

Baptist & Reflector

Stewie Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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LifeWay staffer helps church, others 'break the code'

By Bonnie Wilkey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Like many people Lynn Pryor enjoys reading good fiction.

So it was not that unusual when, while on a mission trip a few years ago, he bought a copy of Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, while waiting in an airport terminal.

And, he readily acknowledges that "it is a fun book to read if you check your brain at the door."

Unfortunately, too many people are taking the Brown novel as gospel, literally. Herein lies the problem as the book is gaining even more popularity with the upcoming release of the movie (slated for May 19) with the same name. The movie is directed by Ron Howard (Opie of *The Andy Griffith Show*) and features Paul Giamatti (of *Forrest Gump* and *Apollo 13* fame) as the actor.

Pryor observed that one of the major problems with the

novel is a page just before the novel begins which notes that some elements of the book are real, such as Opus Dei, a powerful Catholic organization, and The Priory of Sion, a small group which included famed painter Leonard Da Vinci, who supposedly knew the "truth" that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene.

"If it were not for that one page, most people would blow the book off," Pryor observed.

But, he noted, people have trouble knowing where the truth ends and the fiction begins when reading *The Da Vinci Code*. "It is blurred," he stressed.

Pryor, who is a former pastor and youth minister and now serves in student ministry publishing at LifeWay Christian Resources, even acknowledged that he caught himself reading portions of the book and saying, "I didn't know that" or "I wonder if that is really true."

Pryor recalled that when he read the book he thought it might become "a good opportunity to talk about who Jesus really is."

Now, with the upcoming movie, that opportunity is greater than ever, he observed.

"While Christians should not endorse the movie, they should embrace the opportunity to say who Jesus really is," said Pryor, a member of Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville.

He also discouraged a " boycott" of the film. "That will just make more people want to see it," he predicted.

Pryor has developed a seminar with handouts and a PowerPoint presentation that can be used to counteract the ideas that are presented in the book, and presumably, the movie.

Pryor acknowledged that simply saying the book is a novel or work of fiction is not enough.

"It is a novel, but it becomes an issue for us as Christians because people are buying into the principles presented in the book."

Those principles are opposite what Christians believe about the Bible and Jesus and that is what compelled Pryor to create the seminar and teaching materials.

"I wanted to create something for young adults or college students that a teacher could grab on to for a class or seminar," Pryor said. The reason for the seminar and resources is to

help Christians combat the false information in Brown's novel that many people are assuming is real and factual.

He has tested his own work, both at Woodmont and at LifeWay. Pryor has taught it to the young professionals Sunday School class he teaches at Woodmont. He also recently began teaching it on a broader scale at Woodmont on Wednesday evenings and to LifeWay employees during their lunch hour.

The seminar, which can be adapted to either one, two, or three sessions, has attracted participants of all ages, he observed, and, in general, has been well received.

Pryor said it is a lecture-based curriculum because of the volume of material that needs to be covered, but he developed a PowerPoint presentation to make it more appealing and allows time for questions and dialogue.

"We have had some interesting discussions," he acknowledged.

In a nutshell, *The Da Vinci Code* suggests that the New Testament gospels do not tell the true story about Jesus, that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene, and that she

was the true intended leader of Jesus' movement. The book also suggests that Jesus and Mary had children that became a part of French royalty.

The book also relies heavily on Gnostic gospels including the gospels of Phillip, Mary, and Thomas. Gnosticism is an ancient belief system that the early church identified as a heresy.

Pryor stressed that church history supports the New Testament gospels. "It does not support the gnostic gospels."

He noted that the bottom line is that "the accounts of Jesus and His life in Scripture are accurate and that everything *The Da Vinci Code* is based on is false, distorted history."

Pryor again stressed the need for Christians to embrace the opportunities provided by the book and movie.

"Because of the popularity of this story, people are asking questions about Jesus. We have a great opportunity to point them to the truth about Jesus." □ — Pryor is willing to share his teaching materials with others who might be interested. He can be reached at (615) 293-3976.

Call to prayer issued for special meeting of TBC

Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The Tennessee Baptist Convention will gather May 9 for a special meeting at Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, for a three-fold purpose:

- 1) Dealing with relationship with Belmont University.
- 2) Possible action concerning trustees of Belmont University.
- 3) Dealing with relationship with The Baptist Health System of East Tennessee, Inc.

On May 8 a Call to Prayer has been issued. The call to prayer will take the form of a prayer walk.

Our desire is to saturate the sanctuary of Two Rivers Baptist Church and the proceedings of the May 9 meeting with prayer and to plead that the Lord's name would be hal-

lowed among us and that His kingdom and His will would be done during the meeting on May 9," said Don Pierson, TBC prayer coordinator.

"A Christ-like attitude in approaching this convention will be best cultivated through intentional, fervent prayer," said TBC Executive Director James Porch.

"I ask each Tennessee Baptist planning to attend this convention to arrive seeking the mind of Christ through prayer," Porch added.

On May 8 the Call to Prayer will begin at 7 p.m. and will conclude at 9 p.m. The format of this prayer walk will be such that individuals can come and go as needed, Pierson said.

"I would like to invite you to come and saturate this meeting in prayer," he added. □

At FBC, Donelson

Prisoners accepted as church members

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — First Baptist Church, Donelson, which is located in the northeastern part of Nashville, recently accepted two women as members who are incarcerated at the Tennessee Prison for Women in Nashville.

According to Jim Cross, senior pastor, and Linda Knott, member, the action is not that unusual if you know the congregation.

For years the congregation has served at the prison. Knott has been involved in ministry at the Tennessee Prison for Women for 14 years. She retired after serving about seven years as volunteer chaplain. Knott also is a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board.

Linda Oakley and Cheryl Holland of TPW also don't feel it's that unusual even though they both joked they don't even know where Donelson is.

With another smile, Holland explained they can be considered shut-ins.

But seriously, the two women said they have felt a connection with members of the church for years as members have come and

taught, led worship, presented music, and loved them, often hugging them. "We pray together with each other and for each other," added Oakley.

"Don't get me wrong, the other people are loving too," she said, referring to volunteers from other churches. The chapel, where Holland works, hosts members of 16 churches who lead events at TPW each weekend. Other studies are led by church volunteers during the week.

Amazingly, although Holland and Oakley are roommates, they decided separately to ask to be members of the church.

"It was a Holy Spirit thing. He directs us," said Oakley.

Oakley, who has been incarcerated for about 16 years, has been a Baptist and Christian since childhood. In fact, her membership has been in a Baptist church in Mississippi. But her life changed when she started receiving "good teaching of the truth" at TPW, she said.

— See Prisoners, page 3



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about your newsjournal

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Students charged in arson attacks plead 'not guilty'

Associated Baptist Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Three men charged with conspiracy and arson in the burning of nine churches in rural Alabama pleaded not guilty in an arraignment hearing April 13. Federal Judge John Ott set a June 5 trial date for the case.

Defendants Russell DeBusk Jr., 19; Benjamin Moseley, 19; and Matthew Cloyd, 20, also face state charges in connection with the fires, five of which happened Feb. 3 in Bibb County. Four more happened in west Alabama Feb. 7.

The men, students at colleges in Birmingham, have been held at Shelby County Jail since their arrest in March. If convicted on federal charges, each count has a mandatory sentence of at least five years in prison.

Defense lawyers have not ruled out a possible plea agreement, Associated Press reported, especially since the men have expressed remorse for the fires. They reportedly told authorities the fires started as "a joke" that got out of hand.

DeBusk's attorney, Brett Bloomston, said the defense teams hope to bring a resolution to the case. He told AP that DeBusk has had time for reflection while in jail. "He's done a lot of praying and introspection," Bloomston said. "He's very remorseful."

Five of the churches were destroyed, and two firemen were injured during the fires. □

Students counter 'day of silence'

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — The culture wars over homosexuality are coming to your local high school soon, featuring a two-day battle.

As an estimated 500,000 high school and college students nationwide plan to participate in the national "Day of Silence" April 26, which calls attention to the plight of sexual minorities in America's schools, students who disapprove of homosexuality plan to hold their own mass response the next day.

The Day of Silence — this year's observance of it will be the 10th — is sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. It is designed to protest harassment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. Participants remain silent throughout the school day, choosing instead to communicate via buttons and T-shirts or at after-school rallies.

On the next day, April 27, other groups of students will participate in the "Day of Truth," an initiative sponsored by the Alliance Defense Fund. ADF, a Christian defense group, says the purpose of the event is

Dockery signs statement on marriage

By Tim Ellsworth
Union University news service

JACKSON — Union University President David S. Dockery was one of 48 religious leaders to sign a letter calling for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

The ecumenical statement, "A Letter from America's Religious Leaders in Defense of Marriage," includes support from Jewish rabbis, Catholic leaders, Anglicans, Orthodox, Protestants, and evangelicals.

"We are convinced that this is the only measure that will adequately protect marriage from those who would circumvent the legislative process and force a redefinition of it on a whole of our society," the letter reads. "We encourage all citizens of good will across the country to step forward boldly and exercise their right to work through our constitutionally established democratic procedures to amend the Constitution to include a national definition of marriage."

The letter argues that marriage, which for thousands of years has been defined as a

bond between one man and one woman, is a vital component of civil society.

"Marriage is particularly important for the rearing of children as they flourish best under the long term care and nurture of their father and mother," the letter reads. "For this and other reasons, when marriage is entered into and gotten out of lightly, when it is no longer the boundary of sexual activity, or when it is allowed to be radically redefined, a host of personal and civil ills can be expected to follow."

Those signing the letter cite their concern with divorce rates, out-of-wedlock births, absentee fathers, and the trend of some courts to make marriage "an elastic concept" that can accommodate individual preference.

Other signers of the letter include Francis Cardinal George, the archbishop of Chicago; Archbishop Demetrios of America; Keith Ackerman, the Episcopal bishop of Illi-

nois; Richard John Neuhaus, editor of *First Things*; Ra' Tzvi Hersch Weinreb, executive vice president of the Union Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America; Charles C. Son, founder and chairman of Prison Fellowship; Jan Dobson, founder and chairman of Focus on the Family; and other well-known leaders across the country.

Other Southern Baptist signers of the letter are Dar Akin, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University; Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission; Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Malcolm Yarnell, director of the Center for Theological Research at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Steve Lemke, provost at New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary; and Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif.

The entire letter can be read at www.religiouscoalitionformarriage.org. □



DOCKERY

to stand against "the promotion of the homosexual agenda and expressing an opposing viewpoint from a Christian perspective." That includes the idea that gays can change their orientation.

Participating students wear shirts and pass out cards that say, among other things, "Silence isn't freedom. It's a constraint. Truth tolerates open discussion."

"We are participating in the Day of Truth not only to exercise our right to free speech, but also out of our love and compassion for those who are struggling with their sexual identity and to provide them with hope through the love of Jesus Christ," a statement from the group said. □

Going to church not a priority for many Christians

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS — Almost three-fourths of Americans claim to be Christians, but only a small fraction consider church the place to deepen their faith, a new survey says.

Less than 20 percent of American adults believe participation in a congregation is critical to spiritual growth, and just as few agree that only through participation in a faith community will they reach their full potential, the Barna Research Group reported April 18.

Based on interviews with 1,003 adults from across the

nation, the telephone surveys also found that as few as 17 percent of adults said "a person's faith is meant to be developed mainly by involvement in a local church." What's more, only one-third of all evangelicals — the group most likely to attend church — endorsed the concept.

And while 72 percent of Americans claim they have personally committed themselves to Jesus Christ, less than 50 percent attend religious services on a weekly basis.

"These figures emphasize how soft people's commitment to God is," evangelical researcher George Barna said in the report. "Americans are willing to expend some energy in religious activities such as attending church and reading the Bible, and they are willing to throw some money in the offering basket, but when it comes time to truly establishing their priorities and making a tangible commitment to knowing and loving God, most people stop short."

Barna also said the results should challenge church leaders to foster a "more positive community experience." Instead of a generic church model, which emphasizes attendance and experience-driven services, Barna said, churches should try for relationships that are less fluid in nature.

"Jesus' example leaves no room for doubt about the significance of involvement in a faith community," he said, adding that a "biblical understanding of the preeminence of community

life" takes strategic planning and time.

The survey, conducted in January, queried a random sampling of people 18 years and older living in the contiguous United States. The geographic distribution of survey respondents corresponded to that of the U.S. population. □

More families dinner together new survey shows

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Parent experts have advocated it for years, and more families may be catching on to the importance of sitting down for a meal together.

A nationwide survey by the National Center for Addition and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that number of children ages 12 and older who ate dinner with their families at least five times a week rose from 47 percent in 1991 to 58 percent last year.

"There's definitely an awareness that was not there a few years ago," said Miriam V. Stein, author of a book on the power of family meals, told *New York Times*.

Children who eat dinner with their families regularly are likely to get involved with school and alcohol than those who do not, studies have shown, they tend to get better grades, exhibit less stress, and eat better, *The Times* noted. □

Prisoners accepted as church ...

Continued from page 1
 She was a part of one of the MasterLife courses taught by Knott at TPW. She has known Baptists to be "saved and satisfied," said, "and I don't want that more." Oakley thought of asking about joining the church for a long time, but didn't pursue it. However, the idea became more prominent inside of me," she described. I needed a church home that was close that supported me," said Oakley. She tends to think of her sons when she thinks of First Church, Donelson, members. Just like she used to pick them up when they were toddlers, the members of the church pick her up. Holland attended the church of God while growing up in East Tennessee. She made a profession of faith while in a county jail. She has been incarcerated for about 12 years. Soon after she arrived at TPW Holland met Ruth Loper, member of First Church, Donelson, who began visiting her once a month. Loper still visits Holland. "For years I've felt a part of a church," said Holland, referring to First Church,

Donelson. What she didn't learn from Loper about the church she learned from Knott. Joining First Church made her a Baptist for the first time, explained Holland. But in her work at the chapel she has had time to study the various denominations. "No other church teaches that God is love like the Baptists do. And that's why I was saved, because of love, and if you don't grasp that you don't understand anything." For years Holland has sent tithes to the church from her job in the chapel. Now both women are tithing to First Church. Oakley works in a business which provides jobs to TPW inmates. When Knott told Jim Cross about the desire of Holland and Oakley to become members, he didn't even pause to consider the request before he agreed to present them to the church, recalled Knott. Soon he traveled to TPW to visit with Holland and Oakley separately to discuss their faith and request.



CROSS

Oakley said, "It was like he'd known me all of his life. I feel like that's where He (God) wants me," she said. Holland agreed. The women also know of former inmates who have joined the church and felt welcomed. Of course, Knott was a great influence on their decision, both women agreed. Because of her and the many Baptists she has recruited to minister to them and others at TPW, they "have never felt forgotten," said Holland. About 20 Baptists serve each week at TPW. "We're in the middle of a mission field," said Oakley. Of her friend, she added, any person who meets Holland soon realizes that "Christ is in here." Knott noted that both women have led dozens of fellow inmates to the Lord and influenced others. "It's an absolute blessing that the church would open their doors to us," said Holland. "We can't be there to support them like most members, but we can lift them up in prayer." Oakley agreed. "We have been so blessed. It's the Lord's favor." They both hope to be released soon and be able to attend the church in person.



LINDA OAKLEY, left, and Cheryl Holland stand in a room of the Tennessee Prison for Women, Nashville.

Holland's daughter has moved to Nashville so Holland will stay here to be near her. She also has a teenage son. Oakley plans to begin a new life in Nashville too. On March 12 Oakley and Holland were presented for membership at First Church, Donelson, in absentia. Knott spoke of Oakley and Loper spoke of Holland. Then Cross asked the congregation to vote if they wished to accept them. The vote was unanimous. After the vote Cross told the congregation that since both women are active witnesses in prison and have seen many women come to Christ as a result of their ministry, he

hoped, should they be released and come to First Church, they wouldn't be disappointed in what they saw in the members. He said during his interview with the women he was overwhelmed by the "keen sense of God in the lives of Holland and Oakley." "Holland said with apology that she knew her work at the prison was nothing like our work at Donelson." She had only helped about 400 be baptized in her years at the prison, nothing she was sure like the work of First Baptist, Donelson, recalled Cross. Knott said, "You pray all of these years that these girls are getting it and when they do, oh yeah, it's great." □

Kingsport church's fishing seminars reach sportsmen

Marcia Knox
 Baptist and Reflector

KINGSPORT — Higher Ground Baptist Church here recently held a unique 13-week community outreach event called "Let's Go Fishin'" seminars Jan. 11 - April 5, which averaged 78 people each Wednesday night. The event was coordinated by church member Nathan Light, "a bi-vocation-fisherman," who also works at Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, and is founder of the Christian Fishing Club. The church seminars had different speakers each week who were local fishing pros in many technical areas from lure to various types of fish. Topics ranged from "River fishing at the Bank" to "Rock fishing." Each Wednesday night a prize donated by local national fishing sponsors was given away. The closing session included "big fish" door prizes. The sessions, which ran from 6:45-8:15 p.m. in the Family Life Center, also featured prayers and devotionals by church leaders and demonstrations and videos by local



LEADING ONE OF "Let's Go Fishin'" seminars at Higher Ground Baptist Church, Kingsport, are Nathan Light, left, event coordinator, and Mickey Burton, also of the church.

pro fishermen. On closing night, April 5, church pastor Phil Hoskins gave a devotional and evangelism talk to about 95 people. Seven people accepted Christ including six who had not visited the church. At least four other denominations were represented at the training sessions, which included a high attendance of 175 people. "This is the first significant outdoor event that our church has offered that was targeted to the community," said Light, who has been a member

of the church for 15 years and served in several key leadership positions including Sunday School director and teacher, interim youth minister, and deacon. "We are planning on doing more outdoor events in the fall. "We had been looking for ways to do outreach and at the same time do something for our men. The pastor gave me free reign to pull it off." Visitors to the fishing seminars knew what to expect, added Light. "We didn't blindsided them with the gospel." □



NATHAN LIGHT, left, event coordinator, stands with Aaron Broome who shows the door prize he just received.

Union trustees ok \$50 million budget

Union University news office

JACKSON — Union University trustees on April 21 approved a record \$50 million budget and recommitted themselves to "Union 2010," the long-range plan for the university that calls for new graduate programs, increased enrollment goals, and continued improvements to the Jackson campus. "It's a giant step forward to enable this university to advance its mission in a bold way," Union President David S. Dockery said of the 2006-2007 budget. The \$50 million budget is a \$4.4 million increase over the 2005-2006 budget, the largest dollar increase in Union's history. Trustees also selected Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, as the recipient of this year's M.E. Dodd Award, the highest denominational service award Union gives. It is named for the man who was a Union alumnus, served as president of the SBC, and who was the father of today's Cooperative Program. □

The study of biblical words is richest of all word studies

words from the Word



By Johnnie Godwin

Editor's Note: Johnnie Godwin formerly wrote "From both sides of the pulpit." He is taking a new approach with his column, now entitled "Words from the Word." We hope you will enjoy this new column.

Words and you

One time I read that people speak an average of 30,000 words per day. That was long before the invention of the cell phone. Recently, I read of someone telling another, "You'll be able to recognize me because I'll be the one not talking on a cell phone." How many words do you suppose you speak a day?

Besides spoken words, we're worded to death via e-mail, web logs (blogs), and other verbiage that bog us down. Marya Mannes observed, "The more people are reached by mass communication, the less they communicate with each other." Ironical, isn't it? To be globally connected, yet to be so disconnected.

Wisdom in silence & words

Our wireless society needs to

learn there is a time to be wordless and a time to use words — the wisdom of timely silence and timely speech (Ecclesiastes 3:7). We've never been so technologically connected as we are now nor so socially disconnected. And we've probably never spoken so many idle words — many of which seemingly pass through the mouth without going through the mind.

Obviously, we either haven't known or taken seriously what Jesus said in Matthew 12:36: *You must give an account on judgment day of every idle word you speak* (NLT). Other translations sense the spiritual context to say we're accountable for careless words that will come back to haunt us; our words reflect our heart. The Message paraphrases, *It's your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words. ... Words are powerful; take them seriously* (from Matthew 12:33-37).

The place of words

But take heart. Words have their place, and we're going to that place. William Barclay said about one of his teachers, "He opened to us the magic of words, and this is a magic which, once it has laid its grip upon you, will never let you go" (*Testament of Faith*, p. 8). True. Especially when the Word grips us.

Words and the Bible

Unabridged dictionaries list

about 28 entries to define "word" and its usages. Before we go further, let's just agree that basically "word" refers to a symbol intended to communicate meaning. Whether it's spoken or written.

Biblically, God used "Word" to refer to the divine personhood of Christ, who became flesh and blood in Jesus (John 1:1,14; 1 John 5:7). In Revelation 19:13, we read about Jesus Christ, *His name is called The Word of God*. The Eternal God in Christ is personified as "the Word." That Word became visible as one of us in flesh — but uniquely divine and sinless.

The Bible itself is referred to as "the Word of God." God chose to communicate with us through the Word (God in Christ) and through His Word (the God-inspired Bible). We have a stewardship opportunity and responsibility to receive God's communication, understand it, and live it out in the days of our flesh. We are to receive God's Word and incarnate it in our living. I hope to be a help by writing about "Words from the Word."

Words of power and richness

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me," says the old proverb; but the proverb is wrong. Words

can hurt us, break our heart, and kill our spirit. Or words can have healing power, encouragement for the discouraged, lift our spirits, and enrich our understanding. We can practice speaking the truth in love instead of being cuttingly candid or brutally frank.

Within the text and context of God's Word, we find that there can be power and richness in words. The Word is creative: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. ... All things were made by him* (John 1:1, 3; Genesis 1-2). About the Bible: *The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, ... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Hebrews 4:12). *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold* (Proverbs 25:11).

Think of a pyramid: The base is "the Word of God" in all senses of that term; and the point of the pyramid is God's call in Christ (Philippians 3:12-15). Now, our stewardship is to fill up the pyramid of life by answering God's Word with our focus on Jesus. That is a rich thought. I have loved studying words ever since I can remember. The study of biblical words is the richest of all word studies.

These words can be more than concepts and precepts that

increase our knowledge. They can become living words that enter our lives and help us say yes to God. They can help us share good news with man. I'm willing, I want to highlight visit with you over one of these words at a time in days to come. **What might be the first of these words?**

I'm afraid to tell you because you might say, "It's all Greek to me." Actually, a large number of the million-plus words in the English language did come from Greek. However, the Bible-related words I'll share are common enough in the English language that they're in most of our dictionaries. Further, I promise to use what I call "people-talk" which means everyday language that you and I know. What is food is to the tummy, people is to the mind.

Okay, with these caveats, go ahead and hint what I plan to write next in "Words From the Word" (D.V.). It's a Bible word that has meant and continues to mean so much to me. It is used over 100 times in the Bible, 10 times in II Corinthians 10 (NIV).

Consider this hint an invitation to join me next time. Copyright 2006 by Johnnie Godwin, resident philologist. Available to you via johnniegodwin@comcast.net.

letters to the editor

Get the facts

I join with you in encouraging Tennessee Baptists to pray for the special meeting of the convention on May 9, to get all the facts, and to attend the meeting with an open mind.

As we pray, collect facts, and keep an open mind, I believe that we must necessarily consider the 1951 document that was discovered by Belmont and given to the TBC in light of the long history between the university and the convention.

It is a history that began in 1951 and has, like every relationship, matured through the years through changes in law and circumstance. The relationship has been redefined multiple times by actions of both Belmont and TBC. These actions were no mere changes in terminology as you suggested in your April 12 editorial. All the facts evidencing this changing relationship and its impact on the relevance of the 1951 document should be considered by messengers to the May 9 meeting.

Belmont has stated its gratitude and respect for its historic relationship with the TBC and its desire to continue its cooperation with Tennessee Baptists. My prayer is that this cooperation can continue in a manner that all concerned can support.

Morris Early
Madison 37115

Modern parable

I know we're all grieved about those things that have developed with Belmont University. As I have thought about the situation, I've tried to come up with a comparable analogy that would help us all to better understand what has transpired. I offer the following as something of a "modern parable" that helps me to place in perspective those things that have recently taken place.

There once was a man who owned a house. One day, this man was contacted by a long lost friend who had fallen on hard times. He explained that times had become so tough that he could hardly pay his bills and that he was about to be evicted. Feeling sorry for his friend, the man decided to allow his friend to stay in his home on the following condition — that he respect his rules and remain accountable at all times. The friend agreed to the terms and even promised that should he ever break the man's rules, he would vacate the premises without argument. Things went well for several months, but then the man began to notice that his friend started inviting some folks of questionable character to the house — folks who tended to disregard the house rules. After this happened on several occasions, the man went to his

friend and asked him to stop inviting the other people over. The friend would always agree, but it seemed as though nothing was ever really done. Things even digressed to the point where the friend invited some of these other folks to live with them — something he had no right to do. At that point, the man decided that the living arrangement was no longer going to work, so he asked the friend that he had been so close with to leave. To his chagrin, not only did the friend refuse to leave, but he insisted that the house belonged to him anyway. It became very clear to the man that he had yet another decision to make — leave his house and simply give it to his friend who had abused their relationship, or stand and fight for that which was rightfully his.

Fellow Tennessee Baptists, is this not where we are now? Like the man who had been so supportive of his desperate friend, has our love and devotion not been abused in like manner? Do we not now have a decision to make? I pray that we'll determine to fight for what God has entrusted to us in a Christ-like manner so that Belmont University may once again burn brightly for our Risen Savior.

Todd Stinnett, pastor
Grace Baptist Church
Morristown 37813

Proud of efforts

Never in a million years would I have thought that I would have to call on the Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief for help, but all of that changed April 2 when tornados hit our small town of Bradford.

Words cannot express our thanks to all the chain saw teams that responded, not just at our home, but to so many who were helped in other places.

I have always been proud to say that I am a Southern Baptist, but I am even more proud now. These teams worked so hard and believe you me, we had plenty for them to clean up. We had around 90 trees down in our yard. The fact that our house is still standing is just a testimony of God's hand of protection.

Thank you sounds so inadequate but we say "thank you, thank you, thank you" to everyone who responded to Bradford in our time of need. It will not be soon forgotten. Thank you for giving to the Lord.

The Randy Carroll family
Bradford 38316

Bible Belt?

It has been said that living here in East Tennessee puts one right in the heart of the good ole Bible Belt USA, but let's look at some interesting facts about our so-called Bible Belt.

One, Tennessee leads the

nation in personal bankruptcy filings and since this is not 1930s and the Great Depression upon us, could it be that such a high rate of filings in federal bankruptcy court has to do with a complete lack of stewardship, i.e., tithing to God, however does it?

Two, Tennessee has the second highest rate of divorce filings across the country so there does not seem to be much respect for what is said in the Bible as found in Matthew 19:8-9.

Three, Tennessee has the highest number of methamphetamine labs raided and shut down in the country for two years running. That now even buying over-the-counter medicines for law-abiding citizens with real medical issues (such as allergies in Smokies) subjects one to being treated like a suspected dealer. It would seem another verse from the Bible might apply here, Exodus 21:12.

Four, members of the Tennessee General Assembly facing federal corruption charges, the Tennessee Highway Patrol and its problem with corruption has been exposed, the list can go on.

So I ask you, fellow citizens, is this the Bible Belt? Further, what does the author of the Bible think of this area called the Bible Belt?

Joey B.
Maryville 37803

Prepare now to break *The Da Vinci Code*



By Gene C. Fant

As a literature professor, I have a favorite Scripture passage: Acts 8. Philip meets the Ethiopian eunuch and says, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The eunuch replies, "How can I unless someone explains it to me?" The same opportunity looms for believers as *The Da Vinci Code* comes to theaters in our netowns. We should not be afraid to ask our neighbors and workers, "Do you understand what you saw?" Most of them will reply, "What does it all mean?" We need to be sensitive to such a question. Our culture is fascinated with spiritual and religious topics. From the Gospel of Judas to various spin-offs of *The Da Vinci Code*, our culture is responding to the God-created world that each of us possesses which longs to find glimpses of the divine. Unfortunately, our culture is likewise afflicted with a fallen-characteristic of settling for substitute half-truths for transcendent Truth. This characteristic of settling for half-truths is exactly why Christians must be prepared to tell a very anti-Christian story to an opportunity to yield

some very helpful conversations. A few very quick questions can be quite beneficial to a person who is struggling to make sense of these stories.

The first question that we should ask is, "Does the novel match up with the facts of history?" The novel's first word is "Fact"; the text sets itself up to be a truth-based work of imaginative fiction. While Dan Brown never claims that the novel's historical claims are accurate, he does claim absolute accuracy in the novel's "descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and ancient rituals" (p. 1). Most readers do not notice this authorial sleight-of-hand. Brown sets the terms himself: the story makes a bold truth claim.

The book, however, does not square with many basic facts of history, as Darrell Bock (in *Breaking the Da Vinci Code*) and many others have proven. Once the book begins to delve into the intricacies of church history, it veers into ignorance at best and falsehood at worst (chapter 55 is a good example of this). These errors do not require the skills of a professional historian; they are simple errors that any person can identify. If, then, the book makes an initial claim to tell the truth but then misses that mark in its historical claims, how reliable can it be in its theological claims?

One of the most dangerous claims made in the book is that Jesus was a mere man. Accord-

ing to the text, the early church believed Jesus to be fully mortal, and it was only later, after Emperor Constantine's reign (A.D. 325), that He was given divine status. One of the characters, Sir Leigh Teabing, actually claims (p. 233) that Christ's divinity resulted from a vote by fourth century church leaders!

Too many Scripture passages, John 1: 1-3 for example, reveal Christ's eternal divinity for such a claim to be taken seriously. Likewise, even a cursory reading of history reveals that Christ's divine status was pretty much settled almost from the outset of organized Christian theology.

This sets up the second question that we should ask; C. S. Lewis dealt with this same question in his masterwork *Mere Christianity*: Should we call Jesus a liar, a lunatic, or Lord? Jesus made many bold statements about Himself: if He made these claims but didn't really believe them, then He was a liar. If He believed Himself to be divine but was not, then He was a lunatic. Either way, His moral teachings are undermined.

The third option is the claim made by the New Testament: His moral teachings radiate from the fact that Jesus is Lord. If we use Scripture as our foundation, then we must conclude that He was, and is, something more than just a wise, gentle teacher. He is the Son of God who loved us so much that He

willingly allowed Himself to die on Calvary on our behalf.

If the film follows the novel, the Jesus of *The Da Vinci Code* will be simply a man whose story was compelling, but whose followers were cantankerous, lying, manipulative, women-hating brutes. As Teabing says in the novel, "The Bible is a product of man, my dear. Not of God" (p. 231). Part of what church history tells us, however, is that the earliest followers of Christ were committed, self-sacrificing persons, both men and women, who were willing to die because they believed in Christ's divinity and in His role as Savior.

II Timothy 4:2 exhorts us to be ready to share our faith both in season and out. We also should be humble and gentle in our walk (Ephesians 4:1-3). People who are confused and a bit frightened by the implications of a work like *The Da Vinci Code* need to hear a comely defense of the Truth. We need to be confident in our faith and allow that confidence to overflow in genuine concern for those around us who may be struggling with important spiritual decisions or genuine physical needs. Perhaps we can even share in Philip's experience and see some of our friends come to accept the Truth of Christ: He is Lord and Savior. □ — Fant chairs the English Department at Union University in Jackson, TN. With his wife Lisa, he is the co-author of *Expectant Moments: Devotions for Expectant Parents* (Zondervan).

reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

Going too far?

There's a disturbing story on page 8 of this issue about an International Mission Board couple who is facing possible termination because they helped start a church in a Muslim-dominated area that is not "Baptist" enough.

What exactly does that mean?

How do you define "Baptist" enough?

Does it not matter that the denomination of the non-Baptist missionary couple they assisted supposedly has doctrinal standards similar to ours? That non-Baptist couple has endorsed the Baptist Faith and Message which our missionaries signed and agreed to adhere to.

I know there is probably more to the story than what has been reported thus far, but part of the problem is the IMB is not saying anything.

From all accounts, the church that has been started is sharing the truth of Jesus Christ in a Muslim-saturated community. If that church is proclaiming the true gospel of Jesus, does it really have to be Baptist in name?

Yes, we pay their salaries and what they need to do should be mostly be "all" Baptist. But the reality is that in some places of the world the word "Baptist" will cause more harm than good.

There are many places in this world where we can't hang the Baptist "shingle." Let's take it a step further. There are many places in the world we can't even acknowledge there are Christian believers.

I would rather have a Christian church in this West African country sharing the good news of Jesus Christ that is not "all" Baptist than no church at all. If we, as Baptists, can have even a minor role in that church, I think we should be excited about whatever avenues those doors may open for this missionary couple.

Are we going to get to the point in Southern Baptist life that we have to have a "Baptist police" to make sure we are Baptist enough? If so, some individuals and churches in our own country might be in trouble.

Part of the heritage of Southern Baptists and the reason for being called "Baptist" is the autonomy of believers and churches.

In the meantime, pray for this missionary couple, Wyman and Michelle Dobbs who have been notified they will be terminated on May 31. Pray for the IMB trustees as they consider the couple's appeal.

Most importantly, pray for God's will to be achieved. His agenda is more important than anyone else's. □

Don't be surprised when God answers your prayers



By Sara Horn

The story begins in Jerusalem. It's been 10 years since Jesus died, was resurrected and ascended back to Heaven. The pressure has been fierce on the remaining disciples. One disciple has already been murdered by King Herod (a descendant of THE King Herod) and Peter is then arrested. Herod is on a mission to exterminate these Christian leaders and it doesn't look good for Peter. Under heavy guard, it's only a matter of hours before he will be executed. But in another part of town, Peter has prayer warriors taking position. They have gathered together to call on God for a miracle. Acts 12:5 says *The church prayed for him most strenuously (the Message)*. So then it happens. An angel comes to Peter's rescue; he's freed from his chains and led out of the prison and to the very place where his prayer warriors were congregated. Rhoda, a servant girl, comes to the door at Peter's knock. Seeing Peter

through the slit in the door, she gets so excited that she runs to tell those in the middle of prayer that she's just seen Peter. Meanwhile, Peter still stands outside.

I can see the scene perfectly. Twenty or 30 men and women have gathered together in one small room. Some are urgently raising their voices to God while others weep silently. "Please, Lord, free Peter!"

Then Rhoda slips in, excitedly, and dashes to the elbow of the group's leader. "Master, master, Peter is standing at the door!" she whispers.

The man looks sternly at her. "Have you gone mad?" he whispers, leaning closely into her, fearful that one of the guests has heard her. "Can't you see this is serious? We're praying for Peter's rescue!"

"But he's here!" she responds. "And, whoops, I forgot to open the door!"

It almost sounds comical doesn't it? Maybe because it hits so close to home. How often do we ask God for something only to be surprised when it actually happens? Sometimes we actually need convincing from God that He has answered our prayers. Can you imagine the joy that erupted when the group opened that door and there stood Peter, in the flesh?

My husband and I, as well as our friends, have prayed for some miracles in recent weeks, and we've seen God answer several. Each time we've received His answer to our prayer not with surprise, but certainly with amazement, and definitely with thankfulness. God has shown us His faithfulness and His provision in the small things. Step by step, He leads.

So don't be surprised when

God answers your prayer. Instead, receive it for what it is: God's way of letting you know that He is there, and He is taking care of you. □ — Horn is a writer, author, speaker, and publisher of AGreaterFreedom.com, a faith-based military news site. She and her family are members of First Baptist Church (The People's Church), Franklin. She can be reached at sara@agreaterfreedom.com.

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



"But please, Lord, don't let it be ME!"



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What is Body Language in Worship?

by Paul Clark

I know that by the title you may be expecting an article on posture and physical motions in worship. I would encourage you to consider a different kind of body language: namely the language that is sung and said by the body of Christ, the church, for the corporate worship and edification service.

I have recently been engaged in a study of some of the language of songs and hymns that we use most in our corporate worship gatherings. One of the things I notice is that most of the songs we are singing, new and old, use language that reflects a close personal affection for the Savior, or celebrates an individual relationship with God.

This is to be expected in our churches where we proclaim our personal faith in Jesus Christ, and believe firmly in a personal salvation. However, what may be missing in our songs is "we" language that places us in the body of Christ as we worship, and gives our church the opportunity to sing of our "togetherness" in commitment and affinity to our head, and also places us in the stream of unending praise that joins our song with the worship of the invisible church of eternity and the gathering at the throne.

Some of our worship music leaders have expressed a sense that they must focus the corporate experience on individual expression, because it is their only opportunity to help people know how to worship individually. I commend them for their appropriate understanding that part of their role and opportunity is to develop the worshiping community to know what song to sing individually through the week. Since we should all be worshipping everyday, and not just worshipping on Sunday.

Perhaps pastors and worship music leaders should work together on spending more time preaching and teaching the ways and means of personal worship expression for daily devotion and ongoing service when the church is away in their daily routines. Possibly doing so would allow our Sunday worship to focus more on the

church body "spurring one another on to and good works, ... and all the more as we see the day approaching," (Heb. 10:24-25).

It is good for the church to be reminded that each of us have come to Christ individually. We sing the songs that express our individual love and devotion. But let us consider if we may be out of balance singing an overabundance of songs that express "God and me" language to the neglect of songs that encourage the body.

What about songs that use second person language that demonstrates concern for one another, and for the world in light of the priesthood of believers? What about songs of lament that encourage us as a gathered body to "weep with those who weep?"

In our songs of celebration, is there an opportunity to celebrate with one another such that each worshiper offers praise for the work of the spirit in our neighborhood as well as us? Do our songs recognize our responsibility to "rescue the perishing, for the dying" and to proclaim "Jesus merciful, Jesus will save," as part of our corporate expression?

And beyond the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, what about the sense of corporate fellowship of Christ among the gathered church? Is there an opportunity to celebrate God's work among His children with past, present, and future works? The handshake is great, but are there ways to promote a stronger sense of connection and koinonia?

I know some pastors who make a point to address their worshiping church as "church family," or "brothers and sisters" in a way that is natural and encouraging. Some worship music leaders know when to thin the accompaniment so that the church can hear herself sing as one voice in music and worship.

As you worship together think about your "body language." The next time you gather with your church pray and thank for the marvelous gift to be a part of the Bride of Christ!



Worship Music Leader: *'s a Tough Job, But Somebody Has to Do It*

is an awesome responsibility for a worship leader to make selections of what words of worship and praise expression to place on the lips of congregation for a given service of worship.

Mark Noll had an article in a 1999 edition of *Christianity Today* entitled, "We Are What We Sing." I concurred with many pastors, seminary professors, other church leaders who have said for sometime our song reflects our theology, and what's more affects our theology.

The words that we form are also forming us. That awesome reality makes the selection of songs all the more critical, and it is not a task to be taken lightly.

We have great respect for our musicians who take seriously their responsibility to select carefully the music of worship whether played or sung. I know of musical leaders who carry fulltime jobs, attend school fulltime, and who then spend hours rehearsing, and preparing music for worship.

I know of instrumentalists who work to prepare music that will underscore the theme or emphasis of the service on Sunday.

I know of pastors who in addition to their own preparation spend much time combing through hymns and other worship songs to help in selecting music that will underscore a pastoral need of congregation at a given point in the church's life.

I read a wonderful article about different contexts of worship expression: festival worship in which

large unconnected groups gather, congregational which is our usual weekly church worship, extended family which is gathering of our smaller groups like the youth group of our church, and private or individual worship in solitude.

I realize that there are many gifted "worship leaders" who travel the world performing before thousands doing festival worship and encouraging participation in massive gatherings where the name of Christ is lifted up.

In the long-term, the effect of spiritual formation through the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs in the local church setting is where I believe the greatest impact is made, most likely without the level of applause or financial benefit of the other. In our day of such wide musical diversity and fierce individualism in our culture, the task of serving up musical fare for worship week after week is a daunting task.

In congregational worship where multiple generations are present and the widest variety of tastes are likely represented, the worshipers meet under the same leadership week in and week out, which is the most difficult environment, but it is also the most rewarding.

I encourage all congregations to pray for and encourage the person who leads their musical worship, because the decision process is perhaps more difficult than ever at the same time that the options are endless. It really is a tough job, and someone does have to do it. Pray for the worship leader and the results can be strangely beautiful.

Thoughts on "Doing the Work" of Worship Music Planning and Selection by Music Leaders

"A pastoral minister of music can make musical decisions to make a service accessible to as many people as possible. Sometimes, that means dropping a repeat or following a more difficult song with a familiar one. Other times that means avoiding a song choice altogether even good songs. Often times, it means taking time to help people grow to see how a new song, or an old one, is helpful for themselves and others ..."

"... The greatest responsibility I feel when selecting music for Concord Baptist Church, Chattanooga, is to find music that flows out of scripture, music that says things about God and about us that are true. Additionally, I look for songs that are shaped by the gospel and our utter dependence on Jesus Christ, pointing to all He has done through the cross. That is what we celebrate when we come together as the church. I don't want to celebrate my commitments and my level of devotion when I come to church on Sunday morning as so many songs tend to do."

Drew Scott, Minister of Music
Concord Baptist Church,
Chattanooga,

"I feel a responsibility each week in selecting music to support the message in the preached word. We must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading, so each planning session is prayed over, that God's will would ultimately direct the planning of the worship outline. I also feel a desire to perform our music and drama in a way that is relevant to our churches target. Does it speak and connect with those that we are trying to reach? We know that the message may seem like foolishness to a non-believer. But we try to present it in a way that draws them to the message ..."

"... I have to try to be open about the music selection and not about what music I may prefer. Our worship is to glorify God and also teach others of His ways through our services."

Brent Roycroft, Minister of Music
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church,
Cross Plains

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

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| April 28-30 | Campers on Mission Rally, James E. Ward Exposition Center, Lebanon |
| April 28-29 | Cross Cultural Training, Baptist Center, Brentwood |
| April 29 | Hispanic: The NET Evangelism Training, North Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield |
| April 29 | Children's Bible Drill, Regional Youth Speakers Tournament, Regional Youth Bible Drill |
| | Visit www.tnbaptist.org for locations across the state |
| May 1-2 | New Church Staff Orientation, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden |
| May 9 | Special Called Meeting of Tennessee Baptist Convention, Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville |

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

IMB missionaries refuse to resign, face forced termination

By Hannah Elliott
Associated Baptist Press

RICHMOND — After receiving an April 15 ultimatum to resign or face termination, Wyman and Michelle Dobbbs have refused to resign as International Mission Board missionaries in Guinea, West Africa.

The couple was targeted for starting a church in Guinea that isn't "Baptist" enough. When the deadline passed, the Dobbbses received a letter April 17 from an IMB regional director that said the missionaries will be terminated May 31.

The Dobbbses, who have served an unreached people group in the mostly Muslim country for eight years, started the church with the help of a missionary couple from the Christian and Missionary Alliance, an evangelical denomination with doctrinal standards and church governance very similar to those of Southern Baptists. The Dobbbses have filed an appeal, which will be reviewed by a regional committee in May.

"I personally think this is an outrage," said Jason Helmbacher, the Dobbbses' stateside pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Sallisaw, Okla. "I don't believe

it's fair that they've been given an ultimatum based on misapplied policy. I just think it's wrong."

IMB chairman Tom Hatley disagrees. Hatley said he must stand by IMB policy, which he said the Dobbbses have violated. IMB policy states that missionaries may plant churches in cooperation with non-Baptist missionaries who endorse the "Baptist Faith and Message" doctrinal statement — the CMA couple has — but those churches must have Baptist doctrine at their core.

It is unclear what doctrinal deviation is alleged in the Dobbbses' case. ABP reported April 13 that the Dobbbses and the Christian and Missionary Alliance couple started a "baptistic" church — one Baptist in doctrine and polity but not in name.

The new church established in Guinea is one of only a handful of Christian outposts in the predominantly Muslim country — and the first congregation affiliated with IMB missionaries.

Helmbacher, who said his church has sent three different groups of people to work with the Dobbbses in less than two years, said the action against the couple has created confusion

for church members who have just begun to get excited about missions.

"Our church is struggling to understand this," Helmbacher told Associated Baptist Press. "They don't understand the politics. They've been confused and upset."

Helmbacher said church members have written letters and made phone calls to IMB trustees, trying to gain support for the Dobbbses. Helmbacher said he fears the appeal might

not make it through the May committee meeting — or a subsequent trustee vote.

Trustee chairman Hatley did not speculate on the appeal's outcome. He said it is a "staff decision" about violated policies. "It's a work in progress," Hatley said. "It could or it couldn't go through."

If the Dobbbses' firing is not reversed on appeal, the full trustee board will vote on the termination in a later plenary session.

The IMB staff does not discuss pending personnel issues.

The conservative trustees who run the International Mission Board have insisted increasingly strict policies acceptable theology and practice among missionaries — such as requiring that only Baptist churches be established overseas. Supporters say IMB missionaries must reflect the of the denomination that sent them. Critics say the IMB policies go too far. □

SBC resolution to affirm 'right of dissent'

Associated Baptist Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — In a sign of the controversy threatening to engulf the Southern Baptist Convention's upcoming annual meeting, a Texas pastor has formally submitted a resolution that accuses SBC leaders of trying to "silence principled dissent."

Benjamin Cole, a leading critic of recent actions by the SBC's International Mission Board, has sent his resolution, titled "On Baptist dissent," to the SBC Resolutions Committee, according to a popular weblog run by an IMB trustee.

Wade Burleson's blog (www.wadeburleson.com) reported the action and the proposal's final text April 18. It says Southern Baptists recognize that "majorities are not always right, and that it is necessary for the voice of dissent ... to be welcomed and heard if the dangers of authoritarian confessionalism or tyrannical governance are to be withstood both in our denomination and the world."

It goes on to state, "we regard all attempts to silence principled dissent by fellow Baptists in our denomination, or of any religious movement, as a compromise of our cherished Baptist witness and an egregious disservice to the kingdom of God," and that Southern Baptists "affirm dissenters both within our denomination and out who raise objection to articles of our confession, policies of our institutions, and governance of our agencies when that dissent has been voiced in a manner consistent with the teaching of Christ."

Cole, reached by telephone at his home April 17, told an Associated Baptist Press reporter he was the author of the resolution, an earlier version of which Burleson had posted on his website April 14. He said it wasn't necessarily aimed solely at the IMB but at SBC agencies and leaders in general. "I really do think the cherished principle of dissent has been subverted in certain quarters of our denomination," he said. □

"And whoever welcomes a little child in my name... welcomes me."

—Matthew 18:5



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Five state associations partner to help Gulf Coast rebuild

arcia Knox
t and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Five Tennessee Baptist Associations are joining more than 1,200 volunteers to the Gulf Coast to help in rebuilding efforts through a covenant agreement. The Tennessee Baptist Association, the Gulf Coast Baptist Association in Gulf-Miss., and Robinson Road Baptist Church, also in Gulf-

the associations working together are Mid-South Baptist Association, based in Cordova; Kentucky Baptist Association, based in Cleveland; Chilhowee Baptist Association, based in Maryville; Knox County Baptist Association, based in Nashville; and Nashville Baptist Association, based in Nashville.

The teams are being housed at Robinson Road Baptist Church in Gulfport, which has been undergoing renovation since Hurricane Katrina. The teams are working under the auspices of the Gulf Coast Baptist Association to assist owners to rebuild and repair their homes that were damaged during Hurricane Katrina. In addition to meeting physical needs, the volunteers will have many opportunities to minister to the emotional and spiritual needs of the victims.

Members from the five associations are focusing on getting Robinson Road Church ready for work to complete the air, and kitchen areas for lodging facility for the

upcoming rebuild teams," said Jim Snyder, director of missions for Chilhowee Association.

"A 21-volunteer team from Broadway Baptist Church, Maryville, worked Feb. 27-March 4 to hang sheet rock, install electrical and plumbing, and put in showers.

"Another team from Bradley County Association followed us the second week of March and now 90 percent of the electrical and sheet rocking is done."

"We are really excited about the receptivity of Bradley County Association churches who are responding to the Gulf Coast Association project," said Phil Taylor, the association's director of missions.

"We've already had three teams travel to Robinson Road Church for rebuild. At least 12 more Bradley County teams are scheduled to go through the end of July."

Teams from several of the churches worked in the area in early March.

"Bradley County Association churches are also responding to the need for evangelistic work, VBS, BYBCs, and other missions work in the Gulf Coast Association," added Taylor.

"I think it's a unique thing for five associations to come together to pool our resources and with the adoption process that NAMB promoted for the rebuild," Taylor observed.

Mid-South, Chilhowee, and Bradley County associations that originally linked up with the Gulf Coast Association, before Nashville and Knox County Baptist associations also focused on the area.

The associations realized that the work was more than just one association could get done, and the TBC is providing the means, Taylor said.

The five associations and the TBC have recruited a coordinating team made up of five Tennessee Baptist volunteers to coordinate the work of the many volunteer teams. Jim Richards, a member of Germantown Baptist Church, Mid-South Association, is the lead coordinator. The coordinating team includes volunteers from churches outside the five associations.

Phil and Aline Van Dixon, members of First Baptist Church, Ramer, Shiloh Association, are coordinating the Robinson Road Church construction. Chris and Carrie Loudonbeck, are members of Faith Baptist Church, Bartlett, in Mid-South Baptist Association. Chris is serving as the assessment and materials coordinator, while Carrie is the communications and hospitality coordinator.

While the Robinson Road Church kitchen is being finished, the Cumberland Gap disaster relief feeding unit has

been on site at the church providing meals for the volunteers. Several volunteer disaster relief mass feeding teams are rotating in and out of the church, according to David Acres, state disaster relief director.

TBC is supplying disaster relief funding to provide building materials, communication resources, and other expenses.

Knox County Association had a rebuild team from Dante Baptist Church, Knoxville, led by pastor Phil Murphy, that did heat and air installation April 3-7 at Robinson Road Church, according to Walter Taylor, associational director of missions.

"Central Baptist Church of Bearden, Knoxville is sending in monthly rebuild teams to Robinson Road," added Taylor.

According to Snyder, the first area of concern is the Pass Christian area and second area of concern is the Waveland community.

"Chilhowee Association has nine other teams scheduled through the end of July," Snyder added. "It is a two year partnership commitment."

"When the kitchen is finished at Robinson Road

Church, we will take the primary feeding team responsibility," said Mike Day, Mid-South Association director of missions. "We have had several volunteer teams serve from Mid-South Association in the Gulf Coast Association."

"Several Mid-South Association churches have sent rebuilding teams and several more churches are on route for going with the partnership, and those volunteers are sharing expenses with the association and their churches. We also sent three association people to serve as coordinators."

"I am glad to be a Tennessee Baptist, and I am glad to be partners with the TBC and the five associations in this response," added Day.

According to Rusty Sumrall, Nashville Association director of missions, construction teams from First Baptist Church, Nashville, and Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, are planning to line up teams for the Gulf Coast Association.

"I think it is great how teams are responding," said Sumrall. "It's a great conduit for us to send our folks to work in the Gulf Coast area." □

C-N honors Appalachian Outreach's Washam

C-N news office

JEFFERSON CITY — Jean Ann Washam is not crazy about being officially honored for doing what she says God called her to do.

"It's not why I do it," she said last Tuesday after Carson-Newman awarded her its Community Service Award for 2006. "I just thank God for the opportunity to serve Him for the last 10 years at Appalachian Outreach."

"As Appalachian Outreach director, Jean-Ann speaks at churches, mission fairs, civic groups, and other events on the local and state level," said Provost. Michael Arrington in announcing the award. "She coordinates the multi-faceted AO ministry, including clothing, food, appliances, and furniture distribution, computer training, Samaritan House, home repair, counseling, Hispanic ministry, Bible study, children's ministry, and a community laundry program."

Washam's decade of leadership at Appalachian Outreach has been a time of great growth for the regional service organization. In 2001, she helped combine three efforts, the home repair ministry, Samaritan House homeless shelter, and Hope House into one umbrella organization that she co-directed.

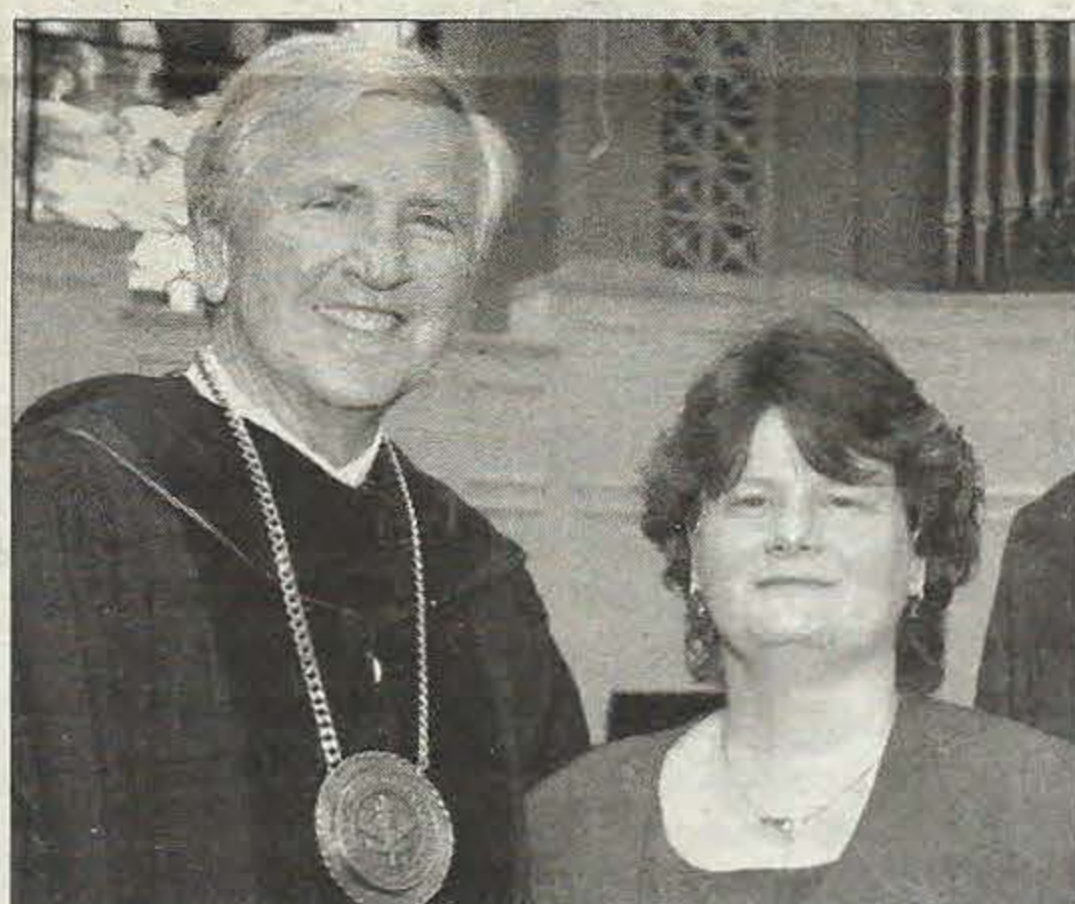
A C-N graduate, Washam and her husband, Shannon, were staffers for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children when Jim Wilson asked them about leading Samaritan House and AO respectively.

"I never planned on leaving there," recalled Jean Ann. "I thought we would retire from doing that work, but we were doing (the Christian devotional study) *Experiencing God*, and were in the section dealing with a crisis of belief. Jim calls and we had to ask God if He wanted us to come back to Carson-Newman and take on this work. God called; we just answered."

The Washams more than answered God's call said Wilson; they made it their life's work.

"Some people treat community service like their jobs — it's how they make a living," said Wilson. "But Jean Ann and Shannon fundamentally understand that it is how they serve God."

The couple worked in conjunction for the first several years of their time back in Jefferson City.



JEAN ANN WASHAM, center, recipient of the 2005-06 Community Service Award from Carson-Newman College, is congratulated by C-N President Jim Netherton.

Jean Ann oversaw "Sam House," one of the country's first homeless shelters established exclusively for families who had slipped through the cracks in America's economy. Meanwhile, Shannon led AO, the ministry founded by Wilson in 1984 to repair substandard housing in a five-county region surrounding the College. They officially combined the efforts into the Appalachian Outreach umbrella organization in 2001.

Jean Ann became AO director in 2004 when Shannon was hired by the Knox County Association of Baptists to direct the group's Western Heights Baptist Center.

Looking back over her tenure, Washam reiterates that she only organizes what others do.

Washam stresses the fact the she directs activities, but that it's the participation of volunteers that make AO what it is, saying, "I see myself as a liaison who has the responsibility of connecting the needs of people in our community with the willingness of other people in the community to accomplish the work."

"It's the people who volunteer their time and resources that really get this work done," she observed. □



B&R History Book

Order a copy of *Telling the Truth in Love: A Brief History of the Baptist and Reflector since 1835* for yourself or your church library. The book, authored by retired editor Wm. Fletcher Allen, provides a glimpse into the history of the official newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

The cost is only \$5 per copy which covers shipping and handling costs. Mail form to *Baptist and Reflector*, P. O. Box 37024, Brentwood, TN 37024

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Reccord comments on resignation as NAMB president

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. — Robert E. Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board, commented April 17 on his resignation from the Southern Baptist entity he has led since its creation nine years ago.

Speaking to nearly 200 NAMB staff members at NAMB's Atlanta-area offices, Reccord said he made the decision, which was effective immediately, with "mixed emotions."

"I am thankful for the countless numbers of people we have seen come to Christ and the thousands of churches we have seen planted and nurtured," he said. "On the other hand, I regret we were not able to complete a number of things we have started or dreamed about. I regret that events of recent weeks have created an environment which makes it difficult to lead the organization and to stay on mission."



RECCORD

The events Reccord referred to resulted from a lengthy article two months ago in *The Christian Index*, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention. The article, which was critical of the entity's accomplishments and Reccord's leadership, led to an investigation by NAMB's board of trustees which also was critical of some of NAMB's more innovative initiatives and decisions under Reccord's leadership.

During his announcement, Reccord told employees he has found it increasingly difficult to be an entrepreneurial leader within a denominational structure.

"I believe that honest philosophical and methodological differences have brought us to this point of separate directions," Reccord said.

He added he hopes he has "demonstrated my love for and commitment to Southern Baptists and all for which we stand."

"I also hope I have demonstrated a kingdom heart and mindset," Reccord continued. "It is this mindset and my entrepreneurial bent that have led us to explore more effective applications of technology and media; strategies for reaching a wider range of demographic groups; and creative evangelism initiatives."

Reccord told employees he doesn't know what he is going to do but has already received several calls asking him to consider various ministry opportunities.

"We will follow God's leadership to do what is best for the kingdom," he said.

"Stepping away will allow me

to leave behind a never-ending stream of administrative responsibilities and focus on unleashing men, women, and young people to fulfill their God-given calling and change the world."

To that end, trustee chairman Barry Holcomb announced that Reccord will serve as a liaison between NAMB and Promise Keepers as he speaks at 19 PK events across the country from June through October.

"NAMB and Promise Keepers entered into an agreement earlier this year to work together to mobilize workers for the rebuild that continues along the Gulf Coast following last year's hurricanes," Holcomb said. "I'm thankful that Dr. Reccord has the opportunity and the desire to challenge Christian men across America to invest their time and talents alongside Southern Baptists."

Holcomb announced NAMB's trustees will consider naming an interim president at its upcoming May 2 meeting as well as begin the search process for a new president.

In the meantime, Carlos Ferrer, NAMB's chief financial officer, who was named the previous week as the interim chief operating officer, would assume all executive leadership responsibilities, Holcomb said. □

Most Americans don't believe in evolution: polls

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Once again, a nationwide poll shows that Americans are prone not to believe in evolution — even if many academic leaders and media members do.

The CBS News poll, conducted April 6-9, asked two subgroups of adults different questions about man's origins. Although their answers varied depending on the question, in each instance they rejected secular evolution — that is, the belief that God was not involved at all in the process:

- In the first subgroup, 53 percent of adults agreed that "God created human beings in their present form." Twenty-three percent believed that "human beings evolved from less advanced life forms over millions of years, but God guided the process," and 17 percent believed that human beings evolved but "God did not directly guide" it. The subgroup included 468 adults.

- In the second subgroup, 44 percent agreed with the statement that "God created human beings in their present form within the last ten thousand years." The rest of the question was identical to the one posed to the first subgroup. In this instance, 30 percent believed that God guided evolution, and 17 percent believed in secular evolution. This subgroup

included 431 adults.

The debate over evolution has divided Americans since at least the late 1800s, and that divide deepened after the famous "Scopes Monkey Trial" in Tennessee in 1925. In fact, in 1925 the Southern Baptist Convention adopted its first statement of faith (the Baptist Faith & Message) in part in reaction to the controversy over evolution.

The media largely has assisted supporting a belief in evolution. An April 12 CNN.com headline about evolution said simply, "Fossil connects human evolution dots." A *New York Times* headline the same day read, "New fossils add link to the chain of the evolution of humans."

But despite the media's role and an education system that backs evolution, Americans aren't buying it. The CBS News poll mirrors other recent polls:

- A Gallup poll of 1,005 adults from September 2005 showed that 53 percent of adults believed "God created human beings in their present form exactly the way the Bible describes it." Thirty-one percent believed humans "evolved over millions of years from other forms of life and God guided" the process, and 12 percent said humans "have evolved over millions of years from other forms of life, but God has no part."

- A Harris poll of 1,000 adults in June 2005 found that 64 percent believed "human beings were created directly by God," 22 percent said humans "evolved from earlier species," and 10 percent believed humans "are so complex that they required a powerful force or intelligent being to help create them." In a separate question, only 38 percent said humans "developed from earlier species." □

S.C.'s Driggers sets retirement

Baptist Press

WINNSBORO, S.C. — B. Carlisle Driggers, saying "the time has come for me to announce my retirement," will step aside as executive director-treasurer of the South Carolina Baptist Convention on Feb. 28, 2007, after 15 years at the helm

of the nation's oldest state Baptist convention.

His will be the second-longest tenure for an executive director in South Carolina. Charles Jones held the position for 17 years, from 1925-42.

Driggers, 68, who said at the time of his election in 1991 that he wanted to be remembered as one who "tried to help the churches grow," made the announcement during the April 17 spring meeting of the executive board at the convention's White Oak Conference Center in Winnsboro.

Driggers called attention to "a kingdom growth focus" across most of the state. □

Tax status not in danger if churches support marriage amendment

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Churches can support proposed constitutional marriage amendments without any fear of losing their tax-exempt status, an attorney with a religious liberty organization says.

Seven states, including Tennessee, are scheduled to vote on marriage amendments this year, and conservatives in two others — Arizona and Colorado — are gathering signatures with the goal of being added to that list.

Gary McCaleb, senior counsel with the Christian legal group Alliance Defense Fund, said pastors can voice support for the amendments from the pulpit and churches can assist in petition drives without fear of reprisal from the Internal Revenue Service.

"In respect to their Internal Revenue Service tax exemption, they have a lot of liberty and leeway to support a ballot initiative," McCaleb told Baptist Press.

"As long as what they do is an insubstantial amount of their total budget, they're pretty much free to do whatever they want in support or opposition to the ballot initiative."

Various courts have ruled that a "substantial amount" ranges anywhere from 5-15 per-

cent of an organization's resources, McCaleb said. The church's budget is \$100,000; it spends less than \$5,000 to support a marriage amendment — which would amount to less than 5 percent of the budget, "you're home free and clear as far as the IRS is concerned," McCaleb said. □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

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

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Brunswick Baptist Church, Brunswick, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Please send resume to: Brunswick Baptist Church, P.O. Box 100, Brunswick, TN 37807. Post to the attention of the Search Committee.

MINISTRY — MUSIC

Music Minister. Part-time worship. Interested persons send resume to Attn: Music Search Committee, Wartburg Baptist Church, P.O. Box 24, Wartburg, TN 37887 or call 346-3550 during business hours.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Bethlehem Baptist Church, seeking a part-time music minister to lead a blended worship service, special events and adult choir. Please send resume to Music Search Committee, 626 Potato Farm Road, Crossville, TN 38571.

MINISTRY — ADMINISTRATOR

Full-time administrator/pastor. Please send resume to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 57, Campbell, AL 35581, or email moorescott@aol.com.

MINISTRY — STUDENT

Part-time youth minister. Energetic person to lead youth grades 6-12 in a growing, evangelistic Southern Baptist church in Shelbyville, Tenn. This position has a potential to become full-time. Please send resume to Youth Search, 150 Fairfield Road, Shelbyville or e-mail montbaptist@cafes.net.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Full-time associate youth pastor (with additional responsibilities such as education). Temporary/traditional work. West St. Louis County, Mo. Send resume to Youth Search Committee, Ballwin Baptist Church, 15101 Manchester Rd., MO 63011-4629, or email youth@ballwinbaptist.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

Pews for sale. 15 ft. and 18 ft. lengths; \$100 each. Call (731) 668-8619 or (731) 5613.

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minister's corner

Miracles in the mess

Harry Yarborough

wn to smithereens." Now we know what the term ns. It's what the aftermath of the tornado (which Gallatin and other areas of Middle Tennessee on 17) looks and feels like. Working on site, we expect the feeling of, "I simply cannot believe what I seeing."

Many homes look like they've been put in a super-blender or as if the Non-Jolly Green Giant has in a random stroll through their neighborhood. I devastation has left people with an enormous s.

and yet, in the middle of the mess, miracles flourish. Lives that should have been lost were spared out so much as a broken bone.

ne family from our church huddled together in a ment office: grandparents, their daughter, and r two grandchildren. The tornado lifted the entire ctured over their heads — keeping the house intact and moved it 10 yards away. The daughter's full size was left upside down in the top of a cedar tree.

another man from First Baptist was outside walk- his dogs and made it indoors only seconds before house was obliterated. He shouldn't have lived ough it because all that was left of his property was (literally). He later told me, "Pastor, it had to be hand of God on me."

here are several stories of teenagers home alone r school who survived projectiles of lumber, metal, glass that smashed through houses like high-pow- missiles.

tory after story continues to surface of God's chcare in the midst of disaster.

ver and over I encountered people from our ch who sustained substantial or total loss of their es who said, "Pastor, this is just 'stuff.'" It can all eplaced. What really matters is that my family is "

t each area I visited, I found First Baptist folk ady there. You were quietly, lovingly in your place rvice. I saw you packing boxes and serving meals. tched you clear the roads and clean up yards. I you crying, hugging, and praying with each other. ady our church members have done everything can to lend a hand wherever they can.

s natural at times like this to question God and ler how He could allow this to happen. However, I d encourage you not to get sidetracked. I believe even if all of the "Why?" questions were answered e Lord Himself, it wouldn't take away one ounce in.

on't feed the impulse to "defend" God. Rather, feel aspiration to be like Jesus.

n glad that's exactly what you are doing. □ — Yar- ough is pastor of First Baptist Church, Gallatin.

You have the power

By Phil Taylor

Focal Passage: Acts 2:1-4, 22-24, 32-33, 36-41

Could you ever imagine living in a mansion, having at your disposal the finest cars money can buy, having the opportunity to do whatever you wanted to do in life, but yet never taking advantage of any of it? It would be one person in a million that might have those provisions before them and not take advantage of any of them.

Every Christian has spiritually anything they need through the power of God that is continually before them. Yet, few Christians ever enjoy and live in the provision that God has given to us through the power of His Spirit. Materially speaking, most are interested, and spiritually speaking, few are interested.

Each Christian through the power of God's Spirit that is already dwelling in us has the provision of God before us. It is time to wake up to come alive in the Spirit and enjoy the provision of God's power in your life. Acts 2 gives us the provisions of God's power to witness and win this world to Him.

His provisions start with the power to witness to the world (vv. 1-4). Jews from various countries were present in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. In this setting God performs a miracle that would forecast the purpose of the church forever. The event described that people heard in

their own language what Jesus did for them. We have been empowered to witness to the entire world about Jesus, including our world, wherever we live.

There are people who believe that the Spirit of God is for the spiritually elite, that the filling of God's Spirit is for those who are the "Eagle Scout" Christians. Not so.

In verse 32, Simon Peter is preaching his sermon to all the people assembled that day. He said to them, *God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and we are all witnesses to this truth.* His provisions are strong enough to keep us committed to the same purpose.

I have heard religious leaders bemoan the fact that Christian people are just not witnessing, not telling people about Jesus like they ought to. I think there is a far more tragic thought here. I fear often that we are not witnessing to the truth of the gospel because we have not witnessed the truth of the gospel.

A witness is someone who has seen something. A witness is someone who has a story to tell. He has experienced something and seen something. These people said, "We have experienced, we have seen, we know that Christ is raised from dead, and we have Him in us. We are witnesses of this."

His provisions are powerful enough to enable us to be openly committed to Christ. After hearing Peter preach they were convicted of sin and had repented and

Sunday School Lesson Family Bible Series April 30

received the word (vv. 37-40). But verse 41 follows verse 40, and we are told that those that received the Word "were baptized." What a baptism service! For about 3,000 were baptized. What a glorious testimony this was to the power and grace of God. Here we have God's blueprint, His picture of the early church. They were converted; they were baptized.

Baptism does not make Christians, nor does the New Testament teach adult baptism, any more than some think it teaches infant baptism. In the early church, when people believed, they were then baptized; believing and baptism always went together. There is no case recorded in Acts of an unbaptized believer.

His provisions keep us gloriously united in Christ. The key word in verse 44 is the word "together." They were different in age, background, and temperament but now, having trusted Christ and been added to the church, *all that believed were together*, which means that they were not only together in the sense that they were near to each other, and with each other, and in each other's presence, but they were "all one in Christ Jesus." □ — Taylor is director of missions for Bradley County Baptist Association, headquartered in Cleveland.

Worship no other

By Marvin Nail

Focal Passage: Isaiah 44:16-22; 46:1-5, 8-9

Most of us are familiar with the old cop out: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." That is supposed to excuse us when, because of our surroundings, we discreetly hide our faith so that we do not embarrass ourselves or those around us who are different from us.

None of us likes to be considered oddball or freakish simply because we are Christians. However, we face a real danger when most of our associations are with persons who do not share our faith. So easily do we allow their unbelief to draw us away from our faith, becoming more like them rather than their becoming more like us.

Isaiah rightly feared for Judah in the captivity that was coming for them in Babylon. He was concerned that they would see the "success" of their captors and turn away from the true God. So the prophet warns them before the fact.

The emptiness of false worship (44:16-20)

In very satirical fashion Isaiah attacks the stupidity of idol worship even though it is the worship of the most powerful nation on earth. Who could fail to see the irony in taking a single piece of wood and making from part of it a warming fire and from the other part a cold and heedless god?

We must not read verse 18 as saying that God doomed Judah's captors from the beginning and would not allow them to see the truth. On the contrary, He has made the same truth available to all. However, by rejecting God's offer of deliverance, our spiritual eyes are blinded and we are unable to distinguish between lies and truth.

The blessing of true worship (vv. 21-22)

Where the gods of their captors are deaf and sightless and to be carried about by their worshipers, the God of the captive people of Judah is all-powerful. He sees their plight in the foreign land, He hears their cries, and He offers redemption.

Their captor is more than a king with a mighty army. Their real oppressor is their rebellion against God. That has cost them everything and made them slaves to their sin. God stands ready to forgive and deliver when His people willingly turn to Him.

The burden of false worship (46:1-2)

In these few verses we encounter one of the real defining characteristics of true worship, and many of us need to take an honest look at our own faith in light of this insight.

One of my seminary professors, in speaking of this very thing, said that our religion, or our worship,

Sunday School Lesson Explore the Bible April 30

can be a "load or a lift, a burden or a blessing." Far too many of us are worn out trying to behave like someone we are not. We have changed our behavior; but we have not allowed the Father to truly change our heart.

Religion, the religion of Jesus Christ, is not meant to enslave us with prohibitions that drag us into continual defeat. Rather, our faith is intended to set us free so that we may serve God willingly with all our heart.

The encouragement of true worship (vv. 3-5, 8-9)

We are not called to God's service because He has need of our help. Instead, He calls us to service because we need His help. We are the ones who are borne along by His loving arms. We are the ones who are weak at the very point He is strong.

The one we serve is not just one among many, not some local god among other local deities. He is holy and righteous altogether. There is none like Him to whom we can turn and be forgiven. □ — Nail is a former pastor and current member of First Baptist Church, Nashville. He is an employee of LifeWay Christian Resources.



Funding missions in Tennessee
and around the world

Deaths

◆ **Elizabeth McWorter Isbell**, age 101, a former president of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, died March 3. She was living in North Carolina with her daughter, where she had lived for the last several years. A long time member of First Baptist Church, Chattanooga, she taught a Sunday School class for young married women and then older ladies. She also was very involved in WMU.

Leaders

◆ **Howard's Quarter Missionary Baptist Church**, Tazewell, has called **John Hall** of Tazewell as pastor. Hall, who has been a preacher for the past four years, is following retired pastor **Joe Rowe**, who served the church for 30 years.

◆ **Point Pleasant Baptist Church**, Buchanan, has called **Craig England** as youth director.

◆ **Trafalgar Village Baptist Church**, Memphis, has called **Jeff James** as associate pastor, youth and education. James will graduate in May from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Germantown.

◆ **Carson-Newman College**, Jefferson City, recently named **Phyllis Driver** as its 2005-06 distinguished faculty member. She is associate professor of accounting. Driver joined the faculty in 1978. She was chair of the department from 1989-92. At Carson-Newman she is a member of the Faculty Council, and was a member of the Sesquicentennial Committee, Honors Committee, and the SACS Steering Committee. She chaired C-N's 1999 "Becoming an Entrepreneur" workshop.

◆ **Clifton Baptist Church**, Vonore, has called **Jimmy**

Manis as pastor. He was recently ordained by Lakeside Baptist Church, Vonore.

◆ **Community Baptist Church**, Niota, has called **Joe Coleman** as pastor.

◆ **Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church**, Bradford, has called **Randall Kellough** as pastor.

◆ **Gum Springs Baptist Church**, Cunningham, has called **Royce Dukes** as interim pastor.

◆ **Maplewood Baptist Church**, Paris, has called **Corey Cain** as pastor effective May 1.

◆ **Memorial Baptist Church**, Clarksville, has called **John David Laida** as interim pastor.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Clarksville, recently called **Joel Reynolds** of Chattanooga as minister of high school. Since 2002 he was minister of youth at Red Bank Baptist Church, Chattanooga.

Events

◆ **The West Tennessee Pastors Conference** will meet May 2 at Union University, Jackson. The speaker will be Phil Glisson, evangelist of Memphis.

Churches

◆ **Midland Baptist Church**, Bell Buckle, will hold a revival Sunday - Wednesday, May 7-10, from 7-9 p.m., with Skip Youngport of Dixon as speaker.

◆ **Westwood Baptist Church**, Nashville, is sending 15 members on a May 5-12 mission trip to Louisiana to repair a church and offer hands-on assistance to families affected by the fall hurricanes to the Gulf Coast.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Bruceton, will hold revival services Sunday - Wednesday, April 30 - May 3 with evangelist Phil Glisson of Memphis as speaker.



MEMBERS OF CHURCH Loudon County Association, Lenoir recently served in France. **IN PHOTO TO** team members paint the of a church. They are, from Robb Atwell; Mc Wampler; and Tony Lyn missionary. **IN PHOTO B** are members of the team left, Tony Ward, Joy Arlene Lewis, Alyssa M Ana Lea Atwell, Mc Wampler, Angela W Carl McPeek, Jesse Klat McPeek, Robb Atwell, Carr, Sylvia Atwell, and Atwell, director of mission leader of the group. They worked with Intern Mission Board mission



◆ **Hillcrest Baptist Church**, Lebanon, will present "Heaven's Gates & Hell's Flames," a real-life drama presentation, Sunday-Tuesday, April 30 - May 2. Sunday's performance is at 6:30 p.m. with weekday performances at 7 p.m. Nursery and children's ministry is provided. For information, contact (615) 444-5923 or broglenn@hillcrestbaptist.org.

◆ **First Baptist Church**, Waverly, held its annual

Easter Egg Hunt April 8 at the Humphreys County Agricultural Center. Over 100 children attended the event which featured music, puppets, food, and the First Church children's choir. Door prizes were given to children who registered in different age groups. Pastor Dennis Perkins welcomed the children to the event and presented information on the church's activities.

◆ **Springfield Baptist Church**, Springfield, will sponsor a July 24 - adult mission trip to points of interest in Michigan.

◆ **Broadmoor Baptist Church**, Nashville, will hold a revival April 30 - May 3. Robert White, evangelist from Owensboro, Ky., will lead the music. Michael Valentine, pastor of Baptist Church, Nashville, will lead the music.



EDGAR LADD, center, receives a plaque for his service to the Sequatchie Valley Baptist Association, Whitwell, from Roger Webb, left, moderator; and Buddy Strickland, director of missions. Ladd has served on the association's executive committee until recently because of his health. Strickland has since retired as DOM. Webb is pastor of Baptist Hill Baptist Church, Jasper.



PAM NEAL, right, director of children's ministry, Grace Baptist Church, Knoxville, was recently named State Representative for Tennessee for the International Conference of Police Chaplains. She was appointed at the recent Southeast Regional Meeting in Clarksville. Chaplain Neal has served as a chaplain for the Knoxville Police Department for over eight years. She stands with Chaplain Leon Adams of Enterprise, Ala., who is regional representative for ICPC. The organization provides training for police chaplains internationally. Over 2,600 chaplains are members.



TWO STUDENTS of Dyersburg State Community College, Dyersburg, received awards at the Annual DSCC Honors and Awards Dinner on April 23. Lauren McCoy, left, received two awards, the Baptist Collegiate Ministry Leadership Award and the BCM Journey Award for demonstrating the most growth journey while at DSCC. At right, Stephanie received the BCM Pneuma Award for demonstrating the true spirit of BCM on campus. Campus Minister at DSCC Stan Cavene presented the awards. A student awards committee accepts nominations from students and mines the award winners.