

Towers



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YOUR FIRST PASTORATE:

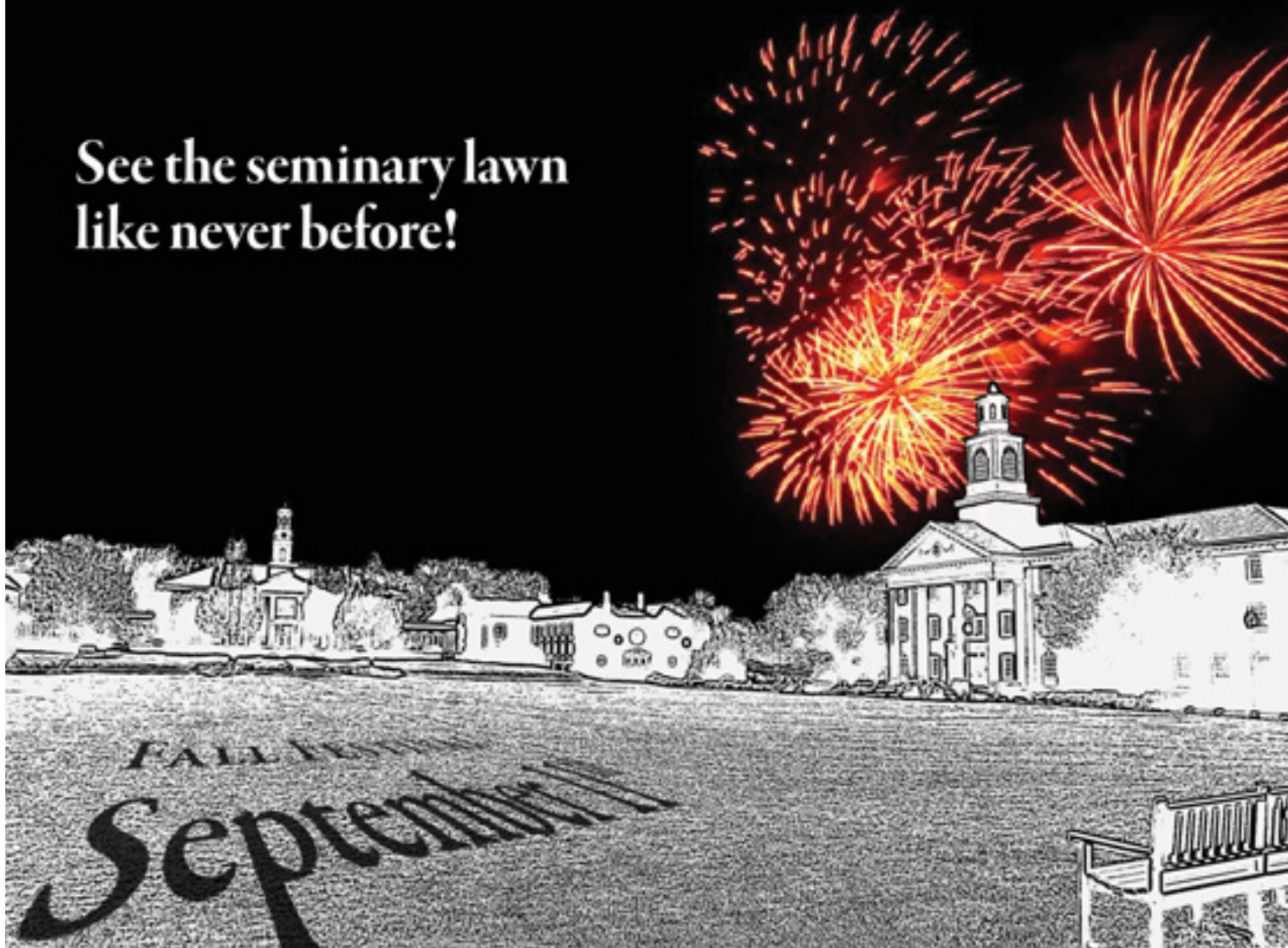
“It’s a role
of service”

—JOSHUA HARRIS
*on being senior pastor of
Covenant Life Church*



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Joshua Harris on being senior pastor of Covenant Life Church

By GARRETT E. WISHALL

You've graduated from Southern Seminary.

Gone are late nights parsing Greek verbs for Tom Schreiner, reviewing notes from Tom Nettles' church history class and trying to figure out how you can write sermon titles, let alone preach sermons, like Russell D. Moore. All of that is in the past.

The congregation of First Baptist Church of Lebanon, Mo., has just called you as its new senior pastor. Like a thoroughbred in the gate seconds before the race, you are ready to run.

So what should you be thinking?

Joshua Harris, senior pastor of Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Md., said such first time ministers need to begin at what seems an unlikely place: with the end in mind.

"Think about things in terms of the long haul, have a long term perspective," Harris said. "You can shoot out of the blocks trying to accomplish everything and have a youthful zeal that is really more about making a name for yourself or making fireworks in some way to make everybody feel like something really great is happening.

"But if you really see it as you laying a foundation and building something for the long term, I think that perspective is going to influence how you teach and how you invest yourself in the people of the church."

Harris, who is 34 and serving in his first pastorate himself, said young ministers also need to be ready to learn from those who are older and more experienced.

"I also think it is so important to have mentors in your life, people that you are talking to and getting help from, an older pastor who you can ask questions of," he said. "There are just so many things that other guys have walked through that you can learn from. If you don't have to make all the mistakes and learn the lesson again, it would save you a lot of hassle.

"So just the humility of saying (to older pastors), 'here are the questions I am asking and the challenges I am facing' and those older pastors will just have so much life experience and be able to help you."

While Harris' first senior pastorate is not your average one — Covenant Life has more than 3,000 members — there are still several valuable lessons for young pastors and pastors-to-be to learn from his life and ministry.

Learning from C.J. Mahaney

Harris — author of several books, including "I Kissed Dating Goodbye" (Multnomah: 1997) and "Stop Dating the Church!" (Multnomah: 2004) — began serving as senior pastor of Covenant Life in 2004. He came to the church in 1997 to serve as pastoral intern under C.J. Mahaney, president of Sovereign Grace Ministries, who was then senior pastor of Covenant Life.

Harris had previously spoken at Covenant Life — he spoke at his father's conferences on homeschooling — and in conversation with Mahaney, he exhorted Harris to look for somebody to mentor him.

After thought and prayer Harris asked Mahaney to fill the role.

"I just saw so many qualities that I wanted to have in my own life in C.J.," Harris said. "Seeing him live his theology made me want the theology. It is just words on paper until you see somebody in the good (situation) of (living out) a real knowledge of God, a real grasp of the Gospel."

See Harris, page 6.



TOWERS

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Staff

Executive Editor:

Dan DeWitt

Managing Editor:

Garrett E. Wishall

Dir. of News and Information:

Jeff Robinson

Director of Communication

Projects:

Jared Hallal

Lead Designer:

David Yeiser

Design/Layout:

John Rogers

Copy Editors:

Emily Griffin

Jessica Sampler

Elizabeth Mejia

Photographer:

John Gill

Contact Information

Phone: (502) 897-4310

Fax: (502) 897-4880

E-mail: towers@sbt.s.edu

Web: news.sbt.s.edu

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ISSUE INSIGHT

What I learned in my first pastorate

A small group of nobodies in a big room seemed really unimpressive, but I confess vanity and pride. To be honest, I expected a lot of growth, and I expected it fast.

It didn't happen.

Sunday after Sunday, month after month, the same four families and a few singles gathered for worship at Baptist Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas. As this happened, the Lord slowly disabused me of the notion that the church was going to grow because of me. It hurts to have your pride molded into humility, but it feels good, too, and how liberating! Not to mention the way others prefer humility to pride.

Through this experience, I learned that Jesus keeps His promise to build His church. I learned the power of the Word of God. And I learned — or made progress in learning — to love people.

Jesus keeps His promise His way

Jesus said, "I will build my church." It's His church. His glory is at stake in it. He keeps His Word. And he does it His way.

Have you noticed what a bad strategist the Lord *seems* to be? If you were God, and you wanted to save the

world, would you do it by parading your deity or by sending Jesus to take on human flesh? And, if you chose the route of incarnation, would you go somewhere important, say, Rome or



Jim Hamilton
Associate
Professor of
Biblical Theology
Southern
Seminary

Jerusalem, or would you go to a hick town like Nazareth?

Once there, what would you do? Write some books and network with significant people? Or do manual labor for 30 years, then the big time: three more years of ambling around the Galilean countryside with smelly fishermen, preaching to unlearned crowds that happen to gather? To top it all off, would you let a bunch of wicked rebels kill you?

The Lord may *seem* to be a bad strategist, but His strategy is the best strategy. God accomplished salvation in Christ by the way of the cross, and Jesus calls His followers to take up their crosses, too. Jesus keeps His promise to build His church as His people follow in His steps.

Jesus gets glory when nobodies gather and love each other. Jesus gets glory when nobodies gather in moldy buildings in bad parts of town. Jesus gets glory when pastors forsake the wisdom of the world, set aside attempts to show off, open the Bible and preach it.

The power of the Word of God David Wells says the mark of the evangelical church in America is superficiality. I am convinced that authenticity comes from the clear exposition of the Scriptures. People encounter God when His Word is read to them, explained to them and applied to them by the power of the Spirit. How do you get past the happy-smiley veneer people wear to church? Preach the Word.

Do you want singles in their late 20s and early 30s confessing anxiety about finding a mate, asking you

to pray for them to trust the Lord's providence in their lives? Do you want guys confessing their struggles with pornography as they seek to join the church? Do you want people with real problems (homosexual urges and the fallout from past sexual sin, whether lingering STD's or guilt from an abortion) joining the church and coming for counsel in their struggle against sin? Do you want guys coming to you because they're afraid of the way they've been rough with their wives and they don't want it to go any further, so they're seeking accountability?

You don't get this from wearing cool clothes, having a trendy name for your church or learning to preach from comedians. If it comes — and if the authenticity about "big" sins is accompanied by authenticity about "acceptable" sins — it will come by the power of the Spirit through the preaching of the Word. The Bible convinces us to quit playing games. The Bible shows us the beauty of holiness. The Bible convicts us of the worth of this treasure, and we sell all we have — or risk exposing our sin — to buy the field in which the treasure lies.

Loving people

I can remember saying to Boyce College Dean Denny Burk when we were in school together: "I don't want to spend time with people, there's too much to read." His reply came with a piercing look in tones of prophetic conviction: "Then you're never going to minister to anybody."

I also remember the sermon I preached on the absolute sovereignty of God, and there my sweet wife sat in the front row weeping. She wasn't weeping because of the beauty of what I was saying; she was weeping because I was beating the people of God over the head with the club of truth in good know-it-all, seminary graduate fashion.

The people of God are familiar with us seminary types, and they have their guard up against us. There is only one way to convince them that they can let their guard down, to convince them that they can talk to us: love them. Listen to them. Let them talk. Stop correcting them. Let them explain their views, and if they don't want your response to what they've said, don't counter them. Ask the Lord to use your preaching to form their thinking. Trust him, and love the people in your care. Don't back down from speaking the truth in love, but make sure that they sense *love* as you speak truth.

So did the church ever grow?

Yes, and do you want to know when? When I listened to my wife's godly suggestion that we start a Wednesday night prayer meeting. We gathered together, sinful beggars clothed by faith with the righteousness of Christ, and we laid hold on the Lord in prayer. Drenched in His mercy, we called on the name of the Lord.

That church didn't grow because of me. That church grew because Jesus kept His promise, because the Word of God is powerful and because we were all learning to love each other the way Jesus loved us. In spite of our insignificance, the moldy building in the bad part of town, the mediocre music and the non-flashy sermons that sought to explain the Bible, the Lord was adding to our number daily. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory, because of thy lovingkindness, because of thy truth" (Ps 115:1).

Jim Hamilton was the founding pastor of Baptist Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, where he served from 2005-2008. He now serves as senior pastor of Kenwood Baptist Church in Louisville.

RESOURCE:

Sesquicentennial Service

R. Albert Mohler Jr.'s address at Southern during the SBC annual meeting: <http://www.sbt.s.edu/resources/sesquicentennial-celebration/sesquicentennial-service/>

ISSUE INSIGHT

Sorry, President Carter ... this argument falls flat

For critics of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), former President Jimmy Carter is the gift that just keeps on giving. In mid-July, yet another round of news reports trumpeted the news that the former president had resigned his membership in the SBC. Almost a decade after he first made this announcement, his return to this theme caused an avalanche of news reports.

In October 2000, President Carter sent a letter to some 75,000 Baptists, indicating that he intended to separate himself from the SBC — a denomination with which he had historically been associated through church membership, public identification and personal involvement. He spoke of this as “a painful decision” that was made necessary by the convention’s stated convictions on a number of issues.

Any honest observer will be compelled to clarify that Carter’s action was an exercise in public relations. Individuals are not members of the SBC, and there is no mechanism for individuals either to join or to resign from the denomination.

Just a few years later, the former president reiterated his desire to separate from the SBC, producing a series of news reports that rarely referenced the fact that Carter had made such a public announcement years earlier. This July, the pattern repeated itself again.

The latest eruption of reports about President Carter’s severing of ties with the SBC came in the aftermath of an article published in the July 12, 2009, edition of *The Observer* [London]. In his article, President Carter reiterated his decision to sever public ties with the SBC:



R. Albert Mohler Jr.
President
Southern Seminary

“So my decision to sever my ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, after six decades, was painful and difficult. It was, however, an unavoidable decision when the convention’s leaders, quoting a few carefully selected Bible verses and claiming that Eve was created second to Adam and was responsible for original sin, ordained that women must be “subservient” to their husbands and prohibited from serving as deacons, pastors or chaplains in the military service. This was in conflict with my belief — confirmed in the holy scriptures — that we are all equal in the eyes of God.”

To his credit, President Carter apparently

did not claim that this was a new decision or a fresh announcement. Furthermore, President Carter’s reference to the SBC was not the main point of this article. Instead, his reference to the SBC introduced his argument that any religious teaching that denies what he construes as full equality for women “is in clear violation not just of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and the prophets, Muhammad, and founders of other great religions.”

That, suffice it to say, is a mouthful. This is not a new argument for the former president. But in his article in *The Observer* he does make some interesting assertions. While acknowledging that he has not been trained “in religion or theology,” he went on to argue that “the carefully selected verses found in the holy scriptures to justify the superiority of men owe more to time and place — and the determination of male leaders to hold onto their influence — than eternal truths.”

All this fits a pattern for which Carter is now well known. He simply rejects the texts in the Bible that clearly establish different roles for men and women in the church and the home. He dismisses these verses for the simple reason that he also rejects the inerrancy of the Bible.

Over just the last several years Carter has

publicly expressed his rejection of the belief that persons must come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in order to be saved. He has also stated that his faith would not be shaken if Jesus did not perform some of the miracles attributed to him in the New Testament.

President Carter actually makes no argument *for* women as pastors. He simply dismisses out of hand what the Christian church has believed for centuries — and what the vast majority of Christians around the world believe even now.

Carter’s argument should embarrass any serious person who considers this question, for it is grounded in little more than his own sense of how things ought to be. He makes claims about the Bible that are reckless and irresponsible and historical claims that would make any credible church historian blush. He straightforwardly rejects what he admits some texts of the Bible teach.

Does President Carter really believe that he will convince Christians — Southern Baptist or otherwise — to see any human statement as holding a higher authority than the Bible? That question, more than anything else, points to the real reason that President Carter and the SBC have parted ways. The point of division remains the ultimate authority and total truthfulness of the Bible as the Word of God.

ISSUE INSIGHT

An open letter to older Southern Baptists

One year ago, I published an article on my blog titled “An Open Letter to Young Southern Baptists.” I do not intend here to copy that entire blog, but here is a quick reminder of the challenges I offered:

- Do review the history of this denomination. Remember that past and current leaders deserve respect.
- Do not give up on the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). You, your church and the SBC lose if you simply walk away without patiently trying to make a difference.
- Continue to support the Cooperative Program even while you seek your role in the denomination. Be kingdom-minded enough to give even when the immediate benefits for you and your church are not always obvious.
- Pray humbly for SBC leaders. From pastoring a local church to leading a denominational agency, the tasks involved in SBC life are not easy.

During the fourth week of June 2009, young leaders did show up at the SBC, and their passion brought a renewed sense of excitement to the event. In light of that event, here is my follow-up letter — this time, written to older



Chuck Lawless
Dean of the Billy Graham
School of Missions and
Evangelism

Southern Baptists (a group to which I belong).

Older leaders, we must first *love* younger Southern Baptists. This one is not difficult for me. As a seminary dean, I have the privilege of working with young men and women whose Great Commission focus puts mine to shame. Most are energetic, passionate and unashamed

Christ-followers. They are deeply serious, yet genuinely fun. They want to make an eternal difference with their lives. They are, to state it simply, easy to love.

We must also *listen* to younger Southern Baptists. Whether or not we always agree with them, their voice is worth hearing. These are brothers and sisters whose Christian integrity, doctrinal fervor and evangelistic zeal deserve our attention.

As we *love* and *listen* to our younger leaders, we must be willing to *learn* from them. There is no question that young leaders sometimes wrongly assume that they have the answers to whatever ails us. We have all thought that way at some point, and we recall with embarrassment our own youthful pride. But let’s be honest: if we assume that we have nothing to learn from leaders younger than we are, we, too, are gripped by arrogance.

We must also *labor* in prayer on behalf of our younger leaders. As Paul prayed for

Timothy — remembering him constantly, night and day (2 Tim 1:3) — we must intercede now for those who increasingly lead the good fight of faith.

The enemy aims his arrows at young leaders, knowing that their youthfulness makes them vulnerable. Hence, our most important work on their behalf might well be what we do in our prayer closets.

Finally, we must still *lead* younger leaders. That’s the way it ought to be — older leaders leading younger leaders, who then are better prepared to lead on their own. I can say with certainty that young leaders long for strong, faithful, experienced, godly Christian leaders to pour themselves into their young lives.

Young leaders may stretch us, challenge us and even dislodge us from our comfort zones, but we must not abdicate our responsibility to help guide them. They still need us, we still need them and a dying world needs all of us working together for the sake of the Great Commission.

Harris

Continued from Page 3.

Harris said his request came at a time in Mahaney's life when God had been convicting him about the importance of training the next generation.

"It was just one of those moments where God's providence is so evident that he (Mahaney) was willing to let me come out and be a part of the church," Harris said. "I ended up living in his basement for a year, learning from his family and beginning to be trained in ministry."

During the internship, Harris started and organized the annual "New Attitude" conference (now called "NEXT"), a conference of teaching and worship aimed at young adults. Harris said Mahaney also gave him preaching opportunities, where he would critique and encourage him, and read and discussed several books with him.

"The mentoring continues," Harris said. "He still gives me feedback on how I lead and tells where he thinks I am getting it wrong and right, and I benefit from that relationship."

Learning to lead

Realizing that he will give an account to God for his flock, Harris undertakes his role as pastor with great earnestness.

"The senior pastor is ultimately responsible, even for other people's decisions: you are the one who is called to take responsibility," he said. "There is definitely a weight of needing to faithfully preach, but then also carry a lot of leadership responsibilities."

"And that is not a one time deal. You have to day in, day out, week after week, year after year keep preaching the Word of God, keep proclaiming the Gospel and it is just a long race."

Harris recognizes his situation is uncommon: he stepped into his first senior pastorate in a large church. On his first Sunday, Harris preached from Joshua 24, a passage that reminds the Israelites that they are living in cities they did not build and harvesting crops they did not plant.

"I preached from that because that is how I felt," he said.

Harris said God has used his situation to impress upon him the overriding importance of faithfulness in his position.

"(I am) very aware of the fact that the church and, even more essentially, the Gospel is a stewardship, it is something that is entrusted to us," he said. "My experience has really laid that weight on my shoulders more."

"I really have felt the sense of something being handed to me and the sense of 'I need to be faithful to guard what has been entrusted to me and deliver that to the next generation.' It

is not about 'Hey, I need to come and innovate' and 'Hey, what mark can I make on this?' and that sort of thing. Of course there is a place for innovation, but in the confines of saying 'This Gospel is unchanging; this is truth that I need to preserve and pass on to other men.'"

Teaching the value of church membership

In "Stop Dating the Church," Harris challenges people to commit and stay committed to a local church. In his interview with *Towers*, Harris noted that when people are not committed to their local church they are "first and foremost disobeying God, then cheating themselves — because they are not receiving the care, love and encouragement that flows through the church — then cheating others."

In a talk at the Gospel Coalition conference in April, Harris recounted the story of a woman who wanted to have "herself, Jesus and a mountain stream" at her baptism. Another person he talked to said they were going to Israel to be baptized in the Jordan River. Harris said such approaches to baptism reveal a fundamental misunderstanding about the role of the local church in one's life.

"Okay, I understand wanting to be baptized in the Jordan River: that is cool, that is a pretty neat thing," he said. "But I would love for people to be in a place to say, 'You know what, unless my church is there, I want to be baptized in the fake tank (in my church) because baptism is not just about me, it is about us.'"

"This is about what God is doing in us. God used the people in this church to save me and I want, because I am called to this community, I want unbelievers there, I want them to hear me testify to what Jesus has done."

Harris lists several biblical reasons for leaving a church, including moral failing or doctrinal infidelity allowed or upheld by the church leadership, but says apart from such situations, people should stick with the body. Harris said it can be valid to switch churches because of a difference in ministry vision or theological emphasis, but warned that they are many dangers in such situations.

"It would be important first of all to evaluate the pattern of your own life," he said. "If you say, 'I'm thinking I should do this' ask, 'Have I ever done this before?' If you say, 'Oh, yeah: eight times in the past two years,' then you might need to stop and say, 'Do you realize there is a pattern here, that you are always seeing something better?'"

"Another question I would ask is have you humbly communicated some of (your concerns or reasons for leaving) to the church leaders?"

That is hard to do. It is easier to criticize than it is to say, 'I respect you, I love this church, but I want to share ways in which I think that we could grow. And I want to be open to evaluation. Maybe I am not seeing something clearly.' You want to leave in a way that preserves the unity of that local church and doesn't create any ill will.

"So just really ask some tough questions and make sure you are leaving for the right reasons."

Harris said he is tremendously honored to serve as pastor of Covenant Life.

"I still just wake up and think, 'I can't believe I am serving in this way,'" he said. "I get to serve with a team of men who I so respect; they are my dear friends. It's a role of service and I am not going to have it forever. Lord willing, I will be able to pass it on faithfully to someone else."

Harris is also the author of *"Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship"* and *"Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is): Sexual Purity in a Lust-Saturated World."* His newest book, *"Dug Down Deep: Unearthing What I Believe and Why it Matters?"* is due in January 2010.



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@hershaelyork:

Finding a comfort in Christ, an encouragement from His Word, and a love from His people that transcends circumstances. I am blessed.

<http://twitter.com/hershaelyork>

@timothywashere:

Everytime I show up at Shiraz, the owner makes me feel like he's excited I've chosen his restaurant. Do visitors at your church feel like that?

<http://twitter.com/timothywashere>

Prepare to preach: Both heart and mind must be made ready

By JEFF ROBINSON

Danny Akin calls it “Saturday night fever” and prefers to stay away from it, Mark Dever embraces it and the great Charles Haddon Spurgeon became famous by following the strategy: preparing to preach Sunday’s sermon on Saturday.

In his must-read work “Lectures to My Students,” Spurgeon revealed that most of his sermon preparation took place on a tight Saturday night deadline.

“I confess that I frequently sit hour after hour praying and waiting for a subject, and that this is the main part of my study,” he wrote. “Much hard labour have I spent in manipulating topics, ruminating upon points of doctrine... I believe that almost any Saturday in my life I make enough outlines of sermons, if I felt at liberty to preach them, to last me for a month.”

God blessed Spurgeon’s Saturday nights remarkably, but many preachers prefer to assemble the sermon throughout the week. But Southern’s professors who also serve or have served as pastors agreed: preparation involves more than just the sermon.

Getting the sermon ready ... and the preacher

While there are probably as many different approaches to sermon preparation as there are preachers, professor/pastors on faculty at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary demonstrate that there are two attributes common to all solid sermon prep: composing the sermon and readying the preacher.

“Being prepared to preach the Word involves much more than just analyzing the text — although it takes that for sure,” said Bill Cook, professor of New Testament at Southern and pastor of Ninth and O Baptist Church.

“It includes being a man passionate for the Lord Jesus Christ. I think in the preparation of the sermon each preacher needs to find the approach to sermon preparation that best suits him. I think this will vary somewhat from person to person based on one’s abilities and personality. But sermon preparation and delivery involves both the heart and mind from beginning to end.”

While serving as a pastor, Billy Graham School Dean Chuck Lawless said he spent up to one-half of a typical week in sermon prep. Like most Southern profs/pastors (and unlike Spurgeon!), Lawless preached book-by-book,

verse-by-verse expository sermons and had no need to “divine” topics each week.

For Lawless, as for the others, preparation of his own heart to step behind the pulpit and undertake the solemn task of proclamation is a vital element of preaching.

“Heart preparation is a daily event,” he

said. “Getting ready to preach is not about suddenly preparing our hearts for Sunday; it is about walking with God every day so that we hear His Word properly in our study, order our sermon well in our preparation, and apply the truths well in the context of our congregation.”

Notes: finished early, late or not at all?

Hershael York, professor of preaching at Southern and senior pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky., said he typically assembles a working outline for the upcoming sermon on Monday. York’s goal is to have the sermon completed by Thursday so he can send the final outline to his assistant and media team to be published in the church bulletin.

“That imposes a discipline on me that keeps me from procrastinating,” he said. “I will tweak and finalize illustrations and other elements on Friday and Saturday, but the basic outline is done at least three days before I preach it. That gives me time to digest and ruminate on the text and the message before I stand to preach on Sunday.”

Other veteran pastor/scholars such as York, Cook, Jim Orrick and Tom Schreiner have been preparing for Sunday’s sermon for as many decades as they have been studying the Bible.

Orrick has been committed to memorizing extended portions of Scripture for many years and has memorized numerous books of the Bible. He memorizes the biblical text, commits every sermon to memory and preaches without any notes, taking two to five hours to arrange and customize his thoughts for the particular congregation he is addressing.

“I preach without notes, and this forces me to be thoroughly prepared and thoroughly textual,” said Orrick, who serves as professor of literature and culture at Boyce College and has been preaching for more than 30 years.

“The possibility of rhetorical disaster is always near at hand when preaching without notes, so I am forced to depend heavily on the Holy Spirit.

“I nearly always forget something I meant to say, but I nearly always think of something while preaching that I never prepared to say.

Often it moves me deeply. I know that if I want my hearers to be deeply moved, I must first be deeply moved myself. God deliver me from being a preacher who fakes it!”

Schreiner typically spends one day per week preparing sermons. He begins by reading and meditating on the passage several times and seeks to understand it deeply so he will be able to offer penetrating, Gospel-centered application.

“I try to soak myself in it,” Schreiner said. “I pray for insight in

terms of understanding and application. After I have written a rough draft, which I usually do on Monday, I let it sit a few days, and then I go over it about 10 times on Friday and Saturday and make changes as I meditate on the sermon.”

Russell D. Moore, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology at Southern, and teaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church’s Fegenbush Campus, said he spends much of the week in preparation for the sermon and mulls over the text with friends and colleagues before putting together the final outline in the wee hours Sunday morning.

Moore prays throughout the week both for himself and his congregation. He prays that the Lord will keep both preacher and congregation from being mere hearers of the Word, from trafficking in unlivd truth.

“I will think sometimes about specific people in my congregation,” Moore said. “Then, because our flock is so large and I never know who will be with us on any given Sunday morning, I think about people who I’ve known over the years and how they would hear this Word, what might they misunderstand, what might drive them to despair, what might counter the ways the evil one would like to snatch this Word away, and then I ask the Lord to give me clarity, passion, love and the power of the Holy Spirit.”

“A sensible friend who will unsparingly criticize you from week to week will be a far greater blessing to you than a thousand indiscriminating admirers if you have sense enough to bear his treatment, and grace enough to be thankful for it.” — Charles Spurgeon: “Lectures to My Students”



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Your first pastorate: Reflections and advice from SBTS profs

Lessons learned and wisdom shared from seven professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary who have spent more than a little time in the pulpit.



Bill Cook, professor of New Testament interpretation; senior pastor, Ninth and O Baptist Church in Louisville.

First ministry position/How long? A pastorate in Montpelier, La., a town with a population of approximately 350 people. Three years.

Your worst early mistakes/lessons learned from it. I think my biggest mistake was I mistook a good theological education for pastoral wisdom. I made numerous missteps because I lacked the patient wisdom of a seasoned pastor. I think that what I learned, and I'm still learning, is that I'm never quite as smart as I think I am.

Wisdom and humility, which are virtues seldom espoused in conferences and educational settings, are essential ingredients for a God-honoring ministry.

Words of wisdom for first time pastors. My advice to someone about to enter his first pastorate relates to what I said about humility. We may be the only person in the church with a seminary education but that does not mean that we are the wisest person in the church. I would encourage a first time pastor (as well as a seasoned one) to be humble, kind and caring.

In addition, preach the Bible to the congregation you have, not the one you wish you had. Spend much time getting to know the people and letting them get to know you. The better they know and respect you, the more open they will be to following your vision for the church.



Bill Henard, assistant professor of evangelism; senior pastor, Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky.

First position/length. Eagan Baptist Church, Eagan, Tenn. Eight months — I was a 20-year-old college student, in way over my head. I had never even attended Vacation Bible School until I led my first one myself.

leге student, in way over my head. I had never even attended Vacation Bible School until I led my first one myself.

Early mistakes/lessons. I called on someone to close the service in prayer and he responded, "No, thank you."

I learned that not everyone is on equal ground spiritually or in service. Be careful to know your people before you put them on the spot.

It was a small mistake, the first of many, but it was one that could have had an adverse effect on my leadership ability if I repeated the same mistake in a much larger venue. It taught me to start with where people are, not with where they ought to be.

Words of wisdom. Personally visit your leadership and listen to their dreams. Work on your people skills. Be a people person, but not a manipulator.

Be humble and thankful for the position you have. Learn to love your people and sincerely tell them that you love them. Pace yourself.

Don't die on every hill; some are not worth dying on. Don't be a church hopper, looking for the next bigger and better deal. Don't go in with both guns blazing; you will hit some innocent people when you do.



Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism; longtime pastor.

First position/length. Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Harrison, Ohio. Two years.

Early mistakes/lessons.

My worst early mistake was thinking that I was somehow supposed to solve all issues, fix any problems, heal any wounds and lead the entire city to Jesus just because I was a pastor. I almost burned out before I was 21 years old. From that hard lesson, I learned two simple truths that I should have already known: I'm not the Messiah and God's people are incredibly forgiving and loving.

Words of wisdom.

1. Ask God to give you a mentor. Look for an older man in ministry whom you trust, and seek his advice and prayer support. Always be a learner at the feet of someone who has already walked where you are now walking.

2. Learn to pray. Read books on prayer, listen to sermons about prayer, find a prayer partner, do Bible studies on prayer — do what-

Celebrate Southern's past and pray for its future during the 2009 Heritage Week events, October 13-15.

Join the faculty, administration, trustees, and foundation board as they renew their commitment to fulfill the mission of Southern and enjoy fellowship across campus.

The Heritage Golf Classic is far more than just a good time; each year it helps fund student educational needs.

With your partnership, the Heritage Classic can further aid in preparing ministers for work across the globe.

The Heritage Classic will be hosted on October 15, at Covered Bridge Golf Club. All are invited to participate, for more information contact Shelley Sullivan at 1-800-626-5525, or locally at (502) 897-4700. Look to www.sbts.edu for more information on Heritage Week activities.



ever it takes to learn how to pray.

3. Live in the Word. It sounds like a cliché, but reading and loving the Word really does make you a better pastor.

4. Love the people. No church is perfect, and no church will ever live up to the ideal you set in seminary. Some people will struggle with your leadership. Others will not grow spiritually as quickly as you want them to grow. Most will not care how many degrees you have. But, they are still God's church whom He loves. Some of the greatest people in the world are in God's church — look for them, and count it a privilege to lead them.

5. Keep good records. My pastoral mentor, Jack Tichenor, challenged me to keep records of marriages, baptisms, funerals, visits, meals, trips, conventions, articles — everything you do in ministry.



Russell D. Moore, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology; teaching pastor, Highview Baptist Church, Fegenbush Campus, in Louisville.

First position/length.

Associate pastor at Bay Vista Baptist Church in Biloxi, Miss. It was largely an Air Force congregation located a couple of miles from Keesler Air Force Base.

Early mistakes/lessons. My worst early mistake was not at Bay Vista, but earlier in a youth ministry position. I was headstrong and arrogant, and I also had a very utopian view of human nature.

When people gossiped about me or lied to me or shirked their responsibilities, I was surprised and hurt. I had much to learn about the kind of patient endurance and love that the Apostle Paul tells Timothy about in 2 Timothy 2.

Words of wisdom.

First, I would advise you to surrender your ego to the Lordship of Christ. This ministry is not about you, which

means the criticism is not an assault upon your personal self worth. Learn from the criticisms people make about you. Even slanderous gossip

must contain a hint of the truth; otherwise, it wouldn't be credible enough for people to send around the "prayer chain." Don't be held hostage to such criticism but analyze it and ask, "Why do people believe this and how can I help to love and to lead them?"

Second, avoid the lure of paying attention to the "important" people in the church or community. Evangelize the trailer parks, show up at Vacation Bible School, and kneel down to hug the snottiest-nosed kid in the room; of such is the Kingdom of God, and it is in those places and among those people the rest of the world scorns that God will raise up a generation to keep preaching the Gospel you preach now.



Jim Orrick, professor of literature and culture, Boyce College; longtime pastor.

First position/length.

My first pastorate was in Buffalo, W. Va., and I was there for seven years. I have been preaching for more

than 30 years.

Early mistakes/lesson. One of the biggest mistakes I made in that first pastorate was that I tried to fit too much into a single sermon. As a result, I had unrealistic expectations of myself, and I had unrealistic expectations of my congregation's capacity to listen. My lofty expectations of what could be done in a single sermon made my sermon preparation unnecessarily burdensome.

My early preaching also put unrealistic

expectations on my congregation. Very few modern hearers can listen to 45 minutes of closely reasoned exposition if it is not sufficiently illustrated. To this day I commonly preach 45 minutes or more, and I try to make it closely reasoned exposition, but I use illustrations far more liberally than I did 25 years ago. It is selfish for a preacher to drone through his sermon notes when everyone is so bored that listening is virtu-

ally impossible.

Words of wisdom. Here is a little verse I made up:

*"A minister, wherever he is,
is a minister, and should
recollect that he
is on duty. ... Even in our
recreations we should still
pursue the great object of
our lives, for we are called
to be diligent in season and
out of season."*

*— Charles Spurgeon from
"Lectures to My Students"*

- God's work
- God's place
- God's way
- God's pace

Be content to do God's work using God's methods in the place where God has put you, and do it at God's pace. Learn what true expository preaching is, and devote your ministry to preaching the Bible. Let Alexander McLaren and G. Campbell Morgan show you how. Your main job is not sermon preparation; it is preacher preparation.

Seek God. Fear God and you will not fear man. Trust in God and do the right. Read and meditate on the Bible day and night. Memorize whole books of the Bible. Sing Psalms.

Memorize the Baptist Catechism. Carefully read John Calvin's "Institutes" and John L. Dagg's "Systematic Theology." Make good friends with Matthew Henry, C.H. Spurgeon and Martin Lloyd-Jones. Let a poet like George Herbert get into your soul, or at least read a poet-hearted preacher like Alexander Whyte or John Bunyan. It is better to be thoroughly acquainted with 10 great books than it is to be superficially acquainted with 10,000 good books. If you cannot understand poetry, learn how; one third of the Bible is poetry.

Pray without ceasing. Turn off the television, smash the Xbox, stop being a slave to email and cell phones. Take a walk every day so you can experience the weather and listen to what God is saying in general revelation. Stop gorging yourself with food. Talk to old people. Refuse to bore children.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Dig a deep well, and you can draw water out of it on a moment's notice — even during a drought. No matter how hard you try, you cannot fall off the floor. If your people really know and feel that you love them, they will follow you to the ends of the earth. If you want to be great in God's kingdom, learn to be the servant of all. You have enough time to do everything that God wants you to do without being anxious or frantic.



Tom Schreiner, professor of New Testament interpretation; preaching pastor, Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville.

First position/length.

An associate pastor position in Diamond Bar, Calif., where I served for

three years.

Early mistakes /lessons. I can't recall anything dramatic happening. I was introduced

early to conflict between the preaching pastor and one of the elders. It was a sensitive and difficult situation since the elder did not like the pastor's preaching.

Words of wisdom. Remember first of all that you are a servant of Jesus Christ and the Scriptures. One of the greatest temptations is to please people more than God. Second, if you have a passion for the glory of God and for the proclamation of the Word, be patient. It takes time for a church to change. Love the people where they are. Pray for them. Teach them. But make sure that they know that you love them. Plan to stay for the long term.



Hershael York, associate dean of ministry and proclamation; senior pastor, Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky.

First position/length.

First Baptist Church of Marion, Ark., was my first pastorate. I was there less than two years, but the love, patience and encouragement of that church shaped my ministry for the rest of my life.

Early mistakes/lessons. I fear this will seem arrogant, but I had such great mentors in my life on whom I relied for wisdom and advice that I avoided many typical freshman mistakes. My (spiritual) father, Adrian Rogers, and Tommy Hinson (a local pastor whom I loved) were like a well of wisdom for me to draw from daily.

I didn't displace people, but allowed change to take place naturally. I made evangelism the focus. I taught the Word. I worked hard to get the natural leaders and decision makers on my side. I had a good sense of when to give in and when to stand my ground. Looking back, I don't have major regrets because I assumed my own ignorance at the time and relied on others for God-given wisdom. My first pastorate was an incredible experience for which I have nothing but gratitude and fond memories.

Words of wisdom. First, have limited goals. Don't think you are going to change everything about the church to make it conform to your idea of the perfect congregation. Make your priorities loving the people, preaching the Word and being a good shepherd to them more than teaching your pet doctrine, changing the way they do business or planting a tulip garden.

Former NCAA Div. I player excited about new head coaching role with Bulldogs

By GARRETT E. WISHALL

Three years ago Matthew Emadi was tired of basketball and the thought of going to seminary had never crossed his mind.

But now Emadi is entering his third semester as a master of divinity student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and is also the new head coach of the Boyce Bulldogs.

"I thought I would never go to seminary and I ended up going to seminary," Emadi said. "I thought I would never do missions and I ended up going to South Africa. I thought I

playing basketball as well: in the way we play hard and conduct ourselves on the court."

Background

Emadi grew up in a Christian home and became a Christian at the age of 8 or 9. His father immigrated from Iran and was converted at age 20. His parents met at North Idaho College and Emadi grew up in Utah.

"I was in a great church growing up with a faithful pastor," Emadi said. "There are hardly any Christian churches or Christians in Utah. It is dominantly Mormon."

After four years at Weber, three playing basketball, the rigors of NCAA Division I basketball had worn Emadi down. Little did he know that God was about to change his life through a providential encounter.

During his third year on the team at Weber, Emadi said he began contemplating a transfer. There was a Mormon student on the team who had transferred

in from California. One of that student's best friends was a Christian who played for Biola University, and he encouraged Emadi to check out the school.

After the season, Emadi called the coach at Biola, tried out and was offered a full scholarship. Emadi said God used the year at Biola to change his life.

"All of a sudden I was in this environment where there are tons of Christians my age who loved the Bible, loved God, who wanted to do missions and different ministries and that profoundly affected me," he said. "That time at Biola opened my eyes more to ministry and kingdom of God-type work."

Emadi only needed one more class to graduate with a business degree from Weber. He was able to take the class at Biola, and he also took several Bible and theology classes, which he said gave him a hunger for further theological study. Work with several different ministries and a mission trip to South Africa — combined with the Bible classes — convinced Emadi that he should go to seminary and pursue vocational ministry.

Coming to Louisville

After receiving his bachelor's degree from Weber in the summer of 2007, Emadi moved to Louisville. He began taking classes at Southern in January 2008 with a biblical and theological studies emphasis in the School of Theology and met

Brittany, the woman who would become his wife.

They married in December 2008 and are expecting their first child in March 2010. Brittany will graduate from Southern in December with a master of arts in Christian Education.

In addition to coaching the Bulldogs on the court, Emadi said he looks forward to the discipleship role he can have in their lives off it.

"Getting to be the coach of a team with Christian guys and share some of my experi-

ences with them, things that I have learned, is a great opportunity," he said. "As a married guy, I'll have an opportunity to work with them from a discipleship aspect, helping some of these younger guys. We will probably go through a book together; I'll definitely have them over to my house."

Practice for the Bulldogs will begin in mid-September. Emadi said he plans to hold open tryouts for the team and said he has already had several students express interest in playing. He said the team's make-up and opponents will play a determinative factor in the type of offensive and defensive strategy he employs.

Emadi and his wife are members of New Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, where Southern Seminary Ph.D. student Cody McNutt serves as senior pastor. Emadi said he and his wife serve in whatever capacity they can, including the nursery and doing yard work, and he recently preached at the church.

Emadi said he looks forward to getting back in the game.

"I am excited. I thought I was done with basketball," he said. "I thought I had moved past that. But now, almost two years after finishing up at Biola, I am going to be back immersed in the basketball world."



New Boyce Bulldogs head coach Matt Emadi, an M.Div. student at Southern Seminary, played at NCAA Division I Weber State University for three years before transferring to Biola University. Photo by John Gill

would never coach and now here I am coaching. That is just the way God works.

"I'm definitely excited about coaching. It is an opportunity to coach Christian guys who want to pursue the ministry. Guys who are wanting to be pastors, missionaries or [serve in] other ministry fields."

In 2002, Emadi earned Gatorade player of the year honors for the state of Utah and was named that state's Class 5A Most Valuable Player for his exploits during his senior year at Northridge High School in Layton, Utah.

That same year, Emadi accepted a full ride scholarship to Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, an NCAA Division I school that is famous for knocking off the University of North Carolina as a No. 14 seed in the 1999 NCAA Tournament.

Emadi red-shirted his freshman season at Weber and then played for three years, before transferring to Biola University in Southern California for one season.

"Having a basketball team opens the door to unique ministry opportunities," he said. "For example, going to prisons, playing prisoners and getting a chance to share the Gospel with them (which the Bulldogs have done in the past). It is neat to think about what kind of kingdom-building work we can do as a team.

"At the same time, basketball is not just a means for evangelism. As people created in God's image we want to glorify God through

"I'm definitely excited about coaching. It is an opportunity to coach Christian guys who want to pursue the ministry. Guys who are wanting to be pastors, missionaries or [serve in] other ministry fields."
— Matt Emadi

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~ Boyce College fall orientation 2009 ~



(Above): Two Boyce College Howdy leaders step up to serve during Boyce College fall orientation.
(Below): A family enjoys ice cream on the Seminary Lawn.



(Below): Lawrence Smith (right), dean of students for Southern Seminary and Boyce College, talks to a student during Boyce fall orientation. Photos by John Gill and Abigail McBroom



Southern announces partnership with Pioneer College Caterers

By GARRETT E. WISHALL

Pioneer College Caterers is the new provider of all dining services at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary beginning with the fall semester.

Pioneer is responsible for all food service on campus, which includes the main dining room, catering, Founders' Café and Boyce Café on the campus of Boyce College.

Andy Vincent, vice president of operations at Southern, said Pioneer, which provides the dining services at Cedarville University, will provide excellent food service for the Southern Seminary community.

"Pioneer College Caterers is a partner that brings unique experience and resources and a desire to serve students," he said. "Knowing this, I look forward to our students enjoying quality food at every meal and great variety."

Pioneer's vision is to provide the highest quality food service available to the students, faculty and staff on Christian college and university campuses, according to the company's website. Pioneer was founded in 1973 and is the largest contract food service management

company catering exclusively to Christian colleges and universities across the United States.

Vincent said Pioneer's focus on Christian colleges and universities means the company will bring "an understanding of a campus culture such as ours." Vincent said students can expect consistent quality and variety as Pioneer applies its experience in providing food services for more than 50 other schools.

The Southern Seminary Shield card may still be used at Fifth & Broadway, for copiers and for all dining venues on campus. Flex dollars will take the place of voluntary dining dollars on the Shield card. Vincent said students will receive an additional 10 percent when they purchase flex dollars, which can be done in the main dining area or Founders' Café.

The hours for the main dining room are:

- Breakfast: 7-9 a.m.
- Lunch: 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Dinner: 5-7 p.m.

There are changes to the student rate plans and structures with the partnership with Pioneer. An FAQ page on these changes is available to students at www.sbps.edu/current-students/dining.

We're in this together...

■ Cooperation is what ties Kentucky Baptists together, but how much do you know about this partnership? Join us at www.greatcommissionkentucky.com, a new blog about how Kentucky Baptists are involved in fulfilling the Great Commission.

■ It's been born out of the latest big discussion in Southern Baptist Convention life — **the Great Commission Resurgence** — which refers to a call from Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt for the SBC to put a renewed focus on fulfilling the Great Commission.

■ Get answers to your questions, share your viewpoint, and **spread the word!**



NAMB president, three associates, resign

By MARK KELLY

Geoff Hammond and three of his closest associates resigned their positions with the North American Mission Board Aug. 11 after trustees met more than seven hours in executive session at the board's Alpharetta, Ga., headquarters.

The three staff members who also resigned were Dennis Culbreth, senior assistant to the president; Steve Reid, senior associate to the president for strategy development; and Brandon Pickett, communications team leader. Their resignations came after 54 of the board's 57 trustees met in an all-day closed session. Four of the 54 trustees participated by conference call.

Until the announcement of the resignations, there was no word from trustees throughout the day about either the substance of their discussions or their progress toward a resolution.

In a statement delivered to the media trustee chairman Tim Patterson said:

"First I want to thank the trustees of the North American Mission Board who have come together today and worked through some very difficult issues. They have carried out their responsibilities today in a way that has been honorable, thorough and fair.

"Dr. Hammond has resigned as president of the North American Mission Board and his resignation takes effect immediately. In addition, three of Dr. Hammond's closest associates — Steve Reid, Dennis Culbreth and Brandon Pickett — will resign their positions as well.

"Even though the subject of today's meeting has been the topic of much media speculation, it is important to remember that this is a personnel matter and we will keep the details of today's discussion confidential.



Geoff Hammond resigned as president of the North American Mission Board after serving in the post for just over two years. *BP photo*

"As you can imagine, these last few days have been very challenging for Dr. Hammond and his family, our trustees and the employees and missionaries of the North American Mission Board. We will continue to be in prayer for Dr. Hammond, his family, and for the families of the others who have resigned.

"I want to thank Southern Baptists for their prayers and ask that they continue praying. We have much work left to do as we seek God's guidance in these days. I still believe that God has great plans for the North American Mission Board and that NAMB will play a key part in the Southern Baptist effort to reach North America for Christ.

Patterson added that he would not have any further comments Aug. 11 but promised more information would be shared "very soon."

The meeting initially was to involve only members of NAMB's executive committee — a smaller group within the board of trustees — but members of the whole board learned about the meeting's agenda and succeeded in calling for a meeting of the full board.

The son and grandson of missionaries, Hammond, before taking over as president, served as a NAMB church planting missionary with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia (SBCV) convention. He also served as senior associate director of the SBCV.

He was elected president by a unanimous vote of the NAMB board in March 2007 following a nine-month search to replace the previous president, Robert E. Reccord, who resigned as president in April 2006, citing "honest philosophical and methodological differences."

All three of the associates who resigned had close working relationships with Hammond before he became NAMB president. Reid and Pickett were on staff with Hammond at SBCV. Culbreth was a pastor in Chesapeake, Va., a NAMB trustee and member of the search committee that brought Hammond to the mission board.

The board meeting comes at a time when NAMB is embarking on an ambitious partnership with state conventions and local associations to see every SBC church, by 2020, planting other churches. The evangelical initiative is called God's Plan for Sharing (GPS). (BP)

Newsbriefs

Ban of human-animal hybrids sought by Senator brownback

Sen. Sam Brownback, R.-Kan., has introduced legislation to prohibit the creation of human-animal hybrids. If enacted, the Human-animal Hybrid Prohibition Act, S. 1435, would bar the creation of beings made from the genetic material of both people and animals. Without a ban, such hybrids could be created for research purposes in laboratories. A British government agency has approved the creation of hybrids for research in that country.

"This legislation works to ensure that our society recognizes the dignity and sacredness of human life," Brownback said in a written statement, July 9. "Creating human-animal hybrids, which permanently alter the genetic makeup of an organism, will challenge the very definition of what it means to be human and is a violation of human dignity and a grave injustice."

The bill has 20 cosponsors, with Sen. Mary Landrieu of Louisiana the lone Democrat. Brownback and Landrieu have sought to gain passage of a comprehensive ban on human cloning in recent years but have been unsuccessful. (BP)

3,642 churches registered at '09 SBC

Official registration figures for the 2009 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Louisville, Ky., show that a total of 8,795 messengers were sent by 3,642 churches from 48 states, according to the report by SBC registration secretary Jim Wells.

Kentucky Baptists had the largest number of messengers, 1,680, at the June 23-24 meeting at the Kentucky Exposition Center, accounting for 23.61 percent of the registration total. The next four leading states in messenger count were Tennessee, 805 messengers (11.31 percent of the total); Georgia, 730 (10.26 percent); North Carolina, 537 (7.55 percent); and Alabama, 526 (7.39 percent).

According to data from 846 messengers (9.6 percent of total) who provided additional information during the registration process, the age categories that showed the most dramatic changes over the 2008 meeting were 35-39 (8.16 percent), up from 5.51 percent and 45-49 (8.39 percent), down from 13.10 percent. Messengers ages 18-29 (5.56 percent) dropped from last year's 5.95 percent. Last year's SBC registration total for Indianapolis was 7,277. The 2010 annual meeting is scheduled for June 15-16 in Orlando, Fla. (BP)

Added Lottie Moon gifts yield more missionaries

By BP STAFF

Gifts from several sources are enabling the International Mission Board to send additional missionaries to the field this year after a shortfall in the 2008 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions forced suspension of some programs and restricted new missionary appointments.

IMB President Jerry Rankin expressed appreciation to individuals, churches and Baptist entities for their additional financial support in response to a drop in Lottie Moon receipts.

"I cannot adequately express my heartfelt thanks for these gifts," Rankin said. "This tangible expression of love for Christ, a heart for missions and a desire to reach a lost world will help Southern Baptists be faithful to the Great Commission by sending more missionaries to the field."

The 2008 annual offering totaled \$141 million, \$29 million short of a \$170 million goal. It

was also \$9 million less than receipts from each of the past two years. As a result, appointments to International Service Corps and Masters programs were suspended and other missionary appointments severely restricted.

Speakers at the annual Southern Baptist Convention and the Pastors' Conference in June noted that sending missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission must remain Southern Baptists' priority.

An offering was taken at the Pastors' Conference and a check presented by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) during the SBC annual meeting.

Ed Litton, Pastors' Conference president, asked those attending for a special offering to help IMB. More than \$43,000 was given by attendees at the two-day pre-SBC gathering.

Jim Richards, executive director of the Texas convention, presented a check for \$100,000 during the IMB annual report to the convention to show their support for international

missions.

Several churches have contacted IMB, indicating that their churches are taking special offerings.

"The money will be used to send missionaries called and qualified to go who we would not be able to send and support this year without these gifts," Rankin reported.

Rankin emphasized that this is not just about the number of missionaries and meeting the needs of the mission board. "God is moving in amazing ways through global events to reach a lost world," he said. "The opportunities are unprecedented to impact lostness and engage unreached people groups.

"We are seeing record baptisms and church growth, and God is calling missionaries to join Him in His work around the world. This will help us to more effectively respond in reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

To support the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, go to imb.org/offering. (BP)

SBTS appoints Troy Bush as director of Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry

By EMILY GRIFFIN

As The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary launches a new semester an air of excitement is building around the Jan. 1, 2010, appointment of Troy Bush, the newly selected director of the Wayne and Lealice Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry Training.

At the Dehoney Center, Bush will strategize, organize and implement plans to help the student and faculty of Southern Seminary further reach the cities of the world for Christ. Bush will serve alongside Jeff Walters, associate director of the Dehoney Center, and under the leadership of Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism.

"Dr. Bush has served in urban settings with both the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board, and I know no one else who combines academic credentials (Ph.D. in missions from Southern Seminary), urban ministry experience and practical creativity as he does," Lawless said.

Bush brings several years of experience in stateside and foreign missions, urban church

planting and church leadership to his new post.

2010 will prove to be busy for Bush, who has also followed a call to move to Georgia to join the leadership team of Cross Pointe



Troy Bush will begin serving as director of the Dehoney Center for Urban Ministry at Southern Seminary in January 2010. Photo from Troy Bush

Church in Duluth, an Atlanta suburb. Under the leadership of Pastor James Merritt, Bush will serve Cross Pointe as minister of evangelism and missions.

Bush currently serves in Baltimore, where he is director of church starting for Embrace Baltimore, a Strategic Focus City effort of the NAMB that works with partners to serve the larger metro-Baltimore area through a focused blend of prayer support, church planting, developing pastoral and lay leaders and impacting neighborhoods through community-based activities.

"I realize that having a director who lives in Georgia will be a different approach, but I have no question that Dr. Bush's leadership will pay significant dividends as we focus on reaching cities around the world," Lawless said.

God's calling to these two new roles will allow Bush to present a strong path for leadership training to Southern students. Bush explained that Cross Pointe is engaged in strategic missions both in the United States and around the world, and it will be one of the models and locations for student internships that will better equip South-

ern students for urban ministry.

"Ethnic groups from around the world, multi-housing of all types, and strong representation from all major religions and many cults found in cities around the world make the Atlanta Metro an excellent place for students to gain urban ministry experience," Bush said.

The Dehoney Center will enable Southern students to gain practical urban ministry experience to enhance their theological and pastoral development, Bush said.

"Southern Seminary is establishing a great model with the Dehoney Center by providing students the very best of both, and I am excited to be part of this effort," Bush said.

"I am humbled to have the opportunity to serve with Dr. James Merritt at Cross Pointe and with Dr. Mohler and the Seminary family.

"Dr. Lawless and the Graham School are on the leading edge of missions and the launching of the Dehoney Center reflects a strategic commitment to preparing leaders to reach cities around the world. In many ways these two roles have much overlap that will require one ministry focus."

An interview with Troy Bush on church planting and urban ministry

Towers had a chance to catch up with Troy Bush for an interview following his appointment as director of the Dehoney Center.

1: Can you tell us about your experience in urban church planting in North America and overseas?

Troy Bush: In 1992 I went to Kiev, Ukraine, to participate in my first missions trip. Out of that experience I began participating full-time in an effort to equip pastors and church starts in Russia and the Ukraine to make disciples and start churches. I worked with missionaries and national leaders to help them engage cities from Moscow to Barnaul, Russia, and from Kiev to Simferopol, Ukraine.

Since that time, I was part of the team that launched Trinity Baptist Church (now Clifton Baptist Church) in Louisville and I later served as the International Mission Board strategy coordinator for Moscow. I have coached urban church starters in the United States and abroad, and I currently serve as the director of church starting for Embrace Baltimore, a Strategic Focus City effort of the North American Mission Board.

2: When and how did the Lord put urban ministry/church planting on your heart?

Bush: When I first traveled to Kiev, I was the pastor of a rural church in Arkansas. I affirmed missions, but I had not engaged in it beyond preaching about it and giving financial support for it. That trip changed my life and the course of my ministry.

While I did not intentionally plan to focus on urban ministry and church starting, the Lord gave me a passion for making disciples in those cities.

I will never forget the words of three older Ukrainian ladies who spoke to me on that trip. They asked if I would stay and help them evangelize their families and neighbors. Tina, my wife, and I have always believed that God's call on our lives has no geographic or occupational boundaries. Though urban life was not my heritage, making disciples and seeing the kingdom advance in cities around the world is the passion, which He has given us.

3: Serving as director of the Center for Urban Ministry Training and as minister of evangelism and missions at Cross Pointe will surely keep you busy. How do you plan to thrive in both positions?

Bush: In many ways these two roles have much overlap that will require one ministry focus. James Merritt started Cross Pointe six years ago with a vision to make disciples and

reach the Atlanta metro area. He also loves young leaders and desires to invest in them.

Additionally, this new church is engaged in strategic missions in the United States and

"If we are to fulfill the Great Commission, and if there will truly be a Great Commission Resurgence, we must engage cities by making devoted followers of Jesus Christ who live or work in urban centers."

— Troy Bush

around the world, and it will be one of the models and locations for internships that I want students to experience as they prepare for urban ministry. Ethnic groups from around the world, multi-housing of all types, and strong representation from all major religions and many cults found in cities around the world make the Atlanta metro area an excellent place for students to gain urban ministry experience.

These two roles reflect the best path

for leadership training. Not only do future ministry leaders need excellent theological education, they also need practical ministry experience. The complexity and diversity of urban environments increase the need for this two-pronged development. Southern is establishing a great model with the Dehoney Center by providing students the best of both.

4: What would you say to Southern students who are praying about church planting/urban ministry?

Bush: Many students come from suburban or rural areas of the country, so they have limited experience in cities. They often hear only the worst about cities, and their image of the city is dark, negative and at best only that of a tourist. The world is moving to the cities and cities are the primary hubs of culture, commerce, communication, education, healthcare, finance and government in nearly all countries.

God is doing amazing things in cities and most people groups are represented in them. If we are to fulfill the Great Commission, and if there will truly be a Great Commission Resurgence, we must engage cities by making devoted followers of Jesus Christ who live or work in urban centers. Urban ministry and urban church starting around the world should become the new norm for graduates of Southern Seminary.

SBTS students bringing Gospel to U of L campus through BCM

By EVELYN CHENG

As they step out into the world for the first time, college students face many decisions and questions concerning their life, faith and values.

During this transitional point in students' lives, the Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) at the University of Louisville seeks "to develop fully devoted Christ followers," said Bill Noe, U of L campus minister and a 2003 graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Regardless of their background, all campus students share a common need: salvation in Christ.

Noe is merely one of many students from Southern Seminary deeply involved in proclaiming the Gospel on the U of L campus through BCM. BCM, funded by the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention, fulfills its mission through a broad variety of ministries and events, such as lunchtime Bible studies, weekend outings and activities, a weekly worship service and a language partner program for international students.

Despite the abundance of Christian fellowship, BCM leaders point out that the organization is not a substitute for the local church.

"BCM exists to serve churches," says Riley Byers, internationals minister who graduated from Southern in May. Byers encourages volunteers from the seminary to minister at the U of L BCM as representatives of their local churches.

Byers personally lives out his goals through his work at Third Avenue Baptist Church, where he has started a Sunday School class

for international university students called "International Christianity Matters." Founded as a place for Christian internationals to grow in their faith, the class has become more evangelistic in nature as several non-believers attend, he said. C.W. Faulkner, also a Southern student, teaches the class in English that is easily understood.

"The Lord in His grace is bringing the nations here."

— Jennifer Hall,
SBTS student

Local church involvement is essential not only for international students but also for American students. Noe said that by being part of a local church, college students will be able to continue to grow in their faith after they graduate. Noe sees BCM as a bridge between Christians and non-Christians in helping lead them to Christ. By keeping students connected to Christ, BCM strives to disciple students for the Lord.

BCM provides unique opportunities to share the Gospel with students of different nationalities without having to go overseas.

"The Lord in His grace is bringing the nations here," said Jennifer Hall, Southern student and BCM semester missionary.

U of L students come from all over the world, including China, India, Morocco,

Tunisia and Spain. More than 80 percent of these international students will return to their homelands after they graduate. By hearing the Gospel while they are in America, these students can be effective witnesses in their own countries where many of them hold influential positions.

Yet it is not an easy process.

Many international students come from pagan or even atheistic cultures. The concept of God and His existence is quite foreign to them, making it hard for them to grasp the Gospel. For these students, BCM works to sow seeds that may one day bear fruit in another land.

Many international students are attracted to BCM as a way to learn about American culture and language. BCM is then able to present Christianity as a part of American culture. Although not a Christian, one doctoral student was so fascinated with Christianity and its connection with American culture that she videotaped Mark Dever, pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. and chairman of Southern's board of trustees, sharing the Gospel. When she returns to her home country, she will show the video to students in her home country.

BCM reaches out to international students through its language partner program, weekday Bible studies and weekend activities. In the language partner program, Christian U of L students and Southern students are paired up with international students. Each pair meets at least once a week to practice conversational English.

BCM volunteers devote themselves completely to these students, showing them the love of God by inviting them to their homes for meals and spending time with them. One student from Spain said, "These are the only people that care about us."

The majority of international students that BCM works with are Chinese. Coming from a strong atheistic background, Chinese students are open to hearing the Gospel, but the newness of the idea of a God prevents them from believing. Once they do, however, their lives are changed.

Kang, originally from China, came to Louisville for post-doctoral studies. He regularly attended a Saturday night Bible study organized by BCM where he heard the Gospel for the first time. Last Easter, Kang accepted Christ and was baptized at the Chinese mission at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville.

Kang says that as a Christian he has greater security and can depend on the Almighty God instead of only himself. Kang also says that his faith has prompted him to change many sinful habits.


Whatever BCM's efforts to share the Gospel, leaders say it is still all by the grace of God that students come to accept Him. Moved by the Spirit, even Muslim students come to BCM hungering for the Word of God. It is then up to BCM volunteers to teach Scripture to these students.

BCM welcomes volunteers who will involve themselves in the lives of a few college students, helping them to come to Christ and grow in their faith.

RESOURCE:

SBC 2009 – Q&A – Wills & Nettles


SBTS profs Greg Wills and Tom Nettles answer questions at the Southern Seminary booth.
<http://www.sbsts.edu/resources/southern-baptist-convention/sbc-2009-louisville/sbc-2009-qa-wills-nettles/>



Chapel Schedule



10 a.m., Tue., Aug. 25
Convocation
R. Albert Mohler Jr.
President
Southern Seminary



10 a.m., Thu., Aug. 27
Russell D. Moore
Senior V.P. for Acad. Admin.
Southern Seminary

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Announcements

Baby recognition

For students and staff who have been blessed with a birth in recent months, there will be a baby recognition in chapel Thursday, Oct. 1. Contact Student Life (897-4015) to be included in the special recognition.

Pendergraph Women's Ministry opening event

The Pendergraph Women's Ministry will kick off the fall semester with a Welcome Wagon event from 7-9 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 25 in Heritage Hall. Whether women are new to Louisville or a returning member of the seminary community they are invited to attend the annual Welcome Wagon event, which will center on "tastes of Louisville" and fellowship with other women. Childcare is available: Pendergraph's provides details — www.sbts.edu/women/pendergraph-womens-ministry. For more information, contact Cheryl Watson at (214) 603 - 9579 or pendergraph@sbts.edu.

Southern Seminary music ensembles

All seminary students and spouses are invited to participate in three new Southern Seminary music ensembles this fall: Southern Seminary chorale, Southern Seminary worship band and Doxology vocal ensemble. These ensembles will assist with chapel services and other musical services on and off campus. Students who register for these ensembles receive one elective credit hour with no tuition fee. For full details on these ensembles, visit www.biblicalworship.com/?page_id=739.

Southern Seminary chorale and oratorio chorus

Professor Carl Stam would like to invite students to participate in Southern Seminary chorale or oratorio chorus this fall. The chorale will meet from 9-9:50 a.m., on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Chorale will sing in chapel on Tuesdays and work towards a fall concert in November singing a variety of sacred choral pieces with a wide range of styles from traditional to contemporary.

Oratorio chorus will meet from 7-9 p.m. on Monday evenings. This group works on larger choral works written by some of the best church music composers. Oratorio chorus presents a concert in November accompanied by the seminary orchestra. For more information on either of these groups, contact Stam at cstam@sbts.edu.

Pray for the nations as you train for the Great Commission Center 5k

The Great Commission Center 5k helps

provide scholarships for students going on school sponsored missions trips. The 5k will be held Saturday, Sept. 12 on the Southern Seminary campus. Training dates for the 5k will be held Aug. 17, 24, 31 and Sept. 7. Students should meet in the Health and Recreation Center at 4:30 p.m. for prayer, followed by a training run. Coaching will also be available to develop a training plan for students. Contact Anthony at missions@sbts.edu with questions.

School of Theology shepherding group sign-up

School of Theology students interested in being involved in a shepherding group this semester must turn in a faculty/student shepherding group commitment form at the School of Theology office (Norton 147) by Aug. 19. Forms are available in Norton 147.

Financial aid incentive for Southern Seminary students

Something new happening this year with financial aid is the incentive to take more classes each semester. Students who take 12-14 credit hours will receive an extra \$150 for the semester. If you take 15 or more hours, you will receive an extra \$300. This money will be applied in the middle of the semester, after billing has closed. To qualify, you must complete the online application for financial aid at finaid.sbts.edu. If you have questions, contact the financial aid office at financialaid@sbts.edu.

Ministry Resources

Résumé service

Start or update your résumé file with Ministry Resources by submitting our on-line candidate form. Visit the Church Resources quick link on www.sbts.edu for the simple instructions. The office is also eager to counsel you over your résumé and ministry preferences. Visit Norton 150 or call ext. 4208.

Ministry position postings

Full-time and part-time ministry positions may be found on e-campus through the help desk's link to Ministry Resources.

Health and Rec

The Health and Recreation Center (HRC) will be open regular hours during the fall semester: M-F — 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Sat. — 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Aerobics schedule

Fitness Boot Camp M, W & F 7-8 a.m.
Mommy and Me Power Walking M, W & F 9-10 a.m.
Practical Pilates M, T, & R 4:45-5:45 p.m.
Aqua Alive T & R 5-5:45 p.m.
Step It Up Cardio Blast T & R 8-9 p.m.

Locker clean out

Lockers need to be cleaned out by 10 p.m., Aug. 17. If belongings are left in the locker, a \$5 fee will be charged to the individual. Items can be returned to the locker the next day.

Indoor dodgeball tournament

Friday, Aug. 21 at 7 p.m.

Indoor couples Cornhole

Friday, Aug. 28 at 7 p.m.

Intramural volleyball

Co-ed intramural volleyball will be held every Monday night from 6:30-8 p.m.

Intramural basketball

Intramural basketball will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Registration runs through Aug. 31. Games begin Sept. 3 at 5:45 p.m.

Kids Fit

Kids Fit features fitness class for 7-12 year old children from 4:30-5:30 p.m., Mondays and Thursdays.

Registration: Through Aug. 24. The class runs from Aug. 25-Nov. 12. The cost is \$20 per child (\$10 per each additional child in either program: Kids Fit or Motor Skills).

Motor Skills

Motor Skills is a program designed to enhance coordination, balance and motor skills through structured activities and games. It is for children ages 3-6 and it will be held from 4:30-5:30 p.m., Tuesdays.

Registration: Through Aug. 24. Motor Skills runs from Aug. 25-Nov. 10. The cost is \$20 per child (\$10 per each additional child in either program: Kids Fit or Motor Skills).

• Call the HRC front desk at 897-4720 with any additional questions about scheduling and events.

Community Newsbriefs

'The Albert Mohler Program'

"The Albert Mohler Program," a daily radio show hosted by R. Albert Mohler Jr., can be

heard from 5-6 p.m. on WFIA-FM 94.7 or as a live webcast at www.AlbertMohler.com. Previous broadcasts of the nationwide program may be accessed at the web site and are also available as a podcast. Anyone is invited to call the show toll free, 877-893-8255, or to e-mail mail@albertmohler.com with questions and comments.

2009 Andrew Fuller Center Conference

The 2009 Andrew Fuller Center Conference, "Baptist Spirituality: Historical Perspectives," will be hosted Aug. 24-25 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The registration fee is \$55 for students \$85 for regular registrants. Visit www.andrewfullercenter.org to register. For more information, contact Steve Weaver at andrewfullercenter@sbts.edu.

New student email account: What you need to know

All student email addresses are now powered by Google, as of June 17. Students now have quicker, easier access to their email, higher mobile phone compatibility and a 7.3 GB mailbox.

What students need to know:

1. Students were notified of the change on June 17, and through several subsequent emails, and through July 15 could still access and receive and send emails from the old sbtsstudents.net account. Students were able to access their emails through Aug. 15.

2. What will my new email address be?

The email username will follow the same pattern as the old email system. Your username is the first letter of your first name, your last name and the last three digits of your student id number. For example, if your name is John Doe and your student id number is 123456, your username (and consequently your email address) will be jdoe456 (jdoe456@students.sbts.edu). The only thing that will change will be the domain name: students.sbts.edu.

3. How do I log in?

To log into the new email, visit mail. students.sbts.edu. The username is the same as your current student email (jdoe456). The password is the same as your Ecampus password (not your current student email password). NOTE: if your Ecampus password is shorter than six characters the letters "xy" have been added to the end of your existing password. For example, if your password was "12345" (that is, shorter than 6 characters) your password to log into the new email address at mail.students.sbts.edu would be "12345xy." Once you log in you will be prompted to set a new password, which will be easy for you to remember.



3

THREE

Questions WITH Ligon Duncan

senior minister of
First Presbyterian Church
in Jackson, Miss.

1 *What should a man have in mind as he begins his first pastorate?*

FIRST, HE NEEDS to be committed to preach God's Word and then, second, he needs to develop a deep love for His people. (He should pray) for God to really grant him a deep love in his heart for his people, so that when he does have to confront his people with their sins, they know that he does it with a heart of total love and commitment with, and for, them.

Third, I'd say be committed to be a man of prayer for them. So, preach the Word, love his people and be committed to prayer and especially cultivate prayer in the life of the church. Fourth, he should invest himself in his elders or his leaders. Cultivate them so they can come alongside him and do ministry.

Fifth, he should promote family religion in the homes, and then, sixth, he should be committed to living a godly life himself. So I'd say those six things ought to be a standard commitment of every young man going into his first pastorate.

2 *How can a young minister have a good accountability structure?*

IF HE'S MARRIED, then it starts with his wife, because if you can lie to your wife, then you can lie to your accountability partner. So, it starts with having the kind of proper relationship of accountability with your wife.

Second, accountability to your church leadership so that they know that you really do submit to their authority and that you are accountable to them in appropriate ways. And then, I do think that it's important for ministers to cultivate special pastoral relationships, preferably with guys that are close to them in proximity, where they can talk about the deep

heart issues that they are struggling with, their ministry issues they are struggling with and their temptation issues they are wrestling with.

I think you need webs of accountability because very often, certain sins can slip through one track of accountability and get caught by others, and we need that. We need to hem ourselves in so that we get caught quickly and easily, so I believe in a multi-faceted web of accountability.

3 *What is a recent occurrence that made you laugh?*

WELL, MY SON — Jennings, who is 9 — is very funny. And he says very, very funny things. Jennings recently just had his finger cut off in an accident on a zip line. We were in the hospital having the orthopedic surgeon look at his finger, and her name was Cynthia Pullion. She walked into the room and said, "I'm Cynthia Pullion" and he looked up at her and he said, "They sent you to pull what?" I laughed pretty hard when he said that.

"I think you need webs of accountability because very often, certain sins can slip through one track of accountability. ... We need to hem ourselves in so that we get caught quickly and easily"
— Ligon Duncan

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New SBJT studies man

By JEFF ROBINSON

Is human personhood defined by what one does or what one is? Is the human body merely a tent that houses the soul that will at last be set free in the next life? Can a person who has undergone "gender reassignment" surgery be saved?

Essayists in the latest edition of the Southern Baptist Journal of Theology wrestle with these crucial questions in an issue devoted to theological anthropology: the doctrine of man.

Contributors include Southern Seminary professors Gregg A. Allison, William R. Cutrer, Russell D. Moore and Bruce A. Ware.

Some might see anthropology as dull or unimportant, but in his opening editorial, journal editor Stephen J. Wellum argues that the need for a biblically sound doctrine of man is fundamental to a Christian worldview.

"In the end, it is a theological anthropology which we desperately need today, given the anthropological crisis of our day," he writes.

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