

Baptist & Reflector

Statewide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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Clergy, laity hold different views on tithing: survey

LifeWay news office

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Research results released for the first time in the March/April edition of *Facts & Trends* magazine show most Protestant ministers believe Christians are supposed to tithe — or give 10 percent of their income — to their local church.

Unfortunately for these ministers and churches, most people in the pews of the local church do not agree with them.

Facts & Trends is published bimonthly by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Two studies were conducted by Ellison Research (Phoenix, Ariz.). One was a representative sample of 811 Protestant church ministers nationwide, and the other was a companion survey of 1,184 people who attend Protestant churches at least once a month.

In the study, 56 percent of all clergy say Christians are under a biblical mandate to tithe 10 percent of their income to the local church, while another 12 percent feel Christians are under this 10 percent mandate, but the gifts do not necessarily have to go to the local church. Twenty percent believe there is a biblical mandate to give, but

not any specific amount or percentage.

However, among the people who attend Protestant churches, only 36 percent feel there is a biblical command to tithe 10 percent to their local church, while another 23 percent believe there is a biblical mandate to tithe, but not necessarily to the local church. Twenty-seven percent feel the Bible commands Christians to give, but not a set proportion or amount, while 10 percent believe Christians are under no mandate to give anything.

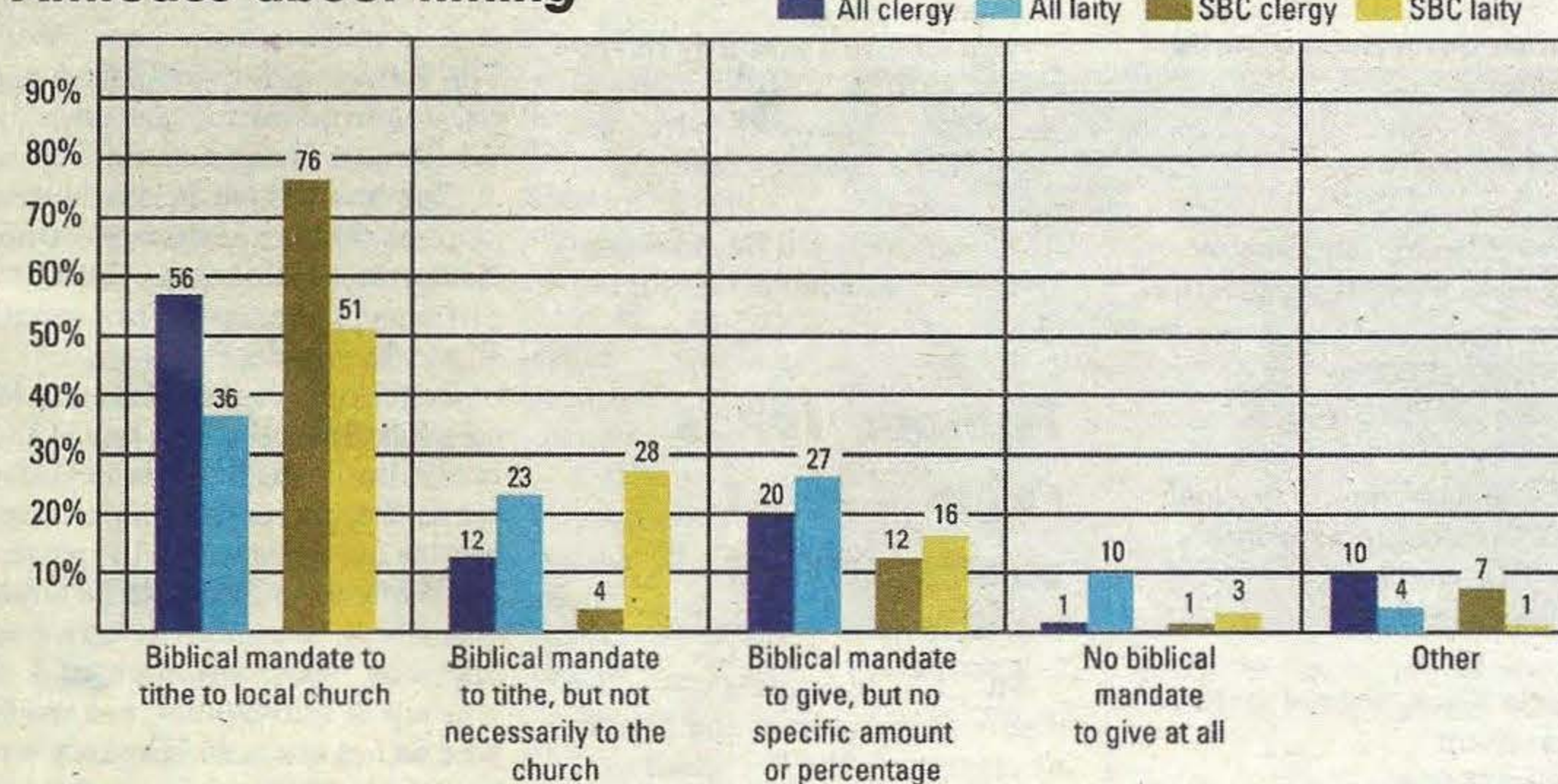
How much and to where?

Among both clergy and laity, Pentecostals, Southern Baptists, and people from other Baptist denominations are the ones most likely to believe in tithing to the local church, while Presbyterians, Methodists, and Lutherans are the denominational groups least likely to hold this opinion.

Among people who do believe in tithing (whether to the local church specifically or to any type of organization), an ongoing debate is whether the 10 percent should be figured on gross income or on net income (after taxes).

Churchgoers who believe in tithing are equally split over this, with 48 percent believing

Attitudes about tithing



Survey is a sample of Protestant clergy and laity only

the tithe should be figured on net income, and 52 percent saying it should be on gross income.

Clergy fall much more into the "gross income" camp (72 percent, versus 28 percent who believe the tithe should be calculated on net income).

The study also found that most people — both clergy and laity — believe that Christians' giving does not have to be limited to religious causes or organizations. Just 3 percent of clergy and 1 percent of laity feel that

Christians should only support Christian causes.

Three out of 10 clergy and 1 out of 10 churchgoers feel Christians should give preference to Christian causes or organizations in their giving, and another third of each group feel Christians should support Christian causes when they can, but should be free to support non-religious organizations when there is no religious equivalent (such as cancer research or animal welfare).

One-third of all clergy, and a

majority of all churchgoers (55 percent), feel Christians should be free to support any type of cause or organization, regardless of whether it has a religious connection.

In fact, ministers and laity are equally likely to have supported a non-religious cause or organization in the last year. Fifty-seven percent of each group have given money to an organization with no religious connections in the last 12 months.

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this week's news

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Leads Belmont into 'March Madness'

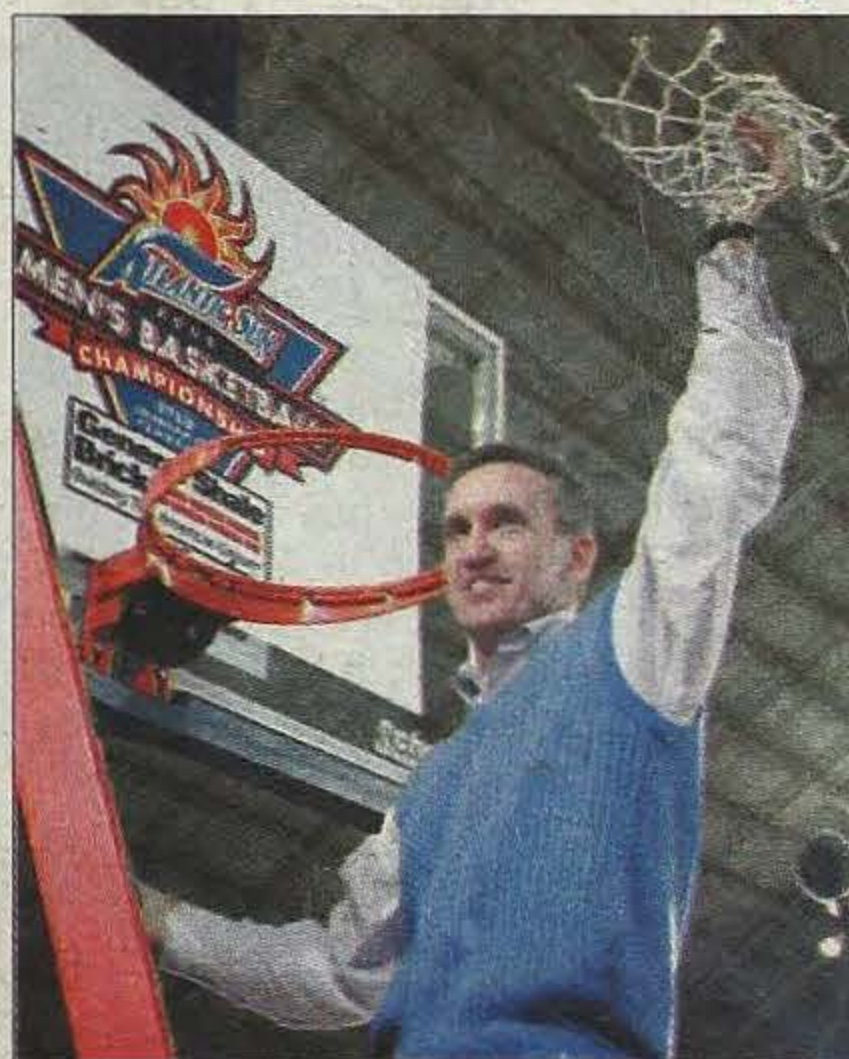
Patience, perseverance pays off for Rick Byrd

By Lonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — After 20 years and 401 victories the name Rick Byrd has become synonymous with the Belmont University men's basketball program.

In his quiet, unassuming manner, Byrd has guided Belmont through its glory days as a powerhouse in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), consisting primarily of small colleges, to the valleys of making the transition to Division I of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) when victories were much harder to come by.

The early years of the NCAA journey required Byrd to be patient and to persevere as Belmont had to play highly touted college programs, which result-



BELMONT UNIVERSITY coach Rick Byrd cuts down the net after Belmont won its first ever Atlantic Sun Conference Tournament on March 4.

ed in some one-sided losses, something he and his teams were not used to in the mid

1990s when they were always near the top of the NAIA standings.

Today, however, Byrd is back on the mountaintop and so is Belmont.

On March 4, Belmont defeated arch rival David Lipscomb University in overtime to win the championship of the Atlantic Sun Basketball Conference and earning the right to play in the NCAA championship tournament during a time of the year commonly referred to as "March Madness." It will be Belmont's first ever appearance in the NCAA tournament.

Through the peaks and the valleys at Belmont, Byrd's philosophy never changed — play by the rules.

"When you represent a school that is without a doubt a Christian institution, then I think it is a no-brainer," Byrd said.

"It is important to adhere to Christian values and to coach that way and treat your players that way," he continued.

Byrd acknowledged, however, that is not always easy to do in a competitive environment such as college athletics and noted that some coaches will "try to push the envelope" or bend the rules.

Byrd, however, has always chosen to coach and recruit based on his personal Christian values and beliefs.

As a result, he has had a strong history of being able to recruit quality young men who are students who play basketball, not basketball players who attend classes.

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Tenn. legislators target abortion

Compiled from news reports

NASHVILLE — Tennessee voters may have the opportunity to amend the state constitution so that it does not guarantee a woman's right to an abortion.

The Tennessee state senate voted 24-9 on March 9 to adopt a resolution (SJR 127) that would amend the constitution to say, "nothing in this constitution secures or protects a right to abortion or requires the funding of an abortion."

The measure would go to voters in 2010 only if the General Assembly approves it twice over the next two years, according to news reports.

The effort is led by state senator David Fowler of Signal Mountain. □

Tsunami funds rebuild lives, communities

Baptist Press

ACEH, Indonesia — The scent of ocean water and freshly lit cigarettes fills the small tent Evizen now calls home in Indonesia's Aceh province. Just outside his canvas dwelling, the sunset casts an amber glow on the strings of Evizen's guitar as he strums an Achenese song of loss.

At 25, Evizen is the sole survivor of his household. The tsunami that killed his parents and four brothers just over a year ago swept through his two-story home, leaving only a skeletal cement structure in its wake.

But like his neighbors, Evizen is looking toward the future. "Sometimes I feel sad," Evizen said, "but life must go on."

With the aid of Southern Baptist tsunami relief funds, people like Evizen have begun to look forward as they begin the rebuilding process.

Of the \$16.7 million Southern Baptists donated in 2005 for tsunami relief, \$6.7 million has been dispersed among Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Malaysia, while another \$4.5 million has been spent on reconstruction in South Asia. The remaining \$5.6 million will be available for use in 2006.

Jim Brown, director of world hunger and relief ministries for the International Mission Board, estimates 125 relief projects are now underway throughout southern Asia and the Pacific Rim as a result of Southern Baptist giving.

Because designated tsunami relief funds have given Southern Baptist missionaries a foothold in several different sectors of society, Brown said the project diversity has helped Southern Baptist workers gain access to areas where Christian workers would otherwise have little to no way in.

Will not allow public forum

Union stands firm against Soulforce tour

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — In a push for broader acceptance of homosexuality, a group of about 35 young adults with the homosexual advocacy group Soulforce has announced a bus tour of 19 Christian colleges and military academies, including some Southern Baptist universities.

Dubbed the "Equality Ride," the group's goal for the tour is to "confront schools that ban the enrollment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students," and they have requested that the schools offer official forums in which the activists can express their views.

"We must cut off the suffering at its source. The source is religion-based oppression, and it has taken place for centuries," Jacob Reitan, a Soulforce spokesman said.

The tour, which began March 9, will include stops at Baptist-affiliated **Union University in Jackson**; Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., and California Baptist University in Riverside, Calif.

Soulforce's visit to Union on March 18 will fall on a Saturday, the first day of the school's spring break, but President David Dockery issued a letter to the university community addressing the matter for those who will remain on campus.

"While we will seek to be kind and gracious in every way, it would be irresponsible for us to offer any public forum on such serious issues to a group of individuals that we do not know and who do not know us," Dockery wrote. "This group has no investment in or accountability to the

academic community or campus life of Union University."

Dockery said Union believes that "human sexuality is God's gift to human beings, which is rightly expressed only within the lifelong covenant commitment of marriage between one man and one woman."

"We expect all those in the Union community — trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students — to live according to the biblical teaching regarding sexuality and cannot approve heterosexual or homosexual practices contrary to the biblical standards," he said.

Homosexuality is not an issue Union would have chosen to highlight, Dockery said, but Soulforce has brought it to the forefront. He also said Union respects the right of others to choose a university consistent with their beliefs.

DOCKERY

Mark Brister, president of Oklahoma Baptist University, addressed his campus community in a similar fashion, saying, "While we respect their right to hold their views, we also ask that they respect our right as a private institution to hold views based on our mission as an institution of Christian higher education."

Brister made clear that Soulforce will not succeed in causing the university to change its policy on human sexuality, but he urged students and faculty to exhibit a Christ-like attitude toward the demonstrators. □

"The work we've done has really been able to help establish a longer-term presence, if not a permanent presence," Brown said. □

Grahams give N.O. pastors spiritual boost

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — Billy and Franklin Graham were welcomed to the sanctuary of First Baptist Church in New Orleans by a standing ovation from pastors, spouses, and special guests March 9 for a time of prayer for the Grahams' March 11-12 "Celebration of Hope" in the hurricane-ravaged city.

The still strong voices of George Beverly Shea and Cliff Barrows led the group in worship. Barrows pointed out that the three men, Graham, Shea, and Barrows, represent 267 years of collective ministry.

Franklin Graham stood behind the pulpit where his father preached in 1954 to lead a month-long crusade in New Orleans at the old Pelican Stadium. David Crosby, pastor of First Baptist New Orleans, pulled out a pen and invited Franklin to sign the pulpit that his father and the Graham team had signed in 1954.

Franklin Graham mentioned the historic nature of the Celebration of Hope. During the planning for the event, he said, "I never dreamed we would have Daddy, Uncle Cliff, and Uncle Bev join us. It is such a blessing, such an honor to have them."

The younger Graham, who

peppered the meeting with self-deprecating humor, told the pastors that they would have to put up with his preaching on Saturday while they were saving the best for last at the two-day outreach, his father.

Billy Graham told the audience, "I am absolutely devastated by what I've felt and seen in the couple of days that I've been here. I don't even know how to describe it. I haven't even called my wife, because I don't think I am emotionally capable of telling her what I've seen and heard since I've been here."

"The encouraging thing to me is the wonderful Christians I've met and the working together among the pastors," Graham continued. "I want to thank you for the parts you are playing in this situation that the whole world is reading about and hearing about."

"Out of this disaster is going to grow a new New Orleans," Graham said. "You [the pastors] are going to be the key to its progress because what is needed is a moral and spiritual renewal."

Many people have asked him why the storm hit New Orleans to which Graham said he has replied, "I don't know. I don't know anyone who does know. I just know God allowed it. He didn't send it, but He allowed it."

Graham noted: "Jesus is no security against storms, but He is a perfect security in the storm."

Local pastors and leaders responded with excitement to the Grahams. Warren J. Riley, superintendent of police for New Orleans and a member of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church,

said, "The city needs prayer. Hopefully, it's an awakening for many people in New Orleans. Perhaps they will become more spiritual, put God in their lives, and help turn New Orleans around."

First Baptist's Crosby said, "I feel that God has displayed his favor to me in the most concrete way possible, by bringing Franklin and Billy Graham here. I don't know of another thing that could have taken place that could have been more of an encouragement to me spiritually, and in every way, than for Billy Graham to say, 'I have New Orleans on my heart and I want to come here.' □

S.D. governor signs historic abortion ban

Baptist Press

PIERRE, S.D. — In an action that supporters hope will result in the overturning of the U.S. Supreme Court's infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision, South Dakota Gov. Mike Rounds March 6 signed a bill into law that bans nearly all abortions in the state.

Rounds' signature was historic, marking the first time since the 1973 *Roe* ruling that a state has adopted such a wide-sweeping ban on abortion. The law would take effect July 1 if not overturned and bans all abortions except in cases to save the mother's life.

Planned Parenthood, which operates the state's only abortion clinic, is expected to file suit in federal court to have the law overturned. □

TBCH staff members aid Sudanese family in Memphis

By Mandi Wyler
TBCH news office

MEMPHIS — The Great Commission, in Matthew 28:18-20, commands people to "go and make disciples of all nations."

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes is answering God's call by doing just that — starting in their own back yard.

Imagine leaving behind everything you've ever known, only to make a new start in a foreign country with languages you cannot understand — all in a simple pursuit of safety. For most people, this is unimaginable. For Atong Nyuon and her family, this is their life.

According to Ockenden International, war in Sudan has left more than two million people dead and nearly four million others displaced. Among those displaced were 32-year-old Atong Nyuon, who was pregnant, and her six children. Her days as she once knew them were filled with fear as she hid her family away and lived "in the bush," plotting an escape from war, which they acted on in the summer of 2005.

Meanwhile, in Memphis, Rachelle Pichardo was working days at Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes' Bartlett campus and in the afternoons tutored inner city refugee children at the local community center.

The tutoring program started in 2002 when Pichardo met a Sudanese woman and leader in the community, who the kids simply call "Mrs. Ruth." She approached Pichardo with the idea for a children's program because 75 percent of the kids' parents are illiterate and can't speak English.

"The more I talked with Mrs. Ruth and started meeting these kids, the more intrigued I became," Pichardo said. "The program really grew. We started

out with 10-15 kids, and now there are 40-60 regulars that show up every day."

Pichardo and Mrs. Ruth continued their ministry outside the community, in Mimosa Apartments, a part of government-subsidized housing, where most of the refugees are placed. They built relationships with the families of the kids in the tutoring program by visiting, bringing dinner, and helping with everyday things in their lives.

Pichardo was visiting with a family from Somalia who lived below Atong and her children, who had recently moved in. "Their kids were playing together and they became friends," Pichardo recalled.

Pichardo then began bringing food to Atong and her children.

Atong's life as she knew it changed again in the winter of 2005. Her utilities were mistakenly cut off and the kids, who could only speak broken English, called Pichardo in a panic. Mrs. Ruth picked up the family and took them into her four-bedroom apartment that she already shared with her own family of five. Atong and her seven children stayed with Mrs. Ruth for a week until her utilities were turned back on.

Pichardo shared this experience with TBCH West Tennessee regional vice president, Ray Moss and had the opportunity to introduce Atong and her family to the TBCH staff.

Atong expressed her gratitude, telling the staff through a translator, "If Mrs. Ruth and Rachelle weren't there the night my utilities were cut off, me and my family would probably be dead."

Upon meeting Atong and hearing her story, TBCH president Bryant Millsaps, along with Moss, vowed that something would be done to help



THE SUDANESE family assisted by staff members of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes includes, from left, Mamer, Khot, Njor, Awar, Madit, Atong, Hijoik, and Nyabol Nyuon.

her and her family.

"From time to time God will send us challenges and opportunities that cause us to grow in our understanding of what it means to minister to the 'least of these,'" Moss said.

"In ministering to Atong's family she has blessed us ... it is an honor to serve a mother with such a high calling to do whatever it takes to care for all her children."

On New Year's Eve in 2005, the TBCH staff banded together and moved Atong and her family into a cottage on the Bartlett campus.

"Everyone has been amazing," Pichardo said. "House parents invite them over for movie night and staff members have been really helpful. Everyone just loves on them. It's an awesome thing."

Mary Turner, a social worker for TBCH, was assigned to Atong's family once they moved in and became settled. For two weeks, Turner was there from sun-up to sun-down, walking Atong through her days, attempting to bring some semblance of normalcy back in her life. In addition to helping with her seven children, Turner rebuilt her confidence and put the "head of household authority" back in her hands.

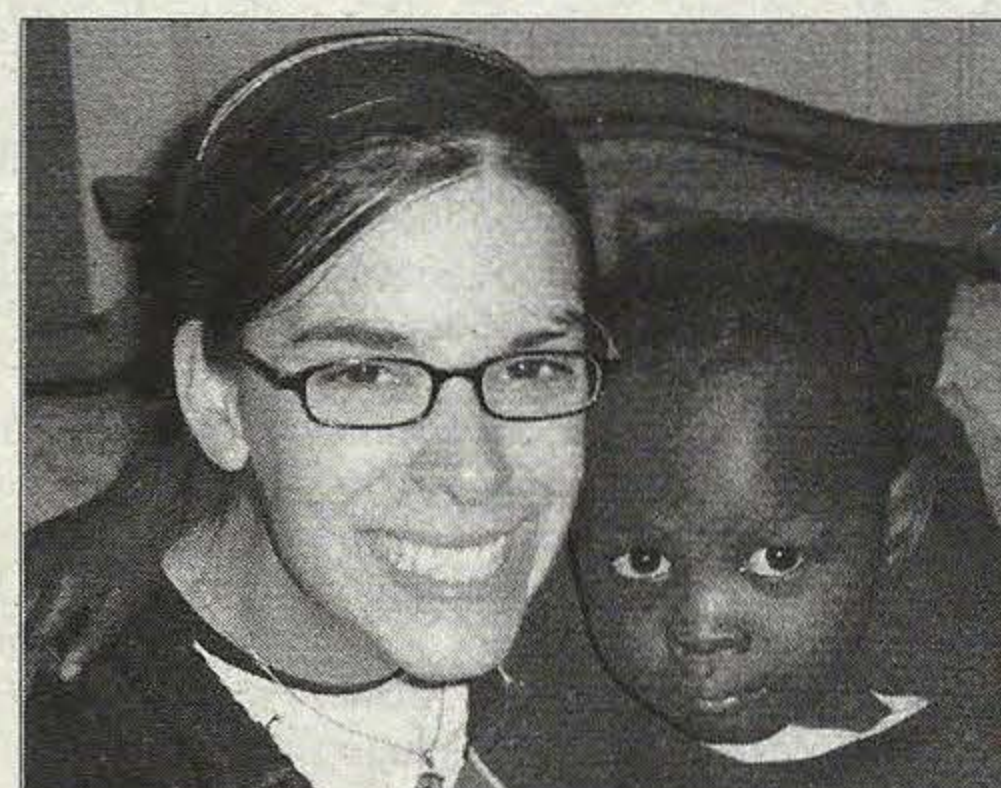
Turner remembers working

with the family one day and tackling the language barrier between the children and their mother. Turner emphasized working together and obedience.

"We talked about the family's chain of command," she explained. "This doesn't have anything to do with the children knowing English and their mother unable to speak it. This is all about how God appoints people in position in a family. It's important for them to understand that their mom is the boss and everybody has a responsibility to fulfill."

Turner told the seven children that this was their life challenge. "This was the most profound moment of the experience for me," Turner said. "These children will always remember the sacrifice their mother made just to give them a chance at a better life."

"The kids have more respect for their mother and this whole experience has taught them the importance of never taking



TBCH MINISTRY assistant Rachelle Pichardo enjoys time with her new friend, Awar.

things for granted," Pichardo observed. "As for me, working with Atong and her family has taught me to value life more. These people, so many times, literally have nothing and they give you what they have with such a loving heart. It's a privilege to be a part of their life."

Atong and her family are still living on the Bartlett campus. The children are in school and continue to learn English.

Atong is also in a weekly English class. Every day, there are small steps to be taken. While some small steps seem like hurdles to Atong, she faces them. And as each day passes, the progress becomes a little easier. □

Clergy, laity hold different views on tithing ...

— Continued from page 1

Giving to causes

Finally, the studies evaluated what types of causes and organizations church leaders and churchgoers have actually supported through donations in the last 12 months.

With the plethora of natural disasters over the last year, it's probably no surprise that the No. 1 category for both laity and ministers is disaster relief. Eight out of 10 ministers and 54 percent of laity have personally supported an organization working in disaster relief in the last year.

Among pastors, there is a clear hierarchy of causes. After disaster relief come three others that are very popular: evangelism (66 percent), denominational causes or programs (51 percent), and specific schools, colleges, or universities (49 percent). Eight other types of causes or organizations have received donations from between one-fifth and one-third of all pastors: literature (such as Bibles and tracts), international poverty relief and development, domestic poverty relief and

development, health (such as medical research and hospitals), educational causes, broadcast stations or ministries, political causes or organizations, and social/moral causes (such as pornography, supporting or opposing abortion).

Five other types of causes are less popular among clergy, finding financial support from fewer than 20 percent: individual political candidates, veterans' causes, cultural (museums or the opera), the environment, and animal welfare.

There are substantial differences between what evangelical and mainline Protestant ministers support out of their own pockets. Evangelicals are more likely than mainline ministers to contribute to evangelism, literature, and social/moral issues. Mainline Protestants are more likely than evangelicals to have supported disaster relief, denominational programs, specific schools, international and domestic poverty relief, health, education, the environment, and cultural issues.

Keeping it in the church

The people in the pews, on average,

have supported fewer causes outside of their own church over the past year than have their church leaders. In fact, disaster relief is the only cause to have received donations from a majority of Protestants who attend church. Second to disaster relief among laity is evangelism (33 percent), followed by veterans' causes, denominational programs, health, and educational causes (all supported by 20 percent or more in the past year).

Virtually all clergy in this study have financially supported their own church in the past year. And for the typical churchgoer, a majority of the money they give does go to their local church. On average, Protestants estimate 69 percent of their giving in the last year went to their church, while 31 percent went to organizations outside of their church.

Two percent of all clergy and 16 percent of all churchgoers say they have not financially contributed to any organizations (outside of their local church) in the last year.

Ron Sellers, president of Ellison Research, noted the irony in some of the

findings. "What's really sad is that 6 out of 10 churchgoers told us they believe the Bible commands them to tithe 10 percent or more of their incomes, yet other studies have consistently shown that under 1 out of 10 actually do that," Sellers said. "In other words, at least half of all Protestants are clear on what they believe they're supposed to be giving, but consistently don't give it."

Sellers also noted that Christian organizations and ministries need to understand that many religious people are supporting non-religious organizations. "When we work with individual charitable organizations, there's often an assumption that Christians support Christian ministries over non-religious organizations," he said.

"This study conclusively shows that assumption to be false, and that in fact over half of all Protestant churchgoers don't even give any preference to Christian organizations in their giving decisions. It's critical that Christian organizations really understand this about their target market." □

IMB trustee chairman Hatley explains board's actions

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — International Mission Board Trustee Chairman Tom Hatley issued an "open letter" March 7 to all Southern Baptists — and a much longer letter to all Southern Baptist pastors — addressing recent decisions by IMB trustees.

The letters accompany detailed background material outlining the trustees' votes on glossolalia (the practice of tongues), the use of private prayer language by missionary candidates and the candidates' mode of baptism. Southern Baptists can access both letters, the new policy on use of tongues, the guideline on baptism, the IMB approved definition of a church, and additional background materials at www.imb.org, the International Mission Board's web site. The background materials include unofficial position papers on the glossolalia and baptism issues which have not been voted on by the entire board.

"I have addressed (the detailed explanation) to pastors

because they are the teachers and guardians of the Word for their congregations," Hatley said in his letter to Southern Baptists. "But feel free to look over their shoulders and read this material."

"There has been no small controversy concerning some of our recent decisions," Hatley acknowledged. "However, as I have shared this information with pastors and others, most have expressed joy because information they had previously received was incomplete. Seeing the greater context has helped many to appreciate the decisions recently made. I pray you will have the same experience."

IMB President Jerry Rankin expressed appreciation for the statement released by the board chairman.

"Much of the confusion and misperceptions regarding these actions came from the lack of clearly defined explanations for the policies," Rankin said. "While some will not be in agreement with the rationale, these documents will help others under-

stand the deep convictions of those on our board for moving in this direction.

"There is no question that those on each side of these issues are committed to the effectiveness of the International Mission Board and are conscientious in their desire to be accountable to the Southern Baptist Convention. God is at work around the world in unprecedented ways. We want Southern Baptists to be assured of the doctrinal integrity and practices of our missionaries and move forward to win a lost world to Jesus Christ."

During their Nov. 14-17 meeting in Huntsville, Ala., the trustees approved a policy stating that a missionary candidate eliminates himself or herself from potential IMB service if he or she has the practice of tongues or a "private prayer language" as



HATLEY

an ongoing part of his or her conviction or practice. They also adopted a baptism guideline stating that future

missionary candidates must have been baptized in a church that practices believer's baptism by immersion alone; does not view baptism as sacramental or regenerative; and that embraces the doctrine of the security of the believer. Exception clauses were included in both the guideline and the policy for special situations. Neither the guideline nor the policy is retroactive and neither will be applied to anyone already in the missionary appointment process.

The letter to pastors, Hatley stressed, "is written from my perspective as your chairman of this board. Further clarification may come from appropriate (trustee) committees. Because such contextualization might not be formed and delivered to you until April or even June (because of the timing of our next meetings), I thought it best to write and at least give you my perspective."

The need to address the baptism and tongues issues has been discussed "from time to time for more than a decade," he added. "The decisions that were recently made have been matters of review and study for more than two and a half years. Similar precedents adopted by staff in dealing with these issues have been used for years. They were not as strong as the current guideline and policy but they

were the base upon which the current statements were constructed."

Hatley also responded to another charge: that the policy on tongues and private prayer language was initiated by trustees to "embarrass" IMB President Jerry Rankin, who acknowledges he has had a private prayer language for many years.

"Trustees have been blamed for having the motive of trying to hurt our president," Hatley wrote. "The force that pushed the issue to this higher level, however, included the president and a few others on staff and on the board."

Hatley asked Southern Baptists to pray — and to put these issues in the larger perspective of the global missions challenge:

"We are on a great adventure together," he wrote. "It stands to reason that our adversary would love to put us against one another. Let's put all blame on our real enemy and work harder than ever to reach every person with the gospel in our lifetime."

Hatley said he is asking the IMB trustee personnel committee to take "a fresh look at these documents with the intention of providing further clarification." He invited pastors and any interested Southern Baptists to e-mail their suggestions and feedback to imbtrustees@imb.org. □

IMB Trustee Approved Glossolalia Policy

GLOSSOLALIA

1. The New Testament speaks of a gift of glossolalia that generally is considered to be a legitimate language of some people group.
2. The New Testament expression of glossolalia as a gift had specific uses and conditions for its exercise in public worship.
3. In terms of worship practices, the majority of Southern Baptist churches do not practice glossolalia. Therefore, if glossolalia is a public part of his or her conviction and practice, the candidate has eliminated himself or herself from being a representative of the IMB of the SBC.

PRAYER LANGUAGE

1. Prayer language as commonly expressed by those practitioners is not the same as the biblical use of glossolalia.
2. Paul's clear teaching is that prayer is to be made with understanding.
3. Any spiritual experience must be tested by the Scriptures.
4. In terms of general practice, the majority of Southern Baptists do not accept what is referred to as "private prayer language." Therefore, if "private prayer language" is an ongoing part of his or her conviction and practice, the candidate has eliminated himself or herself from being a representative of the IMB of the SBC.

APPLICATION

1. This policy is not retroactive.
2. Any exceptions to the above policy must be reviewed by the staff and the Process Review Committee.

IMB Trustee Approved Baptism Guideline

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE: ARTICLE VII — BAPTISM

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior; the believer's death to sin; the burial of the old life; and the resurrection to walk in the newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

POINTS TO BE COVERED DURING THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS:

1. The Individual
 - a. Believer's baptism by immersion
Baptism by immersion follows salvation
 - b. Baptism is symbolic, picturing the experience of the believer's death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ.
Baptism does not regenerate.
2. The Church
 - a. Baptism is a church ordinance.
Baptism must take place in a church that practices believer's baptism by immersion alone, does not view baptism as sacramental or regenerative, and a church that embraces the doctrine of the security of the believer.
 - b. A candidate who has not been baptized in a Southern Baptist church or in a church which meets the standards listed above is expected to request baptism in his/her Southern Baptist church as a testimony of identification with the system of belief held by Southern Baptist churches.
3. The Candidate
The candidate is responsible for meeting this doctrinal commitment to the above points.
4. The Consultant
While the candidate consultant should have a working knowledge of many denominational groups, he is not expected to investigate every church.

APPLICATION

1. This guideline is not retroactive.
2. Any exception to the above guideline must be reviewed by the staff and the Process Review Committee.

IMB Trustee Approved Definition of Church

International Mission Board, Definition of a Church, January 25, 2005

DEFINITION

The definition of a local church is given in the 2000 edition of the Baptist Faith and Message:

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scriptures.

GUIDELINES

We believe that every local church is autonomous under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of His inerrant Word. This is as true overseas as it is in the United States. Some churches to which we relate overseas may make decisions in doctrine and practice which we would not choose. Nevertheless, we are accountable to God and to Southern Baptists for the foundation that we lay when we plant churches, for the teaching that we give when we train church leaders, and for the criteria that we use when we count churches. In our church planting and teaching ministries, we will seek to lay a foundation of beliefs and practices that are consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, although local churches overseas may express those beliefs and practices in different ways according to the needs of their cultural settings. Flowing from the definition of a church given above and from the Scriptures from which this definition is derived, we will observe the following guidelines in church planting, leadership training, and statistical reporting.

1. A church is intentional about being a church. Members think of themselves as a church. They are committed to one another and to God (associated by covenant) in pursuing all that Scripture requires of a church.
2. A church has an identifiable membership of baptized believers in Jesus Christ.
3. A church practices the baptism of believers only by immersing them in water.
4. A church observes the Lord's Supper on a regular basis.
5. Under the authority of the local church and its leadership, members may be assigned to carry out the ordinances.
6. A church submits to the inerrant Word of God as the ultimate authority for all that it believes and does.
7. A church meets regularly for worship, prayer, the study of God's Word, and fellowship. Members of the church minister to one another's needs, hold each other accountable, and exercise church discipline as needed. Members encourage one another and build each other up in holiness, maturity in Christ, and love.
8. A church embraces its responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission, both locally and globally, from the beginning of its existence as a church.
9. A church is autonomous and self-governing under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of His Word.
10. A church has identifiable leaders, who are scrutinized and set apart according to the qualifications set forth in Scripture. A church recognizes two biblical offices of church leadership: pastors/elders/overseers and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

Baseball season fast approaches; life is good

guest
columnist



By Tim Ellsworth

My spirits always tend to rise a little at this time of year.

Spring training is upon us. Baseball season is close. Spring is near. Life is good.

Many of you can relate — if not to baseball, then to your favorite sport. Maybe you get a little antsy near the start of football season. Maybe the thought of stepping onto the links for the first time each year gets your blood pumping a little more than usual.

I've been a rabid sports fan my entire life. Baseball is by far my sport of choice, but I like most others as well. My office is decorated with all kinds of baseball pictures and memorabilia. I play fantasy baseball. I read baseball books. I go to lots of baseball games.

But are such interests godly in nature? Is there a spiritual

side to being a sports fan? Isn't it easy at a ball game to behave in a way that's unbecoming for a Christian? How do you know where the line is between leisurely diversion and unhealthy obsession?

A recent article I read at byfaithonline.com by Peter Enns, a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, articulates many of the answers to questions like these.

Like me, Enns is a rabid baseball fan. While I'm passionate about the St. Louis Cardinals, he's equally enthusiastic about the New York Yankees.

"But here's the rub," Enns writes. "I am a Christian, and I sometimes have a hard time reconciling my devotion to sports, especially baseball and the Yankees in particular, and my devotion to Christ."

Sound familiar? It certainly did to me. But Enns has good news. Being a sports fan can actually help you think more deeply about God.

"For all we know, the Lord does not give a hoot about base-

ball or any sport, but He does care about us," Enns writes. "And it is important for us to be aware of this deep connection we feel with sports and to be honest about it. It is more than just 'fun,' like a momentary and superficial rush of a roller coaster. For some, like me, it is a source of joy, in the same way C.S. Lewis used the word. Joy is a word he uses to describe something that sparks in us a longing for something eternal (independent of whether we realize it at the time)."

"The joy that I get from hearing the crack of the bat, watching a well-executed hit-and-run, or teaching my son how to hit can actually point to something infinitely more fulfilling than sports," Enns argues.

"I do not chastise myself for feeling good about something so 'unholy' as a sport," he writes. "Rather, I remember ... that all of creation belongs to the King, and He uses any means to remind His people that all earthly pleasures are just shadows of a much richer joy that is truly lasting. For Christians,

such joy is a reminder of what we have already begun to know in Christ. For non-Christians, it is a bit of grace to show them ... that their earthly source of joy will always disappoint if not fulfilled by the real thing."

But like everything else in creation that's good, sports can be subject to abuse. How do we know we've gone too far in our devotion to sports?

Enns has developed a rule for himself that when he allows the emotions of a game — good or bad — to occupy his thoughts for more than a few hours, he knows he's gone too far. A love for sports has then become an end in itself, rather than a tool that points to a greater end.

"But the answer is not to keep away from sports," he writes. "Rather, it is to 'take sports captive and make them obedient to Christ.'"

Such action will help all of us in our pursuit of godliness, no matter what the season. □ — Ellsworth, a staff member at Union University, writes a regular sports column for Baptist Press.

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

Keep sports in perspective

March Madness — the time of year that every basketball fan loves and looks forward to.

And even though the first tip off for the bulk of the NCAA tournament games does not happen until Thursday, March already has been a lot of fun as different conferences have held their tournaments. Teams favored to win have lost and several teams wore the "Cinderella" slipper, at least for a few games.

That is what makes this time of year fun. Some teams exceed expectations while others fall flat on their faces. You never know what to expect.

This month will be particularly exciting for fans of the University of Tennessee, Belmont University, and the University of Memphis, which are all in the tournament. Belmont, particularly, should be congratulated as the school will participate in its first ever NCAA tournament. Belmont coach Rick Byrd is a class guy who still believes college basketball players should be students first and I wish him and his team well.

Unfortunately, some fans take this time of year far too seriously. I have been guilty of that myself. We get so caught up in the game we sometimes act in a way completely out of character.

Sadly, I have seen this overzealousness for sports trickle down through the high school level on down to children's leagues.

I recently refereed a game between two third grade girls teams. Afterwards, a lady came up to the coach of the winning team and chewed him out royally, telling him he was a poor example of sportsmanship. It was all I could do to keep from laughing. As the old saying goes, the "pot was calling the kettle black," except in this case I honestly didn't think the coach had done anything to warrant her attack. My only surprise was that she didn't turn to me and tell me I was the worse official she had ever seen.

We get so caught up in winning or losing that we forget it is just a game. It is not life or death.

If only we put as much emphasis on witnessing and evangelism as we did winning or losing a basketball game. Think about how many more people would know the Lord if we "practiced" evangelism as much as some teams prepare for games.

A basketball game doesn't really matter. Where a person spends eternity does. Let's keep sports in perspective. □

letters to the editor

Different gifts

After reading the article about Jerry Rankin on the private prayer gift he has received for the Lord Jesus, I realize that God gives different gifts to us as He desires.

Each one of us has gifts that are given to us by our Heavenly Father to further His kingdom's work. I Corinthians 12:1-31 gives us a list of how God wants to use us in the body of Christ. I am sure my personal gift of prayer and evangelism was given to me by the Holy Spirit. I personally don't understand how God was so wonderful to trust me with telling the good news.

Let's love each person with their gifts and bring our churches into unity. Let's rally around Jerry Rankin and bring the whole world into the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Janice Scruggs
Dandridge 37725

Saddened

I was saddened to learn that the SBC Executive Committee is considering a move to bring WMU under its control. Since WMU is financially independent and does an excellent job of governing itself what would this move accomplish? Could it be power and control through male dominance of the SBC?

My Bible's Great Commission tells us to "Go ye ... and teach ALL nations ..." and it also says we are to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. If we cooperate with fellow Christians we can accomplish much, much more in our witness. I am very concerned about the "witness" of our more conservative friends

who seem to condemn rather than love. My Jesus loved everyone no matter their life situation.

I'm very happy that my Southern Baptist church has a strong WMU with all organizations, including Mission Friends, GAs, Acteens, and Women on Mission. (Our Acteens Activators have served as mission volunteers each year since 1986.) Our children and young ladies are learning about Southern Baptist missionaries around the world. My pastor supports missions and invites missionary speakers to share with us several times a year.

We do not have AWANA; however, we do have special Bible study classes whereby our children explore the Bible and do lots of memory work.

Lola Byrd
Powell 37849

Tongues ceased

I have read with interest and disgust the recent articles concerning Baptists speaking in tongues and the supportive position of other Baptists, even the editor of this paper.

Any serious Bible student knows that I Corinthians 13 tells us that tongues ceased when "that which is perfect is come." We claim that the Bible is now complete or perfect. Believing this, we have no scriptural choice but to say that Bible tongues have ceased and are no more. Therefore, the tongues of our day are un-scriptural.

It is sad that the leadership of local associations, state conventions, and the SBC have not spoken out concerning this un-scriptural practice.

If this is the course that some, even in leadership positions, want to pursue then they should openly join the charismatic movement and quit causing division among Baptists.

W.A. Criswell in his book, *The Holy Spirit in Today's World*, on pages 222-226, states six points on present-day glossolalia. Each point denounces the practice as un-scriptural. The sixth point begins, "Wherever and whenever glossolalia appears, it is always hurtful and divisive." We are seeing this today.

Jerry Daughtry
Ethridge 38456

Editor's Note: This editor has never endorsed the practice of speaking in tongues, especially publicly. It goes against what most Baptists believe the Bible teaches. However, I also don't believe God has given me the authority to condemn or discount what a person does in his or her own private prayer time with God. That is between an individual and God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. — Lonnie Wilkey

Applauds stand

I must applaud the state of South Dakota for their bold stand for the protection of unborn children. It is my prayer that this bill will become law in South Dakota and spread throughout our nation as the "law of the land," thus getting back in line with the "law of God."

The cries of intolerance by the so-called "pro-choice" groups are silenced by truth, morality, common decency, and the Word of God. The "right of a woman to choose" proponents fail to mention that somewhere around

half of the murdered unborn babies (aborted fetuses) are females; therefore those women do not have the opportunity to choose life or death for themselves as their mothers and our sick, warped society "choose" on their behalf. I find no reason to even discuss the idiocy of the "when does life begin" question as God's Word (see Jeremiah 1:5 and Psalm 139:13-16), true science, and clear logic shout the truth that precious, individual, and important life begins at conception.

Those who look to Planned Parenthood for help need to be aware of the damage done in our society by this organization. Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion chain in America and is openly hostile to Christianity. They hurt the women they claim to help.

I am sure that I will be labeled "ignorant" and "intolerant" by some. The "ignorance" claim will be decided by folks who are willing to stop listening to those marketing the abortion industry and learn the truth, while the label of "intolerant" is one I wear with a little pride.

After all, everyone is intolerant of someone or something. Actually, the Creator of our universe and all that is within it is intolerant (life exists because certain criteria are met). The very Son of God is intolerant (see John 14:6).

All things considered, I am in pretty good company concerning my intolerance of that which is against "nature and nature's God."

David Seiber, pastor
First Baptist Church
Norris 37828

Special
Calendar
Issue

Church Health Matters

"Building healthy churches empowered by the presence of God."

Disaster Relief Statewide Regional Training and Jamboree

April 21-22, 2006

Friday – 2 p.m.-10 p.m.

Saturday – 7 a.m.-4 p.m.

Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden

Registration Fee: \$25 (covers materials and meals)

Housing Options: \$13/night for cabin bed, \$5 for linen/towel sets (opt.)

In order to simulate an actual disaster response as part of your training, we are encouraging all participants to stay on site with us. You will need to bring a sleeping bag, bedding, and towel sets.

We want to celebrate our associations and churches who have partnered with us. We would like to have you bring your recovery trailer, feeding unit, laundry unit, shower trailer, etc., to show others your accomplishments.

Contact: drelief@tnbaptist.org for registration or Elizabeth Holmes for further information at (800) 558-2090, ext. 7926. Pre-registration will assist trainers in providing materials needed for the classes as well as for meal preparation.

Leadership in Action

Collegiate Spring Leadership Conference Program

Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden

March 31-April 2, 2006

Mega Seminars

Evangelism in the Midst of a Changing Culture, Rick Jenkins - Activities Building

Spiritual Preparation for Leadership, Jeff Jones - Owl Building

Ministry in Action, Guy Chmielecki - Tabernacle

Responding to Challenges in a Media-driven Society, Cliff Vaughn - Conference Center

Program Personnel

Guy Chmielecki - University Minister, Belmont University

Rick Jenkins - International Mission Board

Jeff Jones - Collegiate Ministry Specialist, University of Memphis

Kyle Matthews - Singer, Songwriter, Speaker from Nashville

Cliff Vaughn - Baptist Center for Ethics

For registration cost and information, contact Julie Heath at (800) 558-2090, ex. 1993 or e-mail jheath@tnbaptist.org.

State Secretaries Conference

April 24-26, 2006

Baptist Center, Brentwood

Reaching Upward...Inward....Outward

Conference Costs:

Registration: \$25.00 (After April 7 \$35)

Dues: \$15.00

2 lunches \$16.00 (Dinner on your own)

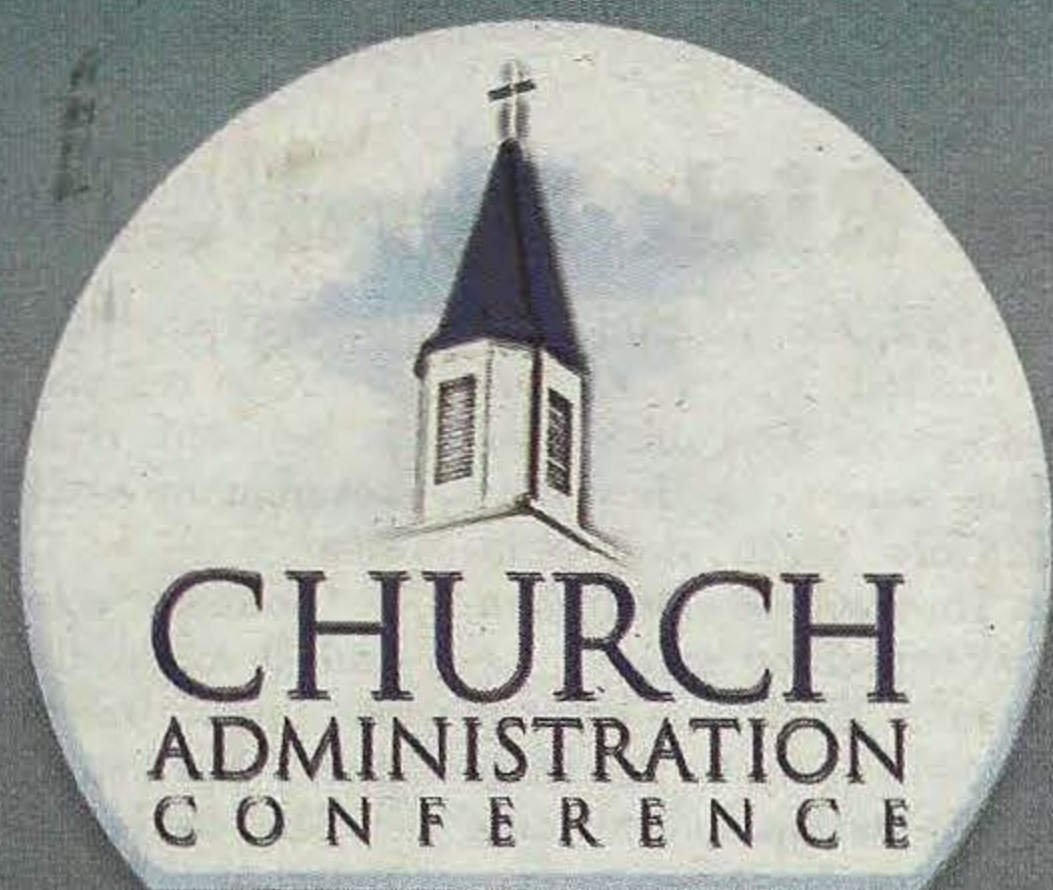
Craft Class: \$5.00 (only if you sign up)

Professional Course: \$60.00 (\$20/module—first three modules will be offered)

Note: To register for Professional Course, you must call LifeWay's toll-free number, 1-800-254-2022;

OR you may register online at www.lifeway.com/events.

Registration: To register for this event, complete the registration online at www.tnbaptist.org. For more information, contact Lana Rose at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2008, or e-mail lrose@tnbaptist.org.



CHURCH ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE

Brentwood Baptist Church
Brentwood, TN

April 3-4, 2006

Church administrators, pastors, church treasurers, and financial secretaries from across the state of Tennessee will come together to learn more about their role in the church. They will leave with valuable information that will enable them to better serve their congregations. The Tennessee Baptist Convention is working closely with the local chapter of the National Association of Church Business Administrators to ensure that a variety of religious denominations are represented at this meeting.

Featured Speaker: Frank Sommerville

Special Guest: Janice Holcomb

Cost: \$125 per person

Register online with a debit or credit card or visit www.tnbaptist.org to download a registration form.

For more information, contact Brittany Powers at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2013, or e-mail bepowers@tnbaptist.org.



Hosted by the Tennessee Baptist Convention and GuideStone
Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.



PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING TRAINING

for the Minister

Paul H. Barkley, Ed.D., will be leading this training. Paul is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who specializes in individual, marriage and family therapy. He is the author of the manual we will be using, the *Manual for Premarital Counseling*.

Tuesday, April 18, 2006
10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Baptist Center, Brentwood

Cost: \$25 per person, covers lunch and program materials.

For more information, contact Jewell Burke at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2010, or e-mail jburke@tnbaptist.org.

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- Charles & Rebecca Reese, Bluefield, WV
- Ferrell Marr, Natchitoches, LA
- Tony & Nikki Jones, Atlanta, GA



March 31 - April 1
First Baptist Church
Nashville

Cost: \$45 per person (\$50 if attending early-bird events).

To register, download the registration form at www.tnbaptist.org.

For more information, e-mail erobertson@cn.edu or call (865) 471-0398.

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

March 23-24, Associational Therapists' Summit, Glenstone Lodge, Gatlinburg. A specialized time for therapists who provide counseling ministries through local TBC associations. For more information, contact Tony Rankin at (800) 558-2090, ext. 8136, or e-mail trankin@tnbaptist.org.

March 24-26, WMU Missions Get-Together, Gatlinburg Convention Center, Gatlinburg. For more information, contact Rebekah Wales at (800) 558-2090, ext. 7921, or e-mail rwales@tnbaptist.org.

March 24-26, Connection, Gatlinburg Convention Center, Gatlinburg. For Acteens grades 7-12. For more information, contact Jennifer Ferguson at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2038, or e-mail jferguson@tnbaptist.org.

April 1, Bible Fun Field Day, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville. For leaders and children in grades 1-6. Cost: \$20 per person. For more information, contact Barbara Owens at (800) 558-2090, ext. 7905, or e-mail Bowens@tnbaptist.org.

April 3-4, New Church Staff Orientation, Baptist Center, Brentwood. For more information, contact Linda Estey at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2088, or e-mail lestey@tnbaptist.org.

April 9, Cooperative Program Day. Church-wide emphasis of the Cooperative Program. For more information, contact Gary Rickman at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2020, or e-mail grickman@tnbaptist.org.

April 22, Interfaith Evangelism Associate Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood. Training on how to understand other religions and cults and how to better witness to them. For more information, contact Tim Hill at (800) 558-2090, ext. 2032, or e-mail thill@tnbaptist.org.

For information on upcoming events, see the TBC web site at www.tnbaptist.org.

Patience, perseverance pays off for Rick Byrd ...

— Continued from page 1

And though Belmont still plays "big-time" basketball programs, they have been more competitive as they have been able to recruit more Division I-caliber players. In fact, Belmont defeated the University of Missouri in 2003, a team that was ranked 23rd in the nation at the time. He also has wins against programs such as the Air Force Academy, Middle Tennessee State University, Austin Peay State University, and Navy.



BYRD

Byrd, who has received numerous awards for his coaching prowess, credits the ability to recruit good student athletes to the fact Belmont is known as a quality Christian institution that cares for its students.

"Belmont gives us the opportunity to recruit the type of players we have," the Knoxville native and University of Tennessee graduate stressed.

Byrd, who attends Belmont Heights Baptist Church, noted a lot of his players attend church regularly and many have gone on mission trips led by Belmont's Betty Wiseman.

"I can't imagine Belmont basketball without an obvious Christian influence hanging around it," said Byrd, who has been a head coach for 25 years,

including stints at Maryville College, Maryville, and Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate. His overall record at the three schools is 493-283.

Despite the success on the hardwood this year (20 victories, season co-champions of the conference, and the conference tournament title), Byrd is more likely to talk about the academic accomplishments of his players.

Twelve of the 14 players on his team this year were selected to the conference's All Academic Team and for 11 consecutive seasons the team has compiled a team grade point average of 3.0 or higher. He has coached two Academic All Americans — Wes Burtner and Adam Mark.

"If I'm going to brag about something about our team, it is the commitment they have to their studies and the commitment they have to represent Belmont in a first class way," Byrd said.

Byrd has taken the success of the team and its first NCAA tournament appearance in stride and gives credit to his three assistant coaches, all of whom have been with him for

six years or more, for the roles they have played.

Because the school was on spring break last week, Byrd gave his players time off to relax and enjoy themselves before beginning preparations for the tournament last Thursday. The first few days were spent "trying to make Belmont better," Byrd said.

After the NCAA selections were announced on Sunday and Belmont discovered they will be a number 15 seed and will be playing UCLA in San Diego, the team will prepare for its opponent.

At the time of the interview last week, however, Byrd expected the team would be a number 16 seed and would play one of the top four teams in the country.

He acknowledged "that no one expects us to win this game.

"I just hope we can prepare for the game just like any other and not worry about the name on the front

of the jersey," Byrd said.

He noted his team has played against top-caliber players this season as they have faced Ohio State and Oklahoma. They will be able to handle that aspect, he said.

His main concern is how the players will react to the stage itself — a national television against a top flight opponent.

"We could go out to the gym now and make seven out of 10 three-point shots," Byrd observed. "It will be different on the national stage. The biggest question mark is can we play comfortably."

Though Byrd never made an issue of wanting to be the coach who took Belmont to its first NCAA appearance, he noted that after his career is over, "it will be nice to look back and know he had a part in taking Belmont to the NCAA tourna-

ment for the first time."

As he reflects on his career at Belmont, Byrd said he cannot imagine coaching anywhere else.

"Belmont was a fit for me and it certainly has been a blessing for me to coach at Belmont," Byrd said.

The feeling is mutual for Belmont President Robert Fisher.

"Rick has one of the most brilliant basketball minds in the game today, but more importantly, Rick is a man of character and integrity," Fisher said.

"He sees his number one job as developing young people to achieve their greatest potential not just in basketball, but in every area of their lives," the Belmont president continued.

"He is a coach you'd want your son to play for." □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — CHILDREN

Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark, is seeking a minister to children. Send resume to jstatton@gsfbc.org or P.O. Box 31510, Little Rock, AR 72260. Information at www.gsfbc.org. Previous children's ministry experience expected.

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— 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?"

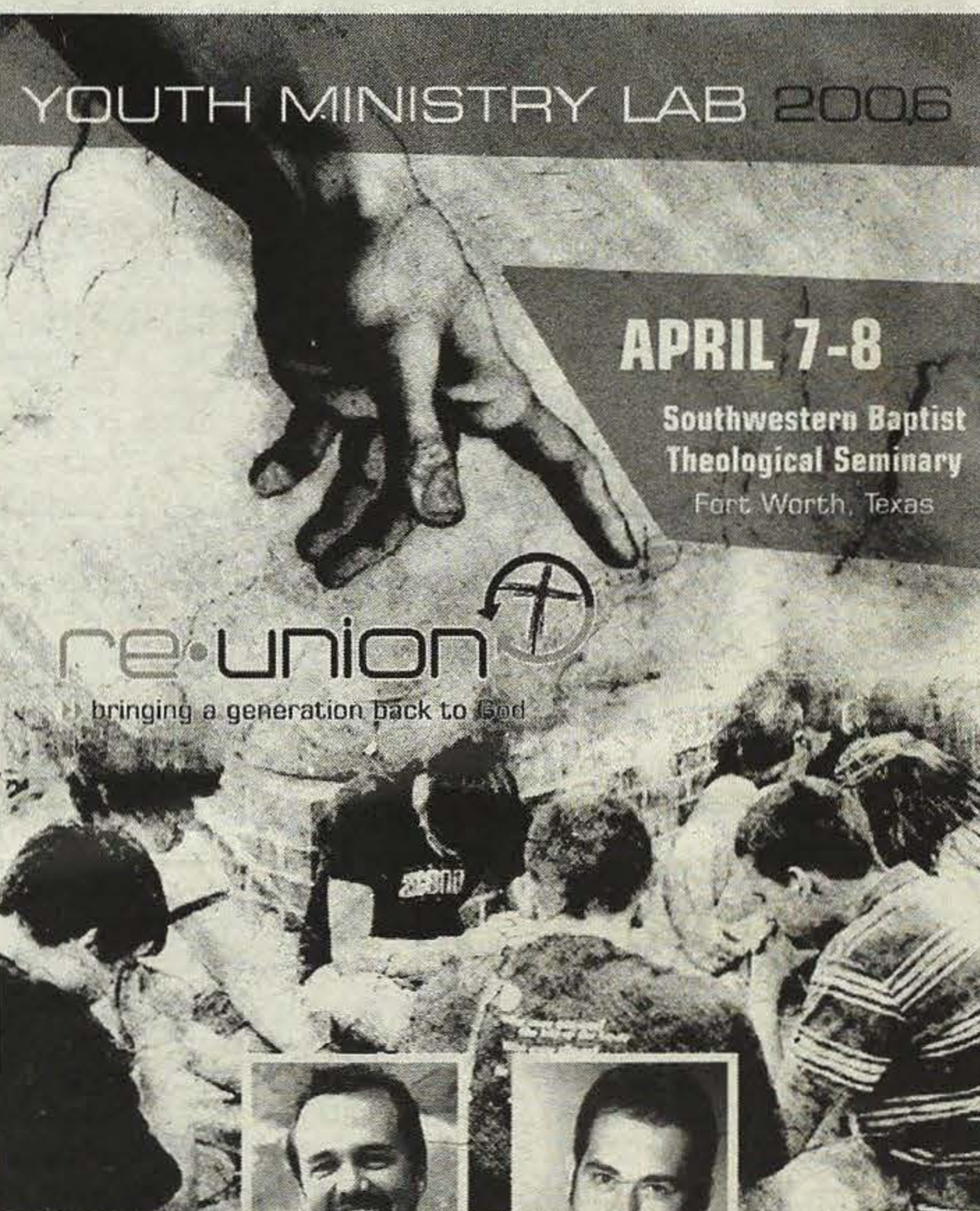
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Regardless of age, health problems

Tennessee volunteer Don Byrd continues to minister

By Kristen Byrd
For Baptist and Reflector

KNOXVILLE — What do a classroom, a jail cell, city hall, a gravel parking lot, a church sanctuary, delivery trucks, and a mortuary have in common?

For Don Byrd they were all places to lay his head while serving as a Tennessee Baptist volunteer.

"Don can be described as a good friend, a joker, and a person with a good, kind, soft heart — a true example of a Christian. He lives his faith daily and puts feet and hands to work to extend Christian love to others," reveals Roscoe England, long time friend and fellow volunteer.

In fact, Byrd is the reason England, as well as other recruits he has brought into the fold, are in disaster relief work.

Byrd, a member of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church here, will turn 75 this year and has been serving as a relief volunteer for more than half his life. He has no plans to quit now unless the doctors hold a meeting to decide otherwise. So far, having Parkinson's has not stopped him and last year's quadruple bypass surgery didn't deter him either.

A past recipient of the Jefferson Award, a national honor in recognition of outstanding

public service, Byrd has spent most of his life sharing with others what he learned as a 5-year-old boy.

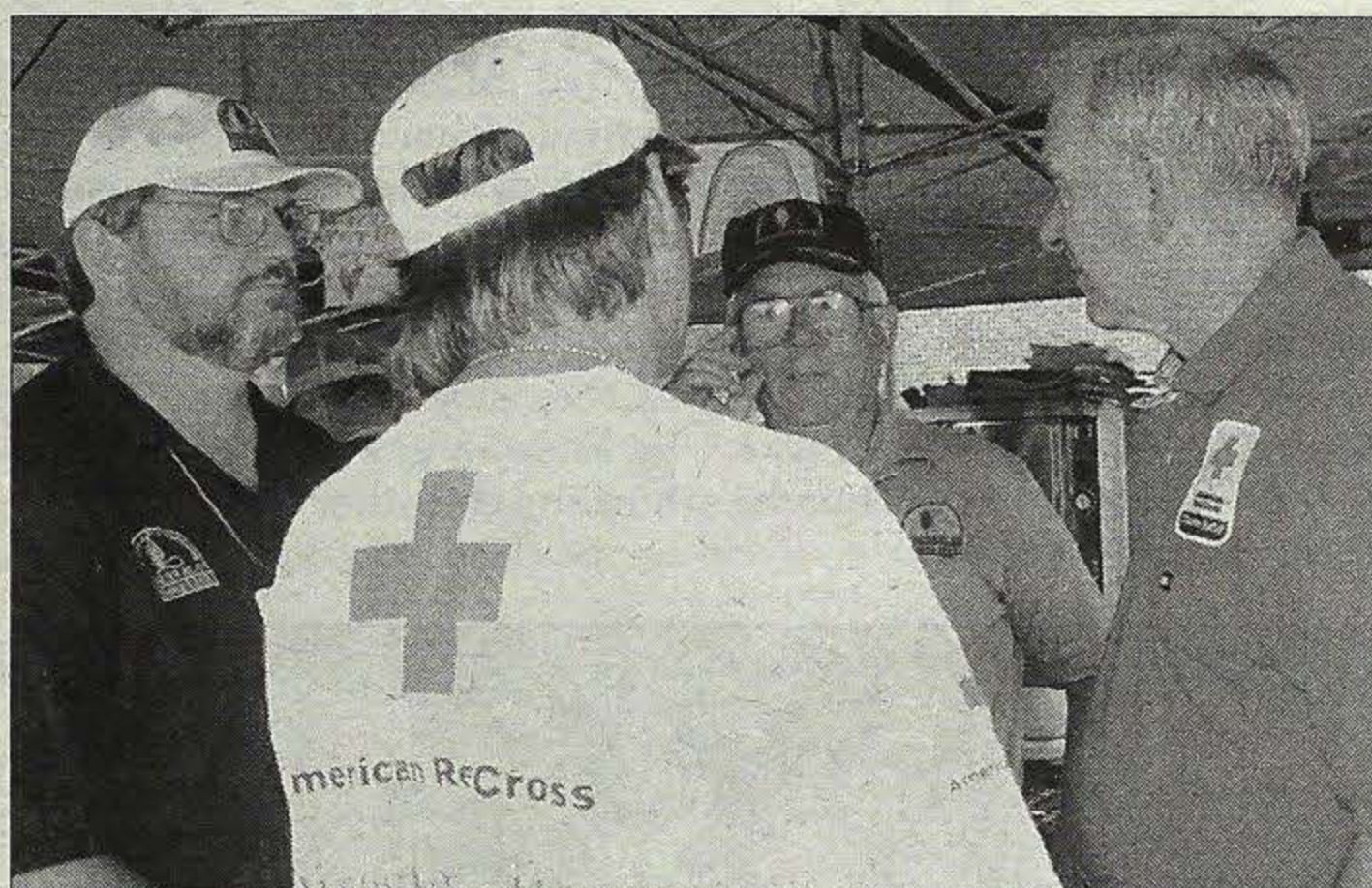
"Back when I was a kid, one of eight boys, my dad died with a heart attack so life was really tough then," explains Byrd. "I can remember the Christmas right after dad died and seeing my mother crying and looking out the window and seeing a whole army of men with boxes on their shoulders."

The church in his parent's community brought the family gifts and the memory of that charity never passed. "That was Christmas for us eight boys."

Since that time he has made it his personal philosophy to share with others whenever he gets the chance.

Byrd was born in 1931, and reared in Pioneer, a small community outside of Huntsville. He can remember sharing one bed with all of his brothers — one boy's feet at the other's head. Deciding who had to jump out of bed and restock the wood in the fireplace each night was always a huge point of contention.

Byrd, who has a reputation for mischief, loves to tell his grandchildren that he graduated 11th in his class. What he fails to mention is that his graduating class consisted of 12 people. And apparently, he



DON BYRD, center, has responded to numerous Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief calls. He is pictured here during a response in 2003 with other volunteers, including Tim Bearden, left, former state disaster relief director. In addition, to disaster relief, Byrd also is actively involved in World Changers and other volunteer opportunities.

was also a "pilot." "My brothers used to cut the wood and it was my job to pile it," Byrd jokes.

At age 19, Byrd moved to Knoxville and made a home there when he had finally met his match, Martha. They raised three boys and most recently have seven grandchildren.

Working as a machinist at Union Carbide in Oak Ridge, Byrd helped create tooling parts for company presses and equipment. But, the skill that he's most well-known for is his carpentry. He's an excellent carpenter and an all around handy man.

"That is why World Changers is such a good fit," explains Byrd.

World Changers is a program sponsored by the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention that offers senior high youth valuable mission experience through hands-on building repair projects. Byrd has been involved in the program since its beginnings in 1990 when he became a crew chief and helped teach construction skills to 10-12-member young adult construction crews. Since then he has aided in the repair of more than 300 homes throughout the United States.

He isn't very good at saying no. Wherever he is, whenever he's asked, whatever the favor, he always tries to help.

"It's been real frustrating sometimes," concedes Byrd's wife Martha, a devoted spouse for 55 years, "but then I'm always thankful he has the kind of heart he has. He had such a hard time growing up, he's walked in their shoes and he knows what it means for someone to bring a little sunshine."

Byrd has worked with Knoxville Leadership and currently with Mission of Hope, a charity program that ministers to those in poverty in the Appalachian regions of Tennessee and Kentucky.

He's helped with anything from removing a tree that had

fallen on someone's house to fixing a running toilet to repairing a broken lock. He once finished a job for a widow and her handicapped son who had hired some men to make their bathroom handicap accessible. Having already received payment, the workers got as far as removing the door and then left. Byrd finished the job.

If it were not for Byrd, more than 30 handicap ramps would not have been built. Through Mission of Hope he has aided in the construction of these ramps at many private residences.

"Don is one of those people that you meet from time to time that you feel like you have known for a lifetime," says fellow Tennessee disaster relief volunteer Larry Goad. "He's a very caring man with a great desire to help people."

When it comes to a life mission, nothing has yielded a greater impact than his involvement in Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief. For 27 years he has aided victims of disaster both foreign and at home. From Hurricanes Gilbert, Hugo, Ivan, Andrew, Katrina, and many more, to flooding in Missouri, earthquakes in California, and terrorism in New York, he has served as part of a mass feeding unit and as a member of cleanup and repair teams.

If it seems that all this devastation might dampen the volunteer spirit, trust Byrd: "We're always having fun," he says. "We've got to when we're out like that and stressed out and we've got to do something to keep our minds off the situation."

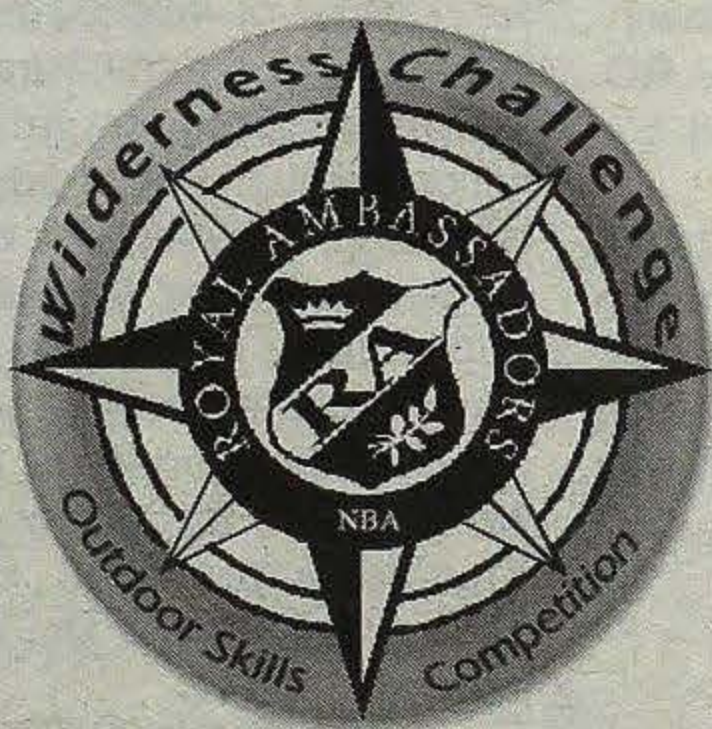
But Byrd isn't the only one having fun. Sometimes friends steal some laughter at his expense.

Byrd doesn't mind the jousting though because he loves to see people smile. He has a philosophy. "Share with other people. Maybe people are not as fortunate as you are." Around town and throughout the world, Byrd's friends consider themselves fortunate just to know him.

Continuing to make his bed wherever life leads him, this Tennessee volunteer knows what it means to adapt.

"I've slept in so many churches that when I go to church I don't know if I'm going to worship or work. I don't know whether to go in and lay down and go to sleep or worship. Usually at my age I go to sleep," he says with a chuckle. □ — Kristen Byrd is a student at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro.

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Three arrested in church fires probe

Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Law enforcement officials announced March 8 the arrests of three men in connection with a string of Alabama church fires that had terrorized the state since early February.

The three men are Benjamin Nathan Moseley, 19, of Birmingham, Ala.; Russell Lee Debusk Jr., 19, of Hoover, Ala.; and Matthew Lee Cloyd, 20, of Indian Springs, Ala. According to press reports, Moseley and DeBusk are students at Birmingham-Southern College and Cloyd is a student at the University of Alabama.

Officials filed criminal complaints against the three men in connection with arson at nine Baptist church fires in February. Four of the nine were Southern Baptist. It is not known if officials believe the men are connected with a 10th church fire that was set in late February.

Alabama Gov. Bob Riley called it a "good day for Alabama" and praised investigators for working together.

He added: "Alabama and all of the faith-based communities in this state can rest a little easier."

Five church fires were set late Feb. 2, followed by another

four late Feb. 6.

According to a nine-page criminal complaint filed in U.S. district court, tire tracks found at the scene of the church fires eventually led investigators to the three men. The tire treads were consistent with the tire treads found on Cloyd's green 2000 Toyota 4Runner, which is registered in his mother's name, according to the complaint. Impressions of the tire tracks were found at six of the churches, the complaint said.

Cloyd told an unidentified witness in the complaint that he and Moseley "did it as a joke and it got out of hand," the complaint said. Officials interviewed Moseley and DeBusk, both of whom admitted to being involved, according to the complaint.

"Moseley said that after they set fire to the first two churches they saw fire trucks driving by. Moseley said that after that, burning the other three churches became too spontaneous,"

the complaint said.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said the state convention has "full faith in the thoroughness of the law enforcement officials as to how they have handled the investigation process."

"We continue to work toward the goal of helping the churches

come to a full recovery from these terrible circumstances which they have experienced," he said in a statement. "Our prayers are with these church families as they plan for the future." □

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 N Chestnut St., Monterey, TN 38574. Post to the attention of Sonny Gilpatrick.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Ramer Baptist Church in Ramer, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Please e-mail resume to joeymaness1@yahoo.com or mail to Joey Maness, 333 Mulberry Ave., Selmer, TN 38375.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

West Fork Baptist Church in Murray, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resume to Kenneth Greer, 115 Shadow Circle, Murray, KY 42071. Resumes taken through March 31, 2006.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

Associate pastor/worship leader: theologically conservative Southern Baptist church is seeking a man who uses a blended style of worship. Must exude a love for Jesus and have a servant's heart. Reply to First Baptist Church, 106 West Oak St., West Frankfort, IL 62896, (618) 932-2105, fax: (618) 932-2106, rkarrroll@verizon.net.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Calvary Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala., is accepting resumes for minister of music. Responsibilities include administration of the music program from preschool through senior adult ministries in addition to worship leadership during our 8:30 a.m. traditional and 11 a.m. blended/contemporary services on Sunday mornings. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, Attn. Music Search, 1121 Paul Bryant Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Thalia Lynn Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of music to lead both contemporary and traditional worship. Send resume and references by April 1, 2006 to Chairman, Music Search Committee, 725 Southleaf Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23462 or e-mail music@thalia-lynn.com.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist Church of Mt. Olive is now accepting resumes for a full-time minister of music. Masters degree desired. Video or DVD would be greatly appreciated. Please submit resume to FBCMO, Attn. Search Committee, 3200 Mt. Olive Rd., Mt. Olive, AL 35117, church phone (205) 631-4401.

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.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Bethel Baptist Church, Henderson, is seeking a bivocational associate pastor/minister to students. This person will have responsibility for children and youth ministries as well as some pastoral duties. Please send resume to Bethel Baptist Church, 125 St. Hwy. 125, Henderson, TN 38340, Attn. Search Committee. Interested candidates can obtain information about our church at www.bethelfamilyoffaith.org.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Full-time associate youth pastor (with additional responsibilities such as education). Contemporary/traditional worship in West St. Louis County, MO. Send resume to Youth Search Committee, Ballwin Baptist Church, 15101 Manchester Rd., Ballwin, MO 63011-4629, e-mail youth@ballwinbaptist.com.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist, Pulaski, is seeking a full-time minister of students for a growing youth ministry. Please send resume to dplumlee@bellsouth.net or FBC, P.O. Box 306, Pulaski, TN 38478.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

First Baptist Church, Hayti, MO, is seeking a full-time youth director. \$28,000 plus insurance. Send resume to Youth Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 201 East Lincoln, Hayti, MO 63851.

MINISTRY — DOM

Sequatchie Valley Baptist Association (27 churches) in southeast Tennessee seeking God's man to replace retiring DOM. Send resume to fbcspn@aol.com or Rev. Charlie Cambell, 306 Fifth St., South Pittsburg, TN 37380.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Sullivan Baptist Association, a 32-church association in Kingsport, Tenn., is currently accepting applications for the director of missions position. Send resume by March 31 to SBA DOM Search Committee, Attn. Arden Taylor, 171 Promise Land Dr., Gray, TN 37615, or e-mail to ataylor@tcbchurch.org. and include a statement telling why God is leading you to seek this position.

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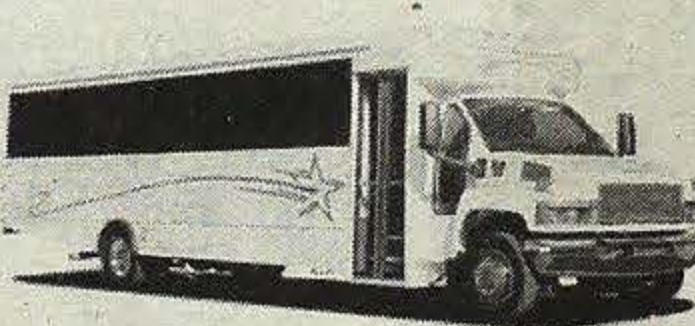
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book review

By Joseph Gould

Revolution
by George Barna
Tyndale Publishers, 2005

"If the local church is God's answer to our spiritual needs, then why are most church Christians so spiritually immature and desperate?" This is the question that George Barna has wrestled with for over 20 years as he has conducted research regarding Christians and the local church and that he answers in his book *Revolution*. In seeking an answer to this question, Barna has discovered what he calls "revolutionaries," some 20 million individuals who are serious about the Christian life, yet do not feel the need to commit themselves to a local congregation because "the experience provided through their church ... seems flat" (pg. 14). While the notion of abandoning the local church angers many people, Barna gives full endorsement to this "revolution," feeling the "Bible does not rigidly define the corporate practices, rituals, or structures that must be embraced in order to have a proper church ... We should keep in mind that what we call the 'church' is just one interpretation of how to develop and live a faith-centered life. We made it up. It may be healthy or helpful, but it is not sacrosanct" (pgs. 37-38). Barna argues that the local church, while not unbiblical, is not required.

We should recognize that the reason cited as why many of these "revolutionaries" have moved outside the local church for spiritual growth is the poor health of the present church. Barna says the seven passions of "revolutionaries" are intimate worship, faith-based conversion, intentional spiritual growth, servanthood, resource investment, spiritual friendships, and family faith. Amen! While we may differ theologically in how some of these passions look in practice, all Christians and churches should strive towards these things!

Barna's argument contains many exegetical and theological flaws. First, Barna's approach leads to the dismissal of many passages of Scripture regarding church polity, such as the roles of pastors and deacons, church ordinances, and congregational church discipline. How can church discipline be enforced if there is no centralized local body? What is the individual in sin being excommunicated from? We cannot dismiss the local church as some human invention; to do so is extremely harmful. Instead, we should work within the local church towards biblical faithfulness, expecting God to persevere and revitalize His churches into healthier institutions.

Next, the New Testament is clear that those who love Christ will love the things which Christ loves. Christ loves the Church and died for her. As Christians, we are to model this love towards one another. We cannot do this outside of covenanting together with other like-minded believers in a local church setting. Having coffee and chatting about the latest sermon you heard on the Internet is not enough.

Finally, Barna's numbers simply do not add up. Barna claims that there are over 20 million "revolutionaries" deeply committed to the Christian faith. He also says that of the 77 million Americans claiming to be born-again Christians, roughly 7 million of them have a biblical worldview. Even if all 7 million are "revolutionaries" (and they are not), then over 13 million (at least 65%) of those claiming this "revolution" do not have a biblical understanding of Christianity. The research shows that this "revolution" is not all that healthy.

How should the local church respond to this so-called "revolution"? First, we must recognize that the neglect of the local church is contrary to Scripture. Also, we must exhort all who repent and believe in the gospel to covenant together with other believers in a local church, so that they may both serve and be served within that body. This is the command of Scripture, even if our church is not as healthy as it should be. □ — Gould is a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. A native of Murfreesboro, he formerly served as youth minister at Harvest Baptist Church, Dyersburg.

Celebrate when people come to Christ

By Phil Taylor

**Focal Passage: Luke 15:1-7,
11-13, 22-24, 28-32**

When the Prodigal Son "came to himself," he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger!" It was as though he said, "What a fool I am! Here I am with nothing, and there they are with more than enough!" He decided to return to his father, and when he did so he discovered that the father waited to bestow upon him a superabundance of supply. How does God react if you come to Him or come back to Him?

The father feels deeply when we return. This father was moved with compassion, pity, and his heart went out to meet his son. The word itself refers to the moving of the viscera, the internal organs. The father felt for the son so deeply that it moved his very physical frame. God does not wait for our speeches before He loves us. While we were still sinners He acted in love toward us. Before you were ever born, knowing that you would rebel, God nevertheless sent His son for you. His compassion runs before you. For an aged oriental man to run was incredible — it was considered beneath his dignity. This presents the depth of the father's compassion.

The father receives tenderly when we return. The father kissed him tenderly or covered his face with kisses. Even more than in our

world this was a sign of forgiveness and restoration to relationship. God wants to demonstrate outwardly and obviously His tender reception when we return to Him.

God reacts with eagerness when we come back. The word "quickly" should not be ignored. The father does not even let the son repeat his memorized and rehearsed speech. God does not investigate or humiliate when we return. He interrupts the carefully crafted speech of the son with showers of honor and festivity. What God does for us He does quickly.

God reacts with generosity when we return. None of the things done for the son was in the order of a necessity. He could have come back on probation. He could have been received with reserve and coldness. He could have been welcomed with a sedate, private ceremony. But the father gives more than enough. Salvation is more than mere pardon and an embarrassed reception back into the family. It is justification, sanctification, adoption, responsibility in the church, resurrection, and glorification. God does more than the necessary when he saves.

God acts with dignity when we return. The son received a long, stately robe worn by nobles on state occasions. God honors us with the best when we return. God shares with us His authority when we return. The signet ring indicated a person of authority and stand-

Sunday School Lesson
Family Bible Series
March 19

ing in a king's house. God does not merely tolerate us as a slave; He gives us the dignity of authority in His house and family. Shoes were the mark of a son, not a slave. Further, only the master of the house could wear shoes in the house. They symbolize possession and freedom. Far from holding us in contempt, God floods us with the tokens of adoption into His family, dignity in His household, and responsibility in His kingdom.

God reacts with celebration when we return. In the entire universe, what moves heaven with hilarity? When we come back to God, heaven celebrates. There was only one fattened calf and it was reserved for the most special occasion. Nothing moves heaven like when one away from the father comes back. What greater contrast could there be than that between a naked son longing for the pods the pigs were eating and the honored son feasting with the father in the family home? □ — Taylor is director of missions for Bradley County Baptist Association, headquartered in Cleveland.



TAYLOR

Do you take God at His Word?

By Marvin Nail

**Focal Passage: Isaiah
7:1-14, 16**

It is truly amazing to watch how even a good Christian responds in the face of trouble. Some don't turn to God until they are really in deep enough that they realize they have no other choice. But most of us do pray for God to help us, then we get up off our knees and proceed to do what we thought was best in the beginning.

The people of Isaiah's day were little different from us. As we read their story from our vantage point we often marvel at how they refused to seek and follow the will of God for their lives. However, some devout believers might look at us and wonder why we do not trust God's promises more.

Facing danger (vv. 1-2)

Though there are some who still think that people with faith never face times of fear or danger, most of us know better. In the depths of our problem we might have wondered for a moment if God really knows how bad our situation is, but we know better.

Judah, the people of God, had begun to hear the rattle of swords to the north as their brother Israel

allied with the Arameans prepared to attack. King Ahaz began to tremble with fear even though God was holding them back. His fear infected the whole nation.

This is the point at which our true faith displays itself. This is the point at which unbelievers are our audience. They are looking for us to give them a reason to believe. This is also the very point at which we often lead them astray.

**Hearing God's promise
(vv. 3-9)**

As Ahaz and all of Judah were quaking with fear and dread, God's message of hope came in the person of Isaiah, the prophet. The Lord God is never far from His children even though they may not be conscious of it at the time.

God's word came to Ahaz where he was. He was not required to go on some quest for it. As with most of us, God's answer sought him out.

Isaiah began by telling Ahaz that God was aware of his circumstances. Not one of our moments slips through the cracks with God. His message was meant to encourage Ahaz as he referred to the two kings arrayed against Judah as "smoldering stubs," indicating that they were already burned out.

God was very clear in telling Ahaz that what those two armies had planned was not going to happen, because the Lord would not allow it.

Sunday School Lesson
Explore the Bible
March 19

**Insisting on our own way
(vv. 1-14, 16)**

Along with the promise of God, Isaiah offered to give Ahaz a sign to confirm the fact that he could trust God in his situation. At that point Ahaz seemed very pious and seemed to indicate he did not need a sign to make him believe God. However, the reason he didn't want the sign of God's help was that he had already enlisted aid from another source, Egypt.

The next part of our text is almost lost to this situation because of its later supreme fulfillment in the birth of Jesus. This is where we fail to see that almost all of prophecy was fulfilled to some degree in the times of the people who first heard it.

To get the importance of this prophecy to Ahaz and the people of Judah, we must suspend for a moment its later fulfillment in Jesus. This word of God through Isaiah was intended to assure Ahaz that God was with them (Immanuel) and that the danger he saw at the moment would only be brief because God does not abandon His people in their time of need. □ — Nail is a former pastor and current member of First Baptist Church, Nashville. He is an employee of LifeWay Christian Resources.



NAIL

Leaders

◆ **Raymond "Buddy" Boston**, pastor of First Baptist Church, Covington, recently received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Union University in Jackson. Boston previously served for 26 years as pastor of First Baptist Church, Dyersburg, as well as pastor of First Baptist Church, Dresden, and of First Baptist Church, Humboldt. He has been involved in partnership missions in five states as well as Canada, Venezuela, and Honduras.



BOSTON

◆ **Donald R. Webb**, a member of First Baptist Church, Jackson, recently received the Distinguished Service Award from Union University. Webb was integrally involved in the study, planning and implementation of Union's relocation from downtown Jackson to its campus in north Jackson. He has served as a Union trustee and president of Union's National Alumni Association.



WEBB

◆ **Prices Grove Baptist Church**, Rogersville, has called **Thomas Holt** of Talbott as pastor.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Oakland, licensed **Carl Doyle** to the ministry March 12.

◆ **Mark Brown**, youth minister at Oak Grove Baptist Church, Moscow, recently resigned to take a position near Humboldt.

◆ **Davis Memorial Baptist Church**, Dresden, has called **Jim Robinson** as its pastor.

◆ **Mountain View Baptist Church**, Benton, has called **Stacy Monger** as pastor. He was recently ordained by Union Grove Baptist Church, Tellico Plains.

◆ **Colonial Heights Baptist Church**, Kingsport, recently called **Daniel Selman** as its new minister of students.

◆ **Grace Baptist Church**, Tullahoma, has called **Micah Brown** as its youth pastor.

◆ **Doug Morris**, pastor of Harmony Baptist Church, Dresden, recently resigned.

◆ **Rocky Mount Baptist Church**, Athens, called **Jerry Plaster** as interim pastor effective Feb. 26.

Churches

◆ **Pinecrest Baptist Church**, Johnson City, will hold revival services Sunday-Wednesday, March 26-29, with Phil Glisson of

Memphis as evangelist.

◆ **Lick Creek Baptist Church**, Linden, will dedicate its new fellowship building on Sunday, March 19. Lunch will be served in the new building following the morning worship service. The 2 p.m. dedication service will be led by Ken Sparkman, interim pastor during construction time; Danny Roberts, pastor; and Lynn Walker, director of missions, Alpha Baptist Association.

◆ **Sharon Baptist Church**, Knoxville, will celebrate its 135th anniversary Sunday, March 26, with former pastor Harold White as guest speaker, and a former preacher's kid Gary Trusler as guest musician. White served the church from 1952-1954. Trusler's father, George Trusler, served Sharon Church from 1948-49 and 1954-59.

◆ **Dowelltown Baptist Church**, Dowelltown, is holding a revival March 12-16 with Ronnie Owens as speaker and Gary and Kathy Miller as worship leaders.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Trezevant, will hold revival March 26-30. John Adams, pastor, East Union Baptist Church, Jackson, will speak.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Milan, will host its second annual Wild Game and Fishing Expo, Saturday, March 18, beginning at 2:30 p.m. Guest speaker will be ESPN's college



JANE GARVIN recently retired after 32 years on the staff of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board. Garvin, a member of First Baptist Church, Lewisburg, was honored with a reception at the Baptist Center in Brentwood. With her are her husband, Bill Garvin, left, and Gary Rickman, TBC ministry coordinator. Garvin served eight years as Rickman's ministry assistant.

football analyst, Mike Gottfried. For information and tickets, call (731) 686-3385.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Clarksville, will break ground on Sunday, March 19, for its new children's and youth complex.

Associations

◆ Five members of the disaster relief chain saw team of **Cumberland Baptist Association** will leave Friday, March 17, to conduct damage assessment in Algiers, La. A second chain saw team is also

expected to serve in Algiers March 25 - April 1.

◆ **Nashville Baptist Association** will host a Church Library Conference, March 30-31 at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville. The \$50 registration fee includes classes, meals, book review session, library vendor's fair, and more. Authors Jonathan Rogers and Jennifer O'Neill of Broadman and Holman publishing will speak at evening banquets. For more information, e-mail steve.gateley@lifeway.com or call (615) 251-2126.

Teams from FBC, Collierville, aid NOBTS campus and community

Baptist Press

NEW ORLEANS — A simple act of service spoke volumes to Sid Allen.

"To me they represent what the church should be," Allen said after volunteers cleaned out his flood-damaged home.

"They came and gave of themselves and asked for nothing in return."

The volunteers were Southern Baptists who came to New Orleans through the

MissionLab program at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in late January. These volunteers are making a significant impact on the NOBTS campus and in the neighborhoods near the seminary as well.

The seminary launched MissionLab in 1999 to provide custom mission experiences for youth, college students, and senior adults. Before the hurricane, MissionLab focused on urban ministry

outside the seminary gates.

Hurricane Katrina presented a unique challenge for MissionLab. Flooding left the city virtually empty and NOBTS campus housing severely damaged. Meanwhile, many Baptists began calling to offer help with campus restoration.

The MissionLab staff adapted for new needs. They began scheduling volunteers to help clean and restore the campus. However, from the start, Mis-

sionLab directors Bob and Linda Jackson hoped volunteers also would be able to help restore homes in the community. That goal was reached in January.

Since Oct. 31, when seminary cleanup began, volunteers have cleaned out and painted numerous campus apartments and buildings, trimmed trees, laid new sod and installed new fencing. The results are tangible — Southern Baptist volunteers have

saved the seminary an estimated \$1 million in labor costs.

During the week of Feb. 19, volunteers from **First Baptist Church, Collierville**, continued the on-campus restoration work. Nine members of the church repainted student and staff apartments on Lipsey Street, getting the campus ready for reopening later this spring. This was the second team sent from the Tennessee church.

The church also had a team in New Orleans last week which combined with a team from University of Memphis collegiate ministries, according to Sam Nichols, minister of missions and administration at First Baptist.

The team, led by Jeff Jones of UM and Mikey Mewborn, FBC youth minister, worked on campus and in area homes, Nichols said.

He noted plans are to send another team in April and possibly in May.

Last year after the disaster hit, FBC gave \$150,000 for disaster relief and another \$50 to NOBTS.

Chuck Herring, FBC's pastor, is a graduate of NOBTS. □



MEMBERS OF First Baptist Church, Collierville, who recently ministered on the campus of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary and the surrounding community were, from left, front row, James Troutt, Duane Kennedy, Sam Nichols; back row, David Johnson, Ed Reed, Jerry Davis, Dwight Anderson, Jim Morrison, Frank McCarroll, Lynn Eagan, and Billy Hart.



ANOTHER TEAM from First Baptist Church, Collierville, who recently ministered on the campus of New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary and the surrounding community included, from left, Collette Day, George Lofton, Lisa Fitzgerald, Mary Lynn Hammons, Doris Troutt, Dwayne Harris, Eugene Maxwell, Mary Eagan, and Sam Nichols.