At Southeast Conclave 2002

Youth leaders challenged to 'raise the bar'

By Lonnie Wilkey, Ruth Robinson Baptist and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — Southern Baptist youth ministers were challenged to "raise the bar" during Southeast Conclave 2002 held here Feb. 28-March 2.

The Conclave, sponsored by the Baptist conventions of Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina, drew about 550 participants, including approximately 200 from Tennessee, according to Bruce Edwards, youth ministry specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention's Christian Growth Development.

In its fourth year, the Conclave registered its highest attendance to date, Edwards said. It is the largest training event for youth ministers held by any of the sponsoring state conventions, he added.

The event offered about 50 practical seminars to equip youth ministers and workers to deal with issues and challenges associated with youth ministry, Edwards said.

Youth ministers were also challenged by guest speakers Voddie Baucham, an evangelist and pastor from Sugarland, Texas, and Barry St. Clair, head of Reach Out Youth Solutions in Norcross, Ga.

In his opening address, Baucham made it clear he was not a speaker.

Instead, "I'm just a preacher," he said.

Baucham set out to dispel a belief he said some hold that if you work with people under 18 years old you don't do Bible-based ministry.

He said there are those who advocate building youth ministries on a foundation of events.

"We've moved from Word-based ministries," Baucham observed.

"If I have seen speakers step to the platform without a Bible," he noted. They try to look cool, say something funny, then bring a manipulatory story to make them cry so they will walk down the aisles so the speaker can count the numbers, Baucham said.

"No wonder when the trends come, we're powerless.

"If we're not faithful to teaching the Word, then eventually our experiences rules all," he said.

— See Youth, page 6

Associations cooperate to provide R.G. Lee Center at Clifton prison

By Sara Horn
For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — When Randall Runions, chaplain of the South Central Correctional Center in Clifton, heard about Bible and ministerial classes being offered at the Turney Correctional Center by Union University’s R.G. Lee Center, he immediately contacted Paul Veazey, assistant to the president for church services at Union, to find out how the program could be started at his own prison.

"We were excited about this opportunity to expand our educational ministry to another prison," said Veazey.

Veazey contacted Ray Maynard, director of missions at the Lawrence County Association and David Miller, director of missions at Indian Creek Association to find out if they would be interested in partnering with Union to sponsor a center at the prison. Both of the associations agreed immediately, and with their assistance and funding for the teacher's salary, the first class of eleven inmates was started earlier this year.

Veazey also contacted the Missions Awareness and Mobilization Group at the Tennessee Baptist Convention and requested funds to assist in the start-up of the center.

Working with TBC staffers Larry Kirk, Beverly Smothers, and Tim Bearden, the funds were approved, and a one-time gift of $3,000 was received from the TBC.

The most immediate need for the prison facility was that of reference materials for the students.

Trent Butler, a Union trustee and an editor with LifeWay Christian Resources, was able to secure a donation of two sets of commentaries and other Bible reference materials from Broadman-Holman Publishing. These volumes will be housed in the prison library.

"Union University could not operate the R.G. Lee Center without the help and commitment from the Baptist associations," said Veazey. "This is a cooperative effort on the part of Lawrence County and Indian Creek Associations and Union University to continue to fulfill Christ’s great commission.

The R.G. Lee Center at SCC now has 10 students currently completing the spring 2002 course on studies in the Pentateuch, and has a waiting list for the next class, said Runions. He is excited about the opportunities the program will offer the inmates.

"Ninety-five percent of the prisoners here will go home," said Runions. "I want them going home saved."
Every child is a winner, says Upholder forward

By Sandy Crow
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — For many sports fans, March means one thing—basketball. March Madness is college basketball at its best—a month-long tournament full of adrenaline, excitement, and athleticism that will lead toward one winner.

The weekend's winning is what Caz McCaslin's new Broadway and Holman book, Every Child is a Winner: Developing Confident to Last a Lifetime, is about. "But it's not about winning ballgames," he said. "Every Child is a Winner is not about sports; it's not about basketball. We've got to get to the point that people understand that just because you're not number one, doesn't mean you're not a winner."

National organizations have attacked Pickering's record on civil rights, abortion rights, and church-state separation in an effort to block his confirmation. Among the leaders in the anti-Pickering effort are People for the American Way, the NAACP, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, and the National Organization for Women.

Supporters of Pickering's confirmation have charged the opposition campaign is based on a distortion of Pickering's record on civil rights and on concern about his rulings on abortion rights.

SBF taps former Tennesseean to lead

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Michael W. Weeks of Tepoo, Miss., has been unanimously elected as president of the Southern Baptist Foundation. He is a graduate of Mississippi Baptist College and Southern College of Optometry. He is an active member of the church and is a member of the executive board of the Baptist Foundation.

JUDICIAL CANDIDATE IS FORMER PRESIDENT OF MISS. CONVENTION

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The result of a major battle in Capitol Hill's latest war over a judicial nominee has been delayed a week, but the prospect does not look good for a former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

In a March 7 meeting, the Senate Judiciary Committee delayed a week a vote on Charles Pickering's nomination as a federal appeals court judge. All 10 Democrats on the 19-person committee signaled their opposition to Pickering, who is expected to vote against his confirmation March 14. Also, Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., has said he will not permit a floor vote on the nominee without the panel's approval.

President George W. Bush nominated Pickering, a federal judge since 1991, to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals last year, but a strong campaign has been waged against the nominee amid charges and countercharges about his record.

Pickering, a member of First Baptist Church in Laurel, Miss., was the first president of the state Baptist convention for two years in the mid-1980s. He is a member of the Peace and Justice Task Force, a group established in 1985 amid the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention and that issued a statement in 1987.
Will speak at YEC

Former astrologer ministers to New Agers

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist & Reflector

NASHVILLE — When it comes to witnessing to people caught up in the New Age Movement, Marcia Montenegro speaks from experience.

For years Montenegro was an astrologer. She depended upon the stars for answers, rather than God. Montenegro shared her story at the State Evangelism Conference in January and will address participants at the upcoming Youth Evangelism Conference March 22-23 at the Murphy Center on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

"The New Age is an umbrella term for many beliefs based mainly on combinations of Eastern religions, humanism, and occultic, esoteric teachings," according to Montenegro.

Montenegro provided a handout at the State Evangelism Conference detailing some general New Age/occultic beliefs. They include:

1. The New Age/occult bases truth on subjective experiences and interpretation.

2. The New Age/occult usually does not acknowledge absolute good or absolute truth.

3. There is one force or energy permeating the universe; the cosmos, nature, animals, and man are all part of this force (monism).

4. God is impersonal; God is an energy or force; God is the One, the Creative Source, the universe, the Divine, the universal consciousness; we are all part of God (pantheism); God is personal but does not reside in innate divinity.

5. The New Age Jesus is usually seen as an advanced spiritual teacher who attained Christ-consciousness, that is, Jesus realized He is God and set the example for all of us to reach that innate divinity. People involved in the New Age do not call themselves New Agers. Often they say they have their own religion, spiritual path, or that they are in spirituality. Small subsets of the New Age/occult include astrologers, Wiccans, and New Agers.

When discussing other spiritual beliefs, Montenegro said, "New Agers are not better (than the New Agers). We are forgiven and we are saved," she reminded. "We once were sinners the same as an astrologer a witch, or any other New Ager," she added. "We who need to see them as people Christ died for."

"The New Age has a key for reaching New Agers," Montenegro affirmed. In her testimony at the State Evangelism Conference she shared that after she accepted Christ, a Christian co-worker had been praying some time to make that decision. Montenegro had no idea the person had been praying for her. I believed Christians should not be afraid to talk with New Agers and to ask them questions about their beliefs. In the process of listening, respond, "That's different from what the Bible says." Christians come from a foundation they know is true, she noted. "You have to stand on the Bible, but you don't hit them over the head with it."

Before she accepted Christ she remembers encounters with Christians who came up to her and told her she was going to hell. "That confirmed to me how I thought they were too judgmental," she said. When talking with New Agers, Montenegro suggested staying away from the phrase, "I believe." Instead, she said, use "God says" or "Jesus says." She observed New Agers often are more willing to talk about Jesus rather than the Bible. "They may be hostile toward Christianity and the Bible, but they are willing to talk about Jesus," she said.

Discipleship after a personal decision for Christ is important for anyone, but it is especially so for New Agers who take that step, Montenegro stressed.

After her salvation, Montenegro recalled she was afraid that Christians would wonder if she was really saved. "There is a lot of fear from former New Agers to even talk with their pastor," she observed.

New Agers need someone to talk to — a mature, well grounded Christian, Montenegro said. "They need to be disciplined.

When New Agers accept Christ, they lose their commune, she said. "They need help, love, attention, and discipleship." For more information on Montenegro's ministry, go to http://cana.userworld.com.

Preparation can aid in discipline, says youth leader

CHATTANOOGA — Some discipline problems can be prevented just by being prepared, suggested a youth consultant and seminar leader from Georgia.

The beginning of discipline starts with the leader, acknowledged Judy Clay of Dacula, who led a seminar titled "If He Does That One More Time" during the Southeast Conclave 2002 held Feb. 28-March 2 here.

Discipline problems many times can be avoided by "head­ing them off at the pass," Clay said.

The first way is to be prepared for the teaching assignment. "A quality lesson challenges the minds and helps students focused," Clay said.

She also suggested that youth workers pray daily for their students.

Students might be changed temporarily through discipline, Clay noted, but "when God changes, it's from the inside out and is permanent."

Clay observed that when possible teachers should be in class 10-15 minutes early to greet students as they arrive.

Get the students focused on something as soon as possible, whether it be through conversation or having them do an activity, she added.

And when problems do not arise, remember that "disc­ipline is an expression of love, not anger or indifference," Clay said.

She encouraged youth leaders to be "positive toward the person" and "negative toward the problem."

Workers should strive to avoid comments and suggestions that condemn while working to find a solution, she said.

When punishment needs to be handed out, make it reasonable and relevant, Clay stressed. "Punishment needs to build character and relate dis­approval," she said, adding, "never make empty threats."

She also encouraged youth leaders to use mistakes made by the teenagers as teachable moments. "Help students see the consequences and accept responsibility for their actions," Clay said.

Mistakes also help students "remember and experience God's grace and forgiveness," she added. ■ — Lonnie Wilkey
Study says marriage heads off social ills

By Mark Wingfield
For Associated Baptist Press

NEW YORK — Marriage is good for health, wealth, and happiness, according to a panel of social scientists.

The panel of family scholars collaborated to survey a vast body of research on marriage and family issues. It is summarized in a document titled "Why Marriage Matters."

The project was sponsored by the Center of the American Experiment, the Coalition for Marriage, Family, and Couples Education, and the Institute for American Values. Leading researchers included Norval Glenn of the University of Texas, Steven Nock of the University of Virginia, and Linda Waite of the University of Chicago.

"Marriage is more than a private emotional relationship. It is also a social good," the researchers note. Not every person can or should marry. And not every child raised outside of marriage is damaged as a result. But communities where good-enough marriages are common have better outcomes for children, as compared to communities in which low rates of divorce, unmarried cohabitation, and high-conflict or violent marriages.

From two decades of research, the authors culled 21 key points. Among them:

• Marriage increases the likelihood that fathers have good relationships with their children.

• Mothers as well as fathers are affected by the absence of marriage, "the study states. "Single mothers on average report more conflict with and less monitoring of their children than do married mothers. But children's relationships with their fathers are at even greater risk. Sixty-five percent of young adults whose parents divorced had poor relationships with their fathers (compared to 29 percent from non-divorced families)."

• Cohabitation is not the functional equivalent of marriage.

• As a group, cohorts in the United States more closely resemble singles than married people, the report explains.

• Children in cohabiting parents have outcomes more similar to the children living with single (or remarried) parents than children from intact marriages. ... Couples who live together also, on average, report relationships of lower quality than do married couples with children. Research reporting more conflict, more violence, and lower levels of satisfaction and commitment.

• Growing up outside an intact marriage increases the likelihood that children will themselves divorce or become unwed.

On this point, the researchers cite a litany of warnings: "Children whose parents divorce or fail to marry are more likely to become young unwed parents, to divorce themselves, and to have unhappy marriages and/or relationships. Daughters raised outside of intact marriages are approximately three times more likely to end up young, unwed mothers than are children whose parents married and stayed married. Parental divorce approximates doubles the odds that adult children will also divorce."

• Divorce and unmarried childbearing increase poverty for both children and mothers.

• The effects of family structure on poverty remain powerful, even after controlling for race and family background," the report summarizes.

• Changes in family structure are an important cause of new failure. "Children of divorced or unwed parents have lower grades and other measures of academic achievement, are more likely to be held back and are more likely to drop out of high school," the study notes. "Children whose parents divorce women face risks about one and a half times as great as those faced by married women."

• Marriage is associated, with better health and lower rates of injury, illness, and disability for both men and women.

"Married people appear to manage illness better, monitor each other's health, have higher incomes and wealth, and adopt healthier lifestyles than do otherwise similar singles," the researchers explain.

• Children whose parents divorce have higher rates of psychological distress and mental illness.

• Divorce typically causes children considerable emotional distress and increases the risk of serious mental illness," the study details. "These mental health risks do not dissipate soon after the divorce. Instead, children of divorce experience reduced risks of depression and other mental illness, in part because of reduced education attainment, increased risk of divorce, marital problems, and economic hardship."

• Divorce appears significantly to increase the risk of suicide.

Not every person can or should marry. And not every child raised outside of marriage is damaged as a result.

Communities where good-enough marriages are common have better outcomes for children, women, and men than do communities suffering from high rates of divorce, unmarried childbearing, and high-conflict or violent marriages.

"Divorced men and women are more than twice as likely as their married counterparts to attempt suicide. ... In the last two decades, suicide rates among teens and young adults have tripled. The single 'most important explanatory variable' according to one new study, 'is the increased share of youths living in homes with a divorced parent.'"

• Boys raised in single-parent families are more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behavior.

"Teens in one-parent families are more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behavior.

"While young women must recognize that marriage is not a good strategy for reforming violent men, a large body of research shows that being unmarried, and especially living with a man outside of marriage, is associated with an increased risk of domestic abuse," the study explains.

"Overall, as one scholar sums up the relevant research, 'Regardless of methodology, the studies yielded similar results: Cohabitors engage in more violence than do spouses.'"

• A child who is not living with his or her own two married parents is at greater risk of child abuse.

"Children living with single mothers, stepfathers, or mother's boyfriends are more likely to become victims of child abuse. Children living in single-mother homes have increased rates of death from intentional and non-accidental injury as mentioned in 'Editor's Note.' The complete report, "Why Marriage Matters," is available at www.americanvalues.org.
I grew up in a great Southern Baptist church. My dad was a part-time music minister and my mom was the church pianist. We never missed church!

I was one of those kids that had all of the right "church answers." I could rapid fire off the 66 books of the Bible and the Royal Ambassador pledge in a split second yet there was something missing. As I listened to my pastor preach the Word every Sunday, I was deeply convicted.

I was really struggling. Each week during the invitation and altar call, I knew that I needed to surrender my life to Christ. I needed to repent of my sins. I needed to receive salvation through Jesus Christ. And so, at the age of 14, I began to pray the "dare prayer.

"God, if you are really serious about surrendering my life to you then have someone walk up to me and tap me on the shoulder right now. Amen.

I was totally reprehensible.

Kudos to leaders

I want to commend Jerry Rankin and Bob Record. I am confident that they have never thought, nor sought for any missionary to "receive their marching orders" from themselves or their agencies. Moreover, they would want nothing less and nothing other than for all missionaries to be called by and given "marching orders from Jesus Christ." It is totally inappropriate and even reprehensible to suggest otherwise.

Sadly, there is good reason for these godly men to be calling for the signing of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. They, obviously, understand the times in which we live. As documented by the research of George Barna and others, many of today's evangelicals (including Southern Baptists) no longer believe the Bible. Frankly, why would anyone who has "marching orders from Jesus" have a problem with a sign of good statement of faith which exalts Jesus and His Word?

The reality of our day is that all of those who love Jesus and that they are sent by Jesus — the Mormons and many other cults. And, even more tragic, there are huge, growing numbers of evangelicals, even Baptists, who deny the virgin birth of Jesus, the trinity and authority of the Word of God, the sinlessness of Jesus, and that Jesus is the only way to heaven. Etc. And they keep on "doing church" and claiming to love Jesus. However, when I pull out the Bible, the "sure word of prophecy," and/or a statement of faith, such as the Baptist Faith and Message, that exalts Jesus and His Word?

"Only in America can I get a Bible in my language," says Jeremy, a friend of mine from Czechoslovakia. This comment came as we passed out Sunday doughnuts, devotional worship sheets, and Bibles to the employees of Ober Gatlinburg Ski Resort.

A college mission team from First Baptist Church, Powell, was helping me deliver our materials and I took the opportunity to visit with Jeremy. His eyes lit up like a child's on Christmas morning on receiving the Bible called to God to come and see what he had.

I had a friend in Russia and Czech and Russian workers that day and each was well received. We still need about 20 more in each language though.

It was a great moment of witnessing as I showed Jeremy and other employees where to begin reading (Gospel of John).

I look forward to follow up ministries with them. I also look forward to finding a Bible for the woman from Estonia and the woman who asked for one in French. And then there were 75 Spanish-speaking employees who got their Bibles just before Christmas.

And there is John, a lift attendant who stopped me to ask for prayer and a Bible in English. I told him the only thing I could do was pray for him to change his life right with God. I look forward to our next encounter.

Continue to pray for our witness at Ober Gatlinburg.

Bill Black
resort missionary, Gatlinburg 37738

March 13, 2002 / BAR
Youth leaders challenged to ‘raise the ...’

Baucham challenged youth workers not to be swayed by the latest fads. "If the only goal is to have more nickels and more noses, we'll compromise to get it," he said.

"Whoever you are, make sure you are committed to a Word-based ministry, not just a job description," he challenged.

Big kids or young adults?

In a later session Baucham asked youth ministers if they treat their teenagers like "big kids or young adults.

"How you treat them is how they will end up," he cautioned.

He observed that today's culture no longer views teenagers as adults and that youth ministry in the last 30 years has come alongside culture. "We have chosen to lower the bar and the body of Christ is missing out because of that," he said.

Baucham cited the Old Testament story of Josiah in 2 Chronicles 34 who became king and reigned in Jerusalem for 31 years.

"Josiah would be told today to do youth stuff or 'church lite' Baucham observed.

Baucham cited the Old Testament.

He cited several lessons that can be learned from the life of Josiah.

(1) God chooses and uses the young. "God does not set age limits on when a person can be chosen, called, or used," Baucham said. History is replete with examples, he added.

(2) Young people can live for God. Baucham noted that in 2 Chronicles 34:2 it says "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

Josiah lived for God as a young man and walked with God," Baucham said.

(3) Young people don't always grow to be old. Baucham noted that Josiah was gone by age 39.

"Why do we continue to tell people to wait when tomorrow is not promised? We don't always get to be old."

"Cassie Bernall did not get to be old, but she impacted the world because she lived for God," Baucham said.

(4) Young people can change culture. By the time Josiah was 20 he was changing his culture and turning it upside down, Baucham observed.

"Today, however, the gospel is watered down so it can be "relevant" to the younger generation, he said.

"When you raise the bar, they will rise to the level of your expectations. You will be amazed at what God can do in and with and through young people.

"There may be a Josiah right under your noses. Don't tell him to wait. Turn him loose."

Barry St. Clair

Barry St. Clair drew the theme for his Friday evening worship message from Hebrews 7:25: "He is able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him."

"Your life, youth ministry, marriage, all depend on drawing near to God. The church in America today feels really impotent. People wonder, 'Does what I am doing really count for much?'"

St. Clair said the message the church gives is not always clear. It is pretty small, weak, and won't turn the world around.

Youth have a warped Jesus story. They have an inadequate view of who Jesus is, of the amazing person of Jesus Christ. He is able because He is the heir over all things, through whom all the world is created. He reflects the glory of God. The real Jesus of the gospels is a Jesus who is able."

The word "save" is tossed around. St. Clair said, until "we have a flat salvation that doesn't go deep into people's lives because they don't know the real Jesus." St. Clair was director of youth evangelism for the former SBC Home Mission Board for six years until he was dismissed, he said.

"Every youth leader worth their salt gets fired somewhere along the way."

Youth ministry, he said, "is not just about getting kids saved. It's about helping them discover God's destiny for them, to understand who Jesus is, that He is able and to draw near to Him. It doesn't do any good just to say words. The message of Jesus must come true in a way that makes them to know through your life that He is able to save and be all He has promised to be."

The session closed with the youth leaders on their knees in an exercise in prayer led by St. Clair designed to help them draw near to God.

Conferences

The youth event also offered about 50 seminars on a variety of topics, ranging from "how-tos" to issues such as time management, legal concerns, outreach, fitness, and more.

The seminars tried to address practical challenges and issues which face youth ministers and workers, Edwards explained.

Seminar leaders included several from Tennessee — Pete Tackett, First Baptist Church, Columbia; Darren Whitehead and Diane Cobb, First Baptist Church, Franklin; Tony Rankin, TBC staffer and member of First Baptist Church, Nashville; and Sherry Spillman, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, and member of First Baptist Church, Dickson.

Also for the first time at the Conclave, those attending had the opportunity for personal counseling with a trained therapist, Edwards said. "This was well received."

Next year the event will move from Tennessee to Hebron Baptist Church in Ducula, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, Edwards said.

It is scheduled for Feb. 20-23. Speakers will include Johny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga., Edwards said.

He noted plans are to return to Chattanooga every other year because of its central location to the southeastern states. It will be held in other states on alternate years, he added.
Through use of new book

**Father, son avoid crisis, heal relationship**

By Conzie Davis
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Tony Rankin is all about being real as a parent, counselor, and minister.

This is true even though his transparency has cost him business in his counseling center. His honesty also has required some courage as he relates with fellow parents at First Baptist Church here, where he and his family are members. And his "realness" has required courage as he leads conferences on parent/teen relationships in churches.

But he knows it helps others, said Rankin.

So, with his son Drew's approval, Rankin shared a personal story. Just three years ago he was looking for Drew, almost 16, in the alleys of downtown Nashville, hoping he would not find him dead.

The Rankin family escaped that crisis unscathed. But in late November Tony and Drew were arguing over something and Tony sent Drew to his room. A few hours later, Tony went to Drew and told him he had to get something that might help them.

Tony asked Drew if he would go through the book, 30 Days: Turning the Hearts of Parents and Teenagers Toward Each Other, with him. It would only require 10 minutes a night for 30 nights, Tony explained.

Drew agreed and they began. Prior to Drew's bedtime each night father and son met, as instructed by the book, privately in Drew's room and by candlelight. They opened an envelope and found directions for each of the 30 days which asked them to share something with the other.

**According to Drew**

At first, said Drew, he thought it was corny and weird, but very soon he decided the experience was "really neat."

"I always wanted to be like best friends with my dad and be real close," said Drew. But it wasn't happening until he and his dad began going through 30 Days.

The directions each received each day "did not make you say anything," said Drew. They just helped him say "what he (his dad) would want him to hear" and "wanted to say, but not just at random," he explained.

He also always wanted to be good, he went on to explain, and please his parents. He didn't discuss it with them and even lied to cover up his feelings because he feared what he would say "wouldn't come out right." "Now I don't have to hold the feelings back or pretend," he said.

He's glad to know "my dad doesn't look down on me."

He knew he had an emotional side, as everyone does, and he always wanted to be emotional toward his dad, Drew said.

Drew continued, before going through 30 Days. But now he realizes the only one who is hurt when he doesn't reveal his emotions is himself.

"It's a loss. It doesn't get you anywhere in life," he said.

The exercise also has helped him get to know his father and learn his point of view on many things. And that has continued because they still meet together each day.

Finally, his relationship with his mother has also improved.

Because of the power of the experience in his life, Drew has shared it with about seven other teens and the father of a friend. And he and his father will report on their experiences April 21 to parents and teens at First Church here.

**According to Tony**

Tony believes he and his wife, Amber, have done a good job raising Drew and their two younger children. He thinks their experience with Drew is "typical of what parents go through."

"It's a joy,""he and Tony, Rankin, co-author of 30 Days, discussed the need for such a book several years ago. As Ross developed the book he also relied on Rankin's advice from the perspective of a clinical counselor.

Prior to going through 30 Days, Tony's relationship with Drew was "good but pretty tense," he described. He learned perfect kids, he joked, since he speaks to thousands of teens and parents across the country about relating with each other with God's help.

Yet Drew was making "some stupid but adolescent mistakes." And occasionally Tony used "emotionally harsh" words toward Drew. He did this even though he knows children will remember them forever, he believed.

For instance, right before he had a heart attack last year, he told Drew that he was going to give him a book attack and kill him. Thankfully, as Tony recovered, a friend told him that Drew was struggling because of guilt caused by the statement.

Going through 30 Days forced Tony to "figure how much I loved him (Drew). I love and adore him dearly," explained Tony.

Then 30 Days helped them understand each other. For instance, Tony was able to tell Drew that his core issue was being good enough, which helped Drew see one of his struggles. And Tony would describe to Drew certain stresses he faced or threats which were influencing him.

He also likes 30 Days, because it does not abuse a person's emotions, Rankin noted, although it encourages some emotion-filled interactions.

"I've made mistakes as a dad and as a mother," said Rankin. "You take advantage of second chances and third and fourth." One of those chances was provided by 30 Days, he said.

Former Tennesseans write book for parents and teens

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Richard Ross, one of the worldwide True Love Waits sexual abstinence campaign founders, and Texas youth minister Gus Reyes have bad news.

Parents who are preoccupied with careers and social lives have emotionally abandoned their teenage children, they say. Teenagers who have been emotionally abandoned, or emotionally neglected, try to protect their wounds by pushing parents away.

The neglect of the parent and the pushing away of the teenager break the "heart connection" between them, they warn. Wounded teenagers who push parents away also push away the faith and values of their parents.

But Ross, a youth ministry professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here and Reyes say they have good news in the form of a plan to help turn the hearts of parents and teenagers back to each other. They share this plan in a new book, 30 Days: Turning the Hearts of Parents and Teenagers Toward Each Other.

30 Days is a study using a collection of cards with instructions to parents and children on what to say during sessions. One parent and one teenager commit to spend 10 minutes together each evening for 30 days opening sealed envelopes and reading the cards.

Parents and teens are called to make commitments, sign pledges and engage in a kind of ritual as they sit close to each other with one candle lighting a darkened room.

Both Ross and Reyes have used the program with their own teenage children and it works, Reyes says.

Yet sees his and his 13-year-old son have seen "remarkable improvements" in ways they relate to each other.

"It has affected the whole family," Reyes says.

What makes this different from other programs is that it tells parents and teenagers exactly what to say and do, Ross says.

"By following the instructions on the cards, the parent and teenager say and do things that have the most powerful potential to turn their hearts toward each other," Reyes says.

A master's and a doctorate in education at Southwestern and a master's degree in management from Angelo State University, he previously worked 13 years at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. Reyes and his family moved back to Texas last year, he says, to impact the quality of youth ministry in Hispanic churches.

"Out of 1, 101 (Southern Baptist) Hispanic missions and churches in Texas, there are only two full-time youth ministers," Reyes says.

Working with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, he recently resurrected a summer youth camp for Hispanic teens. Five hundred teens attended the camp last summer.

This number is expected to mushroom this year. Reyes also hopes to host 3,000 to 4,000 Hispanic teens at a youth congress Easter weekend. Reyes says they hope to publish 30 Days in Spanish this year.

Reyes is joining Hampton Place Baptist Church in Dallas as associate pastor for youth ministry. His brother, Albert, is president of the Hispanic Baptist Theological School in San Antonio, and another brother, Fred, is marriage enrichment team coordinator for LifeWay.

Ross recently made presentations of the 30 Days material to leaders of two national family-oriented ministries. In addition, he has recently been invited to appear on Robert Schuller's television broadcast, "The Hour of Power."

Ross and his wife, La Juna, have served side by side in local church youth ministry for more than 30 years. He served 16 years as youth ministry consultant with LifeWay.

Ross earned a master of religious education and a Ph.D. in youth ministry from Southwestern. He earned his bachelor's degree at Harding Simmons University in Texas. He has written or compiled 16 books on youth ministry, many of which have been classroom texts in Southern Baptist colleges and seminaries.

Ross is well-known for serving as a founder of the True Love Waits campaign.

"I always use the term 'spokesperson' rather than 'founder,'" Ross says. "God was the founder."

Their book is available only from existing orders, but venture, Josiah Press, for $19.95. To order, call 1-877-430 DAYS or visit www.josiahpress.com.
Ministry must be balanced with family: Rankin

By Ruth Robinson
For Baptist and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — "Your ministry can affect your family positively and negatively," Tony Rankin told youth ministers and their spouses in a seminar on "Balancing Family and Ministry."

The seminar was held at Southeast Conclave 2002, a regional meeting sponsored by the Baptist state conventions of Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee.

"Striving for excellence at work, but sacrificing your family to do so," Rankin said, "is not the answer. Family is just as important as your job."

The group of 85 participants took a break every hour for refreshments.

Rankin is currently family ministry specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and a counselor in private practice.

"When you spend all your energy at work, you rarely have much energy at home so that home gets left overs."

Rankin says he is speaking from personal experience.

That's your legacy. Nobody (in the future) is going to care if you make every meeting.

You need to do what you teach to your children.

Tony Rankin of the TBC Christian Growth Development Group addresses seminar participants at Southeast Conclave 2002 in Chattanooga.

Tony Rankin told youth ministers and their spouses a seminar on "Balancing Family and Ministry."

Tony Rankin: Family Ministry Specialist, Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Tony Rankin: "Striving for excellence at work, but sacrificing your family to do so, is not the answer. Family is just as important as your job."
Relationships with teens are repairable

By Ruth Robinson
For Baptist and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — "We are not products of a sperm race. We are designed by God, redeemed by God and given a mission by God," said Richard Ross, youth professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

His topic at Southeast Conclave 2002 held here Feb. 28-March 2 was "Restoring Broken Heart Connections" with families where things are not going well.

"In the past we have tried to help students survive bad homes. Why not approach the problem by changing the homes," he asked.

He said it was possible to rebuild homes where things are already mixed up.

"The way for Christian parents to parent teenagers is the way God parents us. We have an emptiness which God fills with unfailing love."

On the other hand, Ross said, "most parents have marketplace love."

They tell their teenager that he/she will be rewarded with love if the teen meets the parent's expectations, Ross observed. They have an attitude of give me something and I will give love back," or the parent may vicariously live out their life through the teenager's life, he said.

Youth, like adults, need a sense of significance, he said. Teens need encouragement, a sense of security, a true and genuine sense of significance.

"Their perception of emotional security is to have their home stay as it is. Your ultimate security comes from God; theirs from their parents. Marriage is a priority. Parents must make a decision to make the home last a lifetime."

Ross said this is not happening in church families where one-half of church families are struggling. He cited several reasons:

(1) Warmth stopped along the way. Parents are occupied with discipline and behavior and forget to love their kids. They want their kids to get it right and are scared by what happens to bad teens.

Also, withholding warmth from kids may have been the example in the parent's home and the parent doesn't know how else to act, Ross suggested.

(2) They are preoccupied with money, possessions, marriage, and lose focus on the kids. "The American dream has just about done us in. Parents are working and too busy, so teenagers are lost."

(3) Divorce. Ross said that whatever the reason that there is a drift in the relationship between parents and teenagers, "teenagers experience pain. Teenagers hate pain."

"That's why they smoke funny cigarettes. To make the pain stop, they turn away from it. They decide their parents are not as important to them as they used to be and to fill the relational void they turn to their buddies."

Is it possible to rebuild relationships? "Yes," Ross says. "It is repairable. Pray for your kids. Teach kids the truth. Model the truth. It is in relationships that most families are missing."

He recommended a project called 30 Days, (see separate story, on page 7) in which a parent and a teenager, in an on-on-one relationship, spend 10 minutes each night for 30 days in intense discussion, using the guidelines in the 30 Days book. Each day has an envelope with five cards, some for the parent, some for the teen, which guides their discussion. In this way both are able to say very personal things to each other that they otherwise find hard to verbalize.

"My desire is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," a verse from Malachi, "which is a neglected teaching here of late," Ross said.

"A family can make big progress in about a month, modeling God's grace and unfailing love."
Gimmicks are good, but should be based on Gospel

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — Creativity is needed to reach youth today, but regardless of what is used, the Bible needs to be the focal point, says a former Tennessee Baptist youth minister.

Russ Butcher, who once served at First Baptist Church, Smyrna, led a session at Southeast Conclave 2002 entitled "From Gimmicks to Gospel."

Butcher, who is now pastor of student ministries at NorthStar Church in Kennesaw, Ga., reminded youth ministers and workers that "the Word of God" changes lives.

However, he continued, "creativity is the velcro that makes it stick in the lives of students in a culture where there are many things competing for their attention."

Creativity is vital because the average teenager has an attention span of seven minutes, Butcher observed.

He noted that in reaching youth the messenger (youth minister or worker) must make four commitments when preparing for "the awesome adventure of teaching Scripture."

(1) A commitment to integrity.
(2) A commitment to authenticity.
(3) A commitment to glorifying God.
(4) A commitment to excellence.

Butcher encouraged those who teach teenagers to examine the ancient truths of Scripture, bring those truths to life, and apply it "to the now."

That can be done using creative approaches, he said.

"Creativity is as simple as looking into your personal life and finding something to help the gospel stick with students," he observed.

Butcher called on youth workers to create a "brainstorming planning team" and to include students on those teams. "Get the students involved. They will be the creative brainstormers," he said.

He encouraged those attending the seminar to tell stories with personal illustrations and to use creative elements (video clips, testimonies from students, etc.) to bring application to biblical truths.

"Quit teaching lessons and start creating experiences," Butcher challenged, noting that students want "experiences."

He observed that "we have conditioned our students to be bored with Scripture. That is a "sin," he stressed.

Keep a balance between creativity and honor the integrity of God's Word, he challenged.

Butcher noted that when teaching students, he always has a Bible in hand.

"They need to see the Bible and understand what it means. "They need to see our commitment as leaders to the integrity of the Scriptures."

Butcher said he tries to teach students that the Bible is the "absolute truth that they need to live by."

He observed that people's world views are determined by the lenses they look through, whether it be a philosophy or religion.

"The lens I believe God wants us to look through is the Word of God," Butcher stressed.

Russ Butcher, left, pastor of student ministries at NorthStar Church in Kennesaw, Ga., and former youth minister at First Baptist Church, Smyrna, visits with Justin Hians, a Union University student and youth minister at Chapel Hill Baptist Church in Milan. •

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MINSITRIES — YOUTH

MINISTRIES — YOUTH

Full-time pastor of students/recreational leadership needed for dynamic growing church in North Alabama. Must have clear call to student ministry. Send resume to Search Team. P.O. Box 145, Athens, AL 35612.

First Baptist Church of Rogersville, Tenn., is seeking a full-time youth/family minister. Please send resume to Mrs. Mae Brooks, Personnel Chair, 1405 Robertson Blvd., Rogersville, TN 37857. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled.

Part-time youth minister wanted at Antioch First Baptist Church, 2601 Una-Antioch Pike. Fax resumes to (615) 832-6486 or call church at 832-7486.

MINISTRIES — OTHER

Oak Street Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a part-time minister of worship. Applicants must meet biblical qualifications for leadership and have the necessary skills and experience to lead corporate worship and church music programs. Resumes or inquiries to Search Committee, 804 Oak St., Elizabethton, TN 37643 or faxphone (423) 542-8722.

Houseparents needed for full-time relief houseparents at the-Tennessee Baptist Children's Home in Chattanooga and Cleveland. Applicants must be couples only. Call Bob Segrest or Lynn Jordan at (423) 892-2722.

The William Carey Association is currently searching for a God-called director of missions. Anyone feeling God's calling to this ministry should apply. Please send resume before Mar. 27 to William Carey Baptist Association, Attn. DOM Search Committee, P.O. Box 11, Fayetteville, TN 37334 or e-mail to wcba@vali.net.com.

Giles Baptist Association is currently searching for a director of missions. Send resume to Giles Baptist Association, Attn. Search Committee, P.O. Box 404, Pulaski, TN 38478.

MINISTRIES — PASTOR

Bethel Baptist, a conservative, mission-minded church, is seeking a full-time senior pastor. Resumes will be received until Mar. 20, 2002. Send resume and cover letter to The Bethel Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 135, Greenfield, TN 38230.

MINISTRIES — YOUTH ADULT

Seeking full-time youth/adult minister. Send resume to Hunter First Baptist Church, 693 Hwy. 91, Elizabethton, TN 37643, fax (423) 543-2948, e-mail church@hunterfirst.com.
By Jon Walker
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE—It's always been a struggle to reach teenagers for Christ, but those born since 1984 may be the toughest to reach yet, said Christian researcher George Barna. Appearing on Richard Land's For Faith & Family weekday radio show in February, Barna said the "Mosaic Generation" is comprised of non-linear thinkers who cut and paste their beliefs and values from a variety of sources.

What's more, Barna said, almost half the Mosas don't know and don't care about moral absolutes. To them, it's just a non-issue not worth arguing over. This means, Barna said, that they're a generation comfortable with contradictions.

Barna defines the Mosaic Generation as youngsters born between 1984 and 2002, describing them as such because they're "very mosaic in every aspect of their life." He said, "There's [no attribute] that really dominates like you might have seen with prior generations." Other researchers refer to this generation as Millennials or Generation Y.

"When we try to show them logically that two things really don't work together — that either one is right and the other is wrong, or they're both wrong — typically what you get is a giggle and then the response, "Yeah, how about that?" Barna said. "They're not really concerned about trying to figure out where things stand on an objective continuum."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and host of For Faith & Family, said the research regarding the Mosas shows America is cultivating a generation of mainly right-brained thinkers.

"I just want to make sure everybody understands that this is a radical departure from Western thought, at least since the time of the Renaissance," Land said. He added that this way of thinking is so different from other generations that it's like comparing a modern man to one from medieval times.

The For Faith & Family broadcast ministry is heard daily on nearly 600 radio stations across the country and around the world on the Internet at www.faithandfamily.com. Visitors to the program's web site can access archives of past For Faith & Family programs as well as listen to the Barna interviews.

An audiotape of the two-part interview also can be ordered by calling 1-888-324-8450.

Barna said society has taught Mosas to think in this different, yet straightforward way through fast-edit videos, constant computer use, and easy access to video games. In addition, 91 percent of all Mosas, compared to 51 percent of all adults, use the Internet, where they absorb information and build relationships.

"We've taught them, 'You don't have to connect the dots the way your parents did,'" Barna said. "What you have to do is just react to whatever you see out there, and as long as it feels good, as long as it makes sense, that's good enough."

Connecting with young people has always been a challenge, Barna said, but today that struggle is at a much deeper level.

"It's no longer just a difference in cultural icons, ones that young people respond to instead of their elders," Barna noted in the For Faith & Family interview. "Now it's a whole different style of thinking and communicating. It's a completely different set of values based upon a very varied interpretation of the meaning of life and how to achieve success or significance in one's life.

"This calls into question 'How do we teach young people today?,'" Barna observed. "Is preaching the best way to communicate God's truths to them, at least the way we traditionally preach? How do we get them to understand and embrace God's Word without ever compromising it while still understanding they communicate very differently from previous generations?"

"They want spirituality; they want faith experiences; they want a taste of religion; but they don't want to have to go through all of the stuff that they see the adults doing at the typical church," Barna said. "But, because the Internet fits with their schedule — it's a 24/7 opportunity — they're using it to explore things they might not have access to otherwise."

During NOBTS emphasis

Skidmore looks at ‘Wow,’ ‘Woe’ of salaries

By Shannon Baker
For Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Most minister’s salary “packages” create a false impression of how much money ministers really take home, said Richard Skidmore. Thus it is imperative that ministers and churches plan correctly on compensation matters. Skidmore, a Tennessee Baptist Convention church minister’s financial support specialist, told future ministers at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Skidmore was one of the featured speakers for this year’s Life Beyond Seminar February 19-21 at the seminary. Various seminars addressed such topics as preparing for interviews with search committees, handling conflict, church planting and preparing a ministry resume for the 21st century. The seminars supplement NOBTS’ regular academic classes which feature a church-focused, competency-based practical curriculum to equip leaders to grow healthy churches.

In addition, representatives from more than 10 state conventions, the International Mission Board, and the North American Mission Board were on hand to speak with students regarding future ministry possibilities.

Skidmore, describing in his presentation the church layman’s understanding of the minister’s salary, said that when John Q. Church Member sees an annual line item of $35,000 for the minister’s salary, for example, the inclination is to compare that salary to someone who works in the secular arena, such as Wal-Mart or Saturn.

However, when you examine the comparison more closely, the minister really is not making the same, Skidmore said, using a question to explain: “Do you pay for your benefits out of your salary?” The secular employee is asked, to which the typical answer is no. In fact, the benefits — medical insurance, retirement, and other fringe benefits — are added to the baseline salary, thereby increasing the amount, he explained.

In comparison, typically deducted from the minister’s published salary of $35,000 is medical insurance, housing, job-related expenses, and if the church agrees, disability and life insurance and retirement. And, because the minister is considered self-employed for Social Security tax purposes, the minister must pay the employer’s portion and his portion of the Social Security tax, which amounts to around 15 percent of his compensation, Skidmore said.

“So, the salary of the minister, when you count out everything else, is actually closer to $20,000 or less,” Skidmore said. “When John Q. Church Member sees $35,000 published, he’s seeing the entire package, not just the take-home salary.

“The salary package may look like a ‘Wow!’ but it can really be a ‘Woe!’” Skidmore said, referencing the seminar’s title, “The Salary Package: Wow! Or Woe?”

Moreover, the minister’s published salary may include a line item to cover expenses such as books, conference fees, and use of the minister’s personal car. “That expense belongs to the church, not to the individual,” Skidmore said.

Consider how it would make the church secretary feel if deducted from her paycheck is the cost of leasing or owning the computer she uses to produce church bulletins and letters, Skidmore suggested. “That’s exactly what we do when we expect our ministers to use their own automobiles for visitation and other church-related travel. Often, ministers are given a published salary, which includes expense money that is subtracted from their total earnings rather than added to it,” he said.

Instead, churches should not include expenses such as the salary, but as a church expense similar to a utility bill, Skidmore said. At the end of the month, the minister should be reimbursed for expenses paid out of his pocket in the same way the electric bill is paid, he said, suggesting that ministers settle with the church monthly, using a mileage log and attaching every expense. The minister and the church should agree in writing at the outset what expenses are acceptable, he said.

Skidmore also pointed out that ministers may be paying taxes themselves. “With the advent of the way some churches set up the payment of medical insurance benefits,” Skidmore said. “If the church pays the premium directly to the insurance company, the benefit is not reportable for tax purposes.” Skidmore explained. However, if ministers are given the money to pay the premiums, then it becomes taxable income, and the ministers have to pay taxes on that amount, he said.

“It’s important to always check with your state convention representative who handles compensation and tax issues to be sure that you are not paying more than you need to pay,” Skidmore advised the students.

Skidmore also offered counsel about the inclusion of a parsonage in the salary package, saying that such use may leave a church at risk and/or may hurt ministers and their families in the long run. “What happens if the pastor has a stroke and can no longer speak in the pulpit?” he asked. “Who wants to be the one in the personnel/finance committee who has to move the family out of the parsonage?”

Without an opportunity to build personal equity through a housing allowance stipend, the minister has nothing of his own to fall back on. Skidmore said.

Skidmore reminded the students that the Southern Baptist Convention’s Annuity Board offers each of its insurance benefits — such as life, disability, dental, and health insurance — as stand-alone options. “We want to meet you where you have a point of need,” Skidmore said. More information from the Annuity Board can be obtained online at www.absbc.org or by phone at 1-800-202-0511.

MINISTRIES — MUSIC
First Baptist Church, Elizabethton, Tenn., is seeking a full-time minister of music. If interested, please send resume to Search Committee. First Baptist Church, 212 E. F. St., Elizabethton, TN 37643.

MISCELLANEOUS
For Sale: Oak pews with bookracks and padded seats. Call (731) 764-2557, Pastor John Cook.

For Sale: A two-year-old 60 x 24 modular building w/HVAC for sale. Used as education or small worship center. Call Gladewater Baptist Church, (615) 444-9550, for details.

MINISTRIES — EDUCATION
Cherry Road Baptist Church is seeking an associate pastor/educator. Resumes to Les Collier, Business Administrator, Cherry Road Baptist Church, 1421 Cherry Rd., Memphis, TN 38117.

Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, is seeking a full-time minister of education and discipleship. Broadway is an ecumenically-minded CBF affiliated congregation, with a commitment to inner-city ministry. We worship in the liturgical tradition. Send resumes or recommendations to Cindy Johnson, Chair, Education Search Committee, 305 W Broadway, Ft. Worth, TX 76104.

Calvary Baptist Church is seeking to fill a new ministerial position of minister of education/evangelism. If you are interested, please send a resume to Pastor Steve McDonald, 163 N. Jefferson Cir., Oak Ridge, TN 37830, phone (483) 483-7470, fax (483) 482-7210.

Centreville Baptist, seeking full-time minister of education and youth. MRE degree required and some experience preferred. Church has new education facilities, Family Life Center, and provides excellent benefits and salary package. Send resumes to Centreville Baptist Church, P.O. Box 326, Centreville, AL 35042.
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GERMANTOWN — Church conflict and forced terminations are part of Southern Baptist life.

In 2000, 482 full-time Southern Baptist pastors and 268 bi-vocational pastors were terminated. Of those ministers, 97 were in Tennessee. In order to address the issue, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary here, in cooperation with the Baptist state conventions of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennesee, is sponsoring "Facing the Issues:

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Receiving the Holy Spirit

By Charles Fritts

Focal Passage: John 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16-5-15

I miss my dad. More than I thought I would. More each year. I have good memories. I have pictures. I have his fishing rods. I don't have him. Where he is. He's safe and happy and I'm glad for that. I still miss him.

The disciples will miss Jesus. He is precious to them. For what is fast approaching, and they are grieved. What will they do without Him? What of the work He began? With Him, they felt they could do anything. He赴s us that way. Without Him? He had even said, "Without me you can do nothing." Then He told them of one who was to come. Fully God, only not visible as Jesus had been. He assures them of His continuing presence and how God will continue to relate to them daily. They will not be orphans. They (and we) will do the work of Christ.

He will be continually present with them (and us) (ch. 14:16-17). He is another "counselor," similar to the first Jesus. B. H. Carroll calls Him, "the other Jesus." The word "counselor" or "comforter" is used in a general sense of "one who helps." As the "Spirit of Jesus." He will complete the words Jesus had spoken and cause the disciples to recall those words so they could have a written record for us. He helps us apply that unchanging message to our changing culture. The Holy Spirit, at work since creation, did come at Pentecost, in a unique and powerful way. Now He is "in you" and "with you" if you are a believer. Although the world doesn't recognize the Holy Spirit, we don't live by "luck" nor do you have to "figure it out" on your own. You have the continuing presence of God. He will bring this (and others) in this continuing mission (ch. 15:26-27). Jesus died, was resurrected, and ascended back to the Father. His physical life on earth was ended. His mission on earth was not.

The Holy Spirit came to continue that mission. And the Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of Truth." We will never leave us. Jesus said, "I will be a "Spirit of Truth." To build a life, to continue His work, to have joy, we must have truth. Christianity offers a "know-so" position in a "hope so" world. It alone has real answers to the real questions: "How can I have peace within?" "How can my life have meaning?" "Is there a heaven or hell?" "How can I have assurance of forgiveness?" You can know! Jesus is no longer with us in bolid form. Yet we are not left without help. God relates to you now as Holy Spirit. "I will never leave you," said Jesus. And He never has.—Fritts is pastor of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia.

Family Bible SS

Lesson — March 17

Give evidence of your salvation

By Thurman Seber

Focal Passage: Ephesians 2:1-10

Most Bible readers are drawn to the "miracle" stories in the Scripture. While Jesus did many wonderful things, the three accounts of His raising the dead are often regarded as the most amazing of all. A much less noticed miracle is often recorded in the accounts of biblical salvation experiences. The greatest miracle of all takes place in the human heart. While salvation is an inner event, the result of this miracle can only be demonstrated by outer actions.

A Christian will give evidence of salvation. I have often said in preaching that no change in lifestyle indicates no change in the sinner's heart.

The first seven verses of chapter two trace our path from death to deliverance. The second verse is the answer to our question, "What is the quickest way to get to the baseball stadium from here?" Resident: "Are you walking or driving a car?" Out-of-town man: "Driving a car." Resident: "That's the quickest way." Take this truth: It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all of the answers.—James Thurer

Memorize this Scripture: "Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?" —Amos 3:3 IV

Pray this Prayer: Lord, help me to be wise enough to ask directions when I don't know the way. Help me further to follow instructions when I receive them.
Jerry Tidwell, pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson, for the past nine years has been called as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Clearwater, Fla. He and his family will be honored at a reception in the church fellowship hall on March 17, his last Sunday at West Jackson. A native of Alabama, Tidwell was president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1999-2000. He is chairman of the board of trustees at Union University, Jackson, and serves on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jerry Legg has been called as interim pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Humboldt.

Salem Baptist Church, Trenton, has called Ben Hindrichs as youth minister.

Lyons Park Baptist Church, Church Hill, has called Roger Dinsmore as pastor.

Ridgetale Baptist Church, Chattanooga, has called Tony Leonard as minister of recreation effective March 18. He formerly served as minister of students at Heritage Hills Baptist Church, Heritage.

Riley Jones is the new pastor at Shady Grove Baptist Church, Rogersville.

Spring Creek Baptist Church, Clarksville, has called Richard Christian as associate pastor of music and youth.

Edgefield Baptist Church, Nashville, recently called Gary Morgan as pastor.

Darren Morrow began serving Feb. 3 as pastor of Calvary Hill Baptist Church, Ripley.

Jeremy Hazel has resigned as youth minister at First Baptist Church, Covington, to accept a similar position in Elizabethton.

Tri-Cities Baptist Church, Gray, recently called Arden Taylor as pastor.

Rusty Wishon retired in February as youth minister at University Parkways Baptist Church, Johnson City. He is available for pulpit supply and can be reached at (423) 928-0326.

Bill Eddins is the new minister of youth at First Baptist Church, Greeneville.

Calvary Baptist Church, Erwin, has called Annette Florence as director of children's ministry.

New Life Baptist Church, Kingsport, recently ordained Coy Webb and Steve Price as ministers of the gospel and Ron Wimmer as a deacon.

Bill Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fairview, and Howard Olive, retired pastor of Monte Vista Baptist Church, Maryville, recently were inducted into the Mainstream Baptist Hall of Fame during a recent ceremony in Charlotte, N.C.

Earl Martin, senior professor of missions at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, was recently named Jo Marquis' Who's Who in America. He was the founding missionary of the Southern Baptist Mission to Rwanda.

Corbin O. Monger died Feb. 7. He was pastor of Solid Rock Baptist Church, Knoxville.

Roger L. Oldham, 76, who served as pastor of 27 Southern Baptist churches in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Florida and was a music evangelist who wrote and published more than 350 gospel songs and hymns, died March 4 in Erlanger, Ky. He is survived by three daughters and a son, Roger "Sing" Oldham, pastor of First Baptist Church, Martin. Memorials can be made to the Roger L. & Glendora S. Oldham Memorial Scholarship Fund at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 5001 N. Oak Street, Kansas City, Mo. 64118.

William A. "Bill" O'Leary, deacon emeritus at First Baptist Church, South Pittsburg, died Jan. 19.

Allen Buhler, 85, a retired pastor in Lebanon, died Feb. 22 after a lengthy illness. His Tennessee pastorates included Montvue Baptist Church, Morristown; Fairview and Southside Baptist churches in Lebanon; and Shelby Avenue Baptist Church in Knoxville. Nashvile. He also served as interim pastor of several churches during his retirement years. He is survived by six children, 14 grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. Memorials can be made to the Allen Buhler Scholarship Fund at Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, c/o Sanderson Funeral Homes, Inc., 901 Main Street North, Carthage, TN 37030-1002.

The Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, Jackson, adult choir will present the Easter musical, "Who Do You Say I Am?" at 10:30 a.m. on March 24. For more information, call the church office at (731) 688-0329.

The adult choir of West Hills Baptist Church, Lebanon, will present their Easter program, "He Thought Of Us" on March 31 at 11 a.m. For more information, call (615) 444-2606.

Trafalgar Village Baptist Church, Memphis, recently held its first missions fair in the history of the 34-year-old church in order to expose the congregation to various missions sponsored by the World Mission Offering, according to Rick Panis, associate pastor.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Limestone, is nearing completion of its new worship center and fellowship hall. It's the first new construction for the church since 1963. Church members did much of the construction.

Boone Trail Baptist Church, Gray, will soon move into its new $2 million family life center/educational facility, the second major construction project for the church in the last three years.

First Baptist Church, Greeneville, recently moved into its newly completed office complex, library, and education space, which was built as the second phase of a three-phase building plan.

Chinquapin Grove Baptist Church, Bluff City, will soon move to their new location at the corner of Chinquapin Grove Road and Walnut Grove Road. The new building, projected at $2.2 million, will provide a new church facility.

Stones River Baptist Church, Smyrna, will hold revival services April 7-11 with guest evangelist Nathan Hale, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Murfreesboro. For more information, call the church office at (615) 459-2933.

Sylvia Baptist Church, Dickson, will change its service times, beginning Easter Sunday, March 31, at 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11 a.m. with Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Lucy Baptist Church, Millington, will hold revival April 21-24 with guest evangelist Hal Fletcher, pastor of Ridgeway Baptist Church, Memphis.

White Hall Baptist Church, Trenton, will celebrate its 60th anniversary with dinner after the morning service on April 21. They will also break ground for new church facilities that day.

Hiwassee Baptist Association held its associational evangelism conference March 2 at Paint Rock Baptist Church, Phelps. Ted Davis of the Evangelism/Missions Strategies Group of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, preached. Special music was provided by the choir from Union Fork Baptist Church, Soddy-Daisy. More than 100 people attended the conference.

Henry Blackaby will speak at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Germantown, during a campus revival April 16-19. Blackaby is co-author of the popular Experiencing God study. For more information, call the school at (901) 751-9453.