

# Baptist & Reflector

Statewide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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## TBC CP gifts above last year's pace

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee Baptist Convention churches gave \$3,078,798 through the Cooperative Program in January.

After the first quarter of the current fiscal year, Tennessee Baptists have given \$9,201,912 through the CP channel of giving.

The amount is \$149,026 or 1.65 percent more than was given after the first quarter of the last fiscal year.

The first quarter gifts are \$24,804 or 0.27 percent ahead of budgeted needs for the first quarter.

The budget for 2005-06, as approved by TBC messengers last November, stands at \$36,708,431.

"We are grateful for how Tennessee Baptists have responded to missions and ministry needs in our state and around the world over the first quarter of this fiscal year," said James Porch, TBC executive director-treasurer.

"We remain confident Tennessee Baptists will continue to give generously this year as we seek to make Christ known," he said. □

## Warren County sheriff seeks to put God first

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

MCMINNVILLE — Warren County Sheriff Jackie Matheny basically starts each day with the same philosophy: "There is nothing like Jesus and I want to tell everyone with an ear about Him."

That's not always easy for a man who holds an elected public office, but it is something Matheny strives for daily.

In addition to his duties as sheriff, Matheny preaches regularly and always finds time to address children's and youth groups, whether it be at church, Scouts, or whatever avenue that opens. A member of Shellsford Baptist Church here, he is currently serving as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Morrison.

"I like to work with children and try to keep them out of trouble," he said, noting that is a lot better "than having to arrest them later in life."

Matheny, now in his 12th year as sheriff, began teaching Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) courses in local schools 16 years ago and still teaches one or two each semester.

The Warren County native grew up in a godly home and accepted Christ at the age of 10 while attending Vacation Bible School at First Baptist Church in McMinnville.

He is grateful for the influence of his parents, both of whom are now deceased.

"In my job I see the worst of humanity. To have parents like I had, I praise God."

Matheny is the first to admit that he strayed from God during his young adulthood. At the age of 28 Matheny lost his job

and began serving as a police officer with the McMinnville Police Department. "I really thought it (law enforcement) would be temporary," he recalled.

After being on the job for only six months, one day Matheny began pursuit of a drunken driver. He followed the man to his home. The man then came out of his house with a rifle and fired at Matheny.

"I never dreamed I would be shot," Matheny reflected.

The bullet missed his heart and hit him in the arm, doing extensive nerve damage.

### Blessing from a bullet

Matheny remembers kneeling down on the ground and hearing the Holy Spirit say to him, "I saved you this time."

Looking back, Matheny acknowledges that getting shot was "one of my best blessings."

That bullet in the arm led Matheny to reflect on his life and begin to "get back in church." Four years after that fateful day, Matheny walked down the aisle with his youngest son, Bryan, who wanted to make a profession of faith. At the same time Matheny and his wife, Katie, both re-dedicated their lives to the Lord and Matheny has been serving Him ever since.



JACKIE MATHENY has served as sheriff of Warren County for the past 12 years. A member of Shellsford Baptist Church, McMinnville, he preaches regularly and is currently the interim pastor at First Baptist Church, Morrison.

"I promised the Lord that whatever door He would open I would walk through it."

In 1994 Matheny felt convicted to run for sheriff of Warren County. He noted that literally hundreds of people encouraged him to run. But a close friend of Matheny was in the race and he did not want to run against him.

Matheny and his wife prayed about the matter and one day his friend called him and said he wanted to talk.

"He told me he had decided not to run and asked me to run instead." Matheny prayed about it, accepted the opportunity, and won the election over an incumbent and two other candidates.

— See Warren County, page 9

## Super Bowl players openly share faith with media

Compiled from Baptist Press

DETROIT — The Super Bowl is over and the Pittsburgh Steelers lay claim as world champions, with a 21-10 victory over the Seattle Seahawks.

But Christian players from both teams emphasized to the media the week before the biggest game of their life that there is something more important than the Super Bowl game itself.

Encouraged by quarterback Matt Hasselbeck and league MVP running back Shaun Alexander, Christian players from the Seahawks spent time with the media sharing their faith and the need to focus on more than Sunday's final score.

"We believe life itself with Jesus Christ is more important than what we do on the field," Alexander said. "We want to make sure our focus is on more than this game. We have a bigger calling."

Nearly half of the Seahawks players and coaches who were given their own platform on media day spoke freely about their personal faith to the media.

"There are a lot of us on this team from all parts of the country, but we are united in Christ, and the unity you see on this team is very encouraging," Hasselbeck said.

Fullback Mack Strong has been bashing his body into bigger and stronger defenders for almost a decade, clearing the way for Alexander and other more publicized backs, but he said the greatest moment of his career was when he became a Christian in 1997.

"We have been given a great opportunity to play football, but it's short-lived. Five years from now people won't remember that I sat in this chair on media day or even what I said unless they look at the video."

"We believe in something

bigger than this game, that we have to stay strong for a bigger purpose."

Backup quarterback David Greene, a rookie who starred at the University of Georgia where he was active in campus ministries and greatly influenced by his Christian head coach, said those looking to explain Seattle's success need to look at more than wins or statistics.

"We have a lot of guys on our team who don't get caught up in the extra stuff. We have guys who are in the Word every day when you could be getting stressed out."

"When you're living with pressure, you have to surround yourself with good people and that's what we try to do. If you believe in Christ, then you can live with pressure regardless of what happens on Sunday."

Numerous Pittsburgh players also were not ashamed to share their faith.

Wide receiver Antwaan

Randle El eagerly surveyed the chaotic media scene of hundreds of journalists with notepads in hand, dozens of video cameramen, and countless live radio interviews being conducted. Then he gave his assessment of the proceedings:

"People think this game may go down in history, but it's really only temporary. I thank God that I am here, but I know I have to ask Him for guidance because I didn't know what to expect ..."

"I can't let this game get me too high or too low," Randle El said. "I have to stay focused on God and stay focused on His Word."

Steelers fullback Dan Kreider said the familiar routine of daily prayer times with his wife over the phone and morning Bible reading in an unfamiliar city helped him overcome temptations connected with the Super Bowl.

— See Super Bowl, page 9

## this week's news

- ▶ Nashville church targeting diverse neighborhood begins in Eastland Baptist Church. — Page 3
- ▶ Columnist considers termination of ministers. — Page
- ▶ "Church Health Matters" discusses worship. — Pages 6-7
- ▶ Churches can manage risks. — Page 8
- ▶ Draper retires from Life-Way. — Page 9



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## SBC gifts behind last year's pace

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are 1.11 percent below the same time frame in 2005, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President Morris H. Chapman.

As of Jan. 31, 2006, the year-to-date total of \$65,872,491.07 for Cooperative Program (CP) Missions is \$742,451.21 under the \$66,614,942.28 received at the same point in 2005. For the month, receipts of \$20,447,401.31 were 0.51 percent, or \$104,444.69, above the \$20,342,956.62 received in January 2005.

Designated giving of \$38,542,304 for the same year-to-date period is 2.56 percent, or \$962,970.53, above gifts of \$37,579,333.74 received at this point last year. The \$27,952,975.81 in designated gifts received last month is \$750,098.51 above the \$27,202,877.30 received in January 2005, an increase of 2.76 percent.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$65,872,491.07 is 104.28 percent of the \$63,288,418.32 budgeted to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. □

## Ministers tax guide available

Baptist Press

DALLAS — Ministers can find additional help in preparing their 2005 federal income tax returns from GuideStone

By NAMB

## C-N recognized for mission efforts

By Mark Brown  
C-N news office

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman College has been recognized by NAMB's Missionary Mobilization Team for its leadership in coordinating student volunteers to share the gospel.

Carson-Newman ranked second of 119 colleges and universities in the number of student missionaries who partnered with the Atlanta-based agency last year.

NAMB's Pam Ortego came to C-N on January 26 to present the award during a chapel service.

"We are thankful for the willingness of students who, in response to God's call and gifting, leave their comfort zones and cross cultural, geographic, or other barriers to proclaim the gospel and live out a Christian witness in obedience to the Great Commission," said Ortego.

She also credited C-N's leadership.

"We are also thankful for the efforts of individuals like (campus minister) Jim Wilson, (associate campus minister) Nenet Measels, (Appalachian Outreach director) Jean-Ann Washam and (vice president for student affairs) Dr. (Renée) Leake, and others who make this possible," she added. "Their work, which is all-to-often behind the scenes, impacts lives on the front-line in the spiritual battle taking place across the country."

Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. The annual Ministers Tax Guide for 2005 Returns details recent changes to tax laws and their effect on ministers.

"This year's tax guide includes the features ministers have come to expect," said O.S. Hawkins, GuideStone's president and chief executive officer. "The informative free tax guide includes sample tax returns with step-by-step instructions for active and retired ministers, as well as a special pull-out section regarding the federal reporting requirements for churches."

An overview of the tax change highlights was written by Richard Hammar, a CPA, attorney, and widely published author who specializes in legal and tax issues for ministers.

The tax guide can be accessed in an electronic PDF format by visiting the GuideStone web site at [www.GuideStone.org](http://www.GuideStone.org). Copies also can be obtained by calling customer service at 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday-Friday Central time. □

## Arson suspected in church fires in Alabama

Baptist Press

CENTREVILLE, Ala. — Five churches, including four Southern Baptist ones, were destroyed or damaged in an Alabama county apparently by arson Thursday night and Friday morning, and a fire at a sixth church in a neighboring county is being investigated.

Rehobeth Baptist Church in Randolph, Ashby Baptist Church in Brierfield, and Pleasant Sabine here were burned to the ground, while Antioch Baptist Church in Centreville and Old Union Baptist near Randolph were damaged. All but Pleasant Sabine are Southern Baptist, and all five are located in Bibb County.

"The sheriff's department and the ABI [Alabama Bureau of Investigation] is treating it as

arson, and obviously they've got some clues as to that," Steve Patrick, director of missions for the Bibb County Baptist Association, told Baptist Press. The FBI joined the investigation Friday.

Investigators are looking closely at how the fires were started in the two churches that weren't destroyed, said Patrick, who added it appeared "the back door was kicked in and the fire was set around the pulpit area" in the churches.

"We believe it's somebody that has a vendetta against Christianity in general, maybe Baptist churches in particular," said Patrick, who requested prayer for the churches as well as for the individual or individuals who started the fires.

All four SBC churches, Patrick said, run less than 100 on Sunday mornings, and all five churches that were affected are located within 10 to 15 miles of each other.

Although racism was involved in 1996 when several black churches in Alabama were burned, the fires in Bibb County involved four predominantly white churches and one predominantly black church.

Meanwhile, a sixth church, New Harmony Church (non-SBC) in neighboring Chilton County, was damaged by a fire Thursday afternoon, *The Clanton Advertiser* reported. That church burned just before sunset; the fires at the other churches appear to have been set sometime during the night. Also, New Harmony had been undergoing construction, and officials said that could have played a role. □

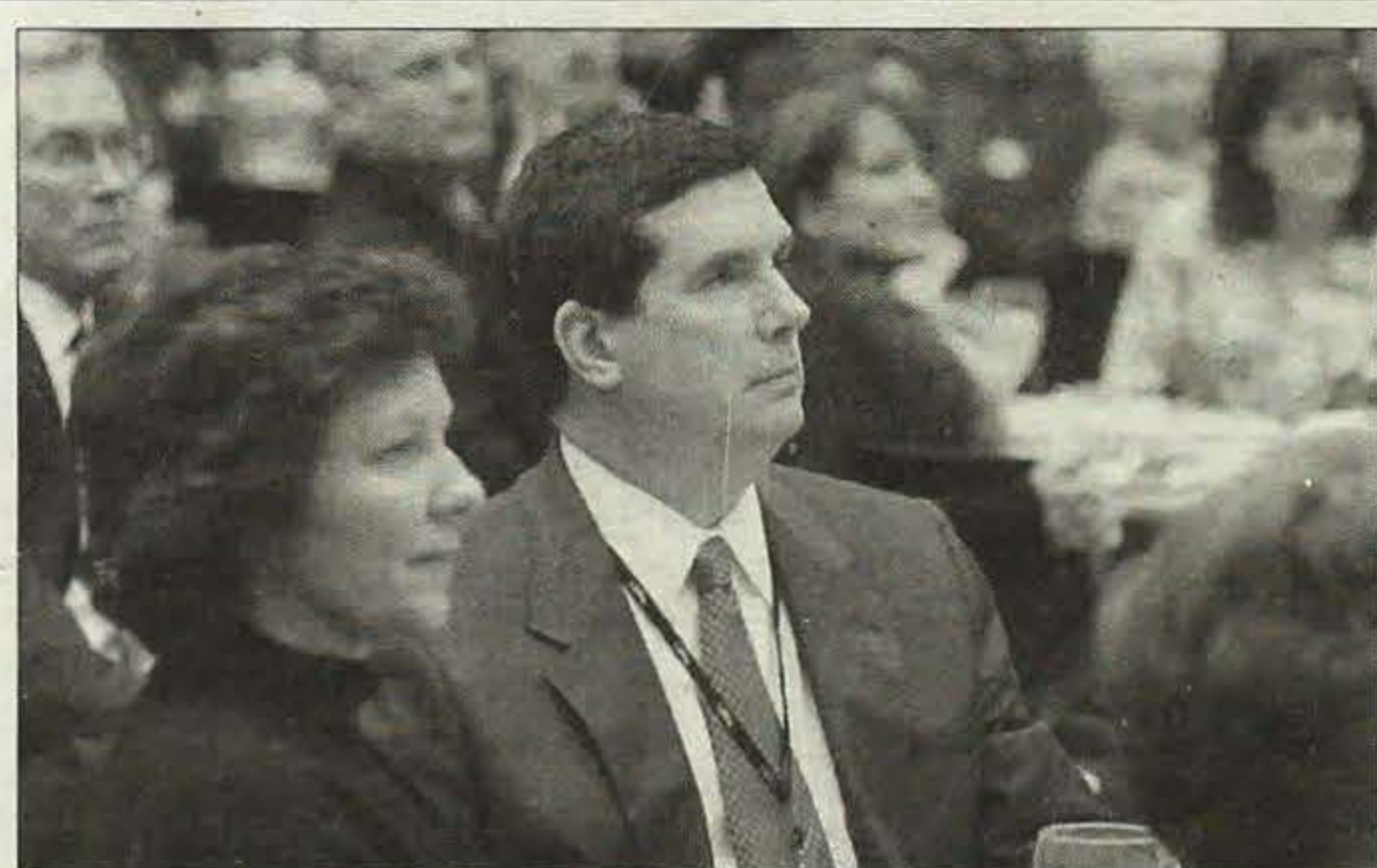


**C-N PRESIDENT James Netherton** accepts a plaque from Pam Ortego of the North American Mission Board on behalf of the college's efforts in sending out student volunteers.

C-N's efforts were part of a national effort that mobilized more than 1,700 student missionaries to serve four weeks or more. NAMB reports that the work resulted in 12,651 mission interactions and 1,567 recorded professions of faith.

"The only thing that matters to me about the numbers is that it means we have a campus brimming with students who want to serve Christ," said Jim Wilson.

"Our numbers look good because our students want to serve Jesus." □



## Thom Rainer inaugurated at LifeWay

Thom Rainer, new president at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville was inaugurated Feb. 6 as the ninth president and chief operating officer at LifeWay. He began his duties Feb. 1, succeeding Jimmy Draper who retired Jan. 31 after 15 years at the helm. Rainer and his wife, Nellie Jo, are pictured at the inaugural luncheon. During his inaugural address Rainer emphasized his commitment to the local church and noted that LifeWay is at a crossroads. "We can choose to ignore the realities of the changing culture around us, of the post-Christian era we are entering, and of the profound challenge of being the world's largest Christian resource provider. Or we can enter this new era with boldness and courage, knowing that our strength is not our own, and that a future in the hands and total dependence on Jesus Christ will be a success by any definition."



## Result of Crossover Nashville

## 'Church within a church' targets area's unreached

By Linda Lawson  
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — First, God convicted Tony Higgins of the need to minister to the unchurched people of East Nashville.

Then God gave him and others, including staff members of Eastland Baptist Church, a vision for a new church, one that would mirror the economically and ethnically diverse landscape of the area.

The result is Eastland Community Church, "a church within a church" that meets on Sunday evenings in the facilities of Eastland Baptist. Higgins serves as pastor in addition to his roles as Crossover catalytic intern for the Nashville Baptist Association and as a Nehemiah church-planting missionary appointed through the North American Mission Board and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The viability of the dream of Eastland Community was tested in June 2005 when a block party was held at Eastland Baptist in conjunction with the area-wide Crossover evangelism thrust. The community was invited for food, music, games, and a Christian witness. Several hundred attended.

"Crossover made a statement that this is a place that is coming back to life," Higgins said. "It made a statement that whoever you are, you are welcome here and you are wanted."

Eastland Community then was launched Sept. 11, 2005, with a public concert, "A Night to Remember." The first service was held Sunday evening, Sept. 18.

Eastland Baptist Church provides the facilities, prayer support, and some of its members regularly attend Eastland Community services.

Brentwood Baptist Church, located in a suburb south of Nashville, serves as a "partnering sponsor," Higgins said, providing financial support and

more than 20 of its members to assist through 2006. For example, Brentwood provided funds and personnel to help with the Crossover block party and has assisted with monthly meals at Eastland, hosted for students of Nashville Auto Diesel College.

Higgins said the vision of Eastland Community is "to be a church-planting church and mission center" in East Nashville and beyond. Their mission statement calls on them to "engage the culture, embrace the community, and encourage committed relationships with Jesus Christ by expressing the truth and touch of Jesus Christ."

With attendance averaging around 70 by the end of 2005, Higgins envisions Eastland Community growing to a maximum of approximately 250 members by the end of 2008. As time goes on, Higgins sees the possibility of as many as "eight, 10, or 12 churches that meet together."

Members of Eastland Community include homeless persons, artists, and others flocking into East Nashville to restore older homes.

To reach its diverse community, Higgins described his church as "very conservative in theology and preaching and very flexible in our methodologies."

Eastland Community's leadership structure includes eight ministry teams: (1) stewardship, (2) dialogue (communications), (3) discipleship, (4) outreach, (5) missions and ministry, (6) relationships, (7) prayer, and (8) worship.

"Nearly everyone in our core group is engaged in intentional outreach on a weekly basis," Higgins said. "Even if you're on the stewardship team you're charged with engaging the culture in some respect."

While plans didn't call for the new church to begin its church planting efforts until 2007, God had other ideas, Higgins said. A church-planting ministry new to Nashville, Set Free, was established in Nashville in connection

## Tony Higgins — actor turned pastor

By Linda Lawson  
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Today Tony Higgins leads a new church in East Nashville with a dream of reaching the diverse population of its community.

While he is a pastor and church planter today, the idea of starting a church was the furthest thing from Higgins' mind when he graduated from high school.

He had grown up in an abusive family situation. He was not a Christian. And his dream was to become an actor. He was attending a theater college in Gainesville, Ga., when a theater critic urged him to leave school and pursue acting and modeling.

After working in Atlanta, Higgins took "all the money I had in the world" and traveled to Milan, Italy, where he had been assured of a modeling job. After arriving with only 50 dollars left in his pocket, he learned the job in Milan had fallen through.

He rented a room in a pension that he shared with two other men and had only enough funds to eat once every three days. When he didn't have an audition, he stayed in his room, reading a book his mother had sent with him. An alcoholic, she had been "getting sober for real for the first time when I left." The book had Scripture verses scattered throughout.

Higgins copied some of the verses onto photography paper and mounted them on the walls of his room. One day, as he reflected on his father's lifelong message to him that he wasn't loved, another voice intervened. Questions flooded his mind.

"Everywhere my eyes landed (on the walls of his room), they landed on Scripture," Higgins recalled. "Every time I had a question my eyes



TONY HIGGINS, pastor of Eastland Community Church, Nashville, stands in front of an old Sunday School attendance chart used by Eastland Baptist Church. Higgins chose that room for the church office and left the chart in place as a reminder of the mandate to reach East Nashville for Christ.

landed on the answer. At the end of the conversation I told God, 'I have been told I wasn't loved, but you say I am. Here's the deal. If you can really love me the way you say you can, then I'll give you my whole life right now.'"

The next day Higgins began getting jobs and earned the money to return home. He got an agent and began what became a 12-year acting career before entering the ministry.

He believes God led him to Italy to get away and hear God's voice. He sees his acting career, not as a diversion, but as a stepping stone to his ministry today in East Nashville. □

with Crossover to help persons recover from addictions, get their lives back on track, and invite Christ into their lives. The Set Free leadership team spends Sunday mornings holding church services in downtown Nashville. They participate at Eastland Community on Sunday nights.

Since Eastland Community still has mission status and has not formally constituted as a church, they serve as a "strategic partner" with Set Free. They cemented the relationship by calling the Set Free church planter, Chuck Benson, as part-time new works pastor for Eastland Community. Kevin Lawson

completes the Eastland Community bivocational staff, serving as worship pastor.

Higgins sees the relationship between Eastland Community and Eastland Baptist as more than one church using the facilities of another.

"We want Eastland Baptist to see us infusing life into their body and as a blessing to them," he said. "We see ourselves as another chapter in that long legacy of good, valuable ministry. We're really impressed to be good stewards of everything they allow us to use and as good stewards of the relationships."

Higgins chose to place the office of Eastland Community

on the second floor of Eastland Baptist in a former Sunday School classroom where an attendance chart from 15 or more years ago still hangs on a wall. It reminds Higgins and Eastland Community members of their mandate to reach out to their community with the love of Christ.

For the future, Higgins envisions Eastland Community planting indigenous churches, beginning in East Nashville, churches that, in turn, will plant others.

Higgins sees confirmation of the Eastland Community dream in the revitalization of the neighborhood and in the growth of the church.

"It is confirmed when you hear that the dreams and heartbeat that individuals at Eastland Baptist have had for years are now coming true," Higgins said. "It is confirmed on Sunday evenings when you stand and sing and preach and you look out and see six or seven of the homeless singing with their hands raised in the air."

If he had not answered God's call to Eastland Community, Higgins believes God would have called someone else to lead out in reaching the community. He's glad that he did.

"Serving here is an honor and a privilege," he said. □



PASTOR TONY HIGGINS, left, of Eastland Community Church in Nashville, and Chuck Benson, new works pastor, sit on the steps of Eastland Baptist Church, where their congregation meets, and reflect on their ministry.



LEADERS OF Eastland Community Church, Nashville, pray together prior to a recent worship service.



## Forgiveness — starting the new year fresh

families  
matter



By Paul Barkley

Many believers will be dragged down as they face a new year. They are not necessarily over weight or carrying a burden of stress. The weight that drags them down is the vengeance they pursue and the grudge they carry for past wrongs committed against them.

Over and over in the Scripture, we are admonished to forgive. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to ask God to forgive us as (in like manner) we forgive those who have hurt, wounded, or sinned against us. One of the things that I try to help my clients see is that they forgive others as much for their own

sakes as they do for the sake of those who have offended them.

When we hang on to a hurt or grab on to a grudge, we add to the weight that drags us down. It drains our emotional and spiritual energy when we carry these with us. It is like a giant blotter that absorbs the gas in our tank.

I want to invite you to consider another group that will carry a heavy weight into the new year because of problems with forgiveness. I would like to suggest that you think about a group that you do not have the right or the responsibility to forgive.

John A. Broadus in a sermon on the Lord's Prayer published in *Favorite Sermons of John A. Broadus*, said, "In the strict and proper sense it is not our duty to forgive a man unless he repents." He makes the statement even clearer when he later says, "It is not right that you should forgive a man in the full

sense of the term unless he repents; not only is it not your duty, but it is not right." I have tried to teach this to my clients for years, especially, those who suffered early childhood abuse, whose perpetrators either would not confess what they had done or had died before they could do so.

One of the problems that I see in our world of entitlement and "victim-hood" is that everybody is "forgiven" whether they repent or not. When people are not held accountable for their sin, we add extra weight to their victims. I want to help relieve some of the weight in your life this year. If God does not forgive those who do not repent, I do not believe that He expects His children to do what He either cannot or will not do.

This, however, does not free us to take vengeance. Vengeance belongs to God. Paul said in Romans 12:19, *Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the*

Lord. We are told to love our enemies, Jesus said, *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you ...* (Matthew 5:44).

God may not forgive a sinner who refuses to repent, but He still loves him and acts redemptively toward him. My definition of love is the willingness to do what you believe to be best for the object of your love despite what it costs you.

God did not say we had to like our enemies, but He did tell us we had to love them. While it may not be our duty to forgive, we still must do him good, in anything that will not enable him to continue to hurt us or others.

In order to unload the weight of vengeance we must turn it loose and let it go. Trust God to settle the issue, He will! He said He would. □ — Barkley is associate professor of psychology and religion at Baptist College of Health Sciences in Memphis.

a parent  
speaks



By Carolyn R. Tomlin

## Winter fun for the family

If you're like many families cold winter weather may keep you from enjoying the outdoor world. Cooped up inside, cold rain and sleet limit usual activities for parents and children. The next time the youngsters complain that there is nothing to do, try these simple and inexpensive or no-cost ideas.

- Draw the outline of a house (divide into rooms) on a large piece of poster board. Provide catalogs and magazines showing furniture, pets, and people. Guide young children to cut pictures and paste them in the appropriate rooms of the house. What pet would they choose to live in their house? Write a caption on the poster that reads "God bless our home."

- Provide a roll of aluminum foil for each child. Ask: Can you create an original design from this source? Whatever the child designs, offer praise for participation. To get children started, suggest an animal, flower, or a toy. As you play together, say, "Thank you God for hands that work."

- Keep a "Special Days Bag" for unexpected events, such as a sick day, days when school is out from harsh winter weather, or a car trip. In this bag place small puzzle books, crayons, coloring book, card game, small boxes of dried fruit, and other things your child might enjoy. Only use this bag on occasions that require something different for entertainment.

- Play "Hide the Pennies" by placing 20 pennies in the house. Hiding places should reflect the age of the child. When all the pennies are found, give a small reward.

- Save that long cardboard tube left from Christmas wrapping paper. Use as a mallet and add a soft ball to play indoor golf.

- Build towers and structures with cardboard boxes. Collect an assortment of sizes and shapes. Is there an appliance box available? This makes a great place for taking books, blanket, and flashlight for looking at picture books. Add a friend for even more fun!

- If the weather outside is dreary, pack a picnic lunch for inside. Throw a blanket on the floor, add colorful plastic or paper plates in a picnic basket, a tablecloth and have your meal in another room of the house. Perhaps your house has a large window that provides an open view. Recall a summer memory your family enjoyed.

Use the cold days of winter to draw you closer as a family. Thank God for His blessings. □ — Tomlin is a freelance writer from Jackson.

## Consider Scripture before terminating ministers

guest  
columnist



By Jerry Foust

A Baptist church is autonomous and can do what it wishes to do. It has been my experience after 41 years as a pastor (three full-time churches, four transitional interims, and three student churches) that this is what most Baptist churches do regardless of whether it is right or wrong.

I read with great sadness, about the Baptist minister who was terminated after 18 years in the same church. (See *B&R*, Oct. 12, 2005, page 5)

Two of my mentors were terminated when I was very young. One of those men was a very personal friend who served a church out of Bells. This wonderful man of God had once been my wife's pastor and later helped ordain me. He had attended college, was extremely humble, visited people regularly, and was a wonderful country preacher. Yet the deacons saw fit to have him terminated. If there ever was a man who did not deserve this horrible treatment, it was that man of God.

Bill Northcott, our state leader in pastor-church relations, does a fantastic job of helping churches and pastors try to heal in this area and still further the cause of Christ. I'm sure the heart of Dr. Northcott is very heavy knowing of the divorce of a church and pastor.

Northcott lists nine reasons (I call them excuses) that a church and pastor divorce (see *B&R*, Aug. 31, 2005, page 1). These reasons come from the surveys of directors of missions. The rea-

sons included: (1) power control, (2) pastor's leadership style is too weak, (3) pastor's leadership style is too strong, (4) poor people skills of the pastor, (5) church's resistance to change, (6) church already in conflict, (7) decline in attendance, (8) conflict with other staff, and (9) decline in contributions.

Northcott further states that "many ministers are embarrassed to admit they have been terminated." However, in I Peter, chapters 1-5, the Scriptures are very clear in the five suffering passages that no minister should be ashamed he was terminated and suffered for Christ (see I Peter 1:6-9, 2:18-25, 3:13-17, 4:12-19 and 5:9). I Peter 2:19-20 says that God will bless those who suffer for Christ.

Many Baptist churches that terminate pastors violate Scripture in four areas. First, and most important, the calling of God's man and their calling of the pastor is violated. Pastors do not choose to preach; God calls them to do so. All pastors answer Isaiah's call to any church, "Whom Shall I Send?" Isaiah responded, "Here Am I, Send Me!" (Isaiah 6:8). Pastors and staff members feel a special calling from God to a church. The same God who led the church to that pastor will lead that same pastor to another church field when the pastor and church feel his work is completed. Churches search for months and years to find God's man, and then years later force him to leave.

In many instances, to terminate a pastor is to take the pastor out of God's will; it implies the church knows God's will better than the pastor. In *The Wounded Minister*, Guy Greenfield quotes G. Lloyd Rediger, who calls these people "clergy killers." Many wonderful layman and a few pastors are

unaware that these people are either mad at God for some reason out of the past or they are hiding some personal sins of their own. Since they can't attack God, they attack the minister in order to hide their own shortcomings. A report in the 1996 *Leadership* reveals some shocking information concerning terminations — churches that terminate often have already done so before and will do it again. In fact, 41 percent of churches who terminate their pastor have done so twice before. All ministers, staff leaders, and layman should read Greenfield's book.

I've loved all deacons I've served with and the God I know and serve has never led a deacon to be in charge of terminating the pastor. Scripture says in I Corinthians 14:13 that *God is not the author of confusion, but of peace*. Do we not know that Satan is behind the leadership of deacons (or anyone else) who chooses to terminate a pastor?

Second, a church that terminates a pastor violates I Thessalonians 5:11-17 (read best in several Bible translations). A church is under God's obligation to do seven things for its pastor. The seven are: encourage him, (verse 11), pay proper respect, (verse 12), treat him with love because of the work he does, (verse 13), be at peace among yourselves, (verse 13), warn the idle, (verse 14), help the weak (that applies to both pastors and church members, verse 14), and see that no one pay back wrong for wrong, (verse 15).

Third, the Scriptures are very clear in I Samuel 24:6, 10 and Psalms 105:15 that churches or individuals are not to "touch God's anointed." Eighty three churches in Tennessee touched God's anointed in 2004 and terminated their pastor or

staff member. Deacons and churches may not be aware of it but it is a very dangerous thing to "touch God's anointed."

Fourth and finally, a church that terminates a pastor violates everything Christianity is about — love (I John 4:7-11). The love of Christ is broken and the heart of God is broken when a church terminates a pastor. It was God's love for His creation that kept Jesus on the cross. It was love that brought Him out of the grave. It is because of love that He is coming back. Many churches that terminate a pastor hurt the love of Christ and please Satan.

So, are there legitimate reasons for a church to terminate a pastor? Yes — if he's guilty of immorality, he could and should be terminated. But what if a pastor is caught in a lie or simply fails to pay his bills? Lying is wrong and one should be confronted with his lies, but love and forgiveness should be the guide. Would a church excommunicate a deacon if he lies? Probably not. If a pastor fails to pay his bills, then perhaps his church is not paying him enough or he needs to take a money management course.

Do pastors make mistakes, blunders, and errors? Yes, we all do and we don't claim to be perfect. Only Jesus was perfect. A pastor should be willing to correct his mistakes; God is going to hold him accountable for his stubbornness.

Churches need to read, again and again, several passages — Thessalonians 5:11-17, I Samuel 24:6, 10, Psalm 105:15 and I Corinthians 13 — before terminating a man of God or staff member. □ — Foust serves as a transitional interim pastor (trained by the TBC and LifeWay) and lives in Nashville. He can be reached at (615) 356-3490 or by writing P.O. Box 210029, Nashville, TN 37221.



# IMB trustee's actions do not warrant removal from board

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

While I was in Cuba a story developed (see Jan. 25 issue) regarding comments made by a trustee of the International Mission Board about some recent policies approved by the board.

I have spent time since returning trying to "get up to speed" on what has become quite a controversy in Southern Baptist circles.

The trustee — Wade Burleson, a pastor from Oklahoma — made the comments on his online weblog or "blog." A blog is a type of Internet journal that is frequently updated with views intended for public consumption.

The IMB is so upset with Burleson they have enacted a process to have him removed as a trustee when messengers convene for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Greensboro, N.C., in June. According to news reports this may be the first time in SBC history that messengers have been asked to remove a trustee from a convention entity.

The essence of the story is Burleson disagrees with a new policy and guideline initiated by IMB trustees in November. The policy will not allow the appointment of a missionary who uses a

"private prayer language" (speaking in tongues). Keep in mind the board already had a policy which prohibited speaking in tongues in public.

Under this new policy, IMB President Jerry Rankin could not be a missionary. He has acknowledged the use of this "private prayer language" while serving as a missionary in Southeast Asia.

Burleson, among others, asserts this is an attempt by some of the IMB trustees to discredit Rankin and to have him removed as president.

The guideline tightens requirements for the missionary candidate's baptism to make sure the person has been baptized by immersion by a Southern Baptist or like-minded church.

Since the IMB already had a policy against speaking in tongues in public, was a new policy really needed? A person's private prayer life is just that — private, between the individual and God.

In researching the baptism guideline I discovered there were some candidates who joined Southern Baptist churches from another denomination and had not been baptized according to Southern Baptist practice and beliefs. I can see why trustees saw the need to establish that guideline.

Burleson publicly stated on his web page that he feels the recent actions are overly restrictive. He wrote in his Jan. 28 blog: "I am not demanding that my fellow trustees 'conform' to my beliefs in order to

cooperate with me in missions and evangelism, but I am simply saying to them, 'It is wrong and un-Baptistic when you are demanding that I and others conform to your beliefs on non-essential doctrines in order to serve on the mission field.'"

Amen!

This is not a conservative versus moderate issue. It is conservative versus conservative, or as Burleson wrote, "crusading conservatives versus cooperative conservatives." Burleson, a former past president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, has been defended by the convention's executive director, Anthony Jordan, for his beliefs and leadership.

Being a staunch conservative evidently is not enough in this case. IMB trustees apparently feel that Burleson broke a trust. In taking this action, trustees addressed "issues involving broken trust and resistance to accountability, not Burleson's opposition to policies recently enacted by the board," according to an IMB statement.

People are now debating whether or not Burleson broke a trust by going public on the Internet. Burleson addressed those allegations with comments in his Jan. 28 blog.

"I am very comfortable with the entire Southern Baptist Convention knowing what goes on in public IMB meetings. Confidential meetings such as forums and executive sessions must remain confidential. ... The convention should know, and must know, what is taking place in our agencies. Public

meetings are by definition public and you can't get more public than the Internet."

Did Burleson break a trust with his fellow trustees? If, as he said, he only reported what went on in a public meeting, then no I don't think he did.

Burleson noted in his Jan. 28 blog that "not one trustee has ever alleged I broke confidentiality regarding the new policies. I have simply voiced public opposition to the action of a majority of the trustees."

There are some trustees, not just at the IMB but on boards of trustees at all levels, who seem to forget they have another "trust" to consider beside their particular entity — the trust of those people who put them on the board in the first place.

Trustees and convention leadership sometimes forget who "pays the bills." Southern Baptists who give sacrificially through the Cooperative Program with their tithes and offerings have a right to know what goes on in their entities.

Evidently, Burleson feels strongly enough about what he sees going on within the IMB board that he is willing to risk his position on the board. That takes courage and he should not be punished for sharing his views. Please note I am working on the assumption that Burleson did not reveal anything that went on in closed sessions. As a journalist and editor, I do not approve of closed board meetings, especially in Baptist life. But once that decision is made confidences should be kept.

If IMB leadership goes on with their effort to have Burleson removed as a trustee at the annual meeting in June, Southern Baptists should demand the entire truth and hear both sides of the issue. If it comes to the floor of the convention, both Burleson and IMB trustees should have "equal time."

It appears Burleson's "crime" is not breaking a trust, but it is going against the trustee leadership and having the courage to speak out. As one Baptist editor (Tony Cartledge of North Carolina) wrote on his own blog: "He dared to disagree."

Until IMB leaders can convince me otherwise, my initial reaction is to affirm Burleson as a trustee, not remove him from office.

Be in prayer about this matter. Also, between now and the convention, do your homework. Read accounts from all sides of the issue, then pray and make up your own mind whether Burleson did something to warrant removal as a trustee.

The controversy has already filtered out into the secular media. I received a copy of an Associated Press story which appeared in the *Cleveland Daily Banner*. The article was headlined "After defeating liberals, Southern Baptists taking aim at each other."

There are no winners with those kinds of headlines. Instead, we are all losers because the name and cause of Christ have been once again tarnished in the eyes of a non-believing world. □

## letters to the editor

### Politics necessary

I am writing this letter in response to Charles E. Ross' letter entitled: "Get Politics Out," in the Jan. 11 issue.

I would like to agree with one of the points of his letter, while taking issue with some others. I will agree sadly, that it may appear as if some pastors seem more interested in "political maneuvering" than preaching the gospel and ministering to their people.

However, this letter seems to imply that only pastors are capable of political maneuvering and that electing only lay people would somehow, "get the politics out of the church and put Christ back into its operations."

The traditional Baptist form of church government is in itself political. Whenever you go by majority rule and vote on anything, it has become political. Three people voting on how to spend \$1 is politics. The only way for us to get politics out of our convention would be for us to quit voting altogether and let a board of elders make all the decisions for us. I know of very

few people who would be willing to do this.

I will agree that our laity needs to become more involved, so they will understand the issues that lie before our convention and churches, but it will not de-politicize the process. Politics is not a dirty word. It is necessary to make sure that each individual member of our convention gets their voice heard.

Finally, the reason pastors often run for and get elected to the offices of the convention is that they have more flexible schedules, which allow them to attend the meetings.

Lay people often work jobs that will not allow them the time to attend the meetings of the boards and committees of our convention.

While some pastors may very well be guilty of "political maneuvering," I am going to let God judge their motives. I would like to believe that they sense a genuine call of God to lead in our convention. Whoever the messengers of our convention choose to elect (clergy or laity), we should support them with our prayers and

words of encouragement.

May God bless our president, vice presidents, and all of the elected and non-elected servants of our convention

Nathan Wilkerson, pastor  
Parkers Creek Baptist  
Church, Burns 37029

### Blessings

God has truly blessed our church again as we recently participated in the One Day Revivals sponsored by our Tennessee Baptist Convention evangelism office.

For more than 25 years, Tennessee Baptist evangelists have come to the churches I have served as pastor: Bethel Baptist in Greenbrier and Northside Baptist in Columbia. These men are God's gift to churches and to our world. They literally travel all over the world we live in to preach Jesus.

Floyd Lammersfeld was our preacher in January. We had our altar covered up at the invitation and, yes, we had some saved. My wife and our family rejoice because our granddaughter, Caroline Grace Rushing, was saved.

I can never remember a time in this 25 years when we have had a Tennessee evangelist that at least one soul was saved.

Benny Jackson came to Bethel years ago in eight inches of snow and 15-degree-below zero weather and we had three little girls saved.

I would urge our pastors and churches to use these men and women who preach and sing for Jesus. I have never regretted having a Tennessee Baptist evangelist.

John Rushing, pastor  
Northside Baptist Church  
Columbia 38401

### Trustee concerns

I was quite interested in the response of Wade Burleson to the IMB trustee action concerning his removal (see Jan. 25 issue).

One concern I have is his attitude for the trustees as a whole. Evidently he has little regard for them, especially the ones between 50 and 70. According to him all in this age group are computer illiterate and not responsible for their actions! Since I am in that age bracket, I

guess that would include me.

Yet, I know that many of the men and women are quite literate on the computer. I worked directly with the trustees for six years as an employee of the IMB and most of the men and women on the board are of the best Southern Baptist has to offer.

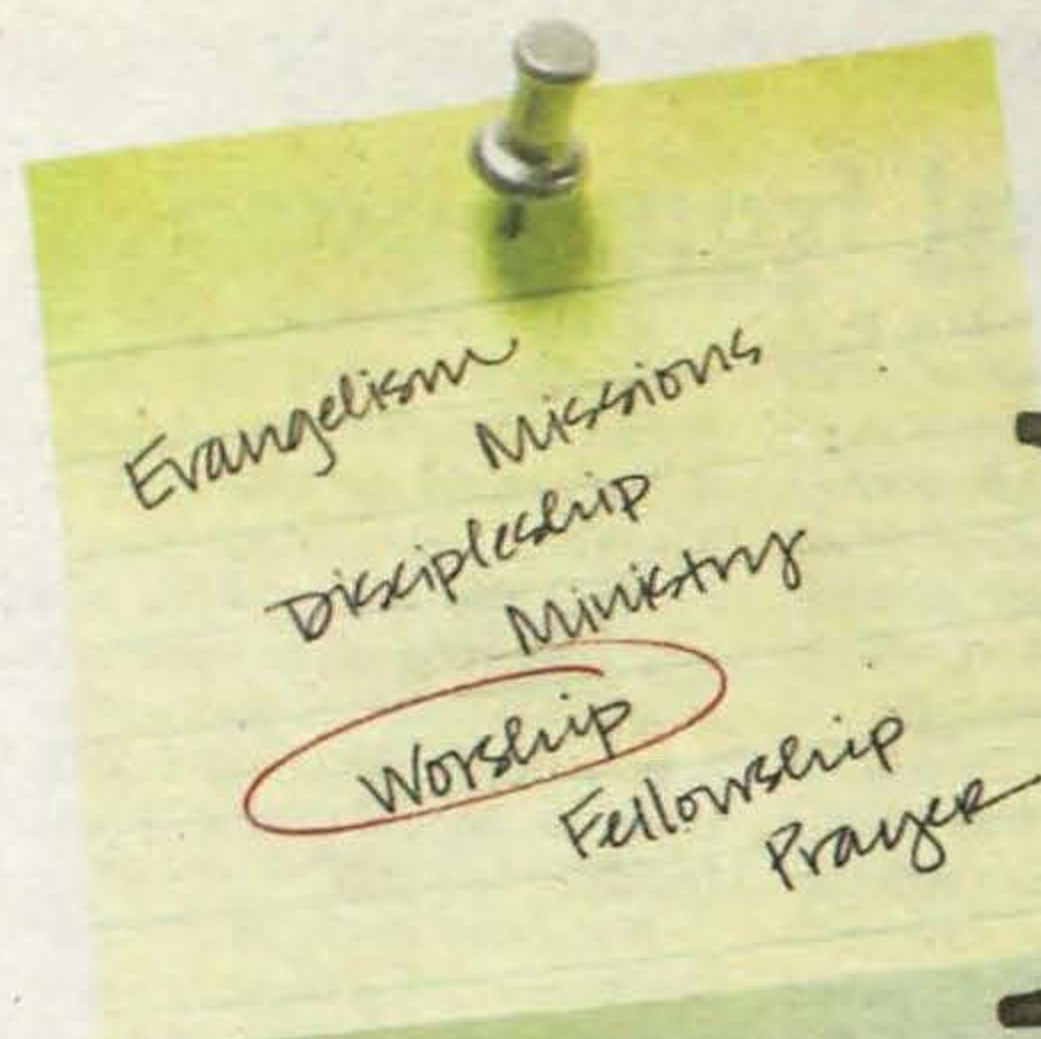
I have a difficult time with anyone that would cast such indignation on the board as a whole. I am also very uncomfortable with Burleson's assessment of the problem "being a growing division among conservative Southern Baptists over freedom of conscience."

I am aware of several attempts to use this phrase to substantiate the belief that one can believe anything they want under the guise of "priesthood of the believer."

This is a cult tactic to twist the biblical truth to propagate a personal agenda. "Freedom of conscience" is not the freedom to disregard the Bible and our heritage of who we are as Southern Baptist.

Roger Briggs, DOM  
Fayette, Haywood Baptist  
Associations, Somerville 38068





# Church Health Matters

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- Handbell festivals • Worship conferences • Music Ministry leadership conferences
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Contact any of the following at (800) 558-2090 or [www.tnworshipandmusic.org](http://www.tnworshipandmusic.org). Or reach them directly at:

### Worship and Music Ministry

Paul Clark.....(615) 371-2041  
pclark@tnbaptist.org

Charlotte Hanson.....(615) 371-7908  
chanson@tnbaptist.org

### Handbells

Dan Arterburn.....darterburn@hhbc.org

### Technology in Worship

Eddie Hodges.....ehodges@wmbc.org

### Preschool/Children's Music

Carla Nichols.....cnichols@wjbc.org

### Keyboard

Martha Robinson.....robinson.martha@comcast.net



## What is Healthy Worship?

by Paul Clark

I grew up going to church. I was a P.K. (preacher's kid). Our family was there for everything. If it was happening at the church, I was probably going to be there by parental decree.

All church gatherings had their own ambiance, but there was something different about what took place in the sanctuary on Sunday morning and Sunday evening in what was called "the worship service." There was a certain mystery about it all.

Sometimes there was laughter, tears, loud singing, and total silence. I was suppose to behave in a certain way, and got into my share of trouble for doing otherwise (usually the fault of one of my siblings — maybe it was me.)

On some Sundays they had what was called "the Lord's Supper," where they were served tiny pieces of bread, and tiny cups of grape juice that they held until the words were spoken, "this do in remembrance of me," and then they would put them in their mouths.

Turns out these words were spoken by Jesus and that is why they were being repeated in our church. In fact, the same words were also carved on the front of the table that sat just beneath the big pulpit right in the center of the front of the church.

Sometimes my dad put on a robe and wading boots, went into a pool of water, and dunked someone under (and the person didn't even struggle). He spoke words about being "buried with Christ ... raised to walk in newness of life." Worship with the church wasn't like anything else in life. It came to be an inescapable pattern especially after I gave my own heart and life to Christ.

When the word "worship" is spoken most people have an image or set of images that come to mind. The image may be 1960s Baptist like what I grew up with, or it may be more liturgical, or more camp

meeting, country church, house church, Black Gospel, or some form of "contemporary" in atmosphere.

If we sensed the presence of God in a particular worship environment, then we are likely to feel that atmosphere is the "right way to do worship."

A lot of Christians struggle with the external atmosphere and "style" of worship and miss the call to worship "in Spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24). Some worship leaders focus more on style than on content and structure in corporate worship.

In the local church where the body of Christ gathers week after week under the natural tensions that worshipping with others may bring, there is a temptation to pay more attention to the surface issues stirred by cultural differences than to follow the admonitions of the New Testament; such as: to "encourage one another to good works" (Hebrews 10:25), and to "admonish one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19), and to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16), and to "count others a better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3) and to "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, for this is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1).

Healthy worship as the body of Christ positions us to be His disciples. It places us in a position to be transformed as we gather, confess, lament, praise, pray, hear, commit, fellowship, give thanks, and depart from the body gathered to live out our mission as worshippers in the world.

William Nicholls in his book *Jacob's Ladder: The Meaning of Worship* (Lutterworth, 1958) recognized worship as "the supreme and only indispensable activity of the Christian church," noting that it will last into eternity.

We need to do all we can to encourage healthy worship in which we "engage with God on the terms He proposes, and in a way that only He can provide," according to David Peterson in his book *Engaging with God* (InterVarsity Press, 1992).



# In Spirit & Truth

## Worship Conference

### "In Spirit and Truth" Worship Conference

*Help for Those Who Lead and Support Worship*

Leading worship in the church through preaching, singing and leading music, or enlisting workers to assist children, youth, or families in weekly worship is a tremendous responsibility, not to mention a whole lot of work.

Those who provide technical support for the worship environment in today's culture face high levels of expectation that call for expertise with ever-changing tools. Tools that are marketed to make things easier may actually take many hours to master.

Those who facilitate worship in our churches through these means deserve some time to gather with peers, and deserve assistance for the tasks they have been called to perform.

This is what the Tennessee Baptist Worship Conference, "In Spirit and Truth," is designed to address. This year's conference will be held Friday-Saturday, March 17-18 at Belle Aire Baptist Church in Murfreesboro.

Uncomplicated times of worship are planned in hopes that those present would be inspired to see the value of their ministry through worship leadership, and reminded of the true source of transformational power in worship, the Spirit of God.

Breakout sessions address issues unique to those in each track: pastor/preachers, worship music leaders, audio technicians, visual technicians, children's leaders, and youth leaders.

David Platt, a preaching professor from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisiana, will be preaching and addressing pastors at the conference. Platt is a gifted young man who communicates with all ages. He will share insights related to communicating the gospel in worship and will interact with pastors about issues of preaching in today's culture.

Jon Duncan, Worship and Music specialist with the Georgia Baptist Convention, Atlanta, is a student of worship and is gifted at communicating with worship music leaders regarding issues related to planning, structuring, and leading services that help people worship.

Candy Macon, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville, children's ministry director, and Rob Tims, Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, minister of students, will lead sessions dealing with children in worship and youth in worship. Their main focus will be considering how we might help our children and youth to "plug in" to the worship expressions of the whole church body.

For information regarding the "In Spirit and Truth" worship conference, call Charlotte Hanson, TBC Worship and Music ministry assistant, at (615) 371-7908 or Paul Clark, Worship and Music Ministry specialist, at (615) 371-2041. Both are in the Church Health Group at (800) 558-2090. See details and register online at [www.tnworshipandmusic.org](http://www.tnworshipandmusic.org).

### Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- March 3-4 Youth Evangelism Conference, Municipal Auditorium, Nashville
- March 10-12 English As a Second Language, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- March 11 Church Planting: Is it for me?, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- March 11 Finding Your Place in Ministry, Kirby Woods Baptist Church, Memphis
- March 14 Regional Secretaries Computer Training, Leawood Baptist Church, Memphis
- March 15 Regional Secretaries Computer Training, Englewood Baptist Church, Jackson
- March 16 Regional Secretaries Computer Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- March 16 Church Building & Finance Conference, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville
- March 17-18 Missions Team Leader Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood
- March 18 Bible Fun Field Day & Journey for Kids Camp, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden

For information on upcoming events, see the TBC web site at [www.tnbaptist.org](http://www.tnbaptist.org).

### Books on Worship for Pastors and Worship Leaders

*"Return to Worship"*

by Ron Owens  
(Broadman & Holman, 1999)

*"People in the Presence of God"*

by Barry Liesch  
(Zondervan, 1988)

*"Worship by the Book"*

D.A. Carson, editor  
(Zondervan, 2002)

*"Beyond the Worship Wars"*

by Thomas G. Long  
(Alban Institute, 2001)

*"Worship Is a Verb"*

by Robert Webber  
(Abbott/Martyn, 1992)

*"Experience God in Worship"*

Michael D. Warden, editor  
(Group, 2000)

*"Understanding, Preparing for, and Practicing Christian Worship"*

by Franklin Segler, revised  
by Randall Bradley  
(Broadman & Holman, 1996)

*"Real Worship"*

by Warren Wiersbe  
(Oliver Nelson, 1986)

*"Worship Evangelism"*

by Sally Morgenthaller  
(Zondervan, 1995)

*"Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down"*

by Marya Dawn  
(Eerdmans, 1995)



## Good stewardship requires churches manage risks: consultant

By Ken Camp  
Associated Baptist Press

SAN ANGELO, Texas — When church leaders fail to identify and manage risks in areas such as legal liability, health and safety standards, and compliance with civil-rights laws, they neglect an important aspect of biblical stewardship, risk-management consultant Dick Baggett has concluded.

God calls church leaders to be good stewards, and their stewardship obligations extend beyond issues of giving and money management, Baggett asserted.

"These obligations call for protecting [God's] assets and people entrusted to us," he said.

Baggett owns a human resources consulting firm in San Angelo, Texas, that specializes in risk-management consultations with churches. In his experience, he has discovered church business administrators typically understand the importance of discussing risk-management issues, but he has found it "more difficult to connect" with pastors.

"With many of these church leaders, the conversation that frequently must take place is more on the biblical and spiritual dimension," Baggett explained.

Discussions about risk management need to be addressed from the position of stewardship, and stewardship needs to be understood in the full biblical sense, he insisted.

"Stewardship consists of our realizing the ownership of the world belongs to God and that our activities are simply in response to his gift of occupancy," he said.

Church leaders have a stewardship responsibility to protect

their congregations the way shepherds protect their flocks, Baggett said.

But few churches understand that it's possible to analyze and identify risks, respond logically and professionally to those risks, and then manage them in a way that eliminates or at least seriously reduces liability.

"I have not yet come across a church who understands that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has 100 percent jurisdiction over the church," he noted as an example.

Many church leaders — both ministers and laity — mistakenly assume that because churches are nonprofit religious organizations, laws regarding safety, health, civil rights, accessibility, labor and transportation do not apply to them.

"I have never understood how successful, informed people who are leaders in their industry, the business world and their local business communities can become totally ignorant when they link up to work with a nonprofit organization," he observed. "It is a truly sad phenomenon to witness. But I have seen it repeatedly occur."

That attitude represents not only ignorance of the law and good business principles, but also a flawed theological understanding of Christians' relationship with government, he said.

"The churches and their leaders are supposed to be exemplary citizens," Baggett said, pointing to the Apostle Paul's teachings in Romans chapter 13 and in the writings of the Old Testament prophets about justice and righteousness.

"A significant part of church risk management is being in compliance with the government's laws, regulations and

monitoring agencies that exist to ensure compliance, equality, fairness and justice."

From Moses' dealing with the Israelites during the Exodus to Jesus' handling of the multitudes who followed him, the Bible offers examples of spiritual leaders who under-

stood the importance of giving attention to detail, gathering good information, planning effectively and "counting the costs," Baggett insisted.

Christian leaders need the discipline and intelligence to see threats their congregations face and find a way to deal with

those threats and resolve frontations, he determined.

"They must possess the ability and talent to teach others and the necessity to become informed to obtain proper instruction to manage threats," he said. "As part of their job, they must be church risk managers." □

## Online registration for SBC meeting has begun

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Online registration for the 2006 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C., opened Feb. 1.

Churches will be able to register their messengers online at the SBC website, [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net), to avoid waiting at the counter upon arrival at the convention while a registration volunteer types in various lines of information.

Jim Wells, SBC registration secretary, said online registration has received "a great response from messengers and is growing each year."

Last year, the third year for the online service, 79.2 percent of messengers to the annual meeting in Nashville registered online, up from 57.2 percent for the 2004 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

When registering online, the SBC website gives a church 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.

The process includes entering information normally found on the traditional messenger card as follows:

- the church's seven-digit ID number, which is found on the church's Annual Church Profile. To ensure security, a subsequent webpage includes a list of a number of randomly selected churches, in addition to the church matching the ID number. The church simply selects its name from the list and moves to the next step.

- the name of the church moderator or clerk whose name will appear on the printed form.

- the church's membership, gifts to Southern Baptist causes and affiliations (local and state).

- the messengers' names and information.

Online registration ends at midnight June 10 — after which registration must be done at the registration desk

beginning at 4 p.m. June 1.

Names can be added, edited and deleted up to June 10 as well. Each messenger must present the printed form, which shows the messenger's reference number — given on the website — at the registration booth in order to receive nametag and set of ballots.

Technically, a person is not a messenger until the messenger reference number is presented at the registration booth. Unlike the traditional method, the person is pre-registered before he or she arrives to the convention.

The traditional registration method also will be available to those churches unable to access Internet access.

"We're looking forward to the great convention in Greensboro as we come together to focus on keeping the main thing the main thing, and that is reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ," said Wells, director of missions for the Tri-Country Baptist Association in Ozark, Mo., who was elected as SBC registration secretary in 2004.

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[www.tbch4kids.org](http://www.tbch4kids.org)



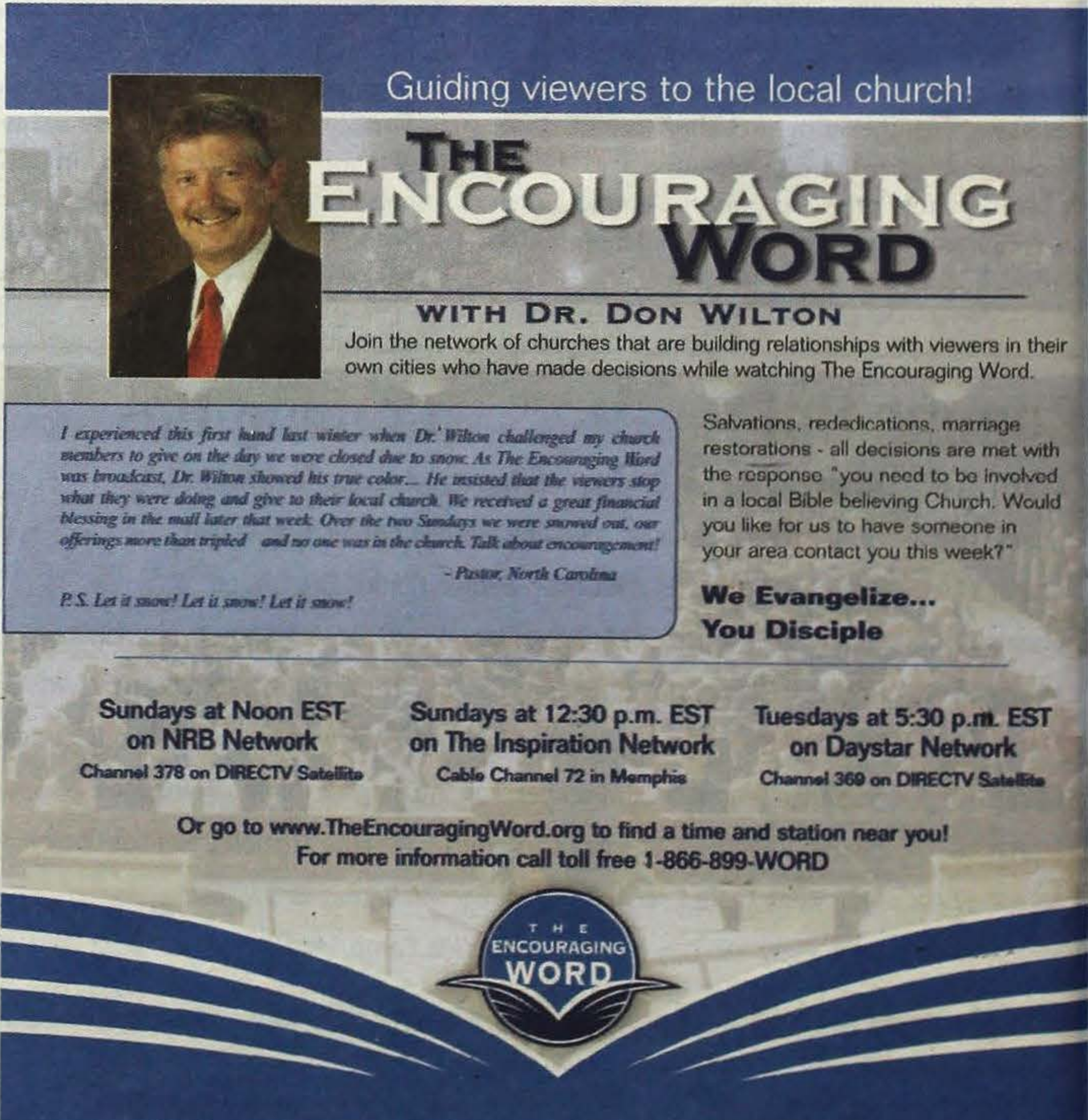
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*I experienced this first hand last winter when Dr. Wilton challenged my church members to give on the day we were closed due to snow. As The Encouraging Word was broadcast, Dr. Wilton showed his true color... He insisted that the viewers stop what they were doing and give to their local church. We received a great financial blessing in the mail later that week. Over the two Sundays we were snowed out, our offerings more than tripled — and no one was in the church. Talk about encouragement!*  
— Pastor, North Carolina  
P.S. Let it snow! Let it snow! Let it snow!

Salvations, rededications, marriage restorations — all decisions are met with the response "you need to be involved in a local Bible believing Church. Would you like for us to have someone in your area contact you this week?"

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## Mr. Southern Baptist' retires after 15 years at LifeWay

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Standing in the pulpit of First Baptist Church in Nixon, Texas, on Sept. 3, 1950, 15-year-old Jimmy Draper preached his first sermon. "I had it down to 30 minutes," Draper said, recalling his first step into the ministry. When I got up to speak, I delivered it in 12 minutes flat."

On Jan. 31, 2006 — 55 years and countless sermons later — James T. Draper Jr., president of LifeWay-Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, walks into retirement to expressions of love and to accolades such as "statesman," "man of integrity," "man of God," "mentor and counselor" and "Mr. Southern Baptist."

"Only a precious few have ever surfaced throughout the story of our convention like Jimmy Draper," said Dallas-based evangelist Bailey Stone, who was preaching when Draper, the son of a Baptist preacher, surrendered to the ministry.

"Jimmy Draper was a 15-year-old teen when we met," Stone recounted. "I was a 19-year-old youth evangelist in vival at his dad's church. Jimmy surrendered to preach on

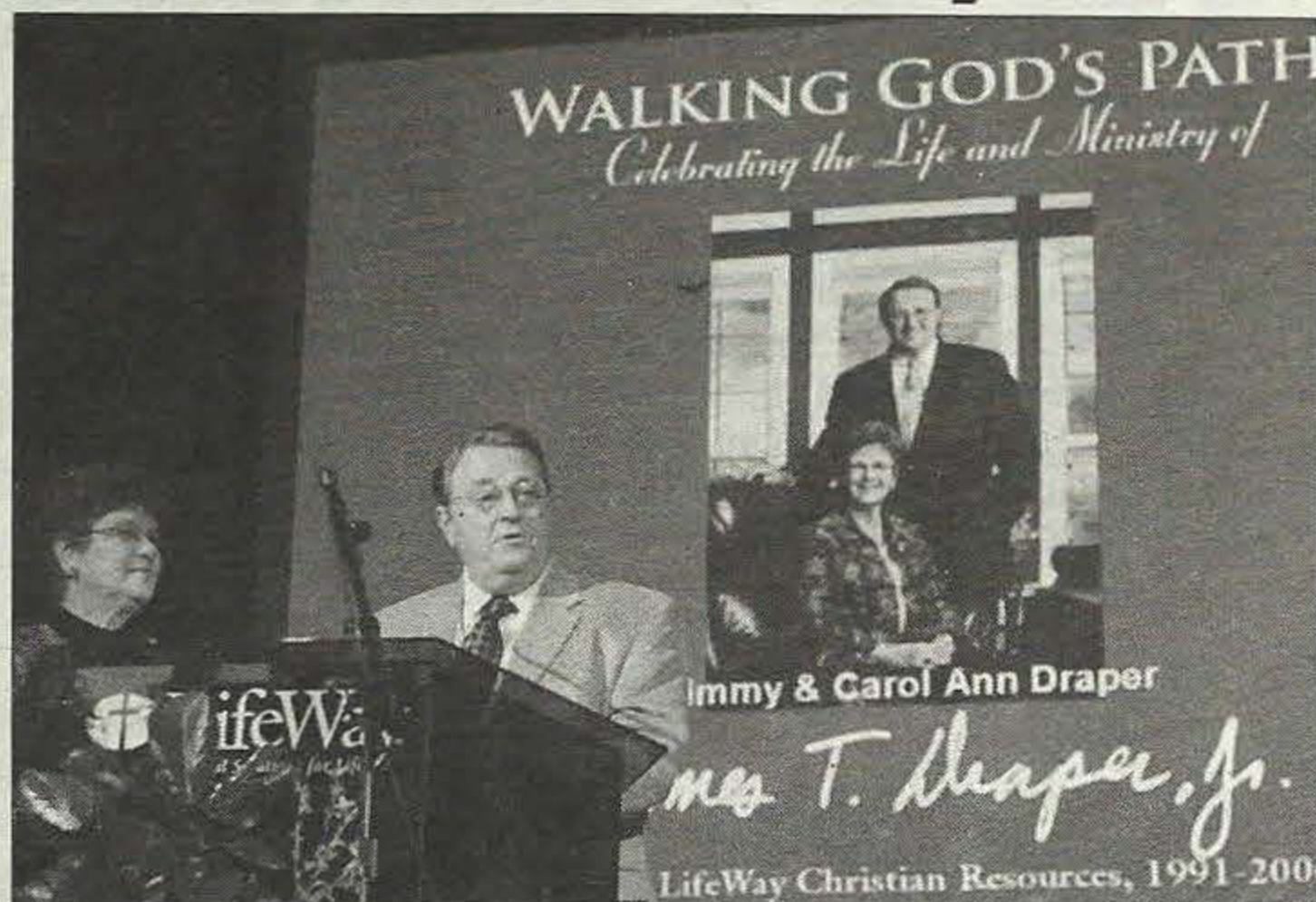
Saturday evening of that revival, and this tied us together as friends for life."

Surrendering to the ministry meant "surrendering any right I had to be anything else and [I] vowed to devote myself to the work of the Lord," Draper said. Over the course of 35 years, Draper served eight churches — six in Texas and one each in Kansas and Oklahoma.

It was at First Baptist in Euless where the Drapers put down their deepest church roots, shepherding a flock and raising a family over the course of 16 years.

Messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention elected Draper president in 1982 and again in 1983. With a pastor's heart, Draper led a denomination embroiled in controversy.

"Jimmy drew on the same characteristics that had made him successful over the years at building churches," wrote John Perry in the Draper biography *Walking God's Path*. "He reached out to allies and opponents alike with letters, phone calls, and invitations to personal meetings and times of fellowship; he worked to build as much consensus as possible without compromising his posi-



**JIMMY AND** Carol Ann Draper were honored recently at a retirement banquet. Draper stepped down Jan. 31 after 15 years as president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

tion on the Bible."

Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, echoed that sentiment. "Jimmy Draper has consistency, conviction, and cooperation that epitomizes him as 'Mr. Southern Baptist,'" Chapman said. "Jimmy literally has been the pastor of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Speaking at the SBC's 2005 annual meeting in Nashville, Draper's lifelong message still resonated. "I think anybody who

knows me knows how much I love Southern Baptists, our churches and our convention," Draper told the convention.

"I feel we have so much room to grow and be used of God in an age when relativism is consuming our culture and the exclusivity of Jesus is being discounted."

"Southern Baptists have got to strike a balance between holding fast to a biblical worldview while engaging the world in nonjudgmental ways. My

deepest desire is that for generations to come we are being used by God to reach the people of the world with the Gospel."

During Draper's tenure as president, the scope of LifeWay's ministry broadened to truly global proportions. Milestones and achievements most memorable to Draper include:

- the global impact of True Love Waits, inspiring millions of young people to sexual abstinence.
- the renaming of the Sunday School Board to LifeWay Christian Resources.
- the launch of LifeWay International, which has accounted for nearly 60,000 pastors and church leaders trained in the use of LifeWay products.
- the release of the Holman Christian Standard Bible.
- the effectiveness of LifeWay's volunteer missions program, which has seen more than 80,000 people led to Christ and 211 churches started around the world.

"The Great Commission is Jesus' charge to every believer and is also part of LifeWay's fabric," Draper said.

Draper and his wife, Carol Ann, were honored at a retirement banquet in January. □

## Warren County sheriff seeks to put ...

Continued from page 1

"It's amazing how the Lord works things out," Matheny observed. "He has since won two re-elections and I'll be running for another term this year."

### Strengthened by Christ

Matheny acknowledged that his Christianity has been used against him in the past and he suspects it will be again.

"It gets ugly at times," he admitted. He noted that he has heard, "We don't need a Christian as sheriff. We need someone who can think like a criminal."

Matheny just laughs at those kind of remarks. "Some perceive Christianity as a weakness. I see the opposite. Christ gives me the strength to do the right things."

He takes particular comfort in Philippians 4:13: *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

"I'm a living testimony of that," he asserted.



**WIFE OF Sheriff Jackie Matheny's family members — Katie and son Jackie Jr. — serve with him at the Warren County Sheriff's Department.**

Matheny said he has peace about the upcoming election (primary in May and the election in August). "It's in God's hands. If He doesn't want me to be sheriff, He will let me know. I just have to be faithful."

Matheny's faith has sustained him time and time again and he refuses to lay it aside when he pins on his badge.

"It is more important for me to live a Christ-like life in my everyday life at home and on the job than it is to act all holy and righteous at church on Sunday," he stressed.

He is a firm believer that actions speak louder than words and that is how he tries to live his life.

Matheny noted that his deputies and staff at the Sheriff's Department know his beliefs and what he stands for. And he is proud of his entire staff.

"If I didn't have the staff I have, I wouldn't be worth much as a sheriff."

### Other doors open

Despite a busy schedule Matheny accepts every opportunity to preach or share Christ.

"If they call, I'll come," he said.

Although he announced to his mother at the age of 5 he was going to be a preacher and felt called by God in 1980 to preach, Matheny did not really pursue that calling until 1993 when a pastor friend called and invited him to speak at his church.

Though he felt uncomfortable and unworthy, Matheny accepted the invitation and spoke about 30 minutes. "God showed me it was what I needed to do," he said.

Matheny believes strongly that God has done so much for him, that he cannot tell God no. "How can I not go out and serve God and preach His word?"

He has preached numerous times for churches of all denominations and held at least four interim pastorates. Matheny, who was licensed to preach by Shellsford Baptist, does not feel led by God to accept a full-time pastorate, although people in churches where he has served as interim have joked that they were going to vote against him as sheriff so he would be available.

At this point in his life, Matheny still feels God wants him full-time in law enforcement. "In this position I can help to make Warren County a better place to live," he said.

Matheny knows that he would not be who he is today were it not for God first and then a supportive family led by his wife Katie. "She is my soul-mate," he said proudly.

Katie Matheny has been through times with her husband when he was shot and other times when he was involved in gunfire, but not wounded.

She acknowledged it is stressful and even more so since their oldest son, Jackie Jr., is also in law enforcement with the Sheriff's Department.

"Jackie puts my mind at ease. He gives me Scripture verses and calms me down," she said, adding that she also "prays a lot."

Matheny takes it all in stride. In addition to being shot at while in the line of duty, he also has had death threats.

"I'm not afraid. I know my life is in God's hands."

In the meantime, Matheny will keep on doing his job and telling others about Christ.

"I don't care who it is. If I have a chance to talk about Jesus I will." □

## Super Bowl ...

— Continued from page 1

"There certainly is a lot of temptations here with parties and women and things we know we shouldn't be a part of," Kreider said. "It keeps you humble when you can pray over the phone every night with your wife or spend time at the team Bible study."

Offensive tackle Max Starks said the annual media gathering, which drew more than 3,000 participants, was seen as a God-given opportunity to the Christian Steelers players, not a hindrance.

"I'm just a tool from God and this life is just a test from Him" Starks said. "God has given the Christian guys a world stage in this big game and promises us a reward in the end. You have the opportunity to use your faith in everyday conversation. That's what we need to be doing."

Steelers starting center Jeff Hartings accompanied Steelers chaplain Jay Wilson on a mission trip in 2004 and said that trip, along with the knee injury he overcame to gain his Pro Bowl status, has changed his career.

"God humbled me with the injury, but over the last three years I've been able to refocus on Him and honor Him with my play. Every year, I just take it one step at a time if He wants me to continue to play. That's the way it's been lately for me and the way it should continue to be," Hartings said.

"I just want to be a Christian man giving Him the glory. That's my plan for this game." □



## Senate confirms Alito — 58-42

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate confirmed Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court Jan. 31, making him the 110th justice to serve on the country's top judicial panel and providing hope the court might be moving toward more restraint in its decision making.

Four Democrats joined with all but one Republican to confirm Alito in a 58-42 vote. The confirmation was a foregone conclusion after the Senate voted to end debate Jan. 30 and eliminate the possibility of a filibuster intended to postpone or block a final vote on the nominee.

The Senate's confirmation vote took place in the morning, and Alito, 55, was sworn in during an afternoon ceremony at the Supreme Court. Alito immediately replaced Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who had announced her retirement in July but had continued to serve on the court until her successor was confirmed.

Sen. Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island was the lone Republican to vote against Alito. The Democrats who supported confirmation were Sens. Robert Byrd of West Virginia, Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Tim Johnson of South Dakota, and Ben Nelson of Nebraska.

Alito's confirmation provides President Bush with two successful nominees to the high court in barely four months' time, despite opposition from abortion rights and other liberal organizations, as well as some of their Democratic allies in the Senate.

The Senate confirmed John Roberts as chief justice Sept. 29 in a 78-22 vote.

Though Roberts and Alito appear to share a judicial philosophy focused on applying the original intent of the Constitution, the opposition to Alito was more pronounced, largely because of the kind of justice he was chosen to replace. While Roberts replaced a conservative, Chief Justice William Rehnquist, Alito was nominated to replace, in O'Connor, a swing voter who often sided with the court's liberals on such con-

tentious issues as abortion and church-state relations.

The addition of Alito, who has established a reputation for judicial restraint in 15 years on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, boosts the hopes of pro-life advocates and other social conservatives that the nine-member court may begin to move at least somewhat away from its mostly liberal direction in recent decades.

Alito's presence, however, will not change the high court's support for *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 opinion legalizing abortion, unless a current justice changes his vote. Even without O'Connor, the Supreme Court has five justices who have endorsed *Roe*.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, called it "a great day for all Americans who cherish our constitutional form of government with its checks and balances to guard against any one branch of the federal government gaining too much power over Americans' lives."

"Tens of millions of Americans, and I would include myself in that number, have been extremely anguished

about the increasingly, some would say unconstitutionally, powerful role of the Supreme Court over the last four decades," Land told Baptist Press.

"Increasingly, the Supreme Court felt no compunction about striking down laws passed by the people's representatives in Congress and the state legislatures that offended their personal sense of right and wrong, as opposed to interpreting the Constitution. □

## Identity theft is growing concern, says former pastor

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Identity theft is a growing problem in Tennessee and the nation, says a former Tennessee Baptist pastor who now works to help people get protection against identity theft.

According to the 2005 Identity Fraud Survey Report, the annual dollar volume of identity fraud is close to \$52.6 billion, based on 2003 figures.

And, according to Deborah Platt Majoras, chair of the Federal Trade Commission, nearly 10 million people over a one-year period discovered they were victims of some form of identity theft.

"Every day on the news you read of someone whose identity has been stolen," said Paul Raines, former pastor of Garrett Baptist Church, Hohenwald, and now a manager with Prepaid Legal Services. "Identity theft is one of the fastest growing problems in America, according to the FBI," Raines added.

Prepaid Legal Services is the marketing arm for Identity Theft Shield, a service provided

by Kroll Background America. Raines noted Identity Theft Shield provides information and services needed to fight back and restore one's identity once it is stolen.

Identity Theft Shield is available to both individuals and groups, he noted.

Raines and others are available to answer questions or provide workshops on avoiding identity theft.

For more information, contact Raines at 931-796-2319. □

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## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — PASTOR

First Baptist Church, Monterey, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Please send resume to Monterey First Baptist Church, 106 Chestnut St., Monterey, TN 38574. Post to the attention of Sonny Gilpatrick.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

An established vibrant church located in the fastest growing community in Middle Tennessee is prayerfully seeking the man God is calling to be our senior pastor. Send resume to Miracle Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 6 LaVergne, TN 37086.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Central Baptist Church of Martin, Tenn., with an enrollment of 500 is seeking a full-time pastor. We are located in northwest Tennessee in a college town. If interested, please send resume to Central Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 50 Martin, TN 38237 or e-mail us at [pastorsearch@cbcmartin.org](mailto:pastorsearch@cbcmartin.org).

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Strong, rural church looking for mature pastor to invest his life with a close-knit congregation seeking to fulfill the Great Commission. No debt, strong Bible study and discipleship training programs. Excellent salary and benefits package. We are asking God for a man to love, who will love us and serve God on a field with many prospects, near the Natchez Trace, close to the Quad-Cities area of north Alabama. Please send resume to Liberty Baptist Church, 13521 County Road 8, Florence, AL 35633.

### MINISTRY — MUSIC

First Baptist Church, Parsons, Tenn., is seeking a part-time minister of music for a choir of 25-30 voices. We also do a living Christmas Tree. For more information see our web site at [www.fbcparsons.org](http://www.fbcparsons.org). Please send resume to Pastor, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 67, Parsons, TN 38363.

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — STUDENT

Central Baptist Church, Spring City, Tenn., is looking for a part-time youth minister. If interested please send resume to P.O. Box 192, Spring City, TN 37381 or call (423) 365-6385.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Youth minister opening. Calvary Baptist Church, 1121 Paul Bryant Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401. Full-time minister to senior high and junior high youth. Manage intern staff, volunteer staff, budget and overall youth ministry including youth worship and Sunday School, special events, mission activities, etc. Preference consideration given to married males with master's degree and 3-5 years church staff experience. Send resumes to the church address in attention to Ken Horst.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Bethel Baptist, Yorkville, Tenn., is searching for a part-time youth director. Contact person is Tracy Funderburk, 5727 Locust Grove Rd., Trimble, TN 38259, (731) 297-2704.

### MINISTRY — COMBINATION

First Baptist Church, Parsons, Tenn., is seeking a full-time minister of youth, children, and family ministries. Prefer someone with experience and college degree minimum. For more information please see our web site at [www.fbcparsons.org](http://www.fbcparsons.org). Please send resume to Pastor, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 67, Parsons, TN 38363.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Tannehill Valley Baptist in McCalla, Ala., is seeking a full-time minister of students and education. A growing SBC church desires someone with at least 2 years experience and master's degree. Person should have a heart for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and worship. Send resume to 12858 Tannehill Parkway, McCalla, AL 35111 or [jon@tannehillvalley.org](mailto:jon@tannehillvalley.org).

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — COLLEGE

Associate pastor of college students: minister to students from Triangle area colleges and universities, including NC State University, Meredith College, Peace College, Wake Technical Community College, and others (40,000+ students in the area). Job responsibilities include, but are not limited to: outreach to college community, ministry and program planning, counseling of college students and coordination of activities and content related to Sunday School, Bible study, fellowship, retreats, and mission trips. Four-year degree required with seminary degree and experience preferred. Applicants must have a passion for outreach, ability to relate to college-age students, relationship building and counseling skills, experience with team ministries involving church staff and lay leaders, and excellent organizational skills. Submit resume and letter of intent to Dr. Larry Harper, Senior Pastor, Forest Hills Baptist Church, 201 Dixie Trail, Raleigh NC 27607 or [pastor@foresthills.org](mailto:pastor@foresthills.org).

### MINISTRY — OTHER

Church secretary, 30 hours/week, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. \$10 per hour. Computer, good communication and accounting skills required; pleasant personality. Fax resume to (615) 883-7118.

### MISCELLANEOUS

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## Conversational English Workshop

There will be a 16-hour Conversational English Workshop on March 10-12 at the Tennessee Baptist Convention Building. The times for this workshop will be Friday, 6-9 p.m., Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Sunday, 1:30-5:30 p.m. There is a \$20 registration fee for this workshop. Certification will be provided to those who attend all sessions and complete given assignments. To register or request additional information, please contact Tim Hill at the Tennessee Baptist Convention, (615) 371-7916, or you can find information on our web site at [www.tnbaptist.org/events](http://www.tnbaptist.org/events).



book review

Dawn Ferguson

*The Good Life*

By Charles Colson

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005

What is the good life? Why are we here? How can my life have significance?

These are the questions we all ask. Especially as we grow older and we realize with more certainty that our days are numbered. In his most recent book, *The Good Life*, Charles Colson comes to the only answer he believes makes sense. And that is, "The good life turns out to be filled in Christ, for now and eternity. It's everything most want: purpose, meaning, relationships, truth, love."

Colson, who spent time in prison as a result of being on the "hatchet man" during the Watergate scandal, arrives at his conclusion by a very logical search for the good life including a look at how we define happiness. He concludes it's not self-gratification, and through first-hand stories shows this to be true. In fact, one interesting study he cites says that Americans rank number 16 on a survey of the happiest people in the world. Germans rank number one. For us, "life is better, but we feel worse."

The pursuit of happiness, our Founders said in the Declaration of Independence, is a God-given right. But the word happiness as the Founders used it has been lost of its meaning in our commercialized culture. At the Founders had in mind was the classical meaning — what the Greeks called eudaimonia, the virtuous life. This could be achieved only by righteous living, decency, honor, doing good. This is the definition of understanding of happiness that needs to be restored in American life."

Colson seeks the truth and explains why tolerance is the antidote of truth. "Tolerance once meant that we could have our reason to discern good and evil in open debate. Today tolerance has been used to call good evil and evil good. . . . The only cardinal rule of American life is that we must respect everybody's opinions as morally equivalent."

Colson states his book is for seekers of the truth. In order to live your life with purpose, you must base it on something that is trustworthy. Too many people accept the fact that we each have different ideas of what is right and believe that to be okay. Colson says we can't be right. You need absolute truths on which to stake your life. That's why Colson is so passionate in his book about defining truth including a scientific discussion about God as our creator.

The question where life comes from is the most important one you must answer to live the good life. Get it wrong, and life becomes dysfunctional or worse, undecipherable. The stakes are huge. . . . If it is designed, the Designer must have a purpose."

The Christian faith is full of paradox. You must die to live. The last shall be first. Victory is through surrender. And ultimately, "we find ourselves only when we surrender ourselves in God." That is the truth, and that is the essence of the good life.

Colson, who is also a lawyer and the founder of the National Ministry Prison Fellowship, presents a case for that truth. A case that will help believers understand better why their lives must be rooted in Christ. And one that could possibly help non-believers come to that realization as well. □ — Ferguson is a correspondent for the *Baptist and Reflector*.

# Paying price to serve God

By Scott Linginfelter

**Focal Passage: Jeremiah 26:1-16**

Jeremiah had a tough assignment. To stand before kings, clergy, and kinsmen and publicly chastise them for their sin was not going to be an easy thing to do, no doubt about it. So why would Jeremiah do it? The answer is simple: God called him to do it; God told him to do it.

If you look at our text though, you see numerous other people who had the call of God on their lives, but refused to be faithful. Jehoiakim had the call to follow in the footsteps of godly kings like David, Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Instead he followed men like Abijah, Ahaz, and Manasseh in the southern kingdom, and Ahab and others in the northern kingdom.

Then there were the priests who should have followed the example of Samuel and Zadok. Instead they followed so many of the wicked priests who had gone before them. The prophets could have followed Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha. Instead they followed after the prophets of Baal.

Jeremiah had a tough assignment from God, but if everyone else had followed God's will for their own lives, then Jeremiah's job would have been much easier. In fact, it is possible that God would not have needed Jeremiah for this

particular job at all. But that idea is in the realm of the possible and not the actual. In actuality, the people of Judah had been wicked, had not served the Lord, and we see Jeremiah's message, and their response in our passage as well.

Jeremiah's word to the people was that they will become like Shiloh. Shiloh was once a place of honor and prominence, the place where people went to worship. After the Israelites captured the Promised Land, they set up the tabernacle of God at Shiloh. Because of the wickedness of the people, particularly the priesthood (1 Samuel 2:27-36), God laid waste to Shiloh by the hand of the Philistines. Now Jeremiah stands before prophet, priest, and king to tell them that their fate will soon be the same if they don't repent.

The people of Judah had not been faithful, but instead of incurring immediate retribution from the Lord, God gave them a chance to repent first. You see, God's prophecy of doom and judgment was conditioned upon the people's repentance; it always is. If they would turn from their wickedness, God wouldn't judge them. Instead of responding to the Lord in repentance, they responded to Jeremiah with anger, desiring that he be killed.

The thing I find interesting is that no one ever disputed the validity of Jeremiah's prophecy. They

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Family Bible Series  
Feb. 12**

simply wanted him dead because he had said it. The people of Judah felt as if no one should ever speak against them at all, the accuracy of the prophecy being irrelevant.

Jeremiah stood firm. Once again, he proclaimed the Word of the Lord and told them to do what they wanted to him personally. He was still going to call on them in the name of the Lord to repent, or face the judgment of God. If they responded by killing him, they would be guilty of shedding innocent blood, but at least Jeremiah had been faithful to the Lord.

So here is the choice: Jeremiah was given a tough task, a costly task, and one that would be difficult to follow faithfully. The only thing tougher would be not to follow God. That was the choice everyone else made. Jeremiah paid a high price for his service, but the price of disobedience is much greater. Jeremiah pleased God and incurred the wrath of the people. The people (including kings, priests, and prophets) faced the approval of men, and the judgment of God. The option we face, just like Jeremiah is this: will we fear God, or fear men? □ — Linginfelter is pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Maryville.

# Glorify God

By Eric Taylor

**Focal Passage: Romans 15:1-13**

The emphasis in this week's lesson is on glorifying God. As I look at this passage, I believe it tells us that there are three ways God gets the glory. God gets the glory through . . .

**The strengthening of the weak (vv. 1-4)**

These verses are a continuation of Paul's admonition to the mature believers in Rome. Even though he now leaves the issue of eating meat, he raises the level of responsibility for the mature believers. He tells those that are mature that they have an obligation to bear the weaknesses of those without strength (HCSB). In other words, the mature believer is obliged to consider the weaker members in the fellowship. Matter of fact, the mature believer is to do this in order to please his neighbor for his good, in order to build him up.

I have been in church long enough to observe that many believers have forgotten that they glorify God when they put others in the church first; when they are more interested in pleasing others through edification than pleasing their own selfish desires. But just in case you need some additional encouragement at this point, look at what Paul writes in verse three. *For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, 'The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.'* Paul

was saying that Jesus obligated Himself to us so that through His sacrifice on the Cross ("reproaches") we would be pleased (edified). I am reminded of Paul's words in Philippians 2:4: *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.* By the way Paul wrote those words just before he tells us to have the mind of Christ, who *made himself of no reputation . . . and . . . humbled Himself and became obedient, even the death of the cross.* God gets the glory when you put others first and strengthen the weak in the body of Christ.

**The spirit of unity (vv. 5-7)**

Speaking of the body of Christ, the Bible tells us that we glorify God when we are *like-minded toward one another* (v. 5). Verse six says that we glorify God when we are of *one mind and one mouth*. And verse seven says we glorify God when we *receive one another*. It is all about unity in the church. Now this does not mean that we always agree or come to the same conclusions. Paul never commanded the Christians in Rome to come to the same conclusion about the "meat" issue. The unity would be accomplished when the mature believers would respect the weaker members and their convictions over nonessential matters.

The same is true today. Much of the disunity in our Southern Baptist churches comes from individuals who are disrespectful of other believers. The unity here (remember the context) is not that

**Sunday School Lesson  
Explore the Bible  
Feb. 12**

believers have the same conclusions on nonessential issues, but that we respect the convictions of one another concerning those things. There must always be a spirit of unity and harmony within the local church.

**The salvation of the nations (vv. 8-13)**

Paul reminds his audience of one of the major themes of his letter: that Jesus has also come to the Gentiles. And in this section Paul quotes from the Old Testament Law, prophets, and writings to make his point that God has always had the salvation of the nations in mind. Yes, Paul does say that Jesus came to the Jew first (Romans 1:16) but He has also come for the Greek (Gentile).

God gets the glory through the praise of all the "peoples" as they come to faith in Jesus Christ (v. 11). It would do Baptists well to remember that the gospel is for all people, regardless of race or ethnicity. In his book, *Let the Nations Rejoice*, John Piper wrote that God's desire is "that every people group be reached with the testimony of Christ" (p. 157). God's desire is to see the nations "rejoice" in His mercy (vv. 9-10). The question is do we share God's desire and Paul's passion? □ — Taylor is pastor of First Baptist Church, Middleton.



Funding missions in Tennessee and around the world



## Deaths

◆ **Jerry Wade Davis**, 65, pastor of Mercer Baptist Church, Mercer, died Jan. 31 following a short illness. From 1967-2006 he served as pastor of churches in Tennessee and Montana including Gold Dust Baptist Church, Ripley; South Side Baptist Church, Humboldt; and Holly Grove Baptist Church, Bells. He is a graduate of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Germantown, and Bethany Bible College and Seminary in Dothan, Ala. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Lois Eggleston Davis of Bells and five children. Memorials may be made to Montana Southern Baptist Convention Partnership Ministries, c/o Eddie Smith, 1019 Wortham Cemetery Road, Bells, TN 38006.

## Leaders

◆ **Jake E. Carroll** has been called as pastor of Chamberlain Memorial Baptist Church, Chattanooga, effective Jan. 29. He has served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Cohutta, Ga.; and Blythe Avenue Baptist Church, Cleveland. Carroll is a graduate of Baylor School, Chattanooga, and Covington Theological Seminary, Ft. Oglethorpe, Ga.

◆ **Ball Play Baptist Church**, Cleveland, has called **Tyler Gentry** as pastor.



CARROLL

◆ **Boanerges Baptist Church**, Cleveland, has called **Joe Hatcher** as interim pastor while their pastor, **Randall Headrick**, recovers from injuries received in an auto accident.

◆ **Ward's Grove Baptist Church**, Jackson, recently called **Cortney Crossnoe** as minister of youth and children. She began her ministry with the church on Jan. 15.

◆ **Nashville Baptist Association**, located in Nashville, has called **Bill McGinnis** as interim church support and community ministries director. McGinnis, who has served in several positions on church staffs, is currently serving as director of outreach, Clear View Baptist Church, Franklin. Contact him at (615) 259-3034 ext. 18 or mcginnis@nashvillebaptists.com.

◆ **Jeffery N. Slone** of Clinton has accepted the call as bivocational pastor, Piney Grove Baptist Church, Midtown, effective Jan. 8. He is a graduate of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. He formerly was pastor of a church in Vansant, Va.

## Churches

◆ **Grace Baptist Church, Elizabethton**, is co-sponsoring the Lynnridge/Lynnwood church, start in Elizabethton with three other Elizabethton churches — Willow Springs Baptist Church, Immanuel Baptist Church, and Oak Street Baptist Church. Grace Church members have been involved in the Lynnridge/

Lynnwood community for seven years helping provide a TeamKid program, Vacation Bible School, ladies Bible study, and other ministries.

◆ The first East Tennessee National Day of Prayer Workshop will be held at **Central Baptist Church, Bearden, Knoxville**, on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. To make reservations contact Marcia Korda at (865) 693-8447 or mkorda@kordacom-munications.com by Monday, Feb. 13.

◆ **Blessed Hope Baptist Church, Troy**, is celebrating its 25th anniversary by holding Crossover type activities. On Feb. 11 the first prayer-walk will be held. On Feb. 14 a sweetheart dinner will feature Melvin Poe, pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, Union City. Other activities are a Spring Fling and block party. Finally an anniversary revival will be held April 2-5. Jack Long, director of missions, Beulah Baptist Association, Union City, will speak. For more information, contact Phillip Senn, pastor, at (731) 536-6693 or pcsenn@charter.net.

## Associations

◆ **Big Hatchie Baptist Association**, Covington, will hold an evangelism conference on Feb. 16 at Calvary Baptist Church, Covington. The speaker will be Phil Glisson, evangelist of Memphis.

◆ **New Life Weekend** will be held Friday - Saturday, March 24-26, at Camp Agape, Benton, of **Polk County Bap-**



**BRETT STAMPS**, center, and **Bronwyn Stamps** stand with pastor, **Marc Drake**, **Cherry Road Baptist Church**, Memphis, being recognized by the congregation Jan. 22. The couple have been named **Mission Service Corps** volunteers by the **North American Mission Board**, Alpharetta, Ga. They will be **Appalachian Trail Chaplains** on the trail as they travel from Georgia to Maine.

**tist Association**. Contact Chris Stewart at (423) 338-4153 to volunteer or to register a youth group for this event.

◆ **Understanding Islam — Reaching Muslims** will be offered by **Nashville Baptist Association** on Monday, March 13, from 6-9 p.m. at Immanuel Baptist Church, Nashville. Speakers will be Terry Neu, U.S. Center for World Missions; Ben McGinnis, Woodbine Baptist Church, Nashville; and Jim Cross, former missionary to Indonesia. For information call Andrew Hong at (615) 974-7681.

## Schools

◆ **Union University**, Jackson, will hold homecoming 2006 Feb. 13-18. Activities will feature Christian recording artists Derek Webb and

## Statewide Events

◆ The Tennessee Baptist Convention is sponsoring **Bivocational Ministers Wives Retreat** Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 16-18, in Pig Forge. Deadline is Tuesday, Feb. 14. For information, contact Marjorie Wadley of the staff at 1-800-558-2090 2040.

# Tennessee students earn degrees from Southern Baptist seminaries

For Baptist and Reflector

**BRENTWOOD** — The following Tennessee Baptist students were among December graduates of three Southern Baptist seminaries — Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

Names are not listed if the seminary did not provide a home town or home church.

### Southeastern Seminary

- Brent Douglas Blake, Greeneville, master of divinity
- Jeffery W. Evans, Maryville, master of divinity
- Randal Ray Humphreys, Loudon, bachelor of arts
- Donald Edwards Jenkins, Cleveland, master of divinity
- Michael Dewayne Mallett, Chattanooga, master of arts
- Gregory B. Morris, Prospect, associate of divinity
- Stephen W. Sligh, Nashville, doctor of ministry
- Kevin Andrew Wilson, Lenoir City, master of divinity

- Christopher Dale Young, Maryville, bachelor of arts

### Southern Seminary

- Jeffrey K. Atkins, Dotson Memorial Baptist Church, Maryville, master of divinity
- Lisa J. Burton, First Baptist Church, McKenzie, master of divinity in Christian education
- Lucas N. Butler, Walker Memorial Baptist Church, Franklin, master of divinity
- Randall D. Davis, Third Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, master of divinity in Christian education
- Joshua C. Duke, Franklin, master of church music
- Matthew P. Ewers, Kingsport, master of arts in theological studies
- Richard C. Fowler III, Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga, master of divinity
- Edward D. Goodgine, Eastside Baptist Church, Burns, master of divinity
- Sujin Han, Judson Baptist Church (Korean Bridge community church), doctor of philosophy
- Jeremy R. Howard, Washington Avenue Baptist Church, Cookeville, doctor of philosophy
- Tara R. Jenkins, First Baptist

Church, Jackson, doctor of education

- Elizabeth A. Lockwood, Knoxville, master of theology
- Richard E. Loy, Holston Baptist Church, Strawberry Plains, master of divinity
- Janice S. Martin, First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, master of arts in Christian education
- Andrew P. Morris, Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, Maryville, master of arts in missiology
- Stephen A. Morse, Shellsford Baptist Church, McMinnville, diploma in theology
- James S. Mosley, Grace Community Church, Nashville, master of divinity
- Daniel C. Peterson, First Baptist Church, Morristown, master of divinity
- Jeri A. Ramsey, Parkway Baptist Church, Goodlettsville, master of music
- Stephen H. Ramsey, Parkway Baptist Church, Goodlettsville, master of divinity
- Herschel T. Redding Jr., First Baptist Church, Smyrna, master of arts in Christian education
- Stephen B. Waddell, First Baptist Church, Winchester, master of divinity
- Tony R. Wolfenbarger Jr., Grace Baptist Church, Karns, master of divinity

### Southwestern Seminary

- Nancy Leanne Barker, John City, master of arts in ministry-baptism evangelism
- Robert Bellew, Germantown, diploma in Christian education
- John D. Brassel Jr., Memphis, diploma in Christian education
- Fred Aaron Campbell, Jacksonville, master of divinity
- Jonathan Michael Jeffries, Elgin Springs, master of arts in Christian education
- Tony Hayes Jenkins, Maryville, master of divinity
- Jeffery Reed Land, Springfield, master of arts in Christian education
- Joel Owen, Morristown, master of arts in Christian education
- Russell Jay Richardson, Nashville, master of divinity
- Bradley Wayne Sams, Elizabethton, master of arts in missiology
- Jeffery Michael Tilden, Clarksville, master of divinity
- Shana Denise Cox Watson, master of music

If you know of a Tennessee Baptist graduate not listed, contact the appropriate seminary. None of the seminaries provided photos. □