is some distance away from where that spot would have been.

## COMMENTARY

According to tradition that goes back to the 6th century, there are two possible sites for Mary's burial in Jerusalem, and the Talpiot tomb isn't one of them. It is also interesting to note that the traditional burial spots of Jesus, James and Mary were all in different locations.

■ The collection of very popular names presented in the tomb claim is unimpressive. Mary was the most common female name in Jesus' day, and there are at least six women by that name in the New Testament. Joseph was the second most common male name in Jesus' day, Judah was the fourth most popular name and Matthew was the ninth.

Of nearly 1,000 ossuaries that have been discovered in Jerusalem, at least 22 have the name "Jesus" inscribed on them and two have "Jesus, son of Joseph."

According to the documentary's Web site, the six ossuaries read, "Jesus Son of Joseph," "Mary," "Mary known as the master," "Judah son of Jesus," "Jose" and "Matthew."

So to find six ossuaries with the names Jesus, Mary, Mary, Judah, Jose (Joseph) and Matthew has limited value. Moreover, one cannot ignore the fact that Matthew is among the bunch. If he wasn't a son of Jesus, who was he? He was not listed as one of Jesus' brothers. A good historian could not ignore this odd factor.

■ There is strong historical evidence that Jesus was single. In 1 Corinthians 9:5, Paul states that he and Barnabas have the same right to be married as others in their positions who are married. He then names Peter, the other apostles and the Lord's brothers. If Jesus had been married, Paul would only have had to mention His name and would have had no need to mention the others.

It is also noteworthy that there is not a shred of good evidence that

Jesus was married or had children. The passage in the gospel of Phillip, written 100 to 200 years after Jesus and to which author Dan Brown referred in "The Da Vinci Code," is preserved only in a single manuscript. That manuscript contains holes that Brown conveniently supplied words for, making it appear that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had a romantic relationship.

The bottom line is that if Jesus of Nazareth was single and had no descendants, the remains of those in the Talpiot tomb do not belong to Him and His family.

■ Most importantly, the theory that the Talpiot tomb once contained the bones of Jesus and His family cannot explain other known historical facts. It is fairly certain that James became a Christian after the death of his brother Jesus.

The earliest proclamations of Paul, James, Peter, John and the other Jerusalem apostles is that Jesus had been resurrected. In light of this, why would James, who was a pious Jew and who had not been a follower of Jesus through the time of His crucifixion, help perpetrate the fraud that Jesus had resurrected when He knew where He was buried?

The fact that shortly after His death by crucifixion, Jesus' disciples sincerely believed that he had resurrected and appeared to them belongs to the historical bedrock that even most skeptical scholars regard as indisputable.

■ The DNA evidence establishes little. At best, it only links possible familial relationships between those in the Talpiot tomb. It cannot even suggest that the remains belong to the family of Jesus of Nazareth.

When the Talpiot tomb hypothesis is weighed on the historian's scale, a few beans may be placed on the side in its favor while a brick of historical evidence is placed gently on the side against it. The tip of the scale that follows is not a gentle one.

Mike Licona is director of apologetics and interfaith evangelism for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

## North American missions focus

This is the Week of Prayer for North American Missions and a special time to focus on the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

The theme is "Change Your World" based on Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

During this emphasis, I encourage you to ask God to awaken a deep longing for Christ in you. Ask Him to give you a tender, sensitive heart and hands that are willing to work at changing your world.

Increasing our level of commitment is not really optional. There are secular forces and other religious groups making advances in North America at a pace that should shock us into reality. Too many churches are plateaued or declining. Individuals need renewal. Churches need revival and our continent needs spiritual awakening.

It sounds like such a big task when we talk about reaching all of

North America. But it really comes down to reaching individuals.

North America cannot be reached for Christ until Kentucky is reached. Kentucky cannot be reached until your county is reached. Your county cannot be reached until your community is reached. Your community cannot be reached until your family and relatives are reached.

Each believer must personalize the Great Commission. Each of us must become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and become engaged in multiplying the number of disciples in our churches and the world. We must pray, give and go.

North American missions are conducted through a partnership between the North American Mission Board and state conventions. Through a covenant agreement with each state convention, joint strategies are developed for reaching people in every town and county.

In the older state conventions, like Kentucky, NAMB provides about

40 percent and the state convention provides about 60 percent of the funding for jointly sponsored missionaries and ministries. In new work state conventions, like Indiana, NAMB may provide 85 to 90 percent of the funding.

Kentucky Baptists contribute almost \$4 million each year through the Cooperative Program and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for NAMB ministries. These funds are used by NAMB to fund evangelism, church planting and language work and to send missionaries—primarily in new work state conventions.

The benefit of this partnership with state conventions is that it allows NAMB to coordinate an effective and efficient evangelism strategy that is broader in scope than could be attained by any single state.

It is a wonderful privilege to be in partnership with 44,000 Southern Baptist churches to work together in reaching North America for Christ. May God touch the hearts of Kentucky Baptists to pray, give and go (locally as well as nationally and internationally) as never before to the honor and glory of God!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## CHURCH

## Do you tithe? It's an issue of faith and obedience

By Doug Strader

I recently read about a pastor who challenged his church members to commit to tithing for a period of three months. At the end of the three months if God had not blessed them, the church would return their tithes to them.

That might sound foolish to some of us, but it seems to me to be akin to the words of Malachi 3:10 when God challenged the people to tithe and put Him to the test to see if He would not bless them until they had no more need. God did not make a promise to return their tithes to them, but He did promise to open the windows of heaven and pour out His blessings on them.

Why is it so difficult for a Christian who has been redeemed by the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross to give to the Lord a tithe of all he or she makes? If I can trust Him for eternal life, why can't I trust Him by tithing?

■ Some Christians have not been taught to tithe. They simply do not know what the Bible says about giving a tithe. They have never been challenged to give a tithe to God.

■ Some people do not believe that the New Testament teaches tithing. (See Matthew 23:23.)

■ Other people do not have enough faith to begin to tithe.

■ Some people believe in proportionate giving instead of giving 10 percent. Christians need to realize that tithing is the floor, not the ceiling of our giving. The Apostle Paul does teach proportionate giving in his second letter to the Corinthian church. However, he uses the example of the Macedonian Christians who gave more than they were able to give out of their poverty. It seems obvious that they were giving much more than a tithe.

■ Some people think they make such a small amount that they cannot afford to tithe.

■ Some other people make so much money that they think it is not necessary for them to tithe as long as they regularly give to the Lord.

If you are not now tithing, why not begin to pray about it with your family and ask God to convict you about what He would have you do? Then begin to tithe for a period of three months and see if the Lord doesn't begin to bless you beyond measure with all spiritual blessings.

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



## Help children develop plan to recognize, avoid sexual abuse

**Q: I recently found out the daughter of my best friend has been sexually abused. My friend is really struggling and blaming herself. I have two children and have never wanted to expose them to information that would scare them. Now that this has hit so close to home, I am unsure how to protect my kids. Should I talk to them or just continue to keep a close eye on their activities and their environment?**

Just as you would have a plan with your children if they were to get lost, forget their lunch money or your house was on fire, it is important to have a plan with your children about good touch and bad touch. They need to know the rules and their rights.

### PARENTING

Talk with your children about good, loving, nurturing touch. This is touch that is not secretive. Talk with your children about bad touch. This involves anyone touching your children's private parts or your children touching someone else's private parts. This is secretive touch. Exceptions include a doctor's exam or a child who needs help with hygiene.

Teach your children the correct terminology for their body parts. In the case of your friend's daughter, for her to explain what happened to her, she would need to know the names of body parts involved. Often children who have been sexually abused struggle to explain what happened because they do not have the correct terms.

Include in your safety plan with your child adults who are safe and can be trusted. Be sure to have your child brainstorm this list with you. More than 85 percent of sexually abused children have been hurt by someone they know, not a stranger, according to ECHO (Exploited Children's Help Organization) in Louisville.

The abuser usually tricks children. Threats and bribes are used to accomplish this. Abuse happens in secret. Children struggle in isolation. Promise your children that you will never be mad at them or blame them.

God has given us the need to be touched, to show and receive love through touch. In our sinful world, touch has been distorted and hidden in the darkness. As your child's teacher, bring touch into the light and talk about these facts. Give your child the skills and tools to deal with inappropriate relationships. If you struggle to talk with your child, there are numerous books and pamphlets available to help you.—Valerie Vincent

**Q: Our 16-year-old son suddenly has become very popular in school and at church. After going through an awkward stage for several years, he has grown several inches, excelled in football, and now everybody wants to be his friend. How can we help him take all of this in stride and stay humble?**

Invite your son to play an old childhood game that he will remember as "Rock, Paper, Scissors." Play a few rounds and ask him what he notices.

He may notice that each choice can mean either a win or a loss. He may notice that there is no guarantee of a victory on any given turn. Scissors cuts paper. Paper covers rock. Rock smashes scissors. Most important, your son may need to be reminded that he who holds the power and influence now may not always be in that position.

The Scripture reminds us that God endows certain individuals with power and influence as a means of accomplishing His purposes in their life. Your son may mistakenly believe that power and influence are his entitlement due to personal accomplishments. He might get the big head and begin to place himself in an elite class of his peers.

Remind him that his power and influence are a gift from God to make an impact for Christ in this world. That power without purpose is perverted. That purposeful power is always humble. Like a servant Savior, true power is ever more prone to carry a cross than wear a crown.—Scott Wigginton

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## Conference combines inspiration, insights

Personally connecting to Jesus Christ and helping others connect to Him remain primary emphases in Kentucky Baptist life in the midst of the state convention's Kentucky Baptists Connect ministry strategy.

Highlighting the theme, "Get Connected—Stay Connected," last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green addressed such diverse topics as connecting through apologetics, interfaith evangelism, prayer, faith and ministry evangelism.

Despite a smaller-than-usual crowd at the annual conference, the event's 10 keynote speakers, 20 breakout sessions, vocational evangelists pre-conference session and women's breakout session and luncheon offered timely words of inspiration and insight for the benefit of participants.

Workshop topics ranged from "What Do We Do about Islam?" and "Reaching People in a Changing Community" to "Transformational Discipleship" and "Moving Students from Salvation to Baptism."

As usual, featured speakers shared memorable words of challenge and encouragement that Kentucky Baptist pastors and laypeople will ponder far beyond the two-day conference. Among those insights:

**Raul Vasquez**, retired director of the Florida Baptist Convention's language division: "If you're going to walk by faith, you're going to have to get used to going beyond the logical, the understandable, the visible. ... That's what faith is all about. ... The only way to feed your faith is to keep your eyes on Jesus."

**Charles Carter**, pastor emeritus of Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.: "Evangelism is not the only thing about the church, but it's the No. 1 thing. ... It's not about numbers, but every number represents a person—somebody's father, somebody's mother, somebody's son, somebody's daughter, somebody's friend."

## Make youth baptisms significant

In the two-plus years I have had the privilege of writing this column, nothing has jumped out at me as much as what I will touch on this week. I was shocked, disheartened and almost depressed when I read it.

According to the latest Annual Church Profile statistics, Kentucky Baptist Convention churches baptized 3,627 students ages 12-17 for the 2005-2006 reporting year. That averages to about 1.5 youth baptisms per Kentucky Baptist congregation per year.

Ouch! In fact, some entire associations of churches baptized fewer than 12 students this past year.

I am not naive enough to think that every student who accepts Christ is being baptized, and that may be part of the problem. In fact, it is becoming harder and harder to get students to follow up their salvation experience with baptism. We have seen students accept Christ in their school or at a special event and never follow that up with baptism and church membership. There are a variety of reasons for this, and this is an issue we need to address.

Of course, there are pockets of the state that are doing well, and we can see where God is moving, and that is refreshing.

Hillcrest Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, where Bill Houpt is associate pastor, has a 95 percent success rate in people who accept Christ following up with baptism and church involvement. He led a workshop at the Kentucky Baptist Evangelism

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

**Ted Traylor**, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla.: "You want to know why you don't share your faith? Jesus is not Lord. ... Are you taking the commission of God serious?"

**Jeff LaBorg**, senior pastor of College Heights Baptist Church in Gallatin, Tenn.: "God is not impressed with big buildings and big budgets. He knows the heart."

**Charles Roesel**, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla.: "I've never seen a time when Southern Baptists have known more and done less than in our day. ... I love the Southern Baptist Convention. But I'm deeply troubled and if we don't do something and do it soon, we're going to be history."

**Don Wilton**, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, S.C.: "We are in a battle for the soul of the New Testament church. ... If I'm not where I want to be (as a pastor), how can I expect my people to be where they ought to be?"

**Dean Haun**, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Ga.: "Our problem is we've got a teacup thirst for God, but He's a 'Big Gulp' God. We can produce work in the power of the flesh, but we cannot produce fruit unless we're hooked up to the vine."

**Carol Kent**, author of "When I Lay My Issac Down: Unshakable Faith in Unthinkable Circumstances": "In this painful, sinful world, we're all going to go through things that will require us to trust God even when it doesn't make sense. ... If you aren't currently living in a crisis, chances are you know someone who is. Let them know you're there and that you care."

**Richard Gaines**, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington: "Prayer is what gives us access to God's purpose and God's power. ... Where there is little prayer, there is little power; where there is much prayer, there is much power."

Conference about how they do that and I want to pass along some of what is working for them.

**Importance.** Students want to be involved with things that have significance and meaning. When we tack baptism on the front or back end of an already packed worship service, it signifies that baptism is not as important as everything else. Hillcrest baptizes new believers the second Sunday night of every month and nothing else is scheduled at that time.

The entire service focuses on baptism. Candidates for baptism share their testimony—sometimes live, sometimes on videotape. The families are recognized and given special seating for the service.

**Timing.** Houpt noted that "students don't feel special if months have gone by before we have a baptism service." He added that the longer a church waits, the less important it seems. "If it is that important," he asked, "then why wait?"

**Mentors.** At the point of conversion, church leaders "attach a mature Christian to a new convert," Houpt explained. Their initial responsibilities are to assist in acclimating the new Christians to the church, taking them to Sunday school the next Sunday and helping "new converts understand that baptism is their first act of obedience." Houpt added that "the mentor is in their house that day talking to their family about what the student has experienced" and scheduling their

baptism. "It is a great opportunity to share Christ with their entire family," he pointed out.

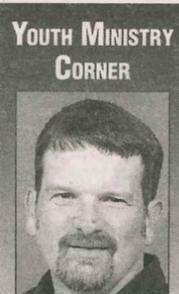
**Celebrate.** It is important that churches involve both the family and the congregation in the celebration of baptism. Invite the family for a meal after church or host a fellowship for the families after the service. Most major life events are celebrated with a meal; this helps reinforce the significance of the baptism experience.

**When.** Schedule baptisms in front of as many youth as possible and cancel other church events that conflict with the baptism service. "If Wednesday is your big youth night then occasionally baptize on Wednesdays," Houpt suggested, noting that some youth who attend or visit on Wednesday nights won't be there on Sundays. This allows young people to be baptized in front of their friends or to witness the baptism of their friends.

**Invite others into the pool.** Allow those who led their friends to faith in Christ to assist with the baptism. They can stand with the candidate in the water, read the candidate's testimony or if your church's bylaws allow, conduct the baptism.

I know that celebrating baptism in itself is not going to significantly increase the numbers of baptisms we have, but it will help students realize the importance and magnitude of the baptism event. In reality, we have to do a better job of taking the gospel to this culture in culturally relevant ways. But that is an issue for another day.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention



Joe Ball

## Gaines urges pastors to seek God's power through prayer

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

**Bowling Green**—Posing the question: "Whatever happened to the power?" Richard Gaines challenged Kentucky Baptists to make ministry connections through a vital prayer life.

Gaines, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington, was among featured speakers at last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green.

If God "is as awesome as we talk about in our teaching and preaching, I ask: Where is the power?" Gaines reiterated. "Where are the mighty miracles being wrought? If God has not changed, what is the problem?"

Emphasizing that "prayer is what gives us access to God's purpose and power," Gaines added, "Where there is little prayer, there is little power; where there is much prayer, there is much power."

"Maybe one of the reasons we have a lack of power is there is sin running rampant in the church," he cautioned. "I believe the answer lies in the church being a house of prayer."

Citing Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17, Gaines said, "If we are going to be effective as the body of Christ, we're got to come together."

"We've got to get past as a church meeting, greeting and eating and back to praying—sincere gut-wrenching prayer ... that will make a difference, that causes us to cry out and repent of our sins."

Preaching from Acts 1 and 2 about the Day of Pentecost, Gaines noted that "the Bible says on the Day of Pentecost they were again in one accord and in one place."

"If Kentucky Baptists are ever go-

ing to connect," he added, "it's going to have to be the work of the Holy Spirit and we're going to have to be in one accord."

Recounting the presence of the Holy Spirit coming "like a mighty, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting," Gaines asked conference participants, "When's the last time your church shook under the presence of Christ?"



Richard Gaines

When believers are filled with the Holy Spirit, "we recognized there is no other name given under heaven by which men are saved

except Jesus Christ. ... When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we are Kingdom-minded people."

"When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we will be led by the Holy Ghost and we will be empowered to do what God has called us to do," Gaines declared, "but we've got to get back to praying."

Challenging fellow pastors to seek God's vision and preach His word "with conviction and compassion," he added, "The battle is not yours; it's the Lord's."

In the midst of the challenges of life and ministry, "God will make a way somehow, but we've got to get in our prayer closets and look up to the Lord," Gaines urged. "We've got to cry out to God with a pure heart."

"The relevant question for us as leaders of the church is: Do we believe God? ... If we don't model it, the people who follow us will never believe it."

"They're waiting for you and I to stand with some boldness," Gaines said, emphasizing that God "has called us not to mark time, but to move forward for the Kingdom of God ... but it will only happen if we stay on our knees and pray."

## Traylor issues call for believers to become missional Christians

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

**Bowling Green**—Challenging Kentucky Baptists to "move past being mission-minded to being missional," Ted Traylor said the key to being a missional Christian is seeking "to engage the culture where they are."

Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla., was among the keynote speakers at the Feb. 26-27 Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference.

Noting that the typical charge for mission-minded believers is to "pray and send and give and even go on short-term missions," he said the difference between being mission-minded and missional involves being "connected to your community" for the sake of the gospel.

"It takes tact to connect to your community," he added. "You are going to have to love your neighbor to reach them with the gospel."

Traylor said three basic goals for an effective missional congregation are:

- Every church member is a missionary.
- Every home is an outpost for evangelism and fellowship.
- The church is a center of missional connection—sending out a mission message from the church.

Preaching from Isaiah 42:5-9 which declares that God will lead His covenant people "to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness," Traylor addressed the question: "How in the world do we



Ted Traylor

become missional?"

He said three keys to becoming missional are:

■ "You will be missional when the Lordship of Jesus is settled."

"Who's Lord in your life tonight?" he asked. "When you settle the lordship issue, you will settle the missional issue."

"You want to know why you don't share your faith? Jesus is not Lord" on a personal level, he insisted. "When no one else gets glory save Christ and Christ alone, we will become missional."

■ "When the commission of Jesus is taken seriously, then we will become missional."

"God has appointed us as a light to the nations plural," Traylor noted. "We've got to reach America; we've got to reach past America. ... Are you taking the commission of God seriously?"

■ "When you see the power of Jesus as sufficient, you will become a missional person."

"The One who created everything said, 'I will hold you by the hand,'" Traylor pointed out, citing Isaiah 42:6. "If God can create you, He can take care of you. ... Don't be frightened of a mission trip or of going here or there."

Affirming the biblical truths of God's sovereignty and man's free will, Traylor quipped, "I don't understand sovereignty, but I'm not in management, I'm in sales."

Noting that being missional is reflected in Christ's words in Matthew 25 to minister to the hungry, naked and imprisoned, Traylor declared, "We must get back to the cross, on our knees, to say, 'O God, make me missional.'"

## Missions professor warns of Islam's growth, urges Christian witness

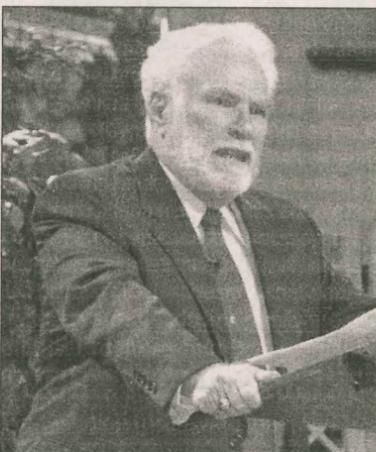
By Kristie Randolph  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

**Bowling Green**—The worldwide spread of Islam is hitting much closer to home than many American Christians realize, according to Bill Wagner, professor of world missions at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

Wagner was among the featured speakers at last week's Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green. In a session focused on "Connecting through Interfaith Evangelism," he identified the spread of Islam as one of the biggest challenges facing Baptists today.

Muslims "are out to convert the world, and they are extremely wealthy," Wagner said, noting that Saudi Arabia makes profits of about \$600 million a day in oil sales. He said at least one-fourth of those profits are given to further Islam around the world.

Muslims are using those funds to execute a well-developed strategy to win converts, Wagner added. He highlighted three key aspects of their approach: a focus on missions,



Bill Wagner

the use of jihad and constructing mosques.

"Muslims are very successful in their mission to win the world," he said, noting that their mission strategy has been intentional since the beginning of Islam in the 600s. In addition to the widespread movement of Islam in Europe, the United States has become a target for new converts.

"There are more Muslim missionaries working in the United States than there are Christian missionaries working in Muslim nations," he said. "The first state they said they would win was Michigan. Today, 50 percent of Detroit is Muslim, and 90 percent of Dearborn is Muslim."

But other experts dispute those claims. According to a 2000 survey by the Association of Religion Data Archives, Detroit and its surrounding county have a population of 2.1 million with an estimated Muslim population of fewer than 50,000. By contrast, Roman Catholics claim more than 450,000 adherents in Detroit.

As Islam continues to gain ground, Wagner said many people don't understand the threat posed by the concept of jihad (holy war) and often point to Muslims they know personally as "good people."

Wagner warned that while Muslims are instructed by the Koran to live peacefully with Christians and Jews when they are in the minority, some interpretations say that does not apply when Muslims are in the

majority.

One of the visible signs of the spread of Islam is the rapidly increasing number of mosques being built around the world, he added.

"In every country I visit, mosques are being built," Wagner said, noting that the mosques are designed to be larger than any nearby Christian church. Islamic nations also are forcing the deterioration of church buildings by refusing to allow building repairs, he added.

Despite the bleak outlook, Wagner said he believes God is working to bring salvation to Muslims around the world. Many former Muslims have come to Christ through what they have explained as supernatural signs and wonders.

"God is doing something wonderful," Wagner said as he shared anecdotes of Muslims hearing God speak and of seeing Jesus come to them in dreams.

By "loving Muslims," Wagner said, Christians can help them come to know Jesus Christ as Savior.

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson

## NAMB staffer affirms impact of apologetics

By Dannah Prather  
Partnerships Editor

**Bowling Green**—Fill in the blank: Apologetics is (a) the study of handy excuses for everything from lost homework to forgotten wedding anniversaries, (b) the study of ways to defend the Christian worldview, or (c) something every believer should know.

According to Mike Licona, an apologetics expert with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, answers “b” and “c” are correct.

Licona spoke on “Connecting through Apologetics” at a Feb. 26 session of last week’s Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green. He began the session by showing a clip from the TV show “Everybody Loves Raymond” to illustrate how not to answer tough theological questions.

In the clip, Ray Barone thinks his daughter, Ally, wants to talk about the birds and the bees. Instead she asks, “Why did God put us here?”

Her dad struggles to respond to the question and finally tells her that it’s really crowded in heaven, so God sent people to live on earth to ease the “heavenly congestion.”

Too often, Licona said, when Christians are faced with tough questions, they provide “‘Raymond answers.’ ... We start spitting out answers in the hopes that something makes sense.”

The word “apologetics,” which Licona described as a rational defense of the Christian faith, might seem reserved for seminary students, but he said the Bible states clearly that every believer should know how to support the faith through logical arguments.

“We don’t need to be theologians or philosophers,” he said, referencing 1 Peter 3:15 which instructs Christians to “always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.”



Mike Licona

Licona, who once debated the resurrection of Christ at a UCLA forum, talked about people he encountered who had compelling questions about the existence of God and the principles of Christianity. Some of those questions are:

- If God created everything, who created God?
- What happens to babies or the mentally handicapped who die without confessing Christ?
- What happens to people who never hear the gospel?
- If the theory of evolution is incorrect, why do chimpanzees share so many of the same character traits as humans?
- Why does God allow suffering?

During his presentation, Licona did not address those individual questions. Instead, he made a case for Christians to become equipped to answer the questions themselves.

While a Christian’s personal testimony or a Sunday morning sermon might compel some people to accept Christ, Licona said there are non-believers who desire a reasoned argument about why Christianity is best. The statement: “You just need to have faith,” carries no weight if a believer has not addressed why faith in Christ is needed, he noted.

Through the process of discovering answers to difficult questions, a Christian’s understanding of the Bible, God and Christ will grow, Li-

cona said, adding that the exercise strengthens a believer’s faith in times of testing.

To illustrate the power of apologetics, Licona told the story of Michael Simone, senior pastor of Spring Branch Community Church in Virginia Beach, Va. One Sunday, instead of a sermon, Simone invited four friends who were unbelievers to the church to take part in a panel discussion on faith.

“How many pastors do you think have four atheist friends?” Licona asked.

As Simone asked his guests why they did not believe in Christianity or God, the congregation learned firsthand the types of questions to which non-believers desire answers. Licona reported that through the pastor’s witness and friendship, three of the four guests eventually professed faith in Christ.

“Apologetics is a powerful tool to have in your pocket to use when you share the gospel,” Licona reiterated.

Resources he recommended include:

- Lee Strobel’s “The Case for ...” series of books.
- 4Truth.net—a Web site developed by NAMB that provides resources on apologetics.
- NAMB also offers a certified instructor credential for ministers “who have a background in apologetics and a passion for teaching it.”
- In the Bible study, “The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus,” Licona and co-author Gary Habermas provide a CD-ROM with the book. “It’s a simulated TV show that helps students master the material,” Licona said. “The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus” is designed as a self-study both for scholars and average church members.
- “Paul Meets Muhammad” is Licona’s account of a fictitious debate between the Apostle Paul and the Prophet Muhammad—the figure central to the Muslim faith.



TESTIMONY Carol Kent told her audience, “I learned that when God seems most absent, He is most present.”

## Kent shares personal tragedy, challenges women to be ‘real’

By Krisite Randolph  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

**Bowling Green**—True spirituality is not about having a perfect life, but about being authentic, Carol Kent told women attending last week’s Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference in Bowling Green.

Drawing from a personal story of family tragedy, Kent explained how God sustained her in brokenness and used the experience to strengthen her faith and encourage others.

Kent, an author and speaker, was the keynote speaker at the Feb. 27 women’s luncheon held in conjunction with the annual evangelism conference.

She told of the time when she received a devastating phone call informing her that her son had just shot and killed his wife’s ex-husband. The news came as a shock to everyone, she said, especially since her son was an accomplished Navy lieutenant and a committed Christian.

“The grief was incredibly tangible,” she said. “I was living in the middle of a horrific nightmare. I remember having to tell myself to ‘breathe, do the next thing, breathe.’”

Kent went on to describe the events leading up to the incident, explaining that the ex-husband had a history of abusing his two daughters, who were now living with Kent’s son and his wife. According to Kent, her son became obsessed with fear that the girls would be hurt if he left them alone with their biological father. Her son also had been participating in deep ocean dives with the Navy at the time, an activity known for causing strange behavioral side effects.

Nearly three years and seven trial postponements later, he was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. “It was a forever sentence, and it has forever changed our lives,” she said. “We have had to get used to living a new kind of normal.”

Kent said she began telling her tragic experience in hopes that it would help other women share their heartaches, and to minister to those in need. Citing numerous friends whose care helped bring her through her darkest hours, Kent stressed the importance of true Christian community.

“During that time, I had never been so needy, but I also had never felt so loved by others,” she said. “If you aren’t currently living in a crisis, chances are you know someone who is. Let them know you’re there and that you care.”

After sharing Scriptures that provided hope and comfort to her, Kent focused on Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac in Genesis 22. The passage displays Abraham’s faith and trust in God, she said.

“What’s your Isaac?” she asked. “In this painful, sinful world, we’re all going to go through things that will require us to trust God even when it doesn’t make sense. In my circumstance, I learned that when God seems most absent, He is most present.”

During an earlier breakout session, Kent offered practical instructions for how to live a “real” Christian life that impacts others and makes a difference.

She encouraged participants to pursue the “six essentials of spiritual authenticity” which include:

- Develop a passion for Jesus.
- Do what the King wants done.
- Cultivate honesty about sin.
- Focus on integrity of the heart above outward behavior.
- Choose to think in terms of eternity, not time.
- Get passionate about personal evangelism.

Emphasizing the need for transparency, Kent told the women, “We will become more real when we begin to fully embrace the love of our Father God.”

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# Domestic partnership debate hits home

Last July, the University of Louisville ignited a debate over state-sponsored domestic partnerships when it became Kentucky's first public school to extend marriage-like benefits to unmarried heterosexual and homosexual couples. There's one little problem, however. Kentucky settled this question in 2004 when it enacted a constitutional amendment prohibiting legal recognition of such relationships. Eighty-five percent of the state's legislators ultimately voted for it, and it was ratified by a record-breaking 75 percent of Kentucky voters.

Apparently, U of L didn't get that memo. Nor did the University of Kentucky, which is now on board the domestic partnership bandwagon.

U of L President James Ramsey added fuel to the fire when he recently defended the policy before a Senate Committee. He said his school embraces "diversity and tolerance" and they are "hell-bent" on becoming a nationally prominent university. They may be hell-bent, but they're not embracing tolerance.

According to U of L's "Safe Zone" manual, staff members have "higher moral



**Richard Nelson is the western Kentucky policy analyst for The Family Foundation**

development" if they have "less restrictive religious beliefs," and anyone objecting to homosexuality has a "disability" that can

be overcome with "psychotherapy." Translation: If you hold traditional views on human sexuality, you have a problem and need help. The manual, published by U of L's office of

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) Services, called opposition to domestic partnerships "heterosexist."

It's no wonder that tolerance is getting a bad name these days.

How domestic partner benefits makes a university better is anyone's guess. But using tax and tuition dollars to subsidize a lifestyle that many Kentuckians find objectionable is not the answer. One

would expect the academically inclined to give a more thorough and thoughtful analysis of the costs involved, not just economic – but the price traditional families will pay.

Giving marriage-like benefits to unmarried sexual partners sends the message that marriage isn't important or deserving of special benefits. It puts heterosexual marriage and non-marital sexual relationships on the same plane, which they very clearly are not. And it's an incentive for sexual relationships outside of marriage – something the state and federal government have been discouraging for years.

This isn't classroom theory anymore. It has real life consequences and will be tested on real people. The meaning of marriage is at stake as core definitions change. Husbands and wives are redefined and replaced by partners – of either sex, for any duration of time. It's one thing to get a definition wrong in an academic setting. It's quite another to impose a bad definition on society where there is no grading on a curve.

In a day when four out of every 10 children in America are born out of wedlock, the last thing the nuclear family needs is another hit. If domestic partnerships are legitimized, marriage becomes marginalized. People are less likely to marry as long as they're treated like

they're married. It would make for a nice commercial: "Domestic partnerships: same benefits, half the commitment." In fact, U of L requires a relationship of only 180 days in order to get the benefits. Is this what should be encouraged today – more short-term relationships?

We don't need marriage-lite, but rather stronger, more durable marriages and life-long commitments. Society needs healthier families with both a mother and a father devoted to raising their children. And that relationship deserves *exclusive* support from the government.

A bill upholding traditional marriage – Senate Bill 152 – is now in the State House of Representatives where a few liberal leaders hold its fate. If they find the courage to bring it up for a vote, lawmakers should shore up the relationship of marriage, which is foundational to society. After all, we wouldn't want marriage to become just another subject studied in history class.

Until then, Kentucky's leaders – both legislative and academic – should do their homework, suspend domestic partnerships and work for policies that send the traditional family to the head of the class.

## **ACTION!!!**

**Please do two things ASAP:**

**#1** Call **1-800-372-7181** – the toll free legislative message line in Frankfort – and leave the following message for your state representative. (The receptionist can tell you who he or she is if you don't know.):

***“Protect Marriage - Pass Senate Bill 152. Stop the Universities from re-defining marriage.”***

**#2** While you're on the message line, ask the receptionist to "copy" your message to these **KEY HOUSE LEADERS:** Representatives Jody Richards, Rocky Adkins, Rob Wilkey, Charlie Hoffman and Bob Damron.

**Husbands and wives should both call, (and older children).**

**Take the time to encourage friends to call.**

**Call Evenings!** The toll free message line is open Monday thru Thursday from 7:30 AM until 11:00 PM (Eastern), but closes at 6:00 PM on Friday.

**The 2007 session ends Monday evening, March 12. (Call soon!)**

## **Status of Senate Bill 152**

Senate Bill 152 was introduced by Sen. Vernie McGaha, sponsor of the 2004 Marriage Protection Amendment, and passed on Feb 15 by the full Senate with a bipartisan vote of 27-8-1. SB 152 simply prevents all state agencies, including universities, from creating a new legal adult relationship – "Domestic Partner" – and offering, to those so-classified, health insurance benefits that subsidize them and authenticate them with state credibility. (See second phrase of the Marriage Protection Amendment below).

At press time the bill was "stuck" in a House committee where a small number of quite liberal Democrats are forcing the entire Democrat House caucus to resist the bill. Many conservative Democrats desire to protect the institution of marriage and are pressing to have the bill heard and voted upon. One of the leaders of that group, Rep. Bob Damron (D-Nicholasville), has filed an amendment that makes sure private colleges are not included in the bill (they are not state agencies) and that existing regulations about benefits in special familial circumstances (grandparent custodial care of grandchildren, etc.) remain at the current status of what the law allows.

With the session ending March 12, supporters of the bill were given added momentum when the KBC Committee on Public Affairs endorsed SB 152 on Monday, Feb. 26.

## **The 2004 Marriage Amendment**

***“Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Kentucky. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized.”***



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## 'Jesus tomb' documentary ignores evidence, experts say

By Michael Foust  
Baptist Press

**Nashville (BP)**—The controversial claim by a recent television special that researchers have discovered Jesus' tomb falls apart under both scientific scrutiny and simple logic, according to scholars in New Testament and archaeological studies.

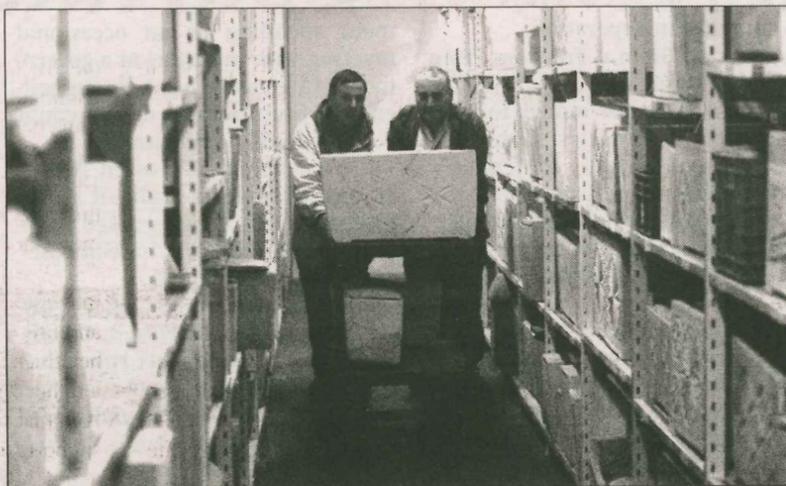
The Discovery Channel aired "The Lost Tomb of Christ"—produced by James Cameron of "Titanic" fame—March 4. Among other things, the documentary claims Jesus and His family's ossuaries (or bone boxes) were found in a tomb in the Jerusalem suburb of Talpiot. The documentary claims those ossuaries belonged to Mary, as well as Jesus' "wife" Mary Magdalene and His "son," Judah, according to the documentary. There also is a Matthew in the mix, supposedly the apostle. The Discovery Channel claimed on its Web site that the find could "rewrite the history of early Christianity."

The ossuaries, though, were discovered in 1980, and archaeologists—both Christian and non-Christian—had long ago written off any possibility the ossuaries were tied to Christ.

"This is not new information. These tombs have been known and were published in the archaeological community," said Steven Ortiz, associate professor of archaeology and biblical backgrounds at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

For centuries, Christians have pointed to two empty tombs in Jerusalem as the possible place where Jesus' body was initially placed. One of the tombs resides within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which Ortiz believes is the most likely location.

But the documentary challenges the bedrock belief of Christianity—the bodily resurrection of Christ. Among the problems with the documentary's claim, experts say, is the fact that the names on the ossuaries



**PUBLIC DISPLAY** Israel Antiquities Authority workers wheel out ossuaries for display, found during an excavation in Jerusalem 27 years ago, in the Israeli city of Beit Shemesh. (RNS/Reuters photo by Ronen Zvulun)

were common during biblical times.

"Joseph is the second most common male name in the period. Jesus is the sixth. Matthew's the ninth," Darrell Bock, professor of New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, told Baptist Press. "Mary is the most popular female name—21 percent of the female names of the period. So, you're dealing with a lot of familiar names."

According to the documentary's Web site, the six ossuaries read, "Jesus Son of Joseph," "Mary," "Mary known as the master," "Judah son of Jesus," "Jose" and "Matthew."

### Ossuary script mistranslated?

Yet the Bible has no mention of Jesus being married, much less having a son. Also, there is no known family relationship of Jesus to Matthew. Mark 6:3 lists four half-brothers of Christ: James, Joses (or Joseph), Judas (not Judas the traitor) and Simon. He also had half-sisters, according to the passage. Although there were ossuaries for a James and a Jose, no other ossuaries with inscriptions for other brothers and sisters were found.

Stephen Pfann, a biblical scholar at the University of the Holy Land in Jerusalem, told Associated Press he believes the script on the Jesus' ossuary more likely says "Hanun," and not "Jesus."

Cameron and those behind the documentary say they asked a statistician to calculate the odds of finding the various biblical names of the New Testament period—Jesus, Mary, Mary, Jose and Matthew—together in one tomb. The statistician, Andrey Feuerverger of the University of Toronto, said the odds are only 1 in 600 it wasn't Jesus' family tomb.

Critics, though, aren't convinced. "Statistical analysis is only as good as the numbers that you run," said Ben Witherington III, professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore. "There are more statistics under the ground than above ground at this point, by which I mean there are tons more names out there and items with names on them out there that have not yet been excavated."

The documentary also claims support from supposed DNA evidence scraped from the bone box-

es of Jesus and "Mary known as the master." A laboratory in Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, concluded the two were not maternally related, and a lab official said the two "most likely were husband and wife," because it was a familial tomb.

Researchers were not able to extract DNA evidence from the other ossuaries, according to the documentary's Web site. The bones in the boxes were buried at unmarked graves following the tomb's discovery, per Orthodox Jewish belief.

"There are lots of weaknesses to their argument, but the DNA evidence and the way they're trying to use it is hilarious," Witherington said. "You need a control sample to compare it to. If we actually had the DNA of Jesus or Mary or James, then we'd have a control sample to compare what they've done. They have no control sample, so they are just comparing it internally to two examples that they're making assumptions about. This is not scientific analysis of DNA at all."

### Theory's multiple problems

There are other problems with the Talpiot tomb claim. George Guthrie, a professor of Bible at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., said in first-century Jerusalem, bodies typically were buried temporarily for a year, and the bones subsequently were gathered and placed in an ossuary in the family tomb.

"The filmmakers are therefore suggesting that the body of Jesus lay decaying in a family tomb in Jerusalem at the same time the early Jerusalem church was expanding because of its belief in a resurrected Messiah," Guthrie said. "Yet, we have no evidence from any ancient document, Christian or non-Christian, that points even to rumors that the body or bones of Jesus were there in Jerusalem."

The claim that Jesus was buried at the Talpiot tomb, Witherington said, means Jesus' family and supporters would have had to "turn around and preach that the tomb was empty when they actually knew where Jesus was buried—which is highly unlikely. The idea that they could get away with doing something like that, with as much attention as they had attracted in the city, is very unlikely."

Additionally, tombs like the one at Talpiot "are associated with the wealthy" and not with "a Galilean peasant family," Ortiz said.

Biblical evidence and Christian tradition hold that 11 of the 13 apostles (including Matthias) died martyrs' deaths for their faith. Skeptics of the Discovery Channel documentary ask: Why would 11 men die for something (Christ's bodily resurrection) they knew to be a lie?

"No opponent of Christianity point(ed) to the (Talpiot) tomb," Guthrie said. "No followers of Jesus revere(d) the tomb. There is no evidence—beyond the circumstantial evidence of exceedingly common names—that points to this as being the tomb of Jesus' family."

"Too many things have to be right in order for it to even be conceivable or plausible," Bock said. "There are just too many problems."

**"The DNA evidence and the way they're trying to use it is hilarious."**

Ben Witherington III, professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore

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## Supreme Court weighs challenge to faith-based initiative

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

**Washington (RNS)**—When do taxpayers have the right to challenge the government's links to religion?

The justices of the Supreme Court grappled with that question Feb. 28 when they heard arguments related to the constitutionality of the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives.

"It's an executive branch decision to use funds in a way that's impermissible under the Establishment Clause," argued Washington-based attorney Andrew Pincus, who represented the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

U.S. Solicitor General Paul Clement, arguing on behalf of the Bush administration, said the case is really about whether the White House spends too much time talking about faith-based organizations and not enough about community groups.

"If that isn't intrusive on the executive branch, I don't know what is," he argued.

### Church-state concerns

The case marks the first time the high court has considered a lawsuit involving the White House office. It's also the first opportunity for the court's newest justices, Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito, to hear a case relating

to church-state separation.

The case, *Hein v. Freedom From Religion Foundation*, concerns the use of taxpayer money to fund the executive branch's faith-based offices and related conferences. Challengers say this violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. The White House office, created by President Bush in 2001, is directed by Jay Hein.

The justices will determine if taxpayers—in this case, the Wisconsin-based foundation—can sue the government. If the court determines the taxpayers have standing, the merits of their suit will be argued in lower courts.

On Wednesday, the justices fired numerous hypothetical questions at lawyers for both sides.

Associate Justice Stephen Breyer wondered if a taxpayer could challenge the government's building of a church at Plymouth Rock to commemorate the Pilgrims. Clement said there would not be taxpayer standing in that case, though there might be other ways to challenge such a government action.

Roberts asked whether citizens could sue over the high court's marshal saying "God save the United States and this honorable court" when justices take the bench.

"I don't think that lawsuit could be brought," Pincus responded.

Pincus said "incidental" govern-

ment spending or an occasional meeting with ministers at a government office can be legal. He suggested that five meetings or less could be considered "incidental."

"What about 10?" asked Associate Justice Antonin Scalia. It seems federal courts are being asked to decide these issues on a "case-by-case" basis, the justice added.

The lawyers and justices discussed a 1968 case, *Flast v. Cohen*, in which the high court ruled that taxpayers had the right to sue when Congress provided financial aid to public and private schools, including parochial schools.

### Initiative continues to expand

Hein, director of the faith-based office, expressed confidence about continuing his work no matter what the outcome.

"We don't question the mission of our office or the administration of our duties," he said in an interview. "We think that we have a very careful understanding of the church-state separation issue."

The White House's faith-based initiative has expanded since its inception, with more than \$2.1 billion in competitive social service grants being made to faith-based groups in fiscal year 2005, the third consecutive year there was an increase in such grants. The White House has sponsored 28 conferences to inform

faith-based organizations about grants through the initiative. Eleven executive branch agencies have faith-based offices.

A federal judge in Wisconsin had ruled the FFRF and three people affiliated with it did not have standing to bring a legal challenge on establishment clause grounds. A panel of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Chicago, overturned the decision, determining in a 2-1 decision the organization could go forward with its suit.

A decision in *Hein v. FFRF* is expected before the court adjourns in early summer.

Among those signing on to friend-of-the-court briefs in support of the FFRF were the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, American Atheists Inc., American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way.

The Christian Legal Society, American Center for Law and Justice and 12 states were among those filing briefs on the government's side. With additional reporting by Baptist Press



## Navy chaplain discharged after case reviewed

**Washington (RNS)**—A military chaplain who publicly protested a Navy policy that urged "nonsectarian" prayers was discharged March 1.

Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt signed the final documents after an appeals court determined that his suit against the Navy did not demonstrate the "stringent standards required" to prevent the court from halting his discharge.

Klingenschmitt received orders stating he was to be dismissed by Jan. 31, but the appeals court postponed the discharge until it had reviewed his case. The Navy said Klingenschmitt was discharged after his request to renew his chaplain appointment with a different denomination was denied.

"The decision to disapprove his request was based upon a review of his credentials," said Lt. Tommy Crosby, a spokesman for the Navy. He said that review included "his military record and performance."

Klingenschmitt, who was a lieutenant, had argued against a Navy policy that urged chap-

lains to lead "nonsectarian" prayers outside traditional worship services.

The chaplain argued his faith compelled him to pray "in Jesus' name" at all times, including at a protest outside the White House. A military jury determined last September that Klingenschmitt disobeyed orders by making that protest.

Late last year, Congress passed a bill that dropped the policy the chaplain opposed. Klingenschmitt said he was satisfied that the policy was dropped, despite the loss of his 16-year career.

"Other chaplains are free again to pray in Jesus' name," he said. "I would do it all over again and I praise God that my sacrifice purchased their freedom."

Klingenschmitt said he was discharged "honorably," but Navy officials would not confirm that, citing privacy law. Klingenschmitt is now pursuing a theology degree at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., and plans to travel to speak about his experience.

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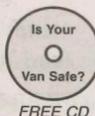
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"Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen." 2 Ti 2:14

## Substance Abuse in my Church?

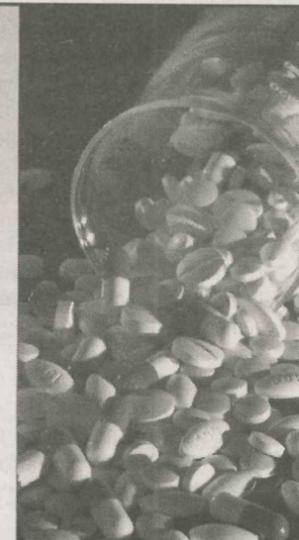
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Transformational gifts

Philanthropists offer worthy example of generous giving

The latest issue of The Chronicle of Philanthropy reported there were 21 donations to charitable organizations last year of \$100 million or more. It was an all-time record. What an inspiration it was to read about the individuals, couples and families who made these transformational gifts.

In addition to reporting on these, The Chronicle reported on other top donors in 2006. The benefiting organizations included universities, hospitals and medical centers, museums and libraries, arts groups, human services groups, foundations, children's and youth groups and environmental and animal-related groups. A portrait of the top donors revealed: 52 were living, eight were by bequests and 71 was the median age of the living donors.

Stacy Palmer, editor of The Chronicle, gave this reason for the increase in transformational gifts: "It's a sign that wealth is growing and people are just raising their sights in terms of philanthropy." Philanthropy experts stated there is a greater consciousness that those who have should give. Stanley Katz, a Princeton University

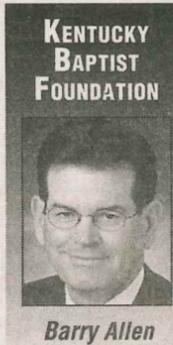
scholar of philanthropy, said, "It's sort of gotten out there that it's the right thing to do to be generous."

After reading the report, three Scriptures came to my mind. Romans 12:2: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is." 2 Corinthians 9:6: "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously ... for God loves a cheerful giver." 1 Timothy 6:6-8: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it."

I also thought of the widow's gift worth a fraction of a penny and Jesus' observation recorded in Mark 12:41-44. To Jesus, she made the most significant gift because it was a sacrificial gift made out of love and commitment.

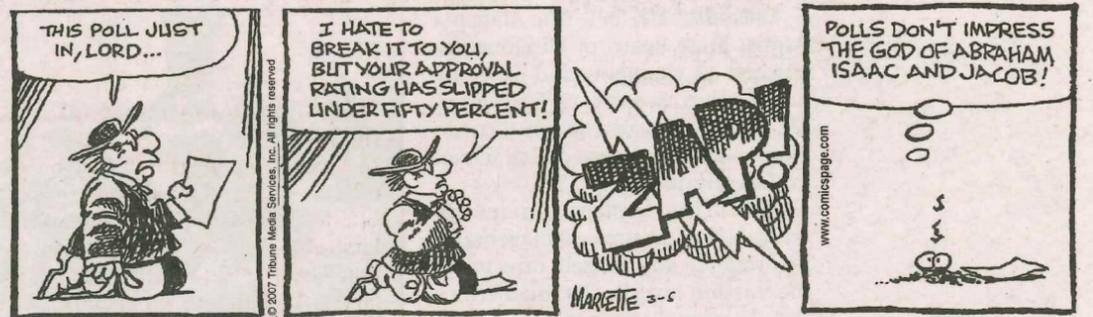
Give what God is calling you to give, and let us assist you in how to structure your gift.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (866) 489-3533; www.kybaptistfoundation.org



Barry Allen

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Rebecca Souder

- Across**
- Stepped
  - "Though ye \_\_\_ not me, believe the works" (John 10:38)
  - "His own \_\_\_ him not" (John 1:11)
  - Spoke
  - Bone, prefix
  - "A man sent from \_\_\_" (John 1:6)
  - Tissue plasminogen interceptor, abbr.
  - Seventh note of the musical scale
  - Doctor of Theology, abbr.
  - "The express \_\_\_ of his person" (Hebrews 1:3)
  - Head, abbr.
  - Salvation Army, abbr.
  - Nickel, chem. symbol
  - "He gave his \_\_\_ begotten Son" (John 3:16)
  - The, Sp.
  - Preposition
  - "\_\_\_ gave names to all cattle" (Genesis 2:20)
  - "The \_\_\_ is the world" (Matthew 13:38)
  - "The Word \_\_\_ with God" (John 1:1)
  - French article
  - Canadian province, abbr.
  - New Testament, abbr.
  - "Full of \_\_\_ and truth" (John 1:14)
  - "\_\_\_ no man any thing" (Romans 13:8)
  - Not down
  - "To whom be glory for \_\_\_" (2 Timothy 4:18)

1	2	3	4		5	6		7	8	9	10
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		35		36				37			38 39
			40			41 42			43		
44	45	46		47					48		
49			50			51			52		
	53						54 55				56
	57					58					59

- "Go ye into all the \_\_\_" (Mark 16:15)
- "Jesus \_\_\_ the Christ" (John 20:31)
- That is, Lat. abbr.
- Spirited
- Spare
- Doctor of Science, abbr.
- "Sat down on the right \_\_\_ of the Majesty" (Hebrews 1:3)
- "Tempted like as we are, \_\_\_ without sin" (Hebrews 4:15)
- District attorney, abbr.
- "\_\_\_ ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19)
- "Behold the \_\_\_ of God!" (John 1:36)
- "The \_\_\_ was given by Moses" (John 1:17)
- "How shall ye believe, \_\_\_ I tell you of heavenly things?" (John 3:12)
- Widemouthed pot
- "Truly ye bear witness that ye \_\_\_ the deeds of your father" (Luke 11:48)
- Name for Christ: the Son of \_\_\_
- "Neither was any \_\_\_ in his mouth" (Isaiah 53:9)
- "\_\_\_ to shew thyself approved" (2 Timothy 2:15)
- The Anointed One
- "After that he was \_\_\_ from the dead" (John 21:14)
- "So is \_\_\_ one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8)
- "The \_\_\_ was made flesh" (John 1:14)
- Historic periods
- Numbering system for library books, abbr.
- Ex dividend, abbr.
- Of age, Lat. abbr.

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56

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And Pacific Northwest Vacation

15 Days from \$1399\*

On September 14, 2007 join your Spiritual Director, Baptist Minister Dr. Clarence Freeman on this 15-day vacation including a 7-day deluxe Alaska Cruise with Holland America Line and a 7-day Pacific Northwest vacation with Your Man Tours. Daily Devotions will be made available for those in the group who wish to participate. Your group will fly into Seattle for a night before a scenic motor coach drive to Vancouver where you'll board the five-star ms Zuiderdam.

Next, travel through a wondrous maze of forested island and glacier carved fjords, past charming coastal villages, migrating whales and calving glaciers to Juneau, Skagway, Ketchikan and spectacular Glacier Bay.

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WESTERNRECORDER



## Alabama Baptists offer support in wake of deadly storms

Enterprise, Ala. (BP)—The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions dispatched 13 chaplains and other disaster relief workers to Enterprise, Ala., in the wake of a deadly tornado March 1 that destroyed a high school in the community.

Each of the chaplains is trained in critical incident stress management, reported Joe Bob Mizzell, director of the mission board's Christian ethics and chaplaincy ministries.

The tornado killed eight students in a string of storms last week that left a total of 20 people dead in Missouri, Alabama and Georgia. Some of the students who were killed reportedly were members of local Baptist churches.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, was among the disaster relief volunteers in Enterprise, serving with a team from Vaughn Forest Baptist Church in Montgomery.

Lance Hogan, pastor of First Baptist Church of Enterprise, told the Alabama Baptist that about 80 people took shelter at the church overnight, including some whose children died at the school. He requested prayer for the families and said he has seen an outpouring of support from church members who helped pull people from the rubble of the school.

Rick Lance, meanwhile, said checks from the state convention are being provided to three churches in the area—one which sustained roof damage from the tornado, Lee Street Baptist, and two that are serving as staging areas—First Baptist, where the Red Cross set up its operations, and Hillcrest Baptist, which is located next to the school.

Lance also reported that the



**RESCUE EFFORTS** Rescue workers search for victims inside Enterprise High School in Enterprise, Ala., after a tornado ripped through the town March 1. (AP photo by Danny Tindell of the Dothan Eagle)

home of Lee Street pastor Larry Doster was severely damaged.

"The situation here resembles a site where bombs have been dropped," Lance said. "Trees are down. Houses are damaged and destroyed in significant numbers."

The volunteer team from Lance's church in Montgomery brought in heavy equipment capable of quickly moving debris, and the team also can provide chainsaw assistance.

Some churches in Coffee Baptist Association sustained minor damage but none had major structural damage, an associational spokeswoman said. Lee Street Baptist Church was the hardest hit.

As the March 1 storm approached Enterprise, students were preparing to evacuate the high school but sirens sounded and the lights went off before they could leave, Associated Press reported. While many of

them took shelter in hallways, the school took a direct hit from a tornado that cut a swath of damage 200 yards wide.

"The whole building just collapsed on everybody," Chase Baldwin, a student at the school, told CNN. "A bunch of people were trapped under cinder blocks, and people had their heads cut open."

Outside the large school, cars were flipped throughout the parking lot and others had windows blown out. Eyewitnesses told CNN it looked like a bomb had been dropped on the school, and school buses were demolished.

Enterprise is a town of about 23,000 people 75 miles south of Montgomery. In addition to the eight students killed at the school, a man died in a mobile home in the community during the tornado.

Injured students were taken from

the school in more than 12 ambulances and some were airlifted by helicopter to nearby Dothan, the Birmingham News reported. A triage unit was set up at city hall, about a mile from the school, and other students were evacuated to Hillcrest Baptist Church next to the school, according to the Montgomery Advertiser.

The assistant superintendent of the Enterprise City Schools asked the public to "pray for our students, their parents and for our community."

In Americus, Ga., about 115 miles south of Atlanta, a tornado struck the Sumter Regional Medical Center, killing three people. The hospital had to shut down and the city lost its fleet of ambulances to the twister, CNN reported. The American Red Cross building in Americus also was hit, hindering the group's relief efforts with the loss of three disaster relief trailers, lights and generators, according to CNN.

At least two people were killed and seven injured in Americus. A shelter was opened at First Baptist Church of Americus. At least nine people were killed in Georgia and 10 were killed in Alabama.

Before the massive storm system reached the southeast, tornadoes killed a 7-year-old girl in Missouri and damaged homes in Kansas, AP reported.

Elsewhere in Alabama, Ed Cruce, director of missions for Bessemer Baptist Association, said chainsaw crews were on the scene in the Adamsville area for tree removal on residential properties. He said he wasn't aware of any churches in his association that had been damaged.

**CORRECTION:** Due to a Western Recorder editing error, former Oneida Baptist Institute President Barkley Moore was incorrectly referred to as Oneida's founder in last week's "This Is Oneida" column. James Anderson Burns was Oneida's founder. The Western Recorder staff regrets the error.

### 'In God's Time'

#### After a long wait, several crucial ministry positions are being filled

Just prior to his death in 1994, Dr. Barkley Moore, my predecessor, told me his desire to write two books. I vividly remember the title he had in mind for one of those books: "In God's Time."

If you had the privilege of knowing Dr. Moore, you know he was a great storyteller. If he had been able to write "In God's Time," he would have told story after story of various needs the school has had over the years—some of them urgent needs.

Many of those needs were not met in the time and manner we would have selected, but God did meet them in His time. Learning to accept God's timing can challenge your faith.

We have had some unmet staffing needs during the past several months. Some of those unfilled positions were creating extra work for current staff.

Because I had heard Dr. Moore tell so many "In God's Time" stories, I began my hiring responsibilities with a little understanding of the importance of letting God meet our needs according to His timetable. I am happy to share that God has once again opened His bountiful treasure chest and blessed us by meeting some of our staffing needs.

A few weeks ago, a family of six from Virginia visited our campus. The wife interviewed to help in our tutoring department. The husband knew that we were looking for someone to be part of our construction team. We have been without one position for nearly two years. After two weeks of prayer and discussion, this family felt led to join us in April.

Another family with three children recently

came for an interview from Georgia. Both parents were interested in teaching. They have degrees in science and math. We had been in need of a math teacher and a science teacher since school began in August. This family has not indicated if they feel led to join our ministry team, but I will likely have heard from them before you read this article. A third family—this one from Ohio and with two children—interviewed last weekend. This man also was interested in joining our construction team.



W.F. Underwood

I sometimes think God has a way of toying with us. First, I go two years without the person I need in construction, then God sends me two men in two weeks! I try never to close any doors God is trying to open, so if this second man feels led to come, we likely will welcome him, too.

During the next two or three weeks, I have other families coming from Mississippi and Washington state to interview for various positions. I needed most of these people some time ago. Apparently it was not God's time to send them our way. Now, for whatever reason, He is sending people to meet some of our ministry needs.

All of these people know we will provide their housing, meals, utilities, insurance and a modest salary averaging about \$6,000 per year. They all were making far more money than they will ever make here. As God has worked in their lives, and as He has been aware of our needs, apparently now it is "In God's Time" to send these people our way.

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

### Ready to go

#### Monticello student doesn't mind commuting to class

As a commuter student, Nick Catron has added miles on his vehicle, yet he's glad Clear Creek has a curriculum that allows him to take a full class load on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

"The trip is 120 miles one way from Monticello," Nick said. "I'm up at 4 a.m. I try to do as much as I can while on campus, because I usually go straight to church after classes." He also works at Monticello radio stations WMKZ and WXYR. The time left after all that activity is devoted to study and church assignments.

With the encouragement of Christian parents, Nick was baptized at age 9. Most of his church involvement occurred at Steubenville Baptist Church. He married Marlene Bell, a Russell County native, in 1988; they have two children and also care for a niece.

The ministry call came in 1999 while he was waiting to board a plane home after a two-week mission in Poland. The missionary told him, "I could see turning you loose on the streets of Warsaw."

Nick acknowledged, "His words cut me to the bone." At home Nick told his wife and she laughed. "My

call has been an adjustment for her," he said.

"We've since been to Poland three times and applied for appointment as associate missionaries. Some family health needs put that on hold. The Lord was leading me to school; I needed to be better prepared for what He desires."

Alumnus Kenneth Dick encouraged Nick to start classes with Clear Creek. After a live, Internet class on the New Testament, and two semesters of classes at Steubenville Church, he began commuting to Pineville.

International missions continue to impact Nick's life. A 2006 trip to Mexico took him to a Baptist camp situated at the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains. The team did renovation work at the camp and in town helped a mission church with evangelism.

"The church had three block walls, a dirt floor and a tarp roof; it was full every service." Nick remembers, "The last night it rained and the electricity was failing. A young boy named Carlos trusted Jesus that night."

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

#### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## NAMB research center offers array of data for SBC churches

By Mickey Noah  
Baptist Press

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Say you're at First Baptist Church in a fast-growing town and need to know the area's changing demographics to better plan the church's outreach and various ministries. How would you start?

Or perhaps you're at Faith Community Church and want to preach a four-week sermons series on some of today's toughest, most sensitive topics: abortion, pornography, homosexuality, divorce. Where would you begin your research?

Where would you find research on planting new churches, refocusing declining churches through evangelism, reaching young adults through conversion growth or best practices for evangelizing children?

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board—even going back to its predecessor, the Home Mission Board—has always operated a research division. But NAMB's new Center for Missional Research has revamped and expanded its operations in Alpharetta, Ga., over the last year to become more interactive and proactive in providing research data to Southern Baptist churches.

"In addition to being the keeper of information, we also wanted to develop research to make churches more effective in evangelism, church planting and in sending missionaries," said Ed Stetzer, CMR director and missiologist. "That is NAMB's passion and challenge today.

"CMR's focus is on serving our churches, pastors and Christian leaders throughout the Southern Baptist Convention," Stetzer added. "We want our leaders to be able to make strategic missional decisions because of the CMR's enhanced ability to research North American cultures, analyze ministry effectiveness of churches and understand the communities where churches minister."

### Free research & resources

To meet these needs, the center offers research tools, new research and resources at no cost to Southern Baptist churches and church planters. For example, CMR just completed the largest-ever analysis of church planting survivability and health—finding statistically significant factors related to more successful efforts.

Stetzer said the word "missional" was included in the official name of the new research center because "we want to help make SBC churches think and act like missionaries."

The CMR's Web site ([www.missionalresearch.info](http://www.missionalresearch.info)) is organized into three broad categories: Knowing Church, Knowing Culture and Knowing Community.

Knowing Community includes a demographic profile with traffic flow reports that can tell a church where to buy billboard space, for instance. It includes local popu-

lation statistics and trends broken down by age, gender, ethnic group, household income, education, consumer habits, recreational activities and personal values. About 70 pages long, the study also has 30 thematic maps reflecting even more data.

Stetzer said approximately 250 churches a month request and download the center's Knowing Community data—a package valued at \$200—which is available free to all Southern Baptist churches. It's usually delivered via e-mail within 48 hours after an order.

And if you're a pastor needing quick, thorough SBC research for upcoming sermons, the CMR's Web site includes more than 1,600 immediately downloadable PowerPoint presentations on a myriad of subjects.

For instance, the Knowing Church section includes a Church Fact File, where pastors can download information on such topics as baptism, belief, evangelism or church planting.

The Knowing Culture pages include information about cultural and moral issues, ranging from abortion to pornography.

### "Invaluable" information

Jim Gatliff, associate director of missions for Hunt Baptist Association in Greenville, Texas, is a frequent visitor to CMR's Web site.

"We use the center's research and demographic data for church planting," Gatliff said. "It helps us find locations for new works." By merely plugging in addresses and zip codes, Gatliff said he can identify 30 potential locations for planting a new church.

"It's by far the best thing available out there," he said. "Certain parts of the community demographic data are extremely helpful. Actually, it's invaluable. It doesn't take the place of doing door-to-door surveys, but it prepares you for door-to-door by giving you better information before you get out there. It gets vital information for planning and doing missions into your hands."

During a recent national launch, the Center for Missional Research also rolled out another database—People Groups—which breaks down people groups living in a given state and city by nationality, language spoken at home and ancestry. Searches can be conducted based on state, city or zip code. People Groups, at [www.peoplegroups.info](http://www.peoplegroups.info), is jointly sponsored by NAMB and the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

The CMR will commission approximately 20 research projects this year, all designed to help churches carry out more effective ministries, Stetzer said. The projects include research on such topics as churches that are effectively reaching 18- to 24-year-olds; conversions from other world religions; and best church planting practices.

**What Have They Done with Jesus? Beyond Strange Theories and Bad History—Why We Can Trust the Bible.** Ben Witherington III. Harper San Francisco, 2006. 342 pages. \$24.95. ♦♦♦♦

Hardly ever has the title of a well-researched, clearly written biblical study summarized the book as well as is the case with this book.

If, when you pick up the book, you expect the book to be a defense of the orthodox Christian understanding of the person of Jesus, you would be right. Likewise, if you expect the author to address alternate views with a defense that will pull no punches, you would be right. And if you surmise that the author is not going to be stuck in the ivory tower of scholarship but will speak from his own passion for the subject, you would be right.

Ben Witherington has managed in the relatively short space of 342 pages to summarize the New Testament picture of Jesus that generations of Protestant ministers have gained from their seminary training. Basically, Witherington believes that the more recent discoveries of Gnostic sources are too far removed from the seminal events of Christianity to be a legitimate challenge to the traditional source of information about Jesus and early Christianity—the Gospels, Acts and the writings of the Apostle Paul.

Obviously written to answer those who question orthodox belief, Witherington has written an accessible and persuasive work. At some points he strains to reconcile seemingly contradictory material even within the canonical tradition, such as the varying reactions of Jesus to His own mother—sometimes brusque and sometimes loving.

The influence on society of "The Da Vinci Code," the "Gospel of Judas" and James Cameron's new documentary about the supposed burial vaults of Jesus and His family is undeniable. Witherington's book will prove to be a good tool for those proclaiming the orthodox Jesus. *Wayne Hager*

**Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision.** Steven R. Harmon. Paternoster/Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006. 275 pages. \$30. ♦♦♦♦

"Towards Baptist Catholicity" is one volume in the Studies in Baptist History and Thought series. Its author, Steven Harmon, is associate professor of Christian theology at Campbell University Divinity School in North Carolina. Raised and educated in Southern Baptist churches and schools, Harmon nonetheless believes that Baptists need a more catholic (read: ancient, universal) view if we are going to remain vibrant in a post-modern, post-Christian culture.

No doubt many Baptists will be put off immediately by the title, assuming that Harmon is really a closet Roman Catholic. Others might be willing to tolerate his thought, while relegating him to the far periphery of Baptist life. And yet, in this volume he tackles some of the difficult issues facing North Amer-

ican Baptists: authority, the role of creeds and confessions, the place of Scripture, and the nature of Christian higher education. He even dares to tread on some ground that, while

being problematic for Baptists, is not often seen as such (e.g. an incipient Unitarianism that comes from a lack of dealing forthrightly with the Trinitarian nature of Christian faith and worship).

Harmon is not out to make Roman Catholics out of Baptists, but he does challenge us to realize that the early Baptists, even the Anabaptists, were aware of what they shared with the ancient faith of the church. While they protested the aberrations of the Anglican and Catholic communions, they sought to restore genuine apostolic faith.

"Towards Baptist Catholicity" has enough to make every facet of Baptist life squirm. Moderate Baptists will struggle with his discussion of the role of creeds. Conservative Baptists probably will be offended initially at his thoughts on Scripture. Most of us will scratch our heads when it comes to worship. Despite those concerns, Harmon's collection of essays is worthy of a serious read and discussion. His essay on Baptist higher education should be required reading, even if one cannot connect with the rest of the work. *Jim Holladay*

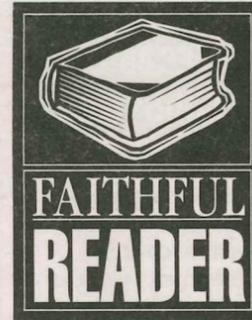
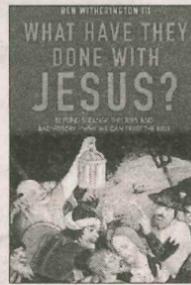
**Addicted to God: 50 Days to a More Powerful Relationship with God.** Jim Burns. Regal Publishing, 2007. 143 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦

Finally, a great book for teens to read in small snippets over a course of 50 days to learn more about God and themselves. There are so many things that someone can learn over a 50-day period that will improve who they are. A person could learn a new skill, lose weight, stop a bad habit or even begin a new and better one. However, many people will not take 50 days to learn more about God and themselves.

Jim Burns, president of HomeWord and author of many books on parenting, teens and family issues, has written a fun devotional book specifically for teens. "Addicted to God" is an outstanding devotional for teens that speaks to the major issues touching every Christian's faith—obedience, self-image, commitment, encouragement and many more. These 50 daily readings incorporate quotes and illustrations from classic children's literature, biographies, personal stories and notable historical events to convey eternally significant themes and help teens relate these concepts to their own lives.

This book, although written specifically for teens, can be read by young adults, college students and parents. The issues being addressed touch everyone in their everyday life.

Burns' book also is ideal for small group leaders or anyone who is a parent of teens or works with teens. Youth pastors can use the book for impromptu studies and small group settings with students. *Steve Coleman*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C.; Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville; and Steve Coleman, pastor of education and youth at New Work Fellowship in Hopkinsville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: [whager@adelphia.net](mailto:whager@adelphia.net); [lyndonpastor@aol.com](mailto:lyndonpastor@aol.com); [risen4me@hotmail.com](mailto:risen4me@hotmail.com).

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Floyd Paris

As a young man, I was quite average. I went to church—sometimes; I went to parties—sometimes; I hung out with my friends—all the time.

There seemed to be this bond between us that made everything a group project. When we went to ballgames, we discussed the games. When we dated, we discussed the dates. When we talked about the future, we discussed our dreams.

One evening I told my friends that there was something missing in my life and I couldn't lay my finger on it. As always, there was a variety of opinions about the source of my problem. I listened to their advice and tried all their remedies, but to no avail. I still had that gnawing feeling that there was more to life than this. Upon further discussion, my friends announced that I had it all and that I was the problem. In my heart I knew there was more.

One night at college I bought a "Soul Winner's" New Testament and for the first time began to read of God's great love for me (John 3:16).

I learned that I could never be good enough to go to heaven on my own (Romans 3:23) and that I really deserved to be forever separated from God (Romans 6:23). For the first time in my life I saw myself as God saw me, a sinner.

Then I noticed that God had promised a gift of eternal life. As I followed the instruction in that Bible, I found I needed to receive God's gift (John 1:12) by placing my faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10).

That night I found that what I had been searching for was a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. He was the missing piece of my life.

If there's something missing in your life too, Jesus can fill that gnawing emptiness when you turn to Him in repentance and faith.

*Floyd Paris, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, is president of the Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference*

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CADIZ**—Oak Grove Church will hold revival services March 11-14 with **Reed Shepherd** as evangelist.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Dry Ridge Church ordained **Matt Howe** to the gospel ministry March 1. **Joe Kitchens** is pastor.

■ **FORDSVILLE**—Pleasant Grove Church recently called **Dick Campbell** as pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church recently called **Michael Welch** as minister of students and outreach coordinator. He previously was minister of education at Grace Church in Lexington.

■ **HEBRON**—**Steve Cable** recently resigned as pastor of Sand Run Church.

■ **LaCENTER**—Mount Pleasant Church recently called **Don Pippin** as interim pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Cornerstone Church called **Alan Dodson** as pastor effective March 4.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bashford Manor Church recently called **Chip Collins** as pastor and **Robert Shaw** as associate pastor.

Cloverleaf Church will host the Southern gospel group **His Song** in concert March 10, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218.

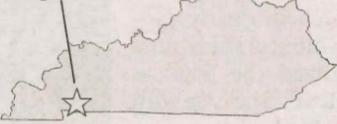
■ **MILTON**—Milton Church ordained **Dean Bowling**, **Mike Massie**, **William Robertson** and **Bruce Walzer** as deacons Feb. 11.

■ **PADUCAH**—First Church ordained **Rick Hubbard** as a deacon Feb. 18.

Lone Oak First Church ordained **Jeff Canter** to the gospel ministry Feb. 25. He has been called as youth

### Spotlight on ...

#### Hopkinsville



Calvary Memorial Church will host the drama "Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames" March 11-13, 7 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call (270) 885-4430.

and children's pastor at Crowfield Church in Goose Creek, S.C.

■ **SOMERSET**—High Street Church recently called **Regenia Hawkins** as children's minister. **Jammie Vance** is pastor

**Don Jones** recently retired as pastor of Immanuel Church.

■ **UNION**—**Jim Jenkins**, associate pastor of Big Bone Church, recently resigned to accept a pastorate in Rising Sun, Ind.

■ **WEST SOMERSET**—Pleasant Run Church recently called **Ronald Barnett** as pastor.

■ **WEST VAN LEAR**—**Chris Caudill** recently resigned as pastor of West Van Lear Church.

### What's going on?

Mail your happenings to Mountains to the Mississippi at Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. E-mail: wesrec@earthlink.net.

## Georgetown's annual Pastors' Conference set for April 16-18

**Georgetown**—A pastor from England and a church planter from Indiana will headline Georgetown College's annual Pastors' Conference April 16-18, at the school's Thomas & King Leadership & Conference Center.

The annual conference "is always eight days after Easter—a date that many pastors mark on their calendars and look forward to," said conference organizer Dwight Moody, dean of the chapel at Georgetown. "This conference helps ministers find fresh energy and enthusiasm for our calling.

"And, this year we are uniquely blessed to feature an international pastor and a female church leader," Moody added.

Simon Perry is pastor of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church in London. A doctoral graduate of Cambridge University, he will lead Bible study on Luke 4, with the theme, "Temptation and the Ministry."

Lesley Kreiger, a graduate of Duke Divinity School, launched a Generation X church plant in Bloomington, Ind. She will speak at the conference's Tuesday evening banquet on the topic, "Paul, Penguins and Project X."

Krieger, 28, served in a traditional church for five years. "But I needed to make church engaging to people who didn't have a positive church experience in their lives," said Krieger, the lead pastor for the new congrega-

tion which has attracted more than 50 people since September, including a mix of previously unchurched and many who had left the church years ago. One way she has sought to reach them is by meeting on Saturday nights in a sports complex.

The banquet also will feature the presentation of the Ken Chafin Award, an annual award for lifetime achievement in ministry. Ira McMullan, a 1941 Georgetown graduate who served for many years in Kentucky and Ohio as a pastor, church planter and administrator will be the recipient of this year's award.

Other conference speakers include Joel Gregory who will preach a sermon titled "A Hole in the Wall." John Durham, a retired Hebrew scholar now living in Virginia, will lead two sessions on "Art and Exegesis" based on his recent book "Rembrandt and the Bible."

Jean Smith of the Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis will lead a seminar April 17 on the Clergy Renewal Program. Each year the endowment awards sabbatical grants of up to \$45,000 to several hundred ministers. Smith, who administers the program, noted she would like to see more Baptist ministers apply for the sabbatical funds.

For more information about the conference, visit [www.georgetowncollege.edu/ministry](http://www.georgetowncollege.edu/ministry) or contact Robbi Barber at (502) 863-7047 or [robbi\\_barber@georgetowncollege.edu](mailto:robbi_barber@georgetowncollege.edu).



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March

7-21 Kentucky Changers College Blitz, Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester.

9-10 Creative Ministries Festival, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

10 RA Congress Region 1, Potter's House Baptist Worship Center, Smithland.

10 RA Congress Region 3, South Fork Baptist Church, Hodgenville.

10 Handbell Ring and Share—West, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

10 Vacation Bible School—West, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.

17 RA Congress Region 2, Olive Branch Baptist Church, Hanson.

17 RA Congress Region 6, Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester.

17 Statewide Keyboard Festivals, multiple locations.

20 Simple Church Seminar, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

22-25 Adult Kentucky Changers, Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester.

23-24 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Third Baptist Church, Owensboro.

24 Girls in Action/Children in Action Missions Event, Third Baptist Church, Owensboro.

24 RA Congress Region 8A, First Baptist Church, Russell.

26-27 Welcome to Kentucky New Ministers Orientation, Baptist Building, Louisville.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** MSC couple in Kentucky needs to sell 2000 Ford Explorer—fully loaded, Eddie Bauer. Asking \$8,500. Call (270) 786-2007.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to children for First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, Tenn., a Southern Baptist church, conservative in its theology, progressive in its methodology. Resumes should be sent to: Dr. Herb Hester, pastor, 108 E Grundy St., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for small Southern Baptist church (average attendance: 65). Send resumes to: Pigeon Fork Baptist Church, 5090 Hickory Ridge Road, Waddy, KY 40076.

**SEEKING:** Grace Baptist Church, Woodbridge, Va., seeks applicants for the position of executive pastor. For more information, go to [www.gracehome.org/ministry](http://www.gracehome.org/ministry) openings.

**SEEKING:** Part-time music director for a conservative, traditional Baptist church in a growing community. Must be able to work with adult choir (30 members). Send resume to Hedgeville Baptist Church, 4700 Lancaster Road, Danville, KY 40422, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of education/building administration for First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, Tenn., a Southern Baptist church, conservative in its theology, progressive in its methodology. Resumes should be sent to: Dr. Herb Hester, pastor, 108 E Grundy St., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and education at Harrodsburg Baptist Church, PO Box 286, Harrodsburg, KY 40330. Primary focus is youth, but education experience is important. For more church information, see [www.harrodsburgbaptist.org](http://www.harrodsburgbaptist.org).

**SEEKING:** Experienced, full-time pastor for church in small, Southeastern Kentucky village. Average Sunday morning worship attendance is 200. Salary based on education and experience. Send resume with references to Bond Baptist Church, PO Box 520, Annville, KY 40402, Attn: Kenneth Moore, search committee chairman. Deadline for receiving resumes will be 5 p.m., March 16, 2007.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music and children. If interested, please send resume via e-mail to: [eddyfirst@bellsouth.net](mailto:eddyfirst@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Altona Baptist Church in Calvert City, Ky., is now accepting resumes for the position of part-time youth/music minister. Send resumes to: Altona Baptist Church, 5847 US Highway 62, Calvert City, KY 42029.

**SEEKING:** Minister of youth. Responsible for providing ministerial leadership and a comprehensive youth ministry that is consistent with the vision and mission of the church. Please send resumes to: Youth Minister Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 446, Taylorsville, KY 40071.

**SEEKING:** Part-time/bivocational minister of music for South Elkhorn Baptist Church in Lexington. Send resume to: Dr. Damon Jones, pastor, 4867 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY 40510; or e-mail to: [preacherjones@windstream.net](mailto:preacherjones@windstream.net) or [donnacornish@windstream.net](mailto:donnacornish@windstream.net).

**SEEKING:** Memorial Baptist Church is seeking God's leading for the position of full-time associate pastor of worship and education. We are a Southern Baptist church with an average attendance of 400-450. We are seeking a man of God, conservative in theology (Baptist Faith and Message 2000), who has a love for Jesus Christ, a desire for evangelism and a passion for leading the congregation in worship. His primary responsibility will be to direct the entire worship experience and to continue to grow all aspects of a total multi-faceted music program. He should be a "people person" and a team player. He also would have a secondary responsibility in overseeing the entire educational program of the church. A seminary degree is preferred and an undergraduate degree in music is required, as well as 3-plus years of experience in working with a church body. Contact: Search Committee, Memorial Baptist Church, 1405 South Kanawha St., Beckley, West Virginia 25801; or e-mail: [memorial-baptist@hotmail.com](mailto:memorial-baptist@hotmail.com).

**SERVICES:** Christian long distance: 3.9 interstate; 3.9 in state; no monthly service charge. Call: (866) 587-8346 or [www.lowermyphonebill.com/harold/](http://www.lowermyphonebill.com/harold/).

# Taking faith to work

*Workplace ministries seek to make spiritual impact in diverse settings*

By Jerry Higgins  
Baptist Press

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Ministry in the workplace is prevalent throughout the Bible. The term “work” is mentioned more than 800 times and the Hebrew word “avodah” is the root for the English words “work” and “worship.”

Forty-five of Jesus’ 52 parables were about work, while 39 of 40 divine encounters in the Book of Acts occurred in workplace settings.

The workplace is a mission field, and many pastors urge their church members to go out and reach it. But according to those who serve in workplace ministries, people are not getting the proper training on how to reach the workplace.

That’s why organizations like HisChurchatWork.org and Corporate Chaplains of America were formed. That’s why the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and other ministries are concentrating on ministering to the workplace.

These and other organizations are either helping churches train the masses to go out and be workplace missionaries or are sending out people into the workplace to minister. Henry Blackaby, founder of Blackaby Ministries International, for example, provides monthly conference calls and training sessions to corporate CEOs to help them learn to bring Christ into their corporate lives.

## Shift to “being the church”

“People are happy in the pews letting ‘professionals’ do this,” said Doug Spada, a Navy veteran in nuclear engineering who started HisChurchatWork.org in 2002 at Journey Community Church in San Diego and now is based in Alpharetta, Ga. “We need to shift from going to church to being the church.”

Spada, a successful business entrepreneur, said he became “spiritually burdened for people’s work lives” and prayed to God for guidance in using his talents in ministry.

## Workplace ministry blossoms at church mindful of people’s stress

Simpsonville, S.C. (BP)—When Rick Julian realized that people today spend more time at work than they do at home, he updated his view of on-the-job training to include ministry.

“The work week is not 40 hours anymore,” said Julian, minister of evangelism at First Baptist Church of Simpsonville, S.C. “The stresses I see as a counselor is that work life is mounting and piling up. As the workload piles up, stress pours into the home.

“We need to attack the true problem,” Julian said, pointing to the church’s launch of a ministry effort to reach people where they work.

When Julian attended a worklife ministry conference sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, he met Doug Spada, head of HisChurchatWork.org. Spada’s organization helps churches devise a

Journey Community Church allowed Spada to start a pioneering church-based worklife ministry based on biblical principles drawn from such passages as Ephesians 4:11-12. From that, HisChurchatWork.org was formed.

“Why did I do this? It was me being obedient,” Spada said. “I was privately discouraged, disconnected, disillusioned in the area of my greatest influence.

“Churches think programmatically. They spend millions of dollars on programs and then people get saved when the pastor preaches. Pastors say God called him to the ministry. What about the people in the pew? What are they called to do? We help churches build bridges where walls and gaps existed.”

Spada works with churches to provide training in worklife ministry through a program he calls Worklife University, encompassing 30 modules of training. He provides support staff as well as links and resources for the church’s Web site in order to “train the trainers.”

“They then train the layperson to lead the ministry,” Spada said. “It’s important to have someone in the workplace. ... We want leaders to bust out of the typical paradigm. What we’ve done is help the church take its rightful and biblical position in the workplace. There’s a significant amount of influence in the workplace and the church has been vacant from that. People need to realize that we are all in ministry.”

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association started looking several years ago at the impact of evangelism training in the workplace, said Jack Munday, who oversees workplace ministry at the Billy Graham Training Center near Asheville, N.C. The BGTC started the Christian Executive Leadership Forum in 2003 which works with business leaders on biblical leadership in business.

“The first century church started in the workplace,” Munday said. “We needed to provide encourage-

Bible-based plan to evangelize within the workplace—and that helped spark the creation of First Baptist’s worklife ministry.

“It didn’t start out on such-and-such a date that we launched a workplace ministry,” senior pastor Randy Harling said. “It just sort of migrated into an emphasis on this.”

First Baptist, Simpsonville, developed a helpful Web site, [www.fbc-simpsonvilleworklife.org](http://www.fbc-simpsonvilleworklife.org). The site is a vast resource center not just for church members looking for daily devotionals, literature and other workplace guides, but for churches seeking information on how to start their own worklife ministry.

“There were no programs out there to emulate,” Julian said. “We were looking for anything. ... Our church was doing business luncheons once a month on site but we knew that was not the answer.



ment and engage leadership in business. We call it the sacred/secular divide. Many of us are not in vocational ministry. We don’t see ourselves in full-time ministry but we are. This is the message we are bringing to executive leaders.

“Most people come to Christ through relationships,” Munday noted. “Most of those occur in work instead of the neighborhood. Our prayer is for business leaders to be encouraged to live out their faith.”

According to the International Coalition of Workplace Ministries, there were fewer than 50 workplace ministries in 1992; today there are roughly 1,200. Reflective of that trend is Corporate Chaplains of America, which provides businesses with career chaplains who combine workplace experience with professional chaplaincy training.

## Employees’ spiritual needs

Mark Cress, a Virginia businessman, started Corporate Chaplains of America in 1996 after he attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. As a Christian business owner, he saw the spiritual needs of his employees but did not know how to help.

Cress started Corporate Chaplains of America as its only chap-

lain. Today, headquartered in Wake Forest, it is in 23 states with nearly 100 full-time chaplains in companies ranging from 10 employees to major corporations like Coca-Cola. It provides confidential caregiving, crisis intervention, programs for worship or prayer and special events scheduled in response to needs that arise in the workplace.

“We get permission to come in and share Christ in a non-threatening manner,” noted Cress, who said chaplains have seen more than 1,900 professions of faith and assisted more than 10,000 employees since he started the company.

The organization’s vision is to employ more than 1,000 full-time chaplains and serve more than 1 million employees by 2012. Sometime this year, Cress said, the organization will start Community Chaplains of America, for churches to set up ministry teams of volunteer chaplains to work in neighborhoods with groups such as police, firefighters, Little Leagues and hospitals.

“In the U.S. today, 71 percent of all employees are unchurched,” Cress said. “They still come to work with the same needs as those who are churched. Churches do a great job with the people they have but they do not have 71 percent of them.”

ministry site. People could subscribe and get an e-mail devotional. We had a big response, which surprised us. So many people grabbed onto it.”

Harling preached a series last fall through the Book of James titled “Corporate Prophets” which looked at such workplace issues as dealing with difficult people, customer service principles and how to make tough decisions. “It attracted the most response from anything I’ve done,” he noted.

Spada was contacted by First Baptist, Simpsonville, to help guide the church through a detailed program of how to evangelize in the workplace, wherever that may be.

“We want to be a place that identifies,” Harling said. “We are a church but we also care about you at work. We care about careers and the pressure of work. There’s so much to deal with.”

## MINISTRY MOVEMENT

*A visit between a Coca-Cola driver and a chaplain affiliated with Corporate Chaplains of America reflects the ever-expanding workplace ministry movement. (BP photo)*

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