

Baptist & Reflector

Wide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

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Women challenged to be clay in hands of God

Donnie Davis Bushey
and Reflector

JACKSON — Many women say "I don't have enough strength, or whatever to tough this day," said Debbanada, missionary in Jackson, W.Va., at the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women here.

Their lives, like pottery or fine furniture, have cracks, and dings.

They should realize that "no matter how poorly it's gone up, God can start it over," she declared, referring to their lives. She spoke to about 360 women at a meeting at First Baptist Church here Sept. 15-16. The theme of the retreat was "In a New Life on the Potter's Wheel."

Debbanada, who has served as a missionary in her husband, Norm, in Virginia for eight years, and of her newborn niece, who has several health problems. Cannada suggested that life is a metaphor of God works in our lives. The speakers perform procedures on Carly, "she is continuing to be re-made. Carly



DEBBIE CANNADA, missionary in Charleston, W.Va., speaks at the retreat. An audio-visual shows a woman making pottery.

is not perfect, but she's perfectly Carly. You're not perfect either, but you're perfectly you.

"God is never content to leave you where you are for very long," explained Cannada.



WOMEN WHO ATTENDED a conference on interpretive movement perform to music in a session of the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women held in Jackson.

Interestingly, people aren't satisfied with where they are either. People aren't satisfied for very long "because ladies, we weren't made for this world. This world will never satisfy us," she declared.

"In our hearts we're working our way into heaven."

She told of taking a teenaged girl into her family's home who

needed help. The girl's parents took drugs.

Cannada said she and the girl have had some rough times because the girl hasn't had what she needed. Yet recently she gave her testimony in church saying God had delivered her.

In a similar way, some of us are not what we should be but

— See Women, page 3

Deadline for voter registration nears

and Reflector

WENTWOOD — On Nov. 7 Tennessee Baptists will have an opportunity to vote to approve a constitutional amendment on age.

This election is an opportunity for people to take a stand for "Christian marriage," says James Porch, executive director/treasurer of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He also urged Tennessee Baptists who have not yet registered to do so. "It is imperative that we do what we can to help with this constitutional amendment," he said.

In the case of the Nov. 7 election, the voter registration deadline is on Oct. 8, a Sunday. Therefore, people registering at county election commission offices must do so by Friday, Oct. 6, or Saturday, Oct. 7, depending on whether the commission will be open on Saturday.

For registrations that are mailed must be postmarked by Friday, Oct. 8. Note that not all post offices accept mail on Sunday and holidays. Check with your local post office for the nearest location that will postmark on Sunday and holidays.

The early voting period for the Nov. 7 election will be Oct. 18-21. It was inadvertently reported last week that the first day of voter registration was Oct. 12. The *Baptist and Reflector* staff is aware of any confusion this may have caused.

Applications for voter registration can be downloaded from state.tn.us/sos/election/ss-3010.pdf.

In order to register to vote, a person must be a U.S. citizen, be a resident of Tennessee, and be at least 18 years old on or before the next election. In addition, prospective voters must not have been convicted of a felony, or have had full rights of citizenship restored, or have received a pardon.

Please note that anyone who registers by mail must vote in person the first time after registering. □ — Linda Lawson and Lonkey

Ten percent of Southern Baptist pastors embrace Calvinism, says LifeWay survey

By Libby Lovelace
For Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — While LifeWay Research found the number of Southern Baptist pastors embracing five-point Calvinism to be relatively small, it is undeniable that the conversations on Calvinism within the Southern Baptist Convention has brought renewed interest to the 400-year-old theological system.

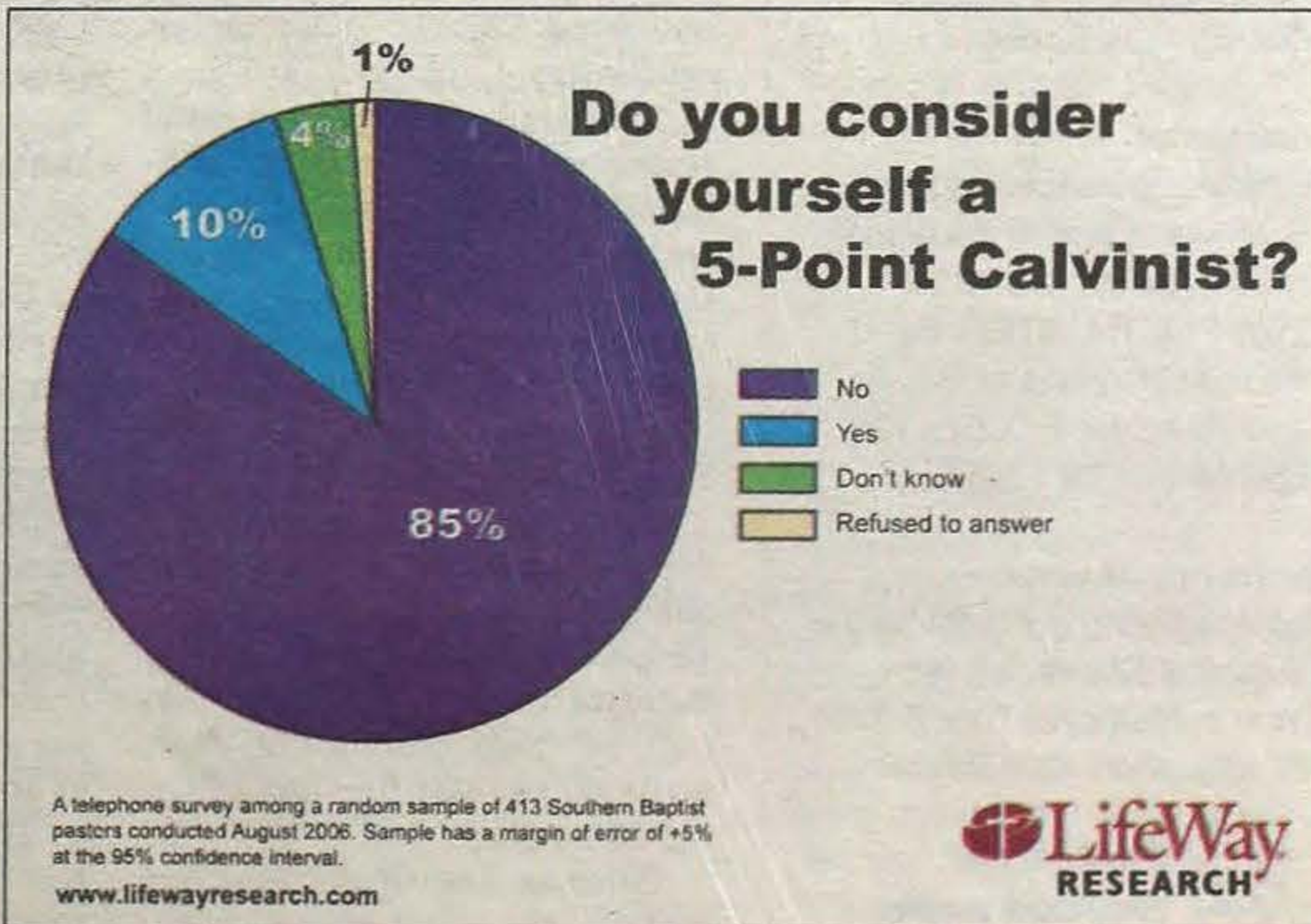
Proponents of Calvinism, or Reformed theology, view it as a healthy return to early Southern Baptist heritage. Others see Calvinism as a negative trend and fear it is threatening to take over the SBC. In its inaugural survey, LifeWay Research sought to document the prevalence — or lack thereof — of Calvinism within the SBC.

Surveying 413 pastors, the July/August 2006 LifeWay Research survey asked Southern Baptist pastors to indicate their position concerning the following question: "Do you consider yourself a five-point Calvinist?"

LifeWay Research found that 10 percent of Southern Baptist pastors consider themselves five-point Calvinists. That number, while still relatively small compared to the 85 percent who do not consider themselves five-point Calvinists, is still a large enough group to deserve attention.

The survey also showed that 4 percent of respondents "don't know" if they are five-point Calvinists. Another 1 percent refused to answer one way or another.

— See Ten, page 3



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Committee acts on SBC trustee matters

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — A range of items addressing how the Southern Baptist Convention operates were on the Executive Committee's agenda during its Sept. 18-19 sessions here.

Executive Committee members approved a recommendation for messengers' deliberations during the 2007 annual meeting in San Antonio to revise SBC Bylaw 15(I) to state: "No person who has served on the board of an entity or on the Executive Committee shall be eligible to serve on the board of any entity or on the Executive Committee until two years after the conclusion of his or her term of office, except that a person may be re-elected to an authorized successive term or serve by virtue of a separate office." The proposed bylaw would reflect changes to the SBC Constitution approved by messengers last June in the first of two votes required in successive SBC annual meetings. The previous wording had stipulated a one-year wait for new eligibility.

In responding to 12 motions referred from June's SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C., the Executive Committee acted on two that also involved trustee service.

In addition to declining a proposed seven-year trustee term instead of the current four-year term, the committee declined to recommend a motion calling for at least one pastor or layman

under the age of 40 to be appointed to each SBC board and committee. The Executive Committee response noted that "trustees under the age of 40 are regularly appointed and elected to virtually all convention committees and entity boards." The Executive Committee said trustees are named via a "long-established and well-accepted selection process for service by Southern Baptists who are well qualified, without regard to their age, gender, or ethnicity."

Concerning a motion for SBC officers to be members of churches that give at least 10 percent of the undesignated receipts they receive through the SBC's Cooperative Program and local Baptist association, the Executive Committee declined to take action. The committee noted that "the matter was resolved to the satisfaction of the Convention by its adopting of the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Cooperative Program Committee." The report included a number of initiatives to heighten Cooperative Program giving by Southern Baptists, but a recommendation similar to the motion was deleted prior to the convention.

Another Cooperative Program-related motion, which called for the Executive Committee to provide information on churches' gifts "to legitimate SBC causes" within their missions budgets, also was declined. The Executive Committee stated that "the motion is already satisfied by the current definition of total mission expenditures in the 2006 Annual Church Profile."

Three motions addressed the operations of SBC entities.

One motion called for "an administrative expense analysis" of all SBC entities, including specific expenses of the entities' presidents. The Executive Committee declined to recommend the motion to messengers at next year's annual meeting by noting that such actions would "tend to usurp the role or invade the province of trustees. However, the Executive Committee does appreciate the spirit and intent of the motion, and therefore recommends [t]hat the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in ... 2007, respectfully request the trustees of the SBC entities to continue to be mindful of their duty of fiscal responsibility and good stewardship" The response included proposed revisions to the SBC Business and Financial Plan.

The Executive Committee declined to act on two related motions. □

Indonesians put to death amid doubts of guilt

Baptist Press

PALU, Indonesia — Three Catholics accused of masterminding a 2000 riot between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia were executed by firing squad at an undisclosed location in the island nation's Central Sulawesi province Sept. 22, the *Jakarta Post* reported.

Government sources said Fabrianus Tibo, Dominggus da Silva, and Marinus Riwi had admitted their roles in religious violence, but doubt has surfaced

in both Christian and Muslim circles about their guilt. Indonesia's former president Abdurrahman Wahid, called stay of execution the day the death sentences were carried out, the newspaper reported.

Wahid said the executions were "against Islam," but Attorney General Abdurrahman Saleh insisted on moving forward with the executions "because he doesn't understand religion."

"In hadis (Muslim tradition) if there is doubt, in this case the prosecutor has any doubt, don't do it," Wahid said. "It is that the attorney general should pay attention to religion."

The men, called "Christian militants" by the paper, were only individuals executed in a long-term conflict that ran from 1998 to 2002 between Muslims and Christians in the Poso area of the Sulawesi province. Government sources previously cited the number of Muslim dead in the 2000 riot as 1,000, but *AsiaNews* at the *Jakarta Post* put the number between 70 and 200.

In addition to claiming that Tibo, da Silva, and Riwi organized the violence against Muslims, advocates for the protested the fact that few Muslims were charged with offenses during the fighting that took place between the two groups from '98-'02. More than 1,000 Christians in Indonesia were in the hands of Muslims during the conflict, according to International Christian Concern, a Christian human rights organization based in Washington, D.C. □

Tennessee colleges report on fall enrollment

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Belmont University, Nashville; Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City; and Union University, Jackson, recently reported on their fall enrollment.

Belmont University

Belmont reported its fall 2006 enrollment of 4,481 students is a record for the sixth year. The school noted the increase is just over 50 percent since 2000 when the school enrolled 2,976 students.

The Belmont student body is currently comprised of 707 graduate students and 3,774 undergraduates.

"Our sixth consecutive year of record enrollment, higher qualifications of incoming students, and jump to the top 10 in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings have all given the Belmont community cause for celebration," Belmont President Dr. Robert Fisher said.

The average ACT score for the 2006-07 freshman class is 26, up one point from last year. Nearly 40 percent of new freshmen at Belmont were in the top 10 percent of their graduating class, while 69 percent finished in the top 25 percent.

Belmont University rose five spots in the latest annual ranking of America's best colleges and universities in *U.S. News & World Report* and is now ranked 10th in the South in the "Best Universities — Masters" category. The rankings are based on several quality indicators including student retention rates, graduation rates, student-faculty ratios, and scores on college entrance exams.

Carson-Newman College

Carson-Newman's fall enrollment of 1,949 includes a freshman class of 442 and a milestone in the college's history.

"Our freshman class includes six National Merit Scholarship finalists," says Tom Huebner, vice president for enrollment management. "Based on our research, that is the most merit finalists in an incoming class in C-N history."

Huebner expects growth in particular disciplines and programs will result in growth across campus in coming years, saying, "We have experienced a market correction with fewer students who want to pursue a traditional liberal arts curriculum, which follows national trends. Accordingly, we are seeing great expansion in a number of areas."

The College's nursing division has continued its meteoric progress, jumping to 290 majors

this year from last year's record high of 212. In 2002, the division had just 80 undergraduate students.

"Beyond nursing, we have benefited from the interest generated from our pre-professional health program, which has long been considered one of the best small college pre-med educations in the country," notes Huebner. "And we are pleased to see the wave of excitement about our new majors in both biochemistry and athletic training, both of which had a very productive first year."

In October of last year, C-N implemented a student retention program that should yield marked improvements in the future. Says Huebner, "Research demonstrates that this generation of college students is willing to continue shopping for options even after they have made their initial decisions."

While Carson-Newman draws its student population from more than 40 states and some 25 foreign countries, the majority comes from Tennessee and 55 percent of the student body report that they are Baptist.

Union University

Enrollment at Union University for the fall semester is a record-high 3,156 students.

That tops last year's fall

enrollment of 2,981 and a 6 percent increase of 175 students. The latest enrollment figures show a 60 percent increase over the 1,972 students enrolled in the fall of 1996, when Union University President David Baker began his tenure.

The total 2006 fall enrollment includes 2,277 undergraduate students, compared to 2,033 last year, and 879 graduate students compared to 803 last year.

To put Union's growth in perspective, enrollment at four-year public campuses increased 13 percent from 1999-2000, according to the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. For four-year independent, religious campuses, enrollment increased 28 percent in the same period.

"These numbers are true indicators of the strength and health of Union University at this time," Dockery said. "It is exciting to see such growth in students from across the state, as well as from around the country, choose Union University."

Of the 2,981 enrolled in 2005-2006, about 900 students graduated during the 2005-2006 academic year. That means Union welcomed nearly 1,100 new students to its Jackson and Germantown campuses this fall. □

Women challenged to be clay in hands of ...

Continued from page 1

re "just too proud to admit noted Cannada.

She also referred to Jane ge of Charleston, W.Va., nnada's friend who led worp for the retreat. Cannada ted Auge, a formally trained ncer, has faced many hurdles her life. Her husband of 27 ars and the father of their ee children left her for other man. She has an ured foot which will cause r'pain for the rest of her life. ge recently had major surry. And her mother has zheimer's disease.

"Sometimes you just don't ow what people have had to ept to get where they are ht now."

Cannada mentioned prison nistry. She spoke at the Ten- ssee Prison for Women in shville after the retreat on pt. 17 drawing about 200. me women in prison are er spiritually than some of e women at the retreat, she ggested.

"Who has been forgiven ch loves much," said Cannada.

"We need to learn to accept e another better," she contin- 1, noting Christians seem to able to love people outside of church easier than fellow ristians.

People outside the church e viewed as sinners who don't ow any better, said Cannada. is is true despite the fact at many of us could easily be ere they are, she added.

She questioned the idea of

being self-made as good. Instead Christians should try to be God-made, said Cannada, and re-made as we are trans- formed by God.

Another session

In another session, Cannada read II Corinthians 4:7, Isaiah 29:16, and 45:9. She asked the ladies if they argued with the potter about how He made them.

"The world that we live in tells you you have to look a cer- tain way, you have to act a cer- tain way."

She doesn't care what peo- ple think of her except if her influence would cause someone to sin, she explained.

She suggested Christians should "be Jesus people" rather than nice people.

Cannada read Romans 12. "It's a hard thing to do, isn't it, to be what God plans us to be."

God is "not in the business of collecting art. He makes art and He makes it so He can make it over and over and over again," referring to pottery making and the process of using old pottery to make new pottery.

She encouraged Christians to be usable. She noted Scrip- ture doesn't say Christians should wait for someone to ask them to serve or they should join a committee. All Chris- tians have to be is "decent clay" and "moldable," she described. Then they can make a differ- ence in people's lives, she added.

Cannada thanked the



DEBBIE CANNADA uses a display of pottery during a general session of the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women to make a point during her message. The meeting was held at First Baptist Church, Jackson.

ladies for bringing 186 \$10 Wal-Mart gift cards for her ministry. They will be used to help parents buy school sup- plies for their children who are in the after-school pro- gram of West Charleston Bap- tist Church. Norm Cannada is pastor there.

She told of the annual Christmas toy store ministry of the church. New toys are offered to needy parents for 10 cents on the dollar. Recently the church provided toys for about 1,000 children although the church is small.

"God never has failed us," she said. They do it so they can present the gospel to each shopper, she added. Shoppers must agree to the counseling session to receive toys, she added.

West Charleston also helps



CANDY PHILLIPS, right, executive director, Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, laughs with Carolyn Jernigan, left, of First Baptist Church, Cookeville, and Becky Jackman of First Baptist Church, Gallaway, during an activity in a conference.

the nearby public school when it can, she added. Cannada works as a librarian there.

"Jesus got dirty," she stated.

All throughout Scripture "we're reminded we're just dirt, clay."

— See Women, page 4

en percent of Southern Baptist pastors embrace Calvinism ...

Continued from page 1

Adherence not age-related

After analyzing the demo- phics of the 10 percent who rm Calvinism, LifeWay search also found no clear age relation.

"Some have expressed views s renewed interest in rmed theology is tied to nger Southern Baptist stu- ts and pastors," said Brad ggoner, director of LifeWay search. "It is interesting that

the research revealed that there is no significant statistical dif- ference in those who are over 40 years of age responding in the affirmative and those under 40. Therefore, age is not a deter- mining factor in those who embrace Reformed theology."

LifeWay Research also found that a slight majority of South- ern Baptist pastors only address Calvinism from the pulpit once a year or less. While a greater number of pastors — 51 percent — rarely speak on Calvinism

with their people, 45 percent of SBC pastors address Calvinism several times a year or more from the pulpit. Four percent refused to answer the question regarding the frequency with which they address Calvinism from the pulpit.

From all the pastors sur- veyed, 6 percent responded that they address Calvinism once a month and 7 percent discuss it more than once a month. The survey did not ask whether the respondents spoke favorably or negatively of Reformed theolo- gy.

Explaining the TULIP

Five-Point Calvinism is most often explained through the acrostic TULIP. Calvinists believe in:

- **Total Depravity:** All humans are born sinners, and this sinful condition affects every aspect of man's being, including his will and has rendered him incapable of respond- ing to the gospel without God's initiative.

- **Unconditional Election:** God decreed from eternity to elect certain individuals to sal- vation. The basis of this election

has nothing to do with the merit of those chosen, but is based solely on the sovereign will of God.

- **Limited Atonement:** Christ's death atoned for the sin of those chosen to salvation from eternity past. In other words, Christ did not die for all of humanity, only the "elect." Many Calvinists prefer the wording "particular redemp- tion" when explaining this ten- ant.

- **Irresistible Grace:** The elect are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and thus are able to see, understand, and respond to the gospel. This act of God's grace is ultimately irresistible in that divine election works unfailingly. Many Calvinists prefer the wording "effectual calling" in lieu of irresistible grace.

- **Perseverance of the Saints:** God preserves those He elects to become believers, and they will not fall away.

LifeWay Research chose to make Calvinism the topic of its first project in light of the increased dialogue across the SBC and as speculation

emerged on the prevalence of Calvinistic theology.

LifeWay President and CEO Thom S. Rainer announced the formation of LifeWay Research in February, describing that the entity would assist and equip church leaders with knowledge that leads to greater levels of church health and effectiveness. The research seeks to accurately measure the beliefs and behaviors of people, the emerg- ing practices of churches, the things church leaders are talk- ing about, and the factors affect- ing churches today.

It is a critical need because "the truth matters," said Wag- goner, in a recent interview. "There seems to be a need for clarity and interpretation of all this information."

LifeWay Research has three more projects scheduled for the remainder of 2006: the formerly church — why they left church and what would bring them back; churches that are effective in evangelism over a 10-year period and why; and from which sources Southern Baptist churches draw ministry help. □

Frequency you address Calvinism from the pulpit



Telephone survey among a random sample of 413 Southern Baptist pastors conducted August 2006. Sample has a margin of error of +5% at the 95% confidence interval.

LifeWay
RESEARCH

www.lifewayresearch.com

Women challenged to be clay in hands of ...

— Continued from page 3

She referred to Myrtice Owens who was on the program. Owens, a missionary to Africa for 36 years with her husband, Carlos, is from Nashville.

Cannada said Owens "is so elegant and beautiful. I'm not. But I'm as usable as Myrtice."

Praise is "equally beautiful" coming out of different containers, she said, referring to human beings.

She warned the women. "You never know what life's going to throw at you that's going to crack your pot." She suggested they view such events as renewal rather than as punishment.

One reason to seek salvation from God is not only for heaven, but for a "reason to get up in the morning," said Cannada.

Third session

Cannada discussed the metaphor of people as pottery citing Isaiah 4:8, Psalms 40:2, and Genesis 2.

She described the pottery-making process. The clay is found, which is a difficult process, and then dug up. It is hard so it is ground. Pottery pieces are also ground into the dust to temper the clay and make it stronger. Then water is added to the mixture which is worked. Stones must be removed. The mixture is dried and ground up several times. Then the clay is usable for pottery-making, said Cannada.

"Just becoming decent clay is a job in itself."

She told the story of Mary and Martha when they were hosting Jesus. Cannada noted Martha was "encumbered about with much doing."

Martha asked Jesus to make Mary "get up and help me." She knew that "nothing short of Jesus saying it was going to get Mary up."

Jesus responded by saying Martha's

name twice and then telling her he would not be with them in the flesh forever.

This is a lesson for women, said Cannada, who observed "women want to do something."

Some Christians are saved but they don't want to be used, she noted. Like the clay, they are metaphorically out in the desert hiding in the dirt. They know many changes would have to occur before they could become a pot.

The clay is unearthed, which is uncomfortable for it, she continued.

The dry powder phase reminds Cannada of dry spells in her life. She made a correlation between the addition of pottery shards to the strength gained by Christians from other people.

Cannada compared the water to the Holy Spirit which is added to a Christian's life.

"It's not enough to say, God, I want to be on your wheel and you mold me." Christians must consider how they can become decent clay. Sometimes we're not okay; we're being worked, she noted. "I'm still lumpy but I'm ready to be used."

Cannada referred again to her newly-born niece Carly. The family had prayed that she wouldn't need a shunt in her head for hydrocephalus. Yet she did.

God didn't answer their specific prayers, but that doesn't mean He isn't working for Carly's good, said Cannada.

"Where are you in the process?" she concluded. □



PARTICIPANTS OF the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women move to the altar to pick up the small garden pots with seeds to remind them of the retreat and to pray during the final session on Sunday, Sept. 16.



DEBBIE CANNADA signs her autograph and a message in a personal item being given to Barbara Bunch, center, First Baptist Church, Humboldt, as Melanie Scott, right of center, also of the church looks on.

Tracey Gholson discovers super woman really doesn't exist

By Connie Davis Bushey
Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — Tracey Gholson confessed to the crowds attending her conference at the Tennessee Prayer Retreat for Women that she wants to be a super woman.

Gholson described some of her struggles. She is wife to Tom, pastor of Brook Hollow Baptist Church, Nashville. They are parents to 9-year-old twins. Gholson is a daughter and granddaughter.

She serves in several roles in her church. She does volunteer work in her community. She is the new statewide coordinator of Christian Women's Job Corps/Christian Men's Job Corps, a ministry of Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union. Finally, Gholson writes for WMU publications.

She said she can relate to the plate spinner, an entertainment act which was popular in the 1960s. Sometimes she feels she has to keep those plates spinning and if she doesn't do it, they will fall.

She also dreams of having super powers, like the mother and wife in the movie, "The Incredibles," said Gholson. Her name was Elasta Girl and she could stretch her body to do things. For instance, she could vacuum the house without moving.



TRACEY GHOLSON of Nashville leads a conference during the retreat on the trials of being a super woman.

"I'm an Elasta Girl," she said, "but I don't have the super powers." She also realized she didn't have the abundant life promised in Scripture. Instead of a peaceful, joyful life, she was stretched and exhausted.

Confession is the first step to recovery, she continued.

The next step she learned is to focus every day "on my love for Jesus." Just like in any relationship, people may feel

love for someone but in our busyness they don't express it as often as they should.

Christians need to pray and read the Bible every day, she directed. And Christian women must "spend the time nurturing that relationship with Jesus Christ."

"We must focus on that love relationship with Jesus especially when we feel stretched."

She referred to Peter, the disciple, who was asked by Jesus three times if Peter loved Him. The incident is recorded in John 21.

Gholson suggested the crowd consider the words of the song, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." It is written by a woman, she noted.

To find the abundant life, women also should serve Jesus, she stated.

"Love is more than a feeling. It's an action," she continued. As the Bible teaches, people should love their neighbors and they can do that by serving them, she said.

Of course, Elasta Girls know how to serve, explained Gholson. They are good at it. It's just "another thing that we have to check off our check list."

But, have Christian women "forgotten the joy that comes from serving others?" And have we forgotten to "do it while showing the love of Jesus?"

Attitude is key, she identified.

"Some of us are just doing to get it done and we don't have the right attitude about it."

"Serve because Christ first loved you and your cup is so full you can't help but serve others."

Finally, women need to focus on living and laughing, suggested Gholson. Many women who have First Step Girl tendencies have "simply forgotten how to laugh," she said. We take "ourselves and our tasks too seriously."

So many times women put off things until they have a bigger house, more money, the kids are out of diapers, the kids are out of school, and then things.

Gholson told how her mother and she traveled to visit her grandfather in Illinois. The two women were there to see his house. They almost forgot to enjoy the visit.

She suggested women consider taking pizza out of a cardboard box, sit on the floor with their kids, turning on music and dancing with their teenaged kids, going on a walk with their husband, getting to know an unchurched neighbor, or sitting in the driveway in a lawn chair with a grandfather or other relative and watching a bird feeder. □

Calvinists have no sense of urgency — Jesus did

Reflections



By Lonnie Wilkey, editor

In this week's issue (on page 10) we have printed a story regarding a study on Calvinism. Since we decided to publish the story I guess I was predestined to write a column about it (that's a joke).

Actually, I probably am predestined to get in trouble, but part of the task of an editor is to make his or her readers think, here goes.

As I read the article about the FeWay study, I was actually surprised that only 10 percent of Southern Baptists claim to be re-point Calvinists (the points are all listed in the story). To hear the discussion among some people would have thought the number were higher.

It would seem that if only 10 percent of pastors really believe the Calvinist doctrine there really is no problem. Maybe, maybe not. If 10 percent do a

good job of sharing their views and convincing others that Calvinism is valid, problems could arise.

Now, keep in mind I am writing from a layman's perspective with no seminary training.

In a nutshell, Calvinists believe that God has already selected or pre-ordained those who will be saved. I have heard of churches that give no invitation because they believe there is no point because God has decided who will be saved.

Now, I believe firmly that God knows the decisions people will make, but I do not believe He has pre-ordained anyone to spend an eternity in hell. Ever since the Garden of Eden and the beginning of mankind, God has allowed men and women to make choices.

My only theological "training" is what I gather from God's Holy Word.

As I read about Jesus and His ministry I notice He had a sense of urgency. After all, He basically had only three years during His time on earth. The Bible speaks often of Jesus traveling from place to place, teaching, preaching, and healing. He

stayed pretty busy. Nowhere does it talk about Jesus taking a long vacation.

Why would Jesus have had that sense of urgency if His Heavenly Father had already chosen those who would spend eternity in heaven?

God gave Jesus a specific purpose. Matthew 18:11 says, *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*

In Matthew 9:37 Jesus notes that the *harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.* Why would we need laborers if God already has chosen those who will live in heaven?

There are numerous scriptural references revealing the urgency of Jesus' ministry, but perhaps it is best illustrated in the parable of the lost sheep (see Luke 15:4-7).

Jesus reminds us that just as a shepherd must go and search for that one lost sheep, we are to keep seeking that one lost sinner. Why bother if God already knows who is going to heaven or not?

And, finally, why would God allow His Son to die a horrible death on a cross if He would not give everyone an opportunity to

be saved?

The danger with Calvinism as I see it is that it could cause Southern Baptists in the pew to think they do not need to witness, give through the Cooperative Program to missions, or pray for lost souls. That would be a tragedy.

To be fair to Calvinists there are some who say that there is a need to witness and share the gospel. But they do not seem to have that sense of urgency that Jesus had. One of the last things Jesus said to His disciples (and to us) is the Great Commission, recorded in Matthew 28:19-20. I can't imagine Jesus saying those words at that particular time if it didn't matter.

I can only go by the example Jesus set. He had an urgency for saving lost souls and He passed that urgency on to us.

Calvinism is becoming a "hot button" item across the Southern Baptist Convention.

When we get to heaven we will find out if the Calvinists had it right or not. In the meantime, let's assume they do not and continue to do what Jesus came to do — to seek and save the lost. And, let us do it with His sense of urgency. □

making Christ known



By Steve Pearson

Running up the score

The scoreboard said it all — 100 to 33. There is just no way to cover or excuse that score as anything else other than "running up the score."

The boys (mostly eighth and ninth graders) at my son's school knew it. Their faces and their heads showed we had been whopped not beat!

Is it ever OK to run up the score? Don't ask Steve Spurrier (former University of Florida coach now at the University of South Carolina). We already know his answer.

Is it ever OK? Yes, if your opponent is Satan.

By the way, if your church is growing and has a passion to see more and more people rescued from the grasp of the evil one then your church is "running up the score."

See, you have already won. You are already the victor. Now, every soul brought to faith in Christ and every Christian reclaimed into the faith is our way of running up the score.

Your Sunday School class ministers to a family in trouble and as a result of that service a family is won to faith in Christ. Your church is running up the score.

You step out of your comfort zone and walk across the street to your neighbor's house and begin the process of investing in the life of your neighbor in order to have the privilege of inviting them to your church. You and your church are running up the score.

My son's team, now all seniors, have not lost a game. And those teams who ran up the score on them four years ago are now wishing they had never made that mistake.

When it comes to winning lost people to Jesus Christ, let's run up the score. □ — Pearson is evangelism strategist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

You don't need a label to testify that you know Jesus

Words from the Word



By Johnnie C. Godwin

After church in a small town, Phyllis and I found a restaurant where everyone seemed to eat on Sunday. We got the last two seats in the place, which were next to a couple I recognized as having been at the church we attended. We introduced ourselves and told the couple we had seen them at church. The lady I had just met looked at me and grimly said, "I don't mind telling you right up front, I'm a fundamentalist!" I don't have any idea why he told me that since he didn't know me from Adam. However, the reply I gave him had nothing to do with his self-label. If he had said he was a liberal, I would have given him the same reply.

Unlabeled — more or less
I answered the man the way we always answered anyone who tried to label me. And that answer goes back before the 1970s. I said, "Well, I don't mind telling you right up front, fundamentally I consider myself to be an enlightened, liberal-minded conservative!" I've never really labeled myself or accepted labels others might want to apply to me. However, I've enjoyed gathering up the terms people use for themselves or others and letting that mix of terms serve as my stock answer for self-labeling.

My new friend looked con-

fused and asked, "When did you get enlightened?" I replied, "At age seven, when I walked down the aisle and accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior." After that, the man and I talked about the same football team we liked and other friendly things. We shared a nice meal. And so did our wives.

What are you?

Up front, people who are labelers seem intent on finding out what "ism" a person is. Now, I know the importance of identifiers, but I don't like efforts to label and pigeon-hole people into a box for all future considerations.

George Bernard Shaw revealed the basic flaw in this approach: "I had become a new person; and those who knew the old person laughed at me. The only man who behaved sensibly was my tailor: he took my measurements anew every time he saw me, whilst all the rest went on with their old measurements and expected them to fit me" (Man and Superman, Acts I).

My own personal convictions are strong, but I've tried to avoid burning any relationship bridges with labeled people. You see, there is a previous question that is critical and far more important than what you are. What you are may change; but if you belong to Jesus, whose you are will never change.

Whose I am

Recently, I had a dream that I was out of my region and in a place where no one knew me. I needed to prove who I was, so I reached into my billfold to get one of my business cards; but not a single card was there. I

discovered my drivers license was gone. My credit cards were gone. My insurance card was gone. There wasn't a single document to prove that I was who I said I was. No one knew me, and I had no proof of my ID.

When I awoke from that nightmare, I began to reflect on it. I began to think about arriving at the gates of heaven without any means of identification. What would I do? My only hope was that my name would appear in the Lamb's Book of Life. I began to find comfort in remembering the night I trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior and got my name written in the Book of Life. That transaction came about by God's grace through repentance, confession, and faith in Jesus as God's Son: Lord, Savior.

The critical thing for everyone is not what they are or who they are but whose they are: a child of the King or a child of the devil. Children of the King have their names written in the Book of Life. Further, children of the King will be recognized because they are remolded in His image (Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15), which image man was created in to begin with (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-2). In the Greek version of the Old Testament and in the Greek New Testament, the word used in these verses for "image" is "icon."

Not an icon yet

Not long ago, Phyllis and I approached the front door of a restaurant at the same time a young woman did. She greeted me enthusiastically, "Hello, Mr. Godwin, how are you doing?" I didn't have a clue who she was.

So I told her I was sorry and that she would have to give me a name. She replied, "That's OK, Mr. Godwin; you don't need to apologize; you're an icon; everybody knows you. I'm Jane Doe, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Doe at First Baptist Church" — the same church we go to. I was both humbled and enlightened.

Phyllis was amused to be married to an icon. Of course, I'm not an icon in the sense that everyone recognizes me. I've just been around a long time and sometimes get mistaken for a big fish in the little pond where we live. Although I'm not an icon in the popular sense, I am becoming one in the biblical sense.

The original image of God is marred in all of us. We tend to act more like a child of the devil than a child of God until we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Then we're born again; and God is at work in us through His Spirit to remold us into the image of his Son (Romans 8:29). We are not yet icons who match the image of God in Christ, but we Christians are on our way. God will complete that molding in His time.

Conclusion

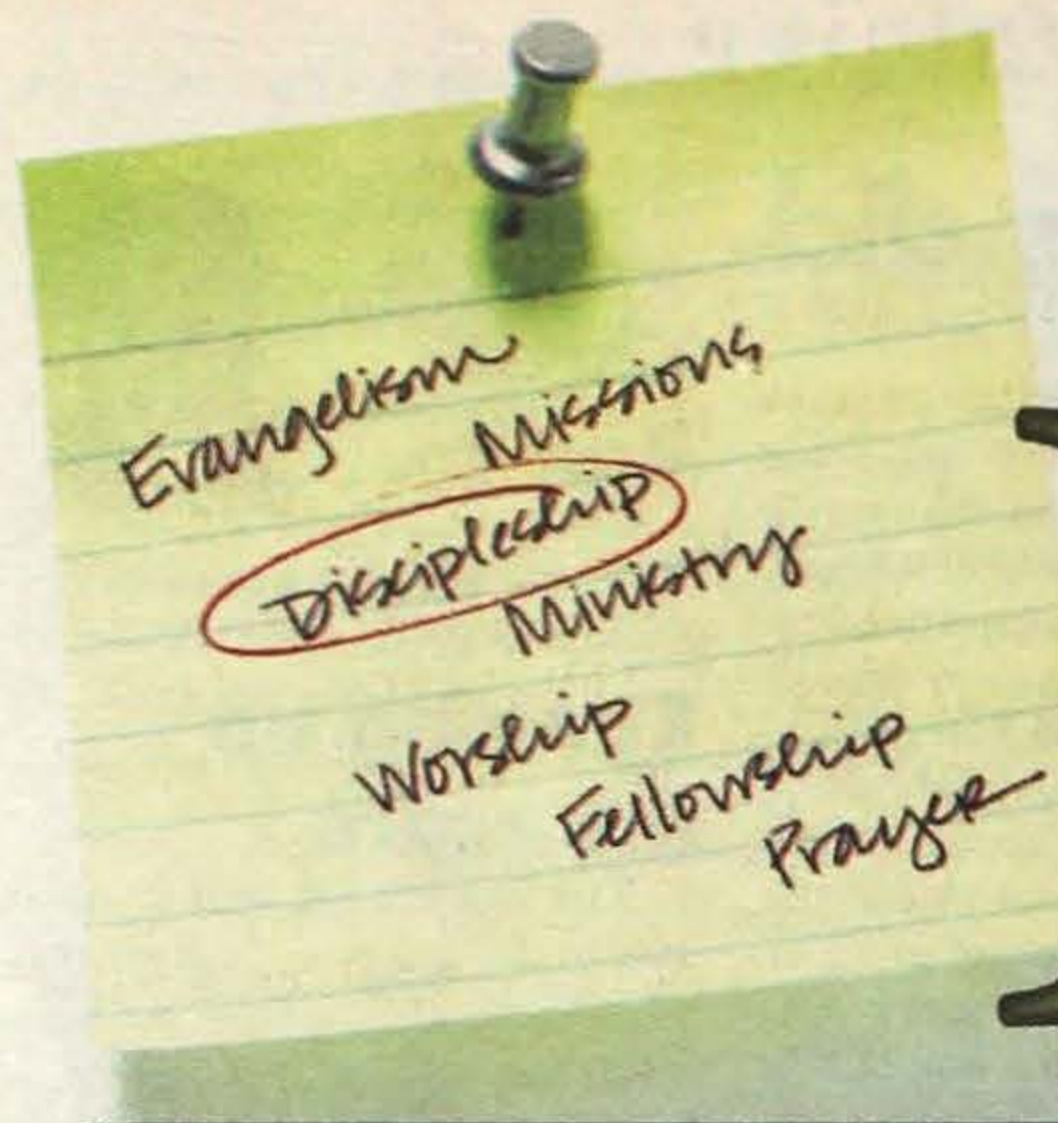
Please don't label me. Just let me testify that I know Jesus, whose child I am; and I want to vote on the ballot that has His name on it. Let me testify I'm a child of the King and am being molded back into His image. And I pray people will recognize His image in me when I reflect it through love, care, and other likenesses. □ — Copyright 2006 by Johnnie C. Godwin: johnniegodwin@comcast.net

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Church Health Matters

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? Discipleship Matters

In using the term discipleship as a function of church health, discipleship is not being used as a term for a church program. Discipleship is about the process of growing the believer to maturity.

This is accomplished through Bible teaching, discipleship programs, small group studies, prayer, and individual and corporate worship. Included below is the contact information for members of your state missionary staff that are available to help you and your church in any area related to discipleship.

State Discipleship Director

Tim Holcomb (615) 371-2055

Youth

Bruce Edwards (615) 371-2094

College

Bill Choate (615) 371-2057

Children

Vicki Hulsey (615) 371-2081

Preschool

Klista Storts (615) 371-2082

What is Discipleship?

By Tim Holcomb

What do you think when someone uses the word discipleship? Is your answer an activity Baptists do traditionally on Sunday evening before worship? Maybe you think about Training Union or Baptist Young People Union better known as BYPU?

Maybe you think about Henry Blackaby, T.W. Hunt, or a clothesline with quarterlies pinned on it? Maybe you even think about a journey or a mix of opportunities and tragedies that become "shapers" of your life?

If we listen to the statistics, discipleship is not very effective. People who say they are believers aren't living like they are "disciples." Look at divorce rates among believers, moral relativism of all ages not just the "Generation Y-ers," and the realistic participation figures, which are around 20 percent of adults in any of our churches.

So what is discipleship? Discipleship is an environment created in Christian groups where a disciple can become more like his master.

"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:1-2, New American Standard Bible).

In feudal days, a young man was indentured to a master craftsman as an apprentice. As an apprentice, you learned the trade from the master. This meant that you most likely lived in the master's home, did chores around his house, and sat daily at his side learning whatever trade he had mastered.

Discipleship is a mix of different opportunities that inspire a believer to become more like Christ. "... and then take on an entirely new way of life — a God fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside



and working itself into your conduct accurately reproduces his character in (Ephesians 4:20-24 NASB).

These opportunities consist of processes, and participants. Products, resources, like books, study guides, or series. They are designed to heighten learning of the individual. General group moves from one resource to another product. Processes have less to do with resources and more to do with relationships.

Discipleship relationships focus on spiritual mentoring and spiritual direction. This process also includes the use of assessments to discern a believer's understanding of their spiritual journey. Then, from this assessment, plans are developed for "spiritual next steps" leading to a more Christ-like image. "Participation" is a term used to describe small group as an essential element of any discipleship experience is the development of relationships. These small groups provide intimacy, accountability, and ministry.

If discipleship defaults to only one opportunity (products, processes, participants), the possibilities of a believer becoming like his Master is diminished. Discipleship is a mixture of opportunities that range from individual one-on-one experiences to small groups to large groups.

Think about discipleship from a perspective of including a variety of opportunities.

Take My Yoke Upon You

By Tim Holcomb

Several years ago I purchased an ox yoke. It is over five feet long and about 10 inches wide. With the heavy metal ring, this makes the yoke very heavy. The oxen that carried this yoke must have been large and strong. Can you imagine what a sight it was to see this yoke in action?

I have always been intrigued by tandem pulling teams. A former neighbor had two Belgian draft horses. In the heat of the summer, he would hitch them to an old mower and cut 6-10 acres of grass around his house. The team consisted of an experienced and inexperienced horse. My neighbor took his time hitching the experienced horse first, and then he followed up with the inexperienced one. He depended on the more experienced horse to teach the younger one how and where to pull. It was such a wonderful sight to see these huge horses cutting straight row after row. Because this land was on a major road, cars would pull off into the roadside to watch. What a great sight! Can you imagine what tandem pulling is really like?

What do you think is required to make a disciple? You've jumped ahead of me and probably have thought already about Matthew 11:28-30. This wonderful invitation from Christ to be yoked with him: "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is perfect and the burden I give you is light" (New Living Translation).

There are three phrases in this text that gives us insight into making a disciple. They are: "Let me teach you," "You will find rest for your soul," and "Take my yoke upon you."

Let me teach you

Where would any master craftsman begin in training an apprentice? It is providing learning opportunities. The nature and scope of these opportunities depend on what needs to be learned. Is learning essential to becoming a disciple? In the text, Jesus says, "Let me teach you." This statement establishes a hierarchical relationship. If a believer is to learn from Jesus, he or she should be ready to practice submission to live in an obedient pattern to the teacher. As a believer interacts with the teacher, questions are answered, and the journey is begun.

You will find rest for your soul

The second phrase is "you will find rest for your soul." This invitation comes from Jesus after discussing the heavy burdens placed on the Jewish people by the Pharisees. The rest Jesus describes here is not laying your head on a pillow, but getting a picture of reality and finding a way to lessen the burden of all the Pharisaical laws.

If learning gets us going on the journey of becoming a disciple, then reflecting moves us along the road. Reflection is the ability to stop and focus on the reality of what we know as truth. Taking time to reflect gives the believer the opportunity to get belief and behavior connected.

In Dallas Willard's latest book, *Renovation of the Heart*, (NavPress Publishing Group, 2002), he discusses ordering our lives. This order provides a means for the individual to connect belief with behavior.

Is it possible that many of us have not thought about the order of our lives?

Perhaps we are so accustomed to living and acting without reflecting, that we have developed a default behavior that is not connected at all to what we say we believe. Nothing could impact more negatively our ability to grow into the image of Christ, than to have a separation between what we believe and how we act.

So what can we do? Let's investigate Willard's list that provides order for our lives: Body, Soul, Mind, Spirit, and God; or God, Spirit, Mind, Soul, and Body.

As you look at these two lists, the first item serves the next, and the next item serves the next and so on. Therefore, in the second list God serves the Spirit, the Spirit the mind, the mind the soul, and the soul the body. Isn't this an interesting way to live our lives? How many live like this?

In the first list, the body serves the soul, the soul serves the mind, the mind serves the Spirit, and the Spirit serves God. (Which of the two lists would you say orders the life of a believer being transformed into the image of Christ?)

Would a believer begin with obedience to their body, or obedience to God? This isn't a trick question. I believe many adults don't know which list they live out of.

Perhaps strong words, but in light of what Jesus was getting at in Matthew 11, this is still true today. Not that we are inundated with laws, but that we haven't stopped to clearly notice who, or what, is in charge of our lives.

"Finding rest for our soul" comes to us from reflecting on the way we live, making sure that we are submissive to God, and that we order our lives with God first and not our own body.

Take my yoke upon you

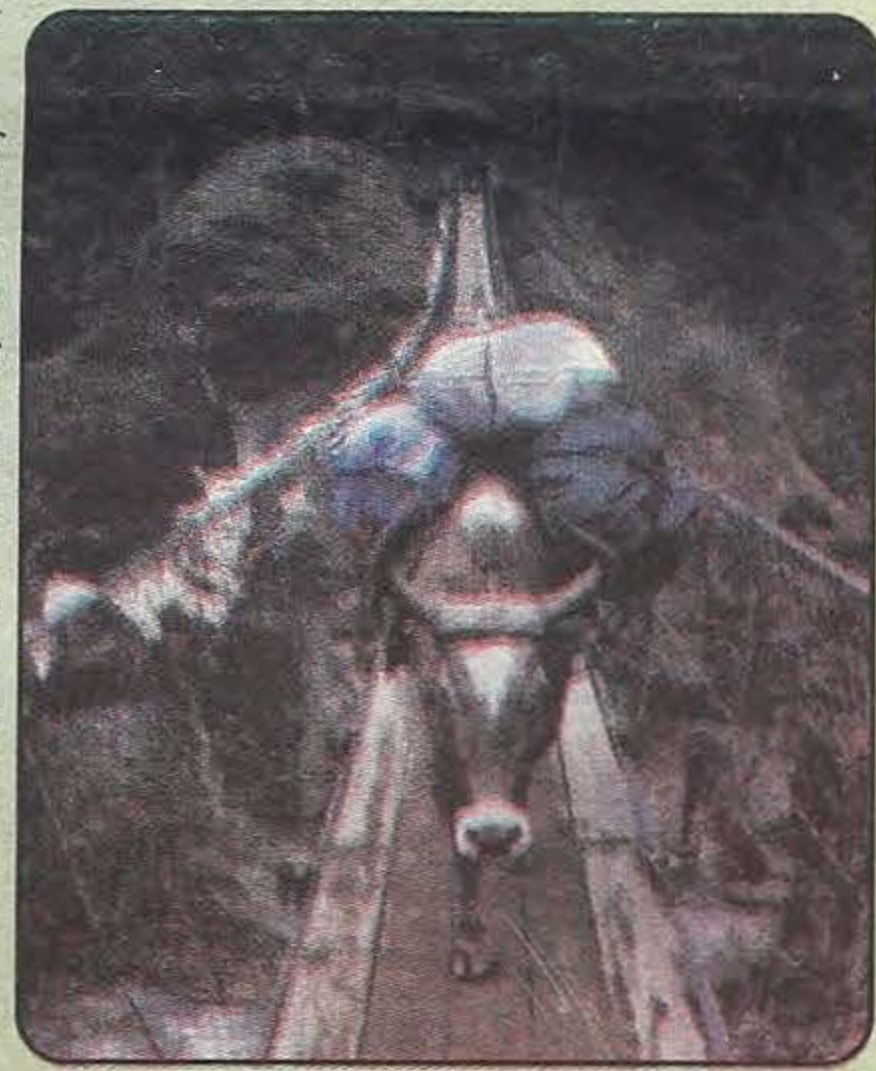
The final phrase in this wonderful passage describes how we get to work. Actually, Jesus asks us to exchange the burden that we are carrying for another that He will assist us in carrying. I believe that Jesus expects us to be part of the team.

So now I am a part of the team. Jesus is waiting for me to get yoked up to Him so we can pull together. When we start pulling together, I learn from Jesus. What a powerful picture of how we become more and more like Christ. When we are yoked with Him in pulling, this is the picture of service.

What better place to take what I have learned about God and myself, and put it into practice through some kind of service to His kingdom.

If you have answered the invitation of Jesus to follow Him, you have taken the initial step of being his disciple. You have made the decision to pull along side of Him. You have put yourself in the position to learn from Him. You seek rest for your soul by reflecting and thinking about how your life is ordered. You have traded old, heavier burdens for burdens that Jesus will assist you in carrying. This is because you have agreed to be in the yoke with Him.

Let's get pulling!



Discipleship Resources

Southern Baptist

C.W. Hunt, *The Mind of Christ: From Heaven's View*, LifeWay
Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing God: The Ways of God*, LifeWay
Clyde King, *The Call to Follow Christ*, LifeWay
Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*, NavPress
Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Discipline for the Christian Life*, NavPress

Evangelical

Robert Mulholland, *Shaped by the Word*, Upper Room
Bill Hull, *Choose the Life*, Baker
Robert Clinton, *Connecting*, NavPress
Meroy Elms, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*, Zondervan
Harry Crabb, *Soultalk: The Safest Place on Earth*, Integrity

Classics

Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal: Reaching Out*, Image
Melvyn Underhill, *The Spiritual Life*, Hodden-Stoughton
Gilden Edwards, *Spiritual Friend*, Panlist Press
Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: Prayer*, Harper
Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening*, Cowley

Coming Up! Coming Up! Coming Up!

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Sept. 29-30 | Kid's Choral Connection, Pleasant Heights Baptist Church, Columbia |
| Oct. 1-2 | Connect, Obion County Fairgrounds, Union City |
| Oct. 1-4 | Connect, Long Hollow Baptist Church, Hendersonville |
| Oct. 5 | Music & Worship Leader Roundtable, Central Baptist Church, Johnson City |
| Oct. 5-6 | Chaplain's Retreat, Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, Linden |
| Oct. 5-7 | New Work Pastors/Wives Retreat, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg |
| Oct. 6-8 | Campers on Mission Rally, Boys Ranch, Millington |
| Oct. 6-8 | FOCUS Fall Collegiate Conference, Baptist Center, Brentwood |

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

Livingston church shows God's love in unexpected ways

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

LIVINGSTON — In March 2005 when Jeremy Byrd and his wife moved back to their hometown here after two years at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Germantown, they just wanted to serve God at a small church where attendance had fallen to about 20 in Sunday School and 50 or 60 in worship.

"The people had just lost hope for whatever reason," Byrd, pastor of Memorial Missionary Baptist Church in Livingston, told Baptist Press.

"So we just started trying to serve God and tried to place our emphasis on leaving the church and being out in the neighborhood doing things. We tried to take the focus off of what you wear and things like that and tried to become a church that focuses on God. When we started doing all of that, we prayed for revival and really tried to seek God."

About a year ago, the church began seeing substantial growth in baptisms, and by the end of August they had baptized 48 for this church year. Byrd made sure people knew that baptism is a celebration of what God has done in a person's life through salvation, and many lives have been touched.

When you look through the Bible ... God doesn't really use the smartest or the most talented ... He picks the Davids of the world. He picks the little guys. — Jeremy Byrd

One example is a couple in their 40s who had not been in church much. The husband had attended a church when he was younger but fell away, and the wife had never been in church, Byrd said. But the wife's daughter started attend-

ing Memorial with some friends and soon was saved and baptized.

"The first time she came to church was to see her daughter's baptism here," Byrd said of the mother. "Then the mother was saved at our Christmas play. Then we had services Christmas Day and the stepdad got saved. So we baptized the husband and wife together on New Year's Day."

And Memorial saw a single mother start coming to church after her child was in Vacation Bible School, Byrd said. Soon after, she accepted Christ and was baptized. The woman started praying for her ex-husband's salvation, and God saved him.

"They're scheduled to be remarried in a few months," Byrd said. "God is doing some amazing things. He's complete-

ly changing families and bringing marriages back together and doing a lot of awesome things."

Now Sunday School attendance is around 120 each week, and worship attendance is around 200. Byrd said the Everyone Can emphasis sums up what God had laid on his heart.

"When you look through the Bible and when you look through history, God doesn't really use the smartest or the most talented or the things of the world. He picks the Davids of the world, He picks the little guys," Byrd said.

Memorial has started a program encouraging members to show the love of God through unexpected courtesies in the community.

"We had some little business cards made up that say,

'Random Acts of Kindness Because Jesus Christ Loves You.' We have used that to evangelize our community, like when we're going through McDonald's," Byrd said. "I pay for the car behind us and just leave that card at the window."

"... I think the world is tired of hearing that Jesus loves them, and they want to see the love," the pastor added. "They saw the love 2,000 years ago when Jesus hung on the cross and that's why the church exploded."

"The Holy Spirit was moving, and people had seen the love of God in action. But it has been a while, I think, since the church has left the four walls of the sanctuary and gone out into the community and said, 'Here is what the love of Christ looks like.'"

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MISCELLANEOUS

Ministry Partners Needed: God is planting a new church in Morgantown, West Va. Partners are needed to grow God's kingdom in this spiritually fertile area. Your Morgantown brothers and sisters in Christ would love to hear from YOU! Contact Pastor Shane Suiter (a native Tennessean), (304) 680-1995.

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We have approximately 500 boxes (various arrangers/composers) of choir music that we would like to donate to a church that could put it to good use. For more information contact Mark Wofford, Gladeville Baptist Church, (615) 444-9550 or mwofford@gladevillechurch.org.

You are invited to join other Tennessee Baptists for our **HAWAIIAN Paradise Cruise & Tour** with **Christian Life Tours** February 26-March 9. Excellent space is also available for a **Mediterranean & Greek Isles** cruise in May, and for **Alaska** in June. Round trip air arranged from your closest major airport. For brochures, or to make a reservation, call 877-557-0073 (toll free) or e-mail ddale1950@aol.com.



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The Evangelism staff of the TBC along with Thomas Hammond and Dick Church both of NAMB would like to invite you to join them at one of the three stops they will be making in the celebration of the success of the EP. The Evangelism Planner is the tool many churches are using to design their plan to evangelize their community and their world. With access to dozens of proven and effective evangelistic activities, programs and events, this exciting new resource will help you plan a comprehensive yearly evangelism strategy for your church. It works! Come find out how it can work for you and your ministry. The EP features:

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Monday, October 9, 2006 - Baptist Conference Center - Brentwood, TN
6:30 p.m. till 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 10, 2006 - Pine Eden Baptist Church - Crossville, TN
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Hamilton County churches merge for 'the good of the kingdom'

arcia Knox
st and Reflector

CHATTANOOGA — Two Hamilton County Baptist Association churches recently merged into one church. It is believed to be the second time a merger has occurred in the association within the last 22 years, according to David Myers, director of missions.

"It is wonderful to see how the Lord has worked in this merger," said Myers. "I think it comes because of a kingdom vision in each church and pastor rather than a local church agenda."

One Accord Community Church, a Tennessee Baptist Association church plant located on Pineville Road, Chattanooga, recently moved its congregation of about 50 members Sept. 1 to the Crosspoint Community Church (formerly Ridgecrest Baptist Church) facility in the

Red Bank area. The church had about 31 members.

Ridgecrest Church, which had gone from 85 people to around 50, had tried to establish a new identity in the community and make a fresh start by changing its name in Jan. 2006 to Crosspoint Church. "It's hard to reach a transient area community," said Richard Goble, pastor of Crosspoint and now co-pastor of the new congregation, though he is looking for a new ministry position.

"Now that I look back at why there was no change in attendance after we changed the church's name and tried to reach the community, I have concluded that God stopped everything on us. He knew about the upcoming

merger of the two churches."

The members of Crosspoint Church joined the membership of One Accord Church, forming a membership of about 70 people with almost 20 children, said Goble.



GOBLE



WILLIAMS

Besides the church building issues, what each church lacked with church staff and leaders to do programs and expanded ministry, the other church brought with them, according to Goble.

"It's the perfect marriage," added Goble. "Everything Crosspoint Church needed One Accord Church had, and everything One Accord needed Crosspoint had. The pieces of the puzzle came together."

One Accord Church, a mission of Northside Baptist Church,

Chattanooga, had doubled in size since its beginning in June 2004 at a restaurant in East Ridge and had eventually purchased the building on Pineville Road it had rented. But the church had already outgrown its Sunday School rooms with over 50 people. One Accord Church pastor Ray Williams had begun to pray for another building when Goble approached him about a possible church merger. That property is now for sale.

Crosspoint Church was down to its last \$100 in the bank with a debt-free building, but its assets were in the building, he noted. The church had no money and not enough people to do ministry. It was down to 31 people and the church staff was resigning.

In mid-August, Goble prayed and called Williams, who Goble knew needed a bigger building. The pastors met, and the merger was soon presented to both congregations, who were already

physically meeting within four miles of each other. Joint services and business meetings soon followed.

"When someone offers me a \$1.2 million facility with no payment, because we needed more Sunday School rooms, then I knew the Lord had given more than what I had been asking for in my prayers," said Williams, who is senior pastor of the new congregation.

Myers praised the two churches for their efforts. "For the good of the kingdom, both churches surrendered some preferences and individuality to join together to accomplish kingdom work!"

"I believe this can serve as a positive pattern that other churches might follow when they find their limited resources to do the work of the Lord can be multiplied and more effective when joined together with a sister church. We must move toward the kingdom view of the Great Commission beyond our own individual church survival." □

CLASSIFIED

MINISTRY — PASTOR

Sidonia Baptist Church seeking bivocational pastor for country church in northwest Weakley County, parsonage available. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Lloyd Hawkins, 3299 Sidonia Road, Sharon, TN 38255.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Coalfield, Tenn., seeks a pastor. Church parsonage is available if needed. Send resume and tape to Pastor Search Committee, 1306 Fairview Road, Coalfield, TN 37719 — for more info see www.pleasantgrovebaptist.net/seek_pastor.html.

Gap Creek Baptist Church, Arthur, Tenn., is now accepting resumes for a full-time pastor position. Applicants must meet biblical qualifications. GCBC is a conservative Missionary Baptist Church located in East Tennessee near Cumberland Gap. Please send resumes to Cecil Goins, 160 Yorkshire Dr., Harrogate, TN 37752.

Philadelphia Baptist Waynesboro, a rural traditional church is accepting resumes for the position of full-time or bivocational pastor. Parsonage available. Send resumes to Jeff Alley, 964 Hwy. 99, Waynesboro, TN 38485 or e-mail icba@netease.net.

Olive Hill Baptist Church, Olive Hill, Tenn., is searching for a bivocational/full-time pastor. We are a mission-minded church, supportive of SBC, and our local association of churches. Send resume and tape, if possible, to Olive Hill Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 2, Olive Hill, TN 38475.

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Arkansas leaders propose change for state paper

Associated Baptist Press

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Baptist leaders will try to turn control of the *Arkansas Baptist News* over to the state convention staff, replacing the independent board that currently governs the newspaper.

A task force, appointed last year by the president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will make five recommendations to the annual convention meeting Oct. 31-Nov. 1.

The recommendation concerning the newspaper asks that "the president of the Executive Board and the president of the *Arkansas Baptist News* board each appoint a committee of no more than three board members, including themselves, to discuss the possibility of merging the *Arkansas Baptist News* and the *Vision* publication under the Executive Board ministries of the state convention."

Charlie Warren, longtime editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News*, reacted cautiously to the recommendation.

"I am pleased that the recommendation simply calls for discussion of the option rather than just outright recommending that the *ABN* be absorbed under the convention's Executive Board," Warren told Associated Baptist Press. "My career has been built on Baptists' right to know. This recommendation has potential to undermine that principle," added Warren, a former associate editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*.

A similar move by the executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention backfired last November, when messengers to that neighboring state convention's annual meeting voted to retain the *Baptist Message's* independent board rather than turn control over to the convention's executive board. □

Pray for revival, SBC's Page exhorts

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Speaking at his first Executive Committee meeting as Southern Baptist Convention president, Frank Page said Sept. 18 he would spend his time in that role calling on Southern Baptists to pray for revival within the denomination.

"Many of our churches are going through difficult days, and we exist ... in a Southern Baptist Convention that is thought by some to have lost its relevancy," said Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C. "In the minds of many ... we have become an archaic, burdensome bureaucracy that no longer has relevancy for today or for the day to come."

Page was elected president at the SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C., in June, besting two other candidates on the first ballot.

Southern Baptists, Page said, must pray that the revival will:

- "transform churches."
- "bring us to a point of true repentance."
- "energize evangelistic efforts to win this world to Jesus."

Southern Baptists, he said, must pray that God will bring them together for a "cooperative mission task." That task, he noted, historically has been funded through the Cooperative Program.

"[T]he Cooperative Program matters," he said. "That's why Greensboro happened; that's why I was elected, because the Cooperative Program does matter, and it is that which can pull us together [because] it is the main funding mechanism to do a

great ministry and mission work across this world." □

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MINISTRY — CHILDREN

LaBelle Haven Baptist Church accepting resumes for a full-time children's minister. Interested applicants may send resume to, 6825 E. Holme, Memphis, TN 38141, fax 901-547-1650, or labellehaven@south.net. Attn: Winford Ba

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Theologically conservative, methodologically creative Tennessee church seeks full-time minister for children and young families. Please send resume with references to Children's Minister Search Committee, Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, 3508 Wildwood Rd., Maile, TN 37804.

MINISTRY — COMBINATION

Central Baptist Church of Tennessee, is seeking a full-time youth/college minister. Applicants should have 3 or more years full-time experience as youth and/or college minister in a Southern Baptist church. We are a growing church with 250+ in worship. Our web site is www.cbcmartin.org. A job description is available upon request. Send resume or recommendation to Youth/College Search Committee, P.O. Box 58, Martin, TN 38237 or youthsearch@cbcmartin.org

MINISTRY — STUDENT

Theologically conservative, methodologically creative Tennessee church seeks full-time minister for youth. Please send resume with references to Youth Minister Search Committee, Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church, 3508 Wildwood Rd., Maile, TN 37804.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Conservative, growing church in booming community near Cookeville, Tenn. is accepting applications for a bivocational youth director. Send application and resume to Hamptons Roads Baptist Church, 10 Hamptons Road, Cookeville, TN 38502.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Middlefork Road Baptist Church is currently seeking a part-time youth minister. Resumes received until Oct. 20. Please send resume with cover letter to Middlefork Road Baptist Church, 3955 Middlefork Rd., Lu, TN 38352.

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honoring our pastors

Clayton Dunsmore

I want to write about something that takes place in October in churches across the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention — Pastor Appreciation Month.

While I believe that pastors need to be appreciated every day of the year, I am glad that October is recognized as Pastor Appreciation Month. I Timothy: 5:17 reminds us, *Let the elders (pastors) that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

How can we honor our pastors? I think one of the greatest things we can do is to pray for our pastor. Every pastor I know needs the flock to pray for him. He has burdens that he may never share, but he needs prayer. I remember an instance in one of my pastures when the church was going through some difficulties. On a particular Sunday morning, the Lord met with us in an unusual way. As I was standing at the door greeting people, a lady said to me, "I knew we would have a good service today. I have prayed for you every day." I responded, "Praise the Lord, keep on praying for me every day."

You may show your appreciation in many ways such as expressing your gratitude in person or with a card. A nice gift would be great. I know your pastor would always appreciate an invitation to lunch or a certificate that he could use for some personal time. If the church has not given him a pay raise recently, that would be a great gesture. I know your pastor does not preach for money, but he has financial responsibilities just like everyone else.

One of the best gifts a church gave me was to change from an "annual call" to an "indefinite call." It gave me the gift of "trust." To me the church was saying, "We trust you and God to know when your work is finished." That gave me a tremendous feeling of freedom from worrying about "election time." Prior to this, every year about three months before election time, people would be asking, "Are you going to stay with us another year?" Others seemed to imply that they thought I had been there long enough. The church would be in a tizzy for those three months, and then take another month to settle down after the election. When we went to an indefinite call, all of that stopped. There was a peaceful spirit, and we could continue to do God's work rather than worry, gossip, or politic.

I love and appreciate all of our pastors and it is a great privilege to serve the Lord with them. □ — Dunsmore is director of missions for Cumberland Gap Baptist Association, headquartered in Harrogate.

a way with words

the Sunday School teacher

Hugh X. Lewis

How could I teach every class?
Those little doubts creep in.
I know I just can't let it pass,
But where do I begin?

I ask, but am I qualified?
What all does it entail?
Of course, if God is on my side,
I know that I can't fail.

A matter over which I pray —
I want to do my part —
And then the answer comes one day,
I'll teach it with my heart. □

Copyright by Hugh X. Lewis, a Baptist layman, is a past laureate of Christian country music in Tennessee. He has written more than 250 songs and is featured daily on 10 Southern Gospel radio stations throughout the country. He is available to speak to church and senior adult groups. For more information, call (615) 883-0086.

Take hold of truth

By Craig Christina

Focal Passage: I Timothy 1:3-7, 12-20

One of my most enriching and most frustrating experiences is a regular meeting I have with pastors from other denominations. Among these pastors are Methodists, Cumberland Presbyterian, Missionary Baptists, and others. Almost half are women and half are African-American. It is enriching to me because 1) I believe they are saved; 2) they offer different theological insights from their unique perspectives and diverse backgrounds; and 3) God's power is unleashed when the larger body of Christ in a community can work together. I have grown to love, admire, and respect these men and women as treasured servants of the Lord.

However, it is also frustrating to me because we occasionally discuss theological issues about which we disagree. As a dyed-in-the-wool conservative, evangelical Southern Baptist, I believe in the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God. My theological positions are based on the truth of Scripture, not on what I would like to believe about God or what I wish was true. When these debates arise, I am always trying to point the group away from feelings and back to Scripture.

As Paul writes to Timothy, his son in the ministry, he tries to help Timothy deal with issues of false teaching and false doctrine in the church at Ephesus. In fact, Paul warns Timothy about those who forsake the truth and experience the shipwreck of their faith (v. 19). How can we encourage one another to stay on the right course and avoid shipwrecking our faith?

Remember the goal (vv. 3-7). As God's people, we must learn to major on the majors and minor on the minors. Don't allow yourself to get wrapped up in a fruitless discussion (v. 6). While it is okay to ask questions about the grey areas of the faith, we should first build a strong foundation on what is black and white. So Paul reminds Timothy that the goal of his instruction is a pure heart of love that looks after the best interests of others, a clean conscience free from the guilt of obvious sin, and the sincerity or soundness of our doctrine (v. 5).

Therefore, Christians need to learn the difference between essential and non-essential doctrines of the faith. Essential doctrines demand unity. We cannot compromise the fundamentals of our beliefs on the Trinity, the Bible, the nature of man, salvation, eternal security, heaven and hell, and the return of Christ.

However, on non-essential issues we should allow freedom. An example of a non-essential issue would be the consumption of alcohol. While we may have strong beliefs about it, we should not divide over it. Remember, if I *understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing* (I Corinthians 13:2). A ship must steer towards the goal, the destination. If it gets sidetracked "chasing rabbits," it will be in danger of wrecking on the rocks.

Rely on God's grace (vv. 12-17). Praise the Lord for His patience and grace! Paul desired to keep others from doctrinal destruction because he remembered that he, too, was once a

Sunday School Lesson Bible Studies for Life Oct. 1

blasphemer, a persecutor, and an arrogant man (v. 13). Paul was sailing his life on the wrong course. Through the intervention of Jesus, he repented and received mercy instead of justice.

As we encourage others towards doctrinal integrity, we should rely on God's grace. Speak the truth in love, not in arrogance. Trust that Jesus will work on the individual's heart to open his or her eyes to the truth.

Rebuke the guilty (vv. 18-20). Too many churches want to sail around the storm by avoiding the confrontation of theological error. Paul reminded Timothy to sail right through it. Though we approach every conflict in a spirit of humility and love, God demands us to *strongly engage in battle* providing that we have clear conscience (v. 18). Sometimes, we don't see the situation clearly because of the plank in our own eye.

Again, make sure the issue concerns an essential belief. In Paul's mind, the issue with Hymenaeus and Alexander was important enough to break fellowship in the hopes they would be "taught a lesson," repent, and be restored.

Satan is alive and well. Churches should not expect that life will always be smooth sailing. For those believers with the courage to defend the essentials, they will keep themselves and others from experiencing the shipwreck of their faith. □ — Christina is pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson.

Seek forgiveness

By Bob Orgeron

Focal Passage: Hebrews 4:14 - 5:10

One of the major insights in the letter to the Hebrews is that Jesus is our great High Priest. On the heels of being admonished to enter into the prepared rest of the Lord, the writer presents a character sketch of our great High Priest.

Jesus: Perfect High Priest, our confidence (ch. 4:14-16). The first point of the passage is that Jesus knows our human condition. It is not something he had heard about, but something He knows; for He, too, is human. We may approach Him confidently because He knows our weakness. Our confidence rests on Jesus. There are three truths in verse 14, that contribute to the building of our confidence: One, He is a *great high priest*, a title that suggests His superiority to the Levitical priesthood. Two, He has *passed through the heavens*. Third, His greatness is further emphasized by the title *Son of God*.

Together these three form the basis for the exhortation to hold firmly to our profession. Our High Priest has entered into our weakness and so can sympathize meaningfully with us. Verse 15 shows that He *has been tempted ... just as we are yet without sin*. So then, the sinless Savior knows the force of temptation. In verse 16, the writer exhorts his readers to approach God boldly. The word "us" does away with the mediation of earthly priests. We can approach God's "throne of grace" directly. This expression for God's throne points both to the sovereignty of God and to God's love for people.

Therefore, the believers of the first century and all contemporary believers of this present century should not be tentative. We should recognize that we have a great High Priest in whom we can be confident. His successful passing into the heavens to take up His position with the Father should serve to emphasize His power and willingness to help,

His understanding of our frailties, and His expectancy to hear from us in our time of need.

Jesus: Appointed High Priest (ch. 5:1-6), the qualities required in high priests (vv. 1-4). In chapter 5 the writer directs the readers attention to the qualities expected in the high priest. He confines his attention to the Aaronic priesthood in the Old Testament without reference to the Jewish priesthood of his day. He shows that the qualifications for the priesthood; include oneness with the people, compassion for the people, and a divine appointment to the office of priest by God.

In verse 1 the writer explores the nature of high priest and begins by showing that the priesthood was a ministry directed both to his fellow-man and to his God. The high priest is required to make offerings for himself just as for the people. In the matter of sins and sacrifices, the priest must regard himself in exactly the same way he regards the people. Becoming a high priest can happen only by divine appointment, the appointment of Aaron in Exodus 28:1-3, sets the pattern.

Christ's qualifications as high priest (vv. 5-6). Having made clear what is required in high priests, the author shows that Christ indeed has these qualifications. In verses 5 and 6, Christ meets the qualification of being called by God. In this passage, the writer will quote from two Old Testament passages, the first being found in Psalms 2:7. The second is from Psalm 110:4. The psalmist says, *You are a priest forever*, which is the first use of the term "priest" in this letter. The writer uses the title priest in a variety of ways throughout the epistle: He uses it in a general sense (7:14; 8:4), and in reference to the Levitical priesthood (7:20, etc), and in referring to the order of Melchizedek (7:1,3), and in referring to Christ (5:6; 7:11, 15, 17, 21; 10:21). The writers usage of the word "priest," is a powerful way of bringing out certain

Sunday School Lesson Explore the Bible Oct. 1

aspects of Christ's saving work for the human race. All that the priests do in offering sacrifice for people Christ also does. However, whereas priests do it only symbolically, Christ effects atonement. In verse 6 we find the word "forever." Certainly this is a contrast with the temporary service of the earthly high priest and the permanent priesthood of our Lord Jesus. His is an abiding priesthood. He has no successor. He is a priest of the same kind as Melchizedek (a better translation than of the order of Melchizedek, for there was no succession of priests from Melchizedek). Jesus is a priest of this kind — not like Aaron and his successors.

Jesus: Obedient High Priest (vv. 7-10). Like Melchizedek, Jesus was without beginning and end. Also Abraham, the ancestor of the Aaronic order of priests, paid tithes to Melchizedek, demonstrating that the Melchizedek order is a superior order of priests.

To sum up these verses, Jesus, like the Israelite high priests, was called by God. Yet, He, unlike the Aaronic high priests, did not need to offer sacrifices for His sins because He is sinless. He is a priest in a superior arrangement — the order of Melchizedek.

The writer has forcefully made his point that Jesus was qualified to be high priest because of His common nature with us and His compassion for us. Note in verse 10, the writer returns to the thought that Jesus was made high priest by God. His High Priesthood is to become the characteristic designation throughout the book of Hebrews. His is a title not given by mere men, not assumed or sought after by Himself. □ — Orgeron is pastor of Park Avenue Baptist Church, Nashville.

Deaths

◆ **W. L. "Dub" Criswell**, 81, of Dyersburg, a Tennessee Baptist pastor, died recently. He served as pastor of several Dyer Baptist Association churches including Parrish Chapel Baptist Church, Dyersburg; Williams Chapel Baptist Church, Beech Grove Baptist Church, Enon Baptist Church, Hales Point Baptist Church, all of Halls; Zion Hill Baptist Church, Friendship; and Emmanuel Baptist Church and Fairview Baptist Church, both of Newbern. He also served as pastor of churches outside Dyer Association including Cottonwood Baptist Church and Cottonwood Grove Baptist Church, both of Ridgely; and Madee Baptist Church. Criswell also was interim pastor of five churches. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Bobbye Criswell of Dyersburg; two sons, and three grandchildren.

Leaders

◆ **Harold "Buddy" Jones** recently resigned as pastor at Sulphur Springs Baptist Church, Jonesborough.

◆ **CrossWay Baptist Church**, Murfreesboro, recently called **Randall Davis** as its minister of education. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

◆ **David C. George**, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Nashville, announced his retirement effective Oct. 8 after 30 years of service. A graduate of Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas, he also received degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.



GEORGE

Before coming to Immanuel, he served churches in Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. During his tenure at Immanuel Church, he served as a member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board, a trustee of Belmont University, and a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission, all in Nashville. In addition, he served as an adjunct professor at Belmont University, and as pastor-in-residence at the George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

◆ **Whites Creek Baptist Church**, Rockwood, honored church members **Hoyt and Jewell Holloway** on Aug. 13. The Holloways have served Whites Creek Church for over 40 years and are still faithful participants despite age and illness. Hoyt serves as a church

trustee. Jewell has served as Sunday School secretary and treasurer for a building project.

◆ **Dale Clayton**, men's basketball coach at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, was elected in June to serve on the board of trustees of Life Way Christian Resources, Nashville. Clayton attended his first board



CLAYTON

meeting Sept. 11-13 at Glorieta Conference Center, Glorieta, N.M. A resident of Morristown, he is a member of Manley Baptist Church in Morristown.

Churches

◆ The Smoky Mountain Regional Royal Ambassador Challenge will be held Oct. 21 at **East Maryville Baptist Church, Maryville**. For information and registration, e-mail SMRRAC4HIM@aol.com or call Dwayne at (865) 982-1534, (865) 977-0741, or (865) 712-8152.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Waverly**, will host a homecoming celebration Oct. 15 beginning with its morning worship service. A covered dish luncheon will be held following the service. The church's new facility will be dedicated after lunch.



LARRY FIELDS, right, senior pastor, Central Baptist Church, Bearden, Knoxville, receives a jersey from Phil Fulmer, head ball coach of the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, Aug. 6. The jersey bore the number 20 to represent the 20 years of service of Fields to the church. Fulmer and Fields worked together for 20 years. Fields was chaplain for the team. He served from 1993-2013. Other recognitions came from community and Baptist leaders at the church.

For information, contact Debbie Frazier, church secretary, at (931) 296-2348.

◆ **Parkburg Baptist Church, Jackson**, will hold a revival Oct. 8-11. Jerry Drace, evangelist of Humboldt, will speak.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Malesus, Jackson**, will hold a revival Oct. 1-4. Jerry Drace, evangelist of Humboldt, will speak.

◆ **Riley Memorial Baptist Church, Tazewell**, recently celebrated Youth Sunday with a recognition held by the church's Children In Action (CIA) group. The CIA group honored 11 church members who were former soldiers, reservists, and volunteer firefighters.

◆ **White Hall Baptist**

Church, Trenton, will hold a homecoming Oct. 8. Activities include a luncheon and noon singing. For more information, contact Doris Graves at (731) 855-2506.

◆ **CrossWay Baptist Church, Murfreesboro**, recently entered its new building with plans already made for a second building phase, a multi-purpose gymnasium-type facility to be used for worship and other activities.

◆ **First Baptist Church, Sharon**, will host a Spirit Awakening Conference Oct. 4-5. Speakers include Vance Perkins, David Worley, Smith, Ray Newcomb, Roger Lipe. Wendell Verde will lead the music. For more information, call (731) 456-2036 or (731) 456-2326.

FBC, Tullahoma, holds Triple Jubilee Celebration



PASTOR J. HERBERT HESTER, right, of First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, looks over historical papers and photos with former pastor James Porch during the church's Triple Jubilee Celebration Sept. 17. The church, which began in 1853, celebrated its anniversary with a variety of weekend activities. Porch now serves as executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Baptist and Reflector

TULLAHOMA — Members of First Baptist Church held a Triple Jubilee Celebration Sept. 16-17, commemorating the founding of the church in 1853.

On Saturday the church reflected on its missions heritage. Participating in the celebration were former pastors Tom Madden and James Porch, both of whom later became executive directors of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Porch also spoke on Sunday about the church's heritage while current pastor J. Herbert Hester addressed the future. □



AMONG THOSE planning the Triple Jubilee Celebration at First Baptist Church, Tullahoma, were, from left, Betty Price; Jane Hilliard; Cindy Marin; Kenny Frame; Marianne Chamblee; Pastor J. Herbert Hester; Virginia Wagnon; Dave Watts, minister of worship; and Dick Abernathy, chairman of the committee.



W. CLYDE MARTIN, center, front row, pastor, Galilee Church, Knoxville, holds a proclamation from the Knox County mayor and stands with deacons of the church on Aug. 27. He honored that day for his 63 years of service, including missions overseas. Martin also is editor of Prayer Life Online magazine www.theprayerlife.com. Pictured are, from left, front row, Shipley, Ray Valentine, Eddie Greene, Martin, Clark Darnell, Martin; back row, Gary McGhee, Calvin Sise, Ben Mitchell, Brad Russell.