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'Massive seed sowing'



IMB photo

In West Africa and other parts of the world, Muslims are turning to Jesus in bigger numbers than ever before.

Movements of Muslims turning to Christ largest in history

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Osamar Aziz walked all the way from one country to the other — across minefields and mountains and deserts — for the funeral of a friend's teenage son.

At the funeral he sat between the parents, Nik and Ruth Ripken.

And what he saw was shocking.

"People were singing. People were crying. But everyone there seemed to know that Tim was in paradise," said Aziz, a devout Muslim.

"Why can't we Muslims know that our loved ones are in paradise when they die? Why is it that only these followers of Jesus know exactly where they are going after death?"

It's thoughts like these that are getting Muslims to ask the right questions, said Nik Ripken, the world's leading expert on the persecuted church in Muslim contexts.

And David Garrison said those questions are leading to a revival in the Muslim world like never seen before.

"Movements to Christ are occurring in virtually every corner of the Muslim world," said Garrison, the International Mission Board's global strategist for evangelical advance.

'No generation' has seen a movement like this

This is coming from the work of the Holy Spirit and the spread of the gospel alongside the dissatisfaction Muslims say they have from their own religion, Garrison said.

"They speak of feeling lost, empty inside, without assurance of salvation. Many are weary of terrorism, fundamentalism and discrimination against women and non-Muslims," he said. "It is also striking how many cultural Muslims, those whose faith was nothing more than a nominal identity, are finding in Christ a living Lord who hears and answers their prayers."

It's remarkable, said Garrison, who is currently writing a book called "A Wind in the House of Islam" set to be published later in 2013. "We have researched this and can say with confidence that no generation in history has ever seen so many Muslim movements to Christ."

(See 'Hundreds of thousands,' page 10)

Faith and Family

Next week: Dealing with **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

COMMENT

Who Is Waging Spiritual Warfare?

Spiritual warfare is not a subject on which I am well versed. In fact, I confess to shying away from the topic. Mention spiritual warfare and people in America most often think of the Salem Witch Trials and burning people at the stake.

C.S. Lewis offers advice to people like me. He wrote in "The Screwtape Letters": "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about demons. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them."

I have seen too much of the latter in church circles. But, as Lewis points out, to deny spiritual warfare is as wrong as being obsessed by it. The Bible clearly teaches spiritual warfare beginning in Genesis 3 and running through the Old and New Testaments. It was Satan, who personified as a serpent in the Garden of Eden, lied about the character of God in order to lure humankind away from fellowship with its Creator.

In the New Testament, Satan waged spiritual war with Jesus after His baptism. And right before Jesus was arrested, He warned Peter that "Satan asked to sift you as wheat."

Christians know spiritual warfare is real because the Bible teaches its reality. When we are honest with ourselves, most believers will confess that we have encountered Evil. We may have felt its presence. Certainly we have been tempted by its seductive song.

Armor of God

In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul plainly wrote, "Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (vs. 11-12).

That struggle is worldwide but sometimes it seems stronger in certain places.

In a recent conversation with a pastor trained



THOUGHTS
By Bob Terry

in Christian seminaries in Europe and the United States and now serving a congregation on Israel's West Bank, I asked about spiritual warfare.

"It is stronger here (than in the United States)," he said in a matter of fact manner. Those who have read books like "Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World?" by Tom Doyle understand that God is bringing an unprecedented number of unbelievers to Himself in the Middle East through the work of His Spirit. It is no wonder there is resistance.

This pastor told of leaders from other faith groups publicly praying that spouses of Christian pastors would be struck with cancer and other deadly illnesses. These same non-Christian leaders prayed that children of Christian pastors would become drug addicts.

With tears in his eyes, the pastor shared that five spouses of Christian pastors in the area were diagnosed with cancer. He told of children who had turned from God. He told of middle of the night phone calls from people he knew who threatened to kill him and other heart wrenching experiences.

"Our struggle is ... against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

This powerful pastor then looked into the eyes of our Alabama Baptist group visiting the Holy Land and asked "who is praying for us?" In the

midst of spiritual struggles going on in places like the West Bank and other Middle East countries, who is praying for believers against the onslaught of the "powers of this dark world" and the "spiritual forces of evil?"

Our pastor host recalled the story of the Israelites fighting the wandering marauders called Amalekites who had attacked them (Exodus 17).

As long as Moses lifted high the Rod of God, Joshua and the army of Israel prevailed. But when Moses grew weary and lowered his arms, the Amalekites carried the battle. It was only when Aaron, Moses' brother, and a man named Hur, who appears only here in history, improvised a way to hold up Moses arms and the Rod of God that Israel routed the enemy.

Spiritual battle

A careful reading of the story shows no indication that Joshua and others in the physical fight grew weary that day. It was Moses who was interceding with God on behalf of the people whose arms grew weak. To conclude that fighting the spiritual battle is more exhausting than fighting the physical battle is not a misreading of the text. "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against ... spiritual forces of evil."

As the late Dietrich Bonhoeffer taught, prayer is not a passive activity. It is not an expression of apathy. For Bonhoeffer prayer was the strongest possible action.

In Ephesians 6:14-17, the apostle Paul outlines the familiar armor of God that enables believers to stand in the midst of spiritual warfare. Then he adds, "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints" (v. 18).

Sometimes Christians, especially those of us in the West, forget that having on the armor of God is not enough without prayer.

As Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, we are to "pray without ceasing."

Prayer described here is not the glibly spoken "God bless whomever." It is the heart-wrenching, soul-searching pleas for God to gain the honor and glory due Him. It is all kinds of prayers for all kinds of requests for all the saints everywhere. It is prayer that intercedes for those in places like the West Bank, India, Afghanistan and Alabama. It is prayer like those in the Psalms that God would thwart the schemes of the enemy and even bring those arrayed against God and His people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Spiritual warfare is a reality and through intercessory prayer, we join the battle. Through prayer we take the offense against the "spiritual forces of evil."





"If ye continue in my word, then ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32

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'Decisive Battle'

North Korean church leaders call on Christians to pray amid war preparations

North Korean church leaders are asking Christians worldwide to pray for their country amid increased war threats and combat preparation by North Korean military officials.

Prayer for beleaguered believers in North Korea is more important than ever, says Open Doors, an organization that supports persecuted Christians in 60 countries.

According to underground Christians, there is a war-like atmosphere in the country: "We are to meet the decisive battle with a gun in one hand and a hammer in the other," summarized a Christian leader about the message the North Korean people recently received from the "high command."

"The military army, navy, air force troops, strategic rocket troops, the red guards and the red youth guards are already in combat mode. Urgent meetings are being held everywhere, regardless if it is day or night. At those meetings, officials make decisions on what needs to happen in case war breaks out and everyone, including women, needs to be combat ready."

According to Open Doors sources, many cars on the roads are covered with camouflage nets. Also, soldiers are wearing hats with camouflage dried branches and carry

guns. North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un released a statement to his people, saying that "If war breaks out because of the actions of the U.S. and puppet South Korea's unpardonable behavior, they will end up with a disgraceful downfall, and our people will greet a brilliant new day of reunification. The day has come to show off the power of 'Military First' and our great nation to the whole world."

However, Christians and other citizens fear war and its consequences.

"Many people are in a hurry to purchase emergency food supplies and daily goods just in case. The prices of goods, including food, are skyrocketing," one believer in North Korea said.

North Korean Christians are grateful for their fellow believers in the West and request their urgent prayers.

"I would like to thank the many brothers and sisters around the world for their continuous love and support," the Christian said. "We know that our journey will not be an easy one, but we are sure that our faith, desperate hope and passionate desire will someday bear many fruit."

"No matter how difficult life is for us, we never blame or complain about our circum-

stances. God has promised us in the Bible that if we seek His Kingdom first, all other things will be given to us as well. Please pray for us."

Jerry Dykstra, a spokesman for Open Doors USA, added, "Beneath the surface of all the rhetoric of war and the possible

launch of nuclear missiles are the suffering and persecution of the estimated 200,000 to 400,000 Christians in North Korea.

"Also, an estimated 60,000 to 80,000 Christians are in harsh political prison camps. The government has been the No. 1 persecutor of Christians for 11 years in a row, according to the Open Doors 2013 World Watch List (www.worldwatchlist.us).

"We must respond now to the Christian leaders' request to pray for them," Dykstra said. "Pray for Kim Jong-Un;

that God will work in his heart and he will pursue peace and not war. Pray for wisdom for leaders in the United States, South Korea and China. Pray for Christians who are put in even more danger due to war preparations. Pray families will find food to feed their families. Finally, pray that no matter what happens Christians will remain strong in their faith." (Open Doors)

**"No matter how
difficult life is for us,
we never blame or
complain about our
circumstances."**

**Christian believer
in North Korea**

Six key questions

John 3:16 Conference addresses theological differences of Calvinism in SBC

While stressing that the discussion between Calvinists and non-Calvinists in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is a family matter, speakers at the 2013 John 3:16 Conference outlined the differences between the two views and what they believe to be the issues hindering unity among Southern Baptists.

Frank Cox, pastor of North Metro Baptist Church, Lawrenceville, Ga., which hosted the conference March 21–22, told attendees that the event would help them “engage in the conversation going on across the nation and the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Jerry Vines, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., opened the conference by saying it was not about anger or fighting anyone over these issues.

“Disagreement does not equal a lack of love,” said Vines, whose ministry organized the John 3:16 Conference and a similar conference in 2008 under the same name.

The 2008 conference responded directly to the five points of traditional Calvinism known by the acronym TULIP: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace and Perseverance of the saints.

This year’s event focused on six key questions pointing to theological differences between the conference’s speakers and those Southern Baptists who identify with Calvinism or the Reformed tradition. The sessions included both professorial and pastoral presentations by Baptist college and seminary leaders as well as pastors and evangelists.

Organizers said more than 350 registrants attended the conference.

Vines opened the sessions by answering what he referred to as “the burning question in Southern Baptist life.”

► For whose sins did Jesus die?

Using John 3:16 as his primary text, Vines stated that Christ died for “my sins individually, the church’s sins especially and

the world’s sins universally.”

He called it a “logical fallacy” to use passages that speak of Christ’s death being for individuals or the church as evidence that it is for those alone.

“The whole matter of ‘For whose sins did Jesus die?’ ultimately goes back to the love of God,” Vines said.

“Does He love every single person in the whole world?” Vines asked. “I believe He does. I can say about everyone I meet, ‘This is a person God loves and for whose sins Christ died.’”

► Does humanity inherit the guilt of Adam’s sin?

Adam Harwood, Christian studies professor at Truett-McConnell College in Georgia, in his presentation directly challenged the perspective on humanity inheriting the guilt of Adam’s sin.

Harwood contended that while all people have a sinful nature, only Adam is guilty of Adam’s sin because “according to the Bible, God judges people for their own sin.”

Harwood claimed that some Southern Baptists, particularly R. Albert Mohler Jr. and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) in Louisville, Ky., disagreed with this stance.

Harwood referenced an article Mohler wrote on his blog in 2012 titled “Southern Baptists and Salvation: It’s Time to Talk” along with Mohler’s claim that a 2012 document signed online by many non-Calvinist Southern Baptists, called “A Statement of the Traditional Southern Baptist Understanding of God’s Plan of Salvation,” “appear to affirm semi-Pelagian understandings of sin, human nature and the human will — understandings that virtually all Southern Baptists have denied.”

As described in the “Evangelical Dictionary of Theology,” semi-Pelagianism “affirmed that the unaided will performed the initial act of faith” and “the priority of the human will over the grace of God in the initial act of salvation.”

Harwood said unity within the SBC may depend, in part, on Mohler retracting his claim.

Harwood also called on Southern Seminary to revise a faculty-written interpretation of the Baptist Faith and Message (BF&M), which

Harwood said goes beyond the doctrinal stands of the SBC’s BF&M.

In Article 3 of the BF&M, humanity inherits from Adam “a nature and an environment inclined toward sin,” whereas in the SBTS interpretation, “the guilt of Adam’s sin falls on all.”

“I do not mean to imply that SBTS faculty don’t affirm the BF&M. They do so as part of the hiring process,” Harwood said.

“But the faculty exposition omits concepts found in the BF&M and replaces them with a theological viewpoint not found in the BF&M, namely that all people are guilty of Adam’s sin,” Harwood said.

Mohler declined comment on Harwood’s statements. A seminary official, in responding March 26 to Baptist Press’ request, said, “Unfortunately, we must respectfully decline the opportunity to comment at this time. Thank you for giving us the opportunity.”

► Does faith precede regeneration?

David Allen, dean of the school of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, spoke in his presentation to the question, “Does faith precede regeneration?” Allen pointed to biblical evidence and statements throughout church history from both Reformed and non-Reformed theologians affirming that faith does precede regeneration.

To view regeneration as occurring before someone can respond to God in faith is, Allen said, “a theological deduction that some Calvinists make that is driven more by their system than it is by Scripture.”

Allen quoted Charles Spurgeon, a 19th-century British Calvinist, as saying that Arminianism (a theological system often seen as the opposite of Calvinism) “marries Christ to a bride He did not choose,” to which Allen retorted that if regeneration precedes faith, “Calvinism marries Christ to a bride in a shotgun wedding. She did not have the choice to turn down His proposal.”

► What are the early SBC leaders’ view on salvation?

Emir Caner, president of Truett-McConnell College, addressed the issue from a historical perspective in answering, “What were the early SBC leaders’ view on salvation?”

Caner noted that Baptist churches from the historical lineage of Sandy Creek Baptist Association practiced revivalistic evangelism methods 40 years prior to the birth of Charles Finney, who is often credited with originating them during the Second Great Awakening.

This strand of Baptist life, Caner said, ran concurrent with the stronger Calvinistic one from the Philadelphia Baptist Association, and both have existed within Southern Baptist

“I can say about everyone I meet, ‘This is a person God loves and for whose sins Christ died.’”

Jerry Vines
FBC Jacksonville, Fla.



BP photo
Jerry Vines, pastor emeritus of FBC Jacksonville, Fla., and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, was among the speakers at the John 3:16 Conference.



BP photo

Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn., maintained at the John 3:16 Conference that the principle of a sinner's prayer, although not directly in Scripture, can be drawn from the biblical text akin to such concepts as inerrancy and the Trinity.

life since the founding of the convention.

Caner asserted that much of the theological disunity could be resolved if there was more evangelistic methodological unity, particularly using an altar call.

Southern Baptist history, Caner said, demonstrates that revival and the methods of evangelism associated with historic "revival meetings" will be what halts "discussion over doctrinal differences" and stops "theological infighting."

► Who are the elect?

Eric Hankins, pastor of First Baptist Church, Oxford, Miss., addressed the question, "Who are the elect?"

Hankins is the author of "A Statement of the Traditional Southern Baptist Understanding of God's Plan of Salvation." He wrote and submitted a proposed resolution affirming the sinner's prayer to the SBC's Resolutions Committee, which reworded it before presenting it to messengers at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans in 2012. The resolution passed overwhelmingly.

Hankins delineated between what he characterized as theistic determinism — God dictating the free choices of individuals — and other viewpoints that, Hankins said, recognize the freedom that humanity possesses.

In this discussion, there is "no middle ground," Hankins said. "There is no mediating position. Either determinism is true and representative of the biblical data concerning salvation or it is not."

Hankins said the question is whether the differing sides "will grant one another liberty in holding one view or the other."

In the past, this liberty was granted, Hankins said, but no more.

"The peace has been shattered recently, not by us but by Southern Baptist Calvinists, who aver that our views on soteriology are deficient and outmoded," Hankins said.

Hankins asserted that non-Calvinists must do more than simply critique Reformed theology without asserting any replacement options. He did this by referencing Molinism as "the best account of the Bible's strong view of God's sovereignty and equally strong view of

libertarian freedom."

"Calvinists think Molinism is too libertarian and Arminians think it is too deterministic," Hankins said. "This, however, may be an indication that it is just about right."

Named after 16th-century theologian Luis de Molina, Molinism is an attempt to solve many of the philosophical and theological issues associated with God's sovereignty and man's free will.

Hankins mentioned several prominent modern theologians who hold to Molinism, including William Lane Craig, Alvin Plantinga and Ken Keathley, a professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Hankins also referenced religious historian Kirk MacGregor's contention that leading Anabaptist theologian Balthasar Hubmeir "could be considered a proponent of Molinism 50 years before Molina."

► Should the sinner's prayer be used?

Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn., concluded the conference by assessing the biblical nature of the sinner's prayer.

While grateful for valid concerns critics have had over a "mindless repetition of a prayer," Gaines maintained that the principle of a sinner's prayer, despite it not being mentioned directly in the Scripture, can be drawn from the biblical text akin to such concepts as inerrancy and the Trinity.

Gaines responded to some who, as he put it, have been questioning the legitimacy of "asking Jesus into your heart."

Poor discipleship, Gaines said, often is to blame for later doubts about salvation and should not be used as an excuse to reject the sinner's prayer, which he claimed was affirmed and used at least occasionally by Calvinists such as Wayne Grudem, John MacArthur and Charles Spurgeon.

Despite the evident differences, Gaines said Calvinists "are not my enemy" and that both sides in the discussion should come together.

"The days ahead are difficult," Gaines said.

"We are going to need each other.

"I can work with them," he said. "There is no need for a takeover. We need to live together."

Vines, in an interview, said unity is possible because of the twin historic focuses of the SBC, noting, "Evangelism and missions have always been our unifying matter."

Vines asserted that convention unity is possible when both sides of the discussion agree over the basic Baptist doctrines and accept the Bible as it is without trying to "squeeze into either theological basket what we think Scripture says."

Vines maintained, however, that any unity

will be disrupted "when either view attacks the other or accuses it of being on the borderline of heresy."

Across the convention, Vines said he sees the issues being addressed best in a local context. "More and more what I'm witnessing is that as information is shared, as views are presented, the people in the local church pews are solving the problem."

The John 3:16 Conference, Vines said, is part of the unifying process.

"We're brothers, but we need to discuss these matters so that we all may say that which we firmly believe," he said. (BP)

BAPTISTS
and
CALVINISM
an international examination

Written by James Leo Garrett Jr.
A distinguished professor of theology, emeritus,
at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas
Reprinted from The Alabama Baptist

BAPTISTS and CALVINISM

- Calvinism: What does it mean?
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- Have Baptist theologians affirmed teachings of Calvinism?
- Does Calvinism have weight of Scripture in its favor?
- Does Calvinism really matter?
- What are alternatives to Calvinism?

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BETHEL

► **Nicholsville Church, Sweet Water**, will celebrate annual homecoming May 5. There will be a service at Old Liberty Cemetery at 10 a.m. and the service at the church will begin at 11 a.m. Interim pastor Steve Trader will speak at both services. Lunch will follow. Shannon Knight will sing at 1:15 p.m. For information call 334-636-0073.

BIRMINGHAM

► **Hilldale Church, Center Point**, will hold a community block party April 20, 10 a.m.–11:30 a.m. There will be games and prizes, an art center and face painting. The church also will host the southern gospel group Awakened on May 19, 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome. For information call 205-853-3000. Ron Pate is pastor.

BLOUNT

► **Pleasant View Missionary Church, Holly Pond**, will hold spring revival through April 12. Services will begin at 7 p.m. Prayer band will be at 6:45 p.m. Dustin Smith will speak. The church also will hold a third Sunday night singing April 21, 6 p.m. with the King's Messengers from Hartselle. For information call 256-796-5986. Randy Burtram is pastor.

COFFEE

► **Mount Gilead Church,**

Elba, will celebrate homecoming April 28, 10 a.m. The Stricklands and Christy Lynne will sing and Pastor Fred Fowler will speak. Lunch will follow. ► **Park Avenue Church, Enterprise**, will celebrate the renovation of its new sanctuary with a dedication ceremony April 14, 2 p.m. Michael Mynatt will speak. Leon Adams is pastor. ► Roger Hall, state coordinator for F.A.I.T.H. Riders (a Christian motorcycle fellowship) will speak at **Church on the Circle, Enterprise**, on April 14, 9:30 a.m. Everyone is invited. For information call 334-389-1081. John Granger is pastor.

EAST LIBERTY

► **County Line Church, Dudleyville**, will celebrate its 178th anniversary May 5, 10:45 a.m. Dinner on the grounds will follow. Brothers Dan and Larry Washburn will speak. Wayne Barrett Sr. is pastor.

MADISON

► **Brownsboro Church** will celebrate its 20th homecoming May 5, 10:30 a.m. The BBC Choir and Carla Brown will provide special music and Larry Fincher will speak. Lunch and fellowship will follow after the service. The church will provide meats and members are asked to bring a covered dish, dessert and drinks. Joseph Cooper is pastor. ► **Hillwood Church,**

Huntsville, will host gospel artist Ivan Parker in concert April 27, 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. For ticket information call 256-883-0485. Charles Freeman is pastor.

MOBILE

► **Ben Dyer** is the new minister of students and missions for **Bayou Sara Church, Saraland**. He will begin in the role April 14. He is a graduate of the University of Mobile and attended Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He and his wife, Shannon, have one daughter. Dennis Dunn is pastor.

WINSTON

► **Bethel #2 Church, Haleyville**, will hold revival April 21–24, April 21 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and April 22–24 at 7 p.m. Ricky Thrasher will speak and there will be special singing each night. Mark Kimbrell is pastor. ► **First Church, Haleyville**, will host the Association Music Festival on April 28, 5 p.m. Special music will be provided by churches in the association. Everyone is welcome. Jim Cooley is pastor. ► **New Hope #2 Church, Haleyville**, will hold revival April 29–May 1, 7 p.m. Mark Kimbrell will speak. ► **Sunny Home Church, Haleyville**, will hold revival April 14–17, April 14 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. and April 15–17, 7 p.m. Lee Taylor will speak. Eddie Everett is pastor.

Baptist News Briefs

Compiled from Wire Services

'Celebrate Life' composer Red dies from cancer

NEW YORK CITY — Buryl Red, a renowned composer, conductor, producer and arranger known around the world as musical director of The CenturyMen and composer of the 1972 classic *Celebrate Life*, died April 1 after a battle with cancer.

A graduate of Baylor and Yale universities and born in Little Rock, Ark., Red, 77, wrote more than 1,600 published compositions and arrangements, many of them award-winning.

He produced more than 2,500 recordings and arranged music for hundreds of shows, documentaries and musical specials for network and cable television. *The Washington Post* described his works as "uncommonly creative."

In 1969, the Radio and Television Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention established The CenturyMen, an auditioned men's chorus of professional musicians who are directors of music in Baptist churches across America and from around the world. With Red as conductor, the group has performed on national television, been finalists for Dove and Grammy Awards and traveled around the world. There are currently four CenturyMen in Alabama: Bill Mallory, Don Lingle, Walter Rogers and Joe Hopkins.

In 1972, Red wrote music for "Celebrate Life," a collaboration with book and lyrics author Ragan Courtney, published by Broadman Press, that became a staple in Southern Baptist youth choirs. The song "In Remembrance," published in the 1991 Baptist Hymnal, is from the musical.

Greg Stahl, executive director of The CenturyMen, described Red as a "true giant" among Baptist church musicians that he puts in the same category with Isaac Watts, Fanny Crosby and B.B. McKinney.

Stahl, associate pastor for worship and music at River Oaks Baptist Church, Houston, said with all the changes that have occurred in church music over the past 10 to 15 years, "I wonder if we will ever see another Buryl Red."

Year-to-date CP gifts slightly above budgeted goal

NASHVILLE — Year-to-date contributions to Southern Baptist national and international missions and ministries received by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee are \$1,352,054.84, or 1.44 percent above the year-to-date budgeted goal at the SBC fiscal year's midpoint, and are 2.47 percent behind contributions received during the same time frame last year, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Frank S. Page. The total includes receipts from state conventions and fellowships, churches and individuals for distribution according to the 2012–13 SBC Cooperative Program (CP) Allocation Budget.

As of March 31, gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the CP Allocation Budget totaled \$95,352,054.86, or 101.44 percent of the \$94,000,000 year-to-date budgeted amount to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The total is \$2,412,535.82 less than the \$97,764,590.68 received through the end of March 2012. Designated giving of \$118,914,217.61 for the same year-to-date period is 1.76 percent, or \$2,051,498.31, above gifts of \$116,862,719.30 received at this point last year.

Southwestern Seminary approves online MTS

FORT WORTH, Texas — Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees have approved an online master of theological studies (MTS) degree to begin summer 2013.

Trustees approved the 36-hour accredited degree during their April 3 spring meeting at the Fort Worth campus. Seminary officials describe the MTS as the shortest fully online master's degree among Southern Baptist seminaries.

Twelve three-hour courses make up the MTS, including classes in hermeneutics, Old Testament, New Testament, church history, Baptist heritage, systematic theology, apologetics and ethics. The programs also provide coursework in biblical languages, preaching, pastoral ministry, evangelism, missions and electives.

For online applications for the online MTS, visit www.swbts.edu/applynow or call 1-800-SWBTS-01.



RED



Photo courtesy of Faith Chapel Baptist Church

MARION'S FAITH CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH BUILDS FELLOWSHIP HALL

Faith Chapel Baptist Church, Marion, is adding on a new fellowship hall. The addition will also contain a small classroom and two restrooms. In August 2004, the family of Cecil White donated \$100 to begin a building fund. Since that time, church treasurer Evelyn Nichols has been accepting contributions both large and small to help make the dream of a kitchen and dining area a reality. Lloyd Stockman is pastor.



BGR photo

A food relief project in Zimbabwe's Zvavahera village, which was conducted with resources provided by the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, has had such a positive impact that not only have HIV/AIDS patients been gaining weight, but no deaths at all were reported during the most recent phase of the effort. The relief project is being supplemented with long-term strategies to help people move toward self-sufficiency.

Renewed HOPE

Southern Baptists offer HIV/AIDS patients 'lease on life' in Zimbabwe

Lives are being saved and families finding hope for the future in a Zimbabwe village, at a time when the country as a whole is battling one of the worst HIV/AIDS epidemics in the world.

In a partnership project between Zimbabwean Baptists and the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund, not only have patients been gaining weight, but no deaths at all were reported in the village during the most recent phase of the effort, project director Aaron Mutingwende said.

When the Baptist Union of Zimbabwe started a congregation in the Zvavahera area in 2010, they saw firsthand the stark poverty of the people and how families were being ravaged by AIDS. Mutingwende petitioned Baptist Global Response (BGR) for assistance and, with resources provided by the

World Hunger Fund, a six-month campaign was launched in January 2011.

Of 229 patients registered at the Zvavahera clinic, 125 were identified as especially needing food support to make their HIV medications be more effective. Ten volunteers visited families to deliver food packets that included, among other things, dried meat and fish, rice, peanut butter, mealie meal and beans.

"Once they saw the assistance and improved health of those being assisted, others were encouraged to come out in the open about their [HIV] status," Mutingwende said. Another 121 people registered for treatment at the clinic, and the next six-month campaign was expanded to feed 350 people, at a monthly cost of less than \$30 per person.

"The feeding program has become the talk of the area. It has also become a unifying factor in a land polarized by many problems," Mutingwende said. "Food is distrib-

uted by the church with a message of hope and salvation in a very nonpartisan manner. Most beneficiaries are clearly showing signs of improved health and recording gains in their weight.

"We can testify that the program has been changing lives. Hope is renewed and it is evident many people have been given a new lease on life," Mutingwende added.

Positive results

"Some people who were not expected to live this long have survived and even gained weight. Since the beginning of the fourth phase of the feeding program in May 2012, none of our beneficiaries have died."

In six communities, totaling 1,500 residents, 660 people received health care and 70 were trained in agriculture, health care, community development and job skills. Of the 2,400 people who heard about God's love for them, 120 made decisions to follow Jesus.

Realizing the need to move recipients toward self-sufficiency, Mutingwende and BGR area director Mark Hatfield developed a self-help strategy for participating families.

"Our humanitarian projects always look for ways to help people move from dependency to self-support," Hatfield said. "For Zvavahera, we are in the process of designing projects in the areas of green-

house vegetable gardening, goat rearing and producing lotions, candles and soaps. A local [organization], the Kunzwana Women's Cooperative, has been contracted by the Baptist Union of Zimbabwe to consult and assist in training in several of these areas. Church members set about molding the 27,000 mud bricks that would be needed for buildings that would house the projects."

The food packs went a long way in averting hunger and providing much-needed nutrition to those who could not afford to buy it for themselves, Mutingwende added.

"Given the drought in the province, the food packs continue to provide great relief to people who would otherwise starve," Mutingwende said. "Sadly we have lost some people whose conditions were critical, some of them young children, but the majority of those receiving this support greatly improved over the feeding project — gaining weight and many feeling strong enough to return to school and work.

"It is our strong conviction that establishing the self-help projects will help make the efforts and finances invested thus far have a lasting impact on the beneficiaries and the community," Mutingwende added. "The ultimate objective of the project is to show the community the love of Jesus Christ by ministering to their physical and spiritual needs and establishing the community in Christ." (BP)

"We can testify that the program has been changing lives."

Aaron Mutingwende
project director



BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTRIES



Photo by Doug Rogers

Baptist Campus Ministries students pray before serving on the beach in Gulf Shores.



Photo by Doug Rogers



Photo by Doug Rogers

Alabama BCM students spend spring break sharing gospel

By Amy Jackson
Intern, The Alabama Baptist

Spring break often means leisurely trips, vacations and time with family and friends for most college students, but students serving with the Baptist Campus Ministries (BCM) in Alabama spent their breaks a bit differently. BCM students served throughout the state, country and world during their March breaks, proclaiming Christ's name everywhere from New York to Ukraine to Portugal, and even in Alabama.

Several groups of students ministered in Queens, N.Y., with Alabama native Nathan Creitz, a pastor and church planter who is in the process of planting City Life Church.

They spent the mornings handing out candy and fliers about the church at busy intersections and subway stops. Although pedestrians were often in a hurry, they were able to have several conversations with people walking by in hopes of sharing the gospel and connecting them with Creitz and City Life Church.

One student from Auburn University-Montgomery (AUM), Jessica Flournoy, tells the story of meeting a man named Louis while handing out information about City Life Church. Louis grew up as a Catholic but

had been away from church for many years; he shared with Jessica and other students that he had a dream about a Baptist church and was interested in visiting. They were able to pass along his information to Creitz and connect the two of them.

In the afternoons, the students found creative ways to meet people. Some visited door-to-door, others participated in park beautification projects and some even served businesses by offering to clean their bathrooms and windows.

Emily Gehman, a student at the University of Alabama, spent time with two Queens residents and shared the gospel with them. Even though they didn't come to know Christ that week, Gehman trusts the Holy Spirit and knows that God will keep working in their lives.

"I know that God can take these conversations and bring them to fruition," Gehman said. "We can plant, and the seed can be watered by other people, but God brings the harvest. This is something that we are trusting in — that God will bring the harvest."

Several students said this experience will have an impact on how they see ministry on their campuses and has taught them the importance of living each day on mission.

Justin Law, a student at AUM, said Creitz taught him that missions is about more than just making converts. It's about disciples making disciples and sharing the gospel through building relationships with others, he said.

"I know that God can take these conversations and bring them to fruition."

Emily Gehman
University of Alabama student

First-time missions tripper Jenna Keel, a student from the University of Alabama at Huntsville, said she felt God specifically calling her to go on this trip, despite her fears.

"I learned to listen to God and not doubt what He wants you to do," she said.

Other BCM students served a little closer to home by partnering with Barefoot Believers, a resort ministry of Baldwin Baptist Association. Students served with the missionary in charge of the ministry, Nate Diehl (see story, page 9), and invested in the Gulf Shores area in a variety of ways.

Some students prepared breakfast for college students on spring break, and others organized block parties for families staying in RV parks while on vacation. Another group worked in Aaronville during the week and hosted a camp for children.

Neal Embry, a student from the University of Montevallo, served with the group working in Aaronville. They picked up trash in

Top: Students at the University of South Alabama in Mobile do outreach on campus the week before Easter. **Bottom:** Students serve breakfast to vacationers in Gulf Shores.

the federal housing project each morning and also held camps for the children in the area.

One morning Embry picked up cigarette butts in a family's yard, while the residents watched him serve.

"Nothing is too burdensome of a task to do if it's going to show them how much God loves them in Christ," he said. "I didn't get to say much to them, but I hope that we showed them love in that situation."

Jacob Pierce, a student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, said he did not realize there were so many needs in his own backyard.

"That's what's neat about anywhere you are," he said. "You can lift the name of Jesus up and serve people."

Some campuses put these lessons learned into place through emphasizing evangelism and outreach on their various campuses during the week before Easter. One goal of BCM is to help support students as they share Christ with others wherever they are — on missions trips across the world, serving in their home state and as they live day-to-day on their campuses. ☞

MINISTRIES



continue to make an impact across the state

Baptist Campus Ministries vital to reaching students in their element

By Nate Diehl
Barefoot Believers, Gulf Shores

A primary weapon that God seems to be using in the Southern Baptist Convention to reach students is Baptist Campus Ministries (BCM). Through BCM we are able to meet students in the campus setting, which is a place that they face distraction the most. BCM allows us to be by their side at the hours they need encouragement the most instead of requiring them to search for help.

BCM helps believing students stand firm in the faith, but the ministry also provides an opportunity to catch nonbelieving students at a time that they are stepping out of their comfort zones of unbelief and into the real world of stronger temptation or possibly an introduction to Jesus, which they may not have had. BCM can also be a training ground for young and passionate missionaries. College students are passionate about their beliefs. Through BCM we can help to encourage them and equip them intentionally to be missionaries on their college campuses.

Student missionaries have been essential in our missions effort in Gulf Shores. During the summer months we use college students as our primary staff. They lead by ministering in various ways sharing the gospel with people of all ages.

They help to facilitate missions opportunities for visiting missions teams and provide a positive example for the high school students who are serving on those teams. Without them we would be very limited in the amount of outreach we would be able to do.

With them we are able to spread out over a dozen locations in a single day sharing the gospel with people from all across North America.

Recently during spring break, college students from Alabama and Arkansas BCMs helped to reach out into the Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, Summerdale and Foley communities in Baldwin County with an intense time of sharing the gospel. The 140-plus students who participated were broken up into teams during a two-week period. They shared the gospel and served through an amazing 109 events.

The students served passionately and with a great attitude alongside their campus ministers, who provided helpful leadership. They planted thousands of seeds and we saw at least 17 people come to accept Jesus over the course of these two weeks.



DIEHL

The partnership of Gulf Area Resort Ministry, Baldwin Baptist Association churches, the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and Alabama and Arkansas BCMs provided for an exciting team.

We are thankful for God's work and for this exciting team that came together during Spring Break 2013.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Nate Diehl serves as a jointly funded missionary with the North American Mission Board, the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and Baldwin Baptist Association as part of the Barefoot Believers ministry in Gulf Shores. For more information about connecting with his ministry, visit <http://barefoot-believers.com>, email nated2676@mchsi.com or call 251-945-5112. 🙏



Photo by Brad Bensinger

A Troy University student speaks with a man in Queens, N.Y.

'Heartbroken' for ones still in darkness

By Anna Henderson
Judson College

The most important thing I learned while on our spring break missions trip to New York is that there are still many who have not yet heard the gospel. It brought to mind Matthew 9:37: "Then He said to His disciples, the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few."

During the time spent in New York, we worked with a church planter, Nathan Creitz. Our duty was to spread the word about this new church, reach the community through service opportunities and, most importantly, to tell others about Christ. We were blessed to be able to pray with many and tell them about what Christ has done for them.

We encountered both positive and negative reactions from people, but what surprised me the most was that many didn't know what we were talking about. They had never heard about Christ or were so opposed

that they didn't want to hear what we had to say. My eyes have been opened and my heart broken for these people. Even in the United States of America, there are those who have never been told the good news.

As the week progressed, we developed many lasting, valuable relationships within the community. Even as our time there came to an end we continued to pray that the city would be reached and many would hear and come to know the Lord.

While on spring break our missions field was New York, but we are reminded that our mission doesn't end just because we have come home. Our entire

missions field is our campus, communities and wherever we may be. As a group, BCM is all about ministering to our campus and from this missions trip we have learned that the time is now. We are all missionaries and, no matter where we may be, must spread the gospel message. 🙏



HENDERSON

"BCM allows us to be by [students'] side at the hours they need encouragement the most instead of requiring them to search for help."

'Hundreds of thousands' putting faith in Christ

(continued from page 1)

It's a unique event across 1,400 years of Christians and Muslims interacting, Garrison said. "The sad truth is that over the past 14 centuries, Christianity has lost tens of millions to Islamic advance."

But during that time, the Christian response was often avoidance or conflict, Garrison said. In the past couple of decades, the strategy has moved to prayerful, intentional witnessing, he explained.

"The results should not surprise us. After 13 centuries without a single uncoerced Muslim movement to Christ, we are now witnessing scores of movements with thousands of born-again, baptized, Bible-believing,

Muslim-background followers of Christ to show for it," Garrison said.

Exactly how many there are, no one knows, he said. Security issues don't allow for thorough counts.

"Certainly there are hundreds of thousands, perhaps even a few million," Garrison said.

In his research, Garrison has limited his surveys to movements of at least 1,000 baptisms or 100 new church starts over the past decade or two. At present, he said he is

tracking 73 movements that fit this description.

"Several of these movements have tens of thousands of baptized believers from Muslim backgrounds," he said.

"Pray for an increased harvest of Muslims into the kingdom of God. This is truly their day of salvation."

**David Garrison
International Mission Board**

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What is causing these Muslims to turn to Christ?

"God is using many things," Garrison said. "Answered prayers, dreams, massive seed sowing through New Testament distribution, one-on-one evangelism, gospel satellite TV and the Jesus Film have all been reported in Muslim encounters with Christ."

Garrison asked Christians to pray that believers in Jesus "will take advantage of this great turning of Muslims to Christ" by praying for Muslims, sharing with them more frequently and "resisting the temptation to repay evil for evil when we are mistreated by them."

He asked for prayers for Muslims who turn to Jesus, that they would be protected from the persecution "that inevitably follows" and that they will be bold in sharing their faith despite that persecution.

"Pray for an increased harvest of Muslims into the kingdom of God," Garrison said. "This is truly their day of salvation."

For more information about how you can pray for and reach Muslims for Christ, including a group study guide, visit loving-muslims.com. To read more of Nik Ripken's stories of the persecuted church in Muslim contexts, visit nikripken.com. ☞



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CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Calvary Baptist Church of Scottsboro, Ala., is prayerfully seeking to call a senior pastor to lead this conservative Southern Baptist church located in northeast Alabama about 45 miles east of Huntsville. Candidates who feel led by God to this calling should submit resumés to: Calvary Baptist Church, Search Committee Chairman, 107 Chywonah Drive, Scottsboro, AL 35769, or cbcalabama@gmail.com by June 1.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR: Bethesda Baptist Church, Prattville, Ala., seeking bivocational pastor part-time Sunday morning and evening services. Please reply to: Arlon Toole, 1902 County Road 38, Prattville, AL 36067. Phone: 334-318-3891, fax: 334-365-2127, Chopr47@yahoo.com.

PART-TIME CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP LEADER: First Baptist Church, Pinson, is seeking a part-time contemporary worship leader. Please send your resumé to: sandysuttles@fbcpinson.org or P.O. Box 310, Pinson, AL 35126, c/o Sandy Suttles.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF WORSHIP: Clearview Baptist Church in Pinson, Ala., is seeking a part-time minister of worship. Please send resumés to: Clearview Baptist Church, ATTN: Pastor Robbie Weems, 5271 Old Springville Road, Pinson, AL 35126, or send via email to: connie@clearviewbaptist.com. You may also call Pastor Robbie at 205-854-2027 for more details about the position.

BIVOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC: Rainsville First Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational minister of music whose responsibilities would include leading choir and worship. RFBC enjoys blended worship, lean-

ing toward praise and worship. Send resumé to: P.O. Box 585, Rainsville, AL 35986 or firstbaptist@farmerstel.com. Call 256-638-3141.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC: Cedar Grove Baptist in Leeds is looking for a part-time minister of music. We have both a traditional and contemporary service. Send resumés to: steven@cedargroveleeds.org.

FULL-TIME STUDENT/ED PASTOR: First Baptist Church of Hokes Bluff, near Gadsden, Ala., is prayerfully receiving resumés. Please send resumés or questions to: fbchb@att.net.

PART-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR: Baptist church is seeking a part-time youth director to plan, coordinate and promote youth programs of the church, special youth projects, assignments and events for grades 7-12. Experience is preferred. Please email resumé to: secretary@nbccbaptist.com.

MINISTER TO PRESCHOOL & CHILDREN (BIRTH-5TH GRADE): Ridgecrest Baptist, Tuscaloosa, is prayerfully seeking a God-called person for this 30 hour per week position. Send resumés to: 912 31st St. East, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405, or email to: rbcscotth@comcast.net.

OTHER POSITIONS

PART-TIME FINANCIAL SECRETARY: McElwain Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., is searching for a part-time (24 hours a week) financial secretary who is trained in ACS (Automated Church Systems) for financials. If interested, email jbaker@mcelwain.org to request an application.

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Want to know God?

By Pastor Clarke Skelton
Valley Grande Baptist Church

Although we live in a culture that is skeptical about spiritual things, many people feel that there has to be something more to life than just the things that we see. In addition to the physical, all of us also experience the emotional and spiritual dimensions of life.

Few people question that emotional side of life. None of us has ever seen love yet few people would doubt that love exists. Life without love would be a bleak experience. Most people readily acknowledge the emotional component of life even though they have never seen love or anger or fear. Although they have never seen emotion, they have little doubt that the emotional part of life is real because they have seen the effects of love, anger or fear.

Life also has a spiritual component that many people either deny or ignore. Yet according to the Bible, God is the Creator of all that exists including us. God created us because He desires to have a relationship with us. Because God is Spirit, He created us with a spiritual side so that we could have a relationship with Him (John 4:24).

However, in order to have a relationship with God, we need God's help because our spiritual side has been distorted by what the Bible calls sin. The Bible is clear that all are sinners (Rom. 3:23). Because we have sinned, we need God's help to have a relationship with Him (Rom. 6:23). God provided the help that we need when His only Son, Jesus, died on the cross (Rom. 5:8).

God wants a relationship with us and He has offered us a solution for the sin that blocks our relationship with Him. However, God's solution for our sin problem is a gift that must be chosen. God wants a loving relationship with us. However, because love cannot be coerced, God gives us the capacity to accept or reject His loving offer of a relationship with Him (Rom. 10:9-10).

If you want to know God, you must accept His offer of forgiveness. God promises in His Word that anyone who desires to know Him can know Him by accepting His forgiveness and His power to change those who turn to Him (Rom. 10:13). ☞

Legacy

ALABAMA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES & FAMILY MINISTRIES

APRIL 2013

DIRT *into* treasure

By PhilanthroCorp, ABCH Ministry Partner

Barnabas is introduced to us in Acts 4:36-37 as a man with a generous and faith-filled heart. He provides us with a great example of a way of giving that is not widely recognized — gifting assets rather than cash. The book of Acts tells us that “Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas, sold a field he owned and brought the money and laid it at the apostle’s feet.” What’s remarkable about this example is that Barnabas did not choose to increase his giving from his harvest, say from 10 percent to 20 percent. He found what God was doing in the first-century church so compelling that he desired to be a part of it by giving not the first fruits of his labor, not the harvest, but the field itself — the proceeds from the sale of his land — to the work of Christ.

In Barnabas’ day, he could sell his field and give all of that money to the church without any tax penalties. However, modern day giving is quite different, and more complicated.

The laws in America make it more tax-efficient at times for someone to give an asset such as a field or stock rather than giving cash. By avoiding long-term capital gains tax, you not only receive more tax benefits, but more of the gift goes toward the Lord’s work.

What about you? Do you have any “fields” that you would like to see invested into ministry? Modern day “fields” can include investment real estate, public stock, property/land, business inventory, stock in a family business, or an IRA.

God calls us to steward all that He gives us; not just our income. But giving assets can be complicated; that’s when we need trusted advice. If you would like to find out whether or not this makes sense in your situation, please visit our website at www.abchlegacy.org/give. Here you can learn more about gifting stock, real estate, and retirement assets. From there, if you would like more personalized assistance, you can submit a contact form or call 1-800-876-7958 to connect with a representative from PhilanthroCorp.

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Dothan's Cloverdale Baptist marks 50 years

Cloverdale Baptist Church, Dothan, celebrated its half-century mark March 23–24 with a time of fellowship and an anniversary Sunday service.

Attendees enjoyed grilled hamburgers and hot dogs March 23 in the Columbia Baptist Association church's gym during a time of fellowship from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Photo scrapbooks were displayed for the current and former members in attendance to look through.

The anniversary service March 24 began with choral singing. During the service, Alabama Baptist Historical Commission representative Virginia Stephenson presented a plaque to the church to commemorate its 50 years of ministry.

In addition, four former Cloverdale Baptist pastors — Henry Johnson, Don Carroll, Rodney Culpepper and Aaron Dickinson — spoke to the congregation.

Some of the church's history, as well as photos of original members, were shared and the Celebration (adult) choir and children's choir presented the special medley "Sunday School Spectacular."

At the conclusion of the service, a challenge to the church was given by Vann Cooley, Cloverdale's minister of education and students. Jerry Grandstaff, director of missions for Columbia Association, read a congratulatory letter to the congregation on behalf of the association.

K.W. Keene, publicity coordinator for the anniversary, estimated that 375–400 people were in attendance. After the service, a special lunch followed at noon. (Julie Payne)

'Powerful legacy'

Former Southern Seminary president McCall dies

Duke Kimbrough McCall, a Southern Baptist statesman and former president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., died April 2 near his home in Delray Beach, Fla., from congestive heart failure and respiratory distress. He was 98.

McCall, whose contributions to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and Baptists around the world cover nearly 70 years, shaped both Southern Seminary and the denomination in ways that continue to define them today, Baptist leaders said. When he became the seventh president of the seminary in 1951 at the age of 36, he already owned a record of denominational leadership.

He served as president of three SBC entities: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1943–1946), the Executive Committee of the SBC (1946–1951) and Southern Seminary (1951–1982). He invested in denominational leadership as a very young man and was only 28 when elected president of New Orleans Seminary (then Baptist Bible Institute). By the time he retired in 1982, he had become the longest-serving president in the history of Southern Seminary.

In 1980, McCall was elected president of the Baptist World Alliance, an organization he supported since 1931 when he attended a Baptist World Youth Congress in Prague, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). For five years



Southern Seminary photo

he traveled extensively encouraging scores of Baptist bodies in their service of Christ.

"A giant has fallen in Israel. The death of Dr. Duke K. McCall reminds us of the lengthened shadow one man can cast over a great denomination," said R. Albert Mohler Jr., the current president of Southern Seminary.

'Profound influence'

Frank S. Page, current president of the Executive Committee, said of McCall: "Southern Baptists are indebted to Dr. McCall. I know that I follow some great men, and Dr. McCall is one of them. He now moves to his ultimate reward and stands before our Lord. Southern Baptists have lost a great leader today. He leaves a powerful legacy."

Chuck Kelley, the current president of New Orleans Seminary, said, "Dr. Duke McCall was one of the most influential leaders in SBC history. ... He earned the respect and appreciation even of those who disagreed with him. The story of the modern Southern Baptist Convention cannot be told without including the story of Duke McCall."

Jason K. Allen, an Alabama native and president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., called McCall "a once-in-a-generation figure, a man Solomonian in judgment and Mosaic in leadership."

"When he spoke, his words were full of wit and wisdom, power and grace," Allen said. "By birth and by nature, he was a Southern gentleman; a patrician, in every good sense of the word."

McCall stood firm for the civil rights of African Americans, and it was during his tenure at Southern Seminary that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke in chapel and in class in 1961. McCall led the seminary in growth, both in enrollment and in its endowment.

Son of Judge John W. and Lizette McCall, Duke McCall was born in Meridian, Miss., in September of 1914, and he grew up with his four siblings in Memphis, Tenn. Following high school, McCall entered Furman University in Greenville, S.C. There, he met Marguerite Mullinnix. The couple married shortly after McCall graduated from the university as valedictorian in 1935. The McCalls raised four sons.

After McCall graduated from Furman University in 1935, he enrolled at Southern Seminary, earning a master of theology degree in 1938 and a doctor of philosophy degree in Old Testament studies in 1942 from Southern Seminary. Through most of his student years he served various churches as their pastor.

McCall leaves behind his wife, Winona McCandless, a widow whom he married after Marguerite died in 1983, and his four sons: Duke Jr., Douglas, John Richard and Michael. (BP)

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For April 14

Explore the Bible By Dale Younce Professor of Christian Ministries, University of Mobile

BE LOYAL

2 Timothy 1:3-18

Some adults live as if they have little or nothing to be ashamed of, at least, partly because of the “anything goes” climate often fostered in society. Other adults have long experience at hiding certain behaviors and faults they would be ashamed of if they were revealed. But what about Christians being ashamed, not of secret sins but of Christ and the gospel? What about the temptation to be silent when Christ’s name is treated disrespectfully or when others make fun of Christ or Christian values? From the earliest days Christians have faced the challenge of being loyal to the Christian faith, particularly when they may experience persecution and suffering if they speak up but may be left unscathed if they do not express their commitment to Jesus. This week’s lesson marks out four factors encouraging us to be loyal to Jesus regardless of the circumstances.

Remember Your Spiritual Heritage (3-8)

Second Timothy is the last letter written by the apostle Paul prior to his death. From his prison cell, alone and cold, Paul wrote this very personal letter to Timothy, his son in the faith. Timothy had trusted Christ on Paul’s first missionary journey and on Paul’s second journey, Timothy joined Paul’s missions team. He was not the first in his family to be saved. He was the third generation in his family to trust the Savior. His grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice were Old Testament Jewish believers who understood the Old Testament well enough so that they were prepared to accept Jesus immediately when they first heard the gospel. Apparently Lois and Eunice taught Timothy the truth of Scripture from childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). Timothy’s spiritual life had its roots with a believing mother and grandmother teaching their child the Scripture.

Paul calls attention to Timothy’s having been gifted and set apart for ministry. By reminding Timothy of his godly heritage and his call to ministry, Paul challenges him not

to be ashamed of the gospel. Remembering our spiritual heritage will help us remain loyal to Christ.

Remember the Greatness Of Salvation (9-10)

Paul writes about God’s sovereign plan of salvation by grace through faith, apart from works. This is the foundation of the gospel. It is also the basis for God’s continuing work in the lives of believers. That plan, formulated before time/space history in eternity past, had at its center the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as the substitute for our sins. Christ’s appearance in history and His death and resurrection not only annulled death but also made known fully the truth of immortality and eternal life, truths not fully understood by Old Testament believers. Remembering the greatness of God and His salvation will help us remain loyal to Christ.

Follow Those Who Are Unashamed (11-15)

As he did in 1 Timothy 1:12-16, so here Paul uses his own life, ministry and suffering as a pattern for living unashamedly for Christ. He lived with unwavering confidence because of the truth of God’s power and faithfulness. Timothy, traveling with Paul and observing his lifestyle, learned firsthand what it means to be unashamed of Jesus. Looking at the example of others who have lived unashamedly for Jesus can help us to be loyal to Him.

Support Those Who Are Unashamed (16-18)

Onesiphorus, an Ephesian brother, befriended Paul in prison and ministered fearlessly to Paul during his second imprisonment. He was not ashamed or afraid to visit the apostle there regularly and minister to his needs. Since Paul was in prison, the only thing he could do for Onesiphorus was to pray for him. Paul complimented and prayed for Onesiphorus because he had demonstrated by his actions that he was unashamed. Supporting and praying for those who have been unashamed of the gospel can help us be loyal to Christ.

Bible Studies for Life By Scott McGinnis Associate Professor of Religion, Samford University

HONORING GOD’S HOLINESS

Leviticus 5:1, 4-5, 14-16; 6:1-7

When I was a teenager one prominent mark of piety recommended by my church was reading the entire Bible through in a year. Sometime in February I would inevitably arrive at the Book of Leviticus, and the whole enterprise would grind to a halt. Whereas books of the Torah like Genesis and Exodus are filled with stories, Christians often have trouble knowing what to make of Leviticus, with its bewildering collection of legal codes and priestly regulations.

Although the cultural setting of Leviticus may be quite separate from our own, the book nevertheless contains valuable principles for people of faith seeking to live well in the world. At the heart of Leviticus’ message is the principle of life: God’s people should pursue those things that lead to life and wholeness, not death and separation from God or one another.

Recognize Guilt Before Holy God (5:1, 4)

Chapter five lists certain sins that require a purification or sin offering. Leviticus contains both positive and negative prescriptions, how one should act and how one should not. This case concerns the situation where a person has knowledge that would be useful in resolving a dispute or providing justice. To remain silent when speaking could lead to a better community is to fail not only God but also one’s neighbor.

We often think of sin in opposite terms, with an emphasis on the offense that sin represents to God. For instance, after David sins against Uriah and Bathsheba, he cries to God in the psalm, “Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight” (Ps. 51:4). In Leviticus, however, the two are inextricably intertwined. One cannot live well with God and ignore one’s responsibility to one’s neighbor, and vice versa. The text here affirms a positive duty to act on behalf of justice and challenges the modern person’s overwhelmingly individualistic approach to life.

Verse 4 is part of a careful parsing of inten-

tion with respect to one’s actions. It is possible to act in a way that does not lead to life and wholeness without being immediately aware of the consequences. The example here is making a rash oath without having thought through all of the implications. The classic example is the vow of Jephthah (Judg. 11). The case immediately preceding concerns inadvertently coming into contact with impurities from various bodily emissions (v. 3). With both the oath and the contamination, “when you come to know it” you then must take steps to purify yourself. Knowledge carries responsibility.

Seek Restoration with Holy God (5:5, 14-16)

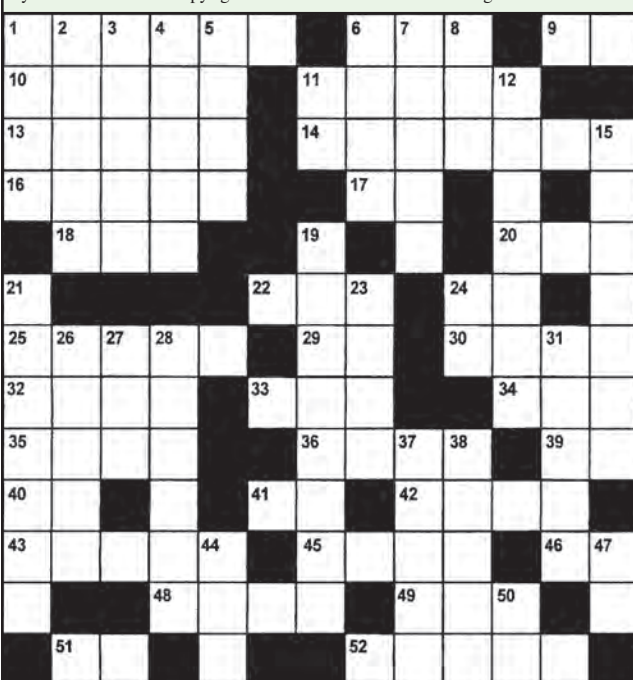
One way to read the Book of Leviticus is to pay attention to the boundaries it lays out. These passages introduce the reparation, or guilt offering. The purpose was to restore the boundary that has been violated by making a compensatory offering to God and, in the case of a violation against another member of the community, making restitution to one’s neighbor. Verse 14 addresses one who inadvertently pollutes the “holy things” of Yahweh, a reference to objects associated with worship. Coming into the presence of God in worship should not be approached casually or without the necessary forethought. Israel’s respect for the “holy things” of Yahweh was tantamount to respect for Yahweh Himself.

Make Amends with Others Before Holy God (6:1-7)

The terse instruction of God in the eighth commandment — “you shall not steal” (Ex. 20:15) — is expounded upon here. I can steal from my neighbor by not carefully guarding a trust, by cheating her or by failing to seek diligently to return lost property to its rightful owner. With these examples we once again encounter the positive duties that are incumbent upon members of community. Living well with God requires that I go out of my way to live well with my neighbor, an observation that leads us to the crucial question on which everything hangs: “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:25-37).

Christian Crossword

By Joan F. Watt Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



Across

- When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the _____. (Luke 14:13)
- He came unto his _____. (John 1:11)
- Exist.
- Set thine house in _____. (2 Kings 20:1)
- Beam cross section.
- Come upon.
- Harbor.
- In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a _____ for me. (Ps. 142:3)
- Year. (abbr.)
- Fermented beverage.
- Loafer.
- Encountered.
- The men of Beth-el and _____. (Ezra 2:28)
- Turn yourselves from your _____. (Ezek. 14:6)
- See!
- There shall come a _____ out of Jacob. (Num. 24:17)
- Record.

- Short for James.
- First female.
- Louse eggs.
- Recedes.
- Short for Albert.
- Overhead transportation.
- Roman numeral four.
- A Hindu queen.
- Governing assembly.
- Greatest of them _____ to the least. (Jon. 3:5)
- Note in musical scale.
- The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no _____ of thee. (1 Cor. 12:21)
- Fuss.
- Direction.
- Wherewith one may _____ another. (Rom. 14:19)
- Pertaining to Celts of Scotland.
- We ought to _____ God. (Acts 5:29)
- Come to me, all you who are _____ and burdened. (Matt. 11:28)
- Short rest.
- Part of verb “to be.”
- Person of Moab.
- Praise him with the _____ and dance. (Ps. 150:4)
- For I know whom I have _____. (2 Tim. 1:12)
- He was not that Light, but was sent to bear _____. (John 1:8)
- Laid it in his own new _____. (Matt. 27:60)
- Equally.
- Give us day by day our _____ bread. (Luke 11:3)
- Choose.
- Course of study.
- Assist.
- Man shall not live by _____ alone. (Matt. 4:4)

- Girl’s name.
- But ye have made it a _____ of thieves. (Matt. 21:13)
- His mother marvelled _____ those things which were spoken of him. (Luke 2:33)
- Coming from.



PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



Muslim mob attacks Christian neighborhood

GUJRANWALA, Pakistan — Incited by calls from mosque loudspeakers after a dispute between Muslim and Christian youths, a Muslim mob attacked a Christian neighborhood in Gujranwala on April 4, injuring at least five Christians and damaging a church and dozens of shops and vehicles.

Only a few hours after Pakistan's Supreme Court rebuked Punjab Police for only observing arsonists and other assailants in Lahore's Joseph Colony rioting in March, police allowed Muslims to attack Christians of Francis Colony in Gujranwala, about 50 miles from Lahore, sources said.



Morning Star News photo

Area Christians said three Christian youths — identified only as Mehran, Timothius and Waqas — were heading to their homes on a motorized rickshaw along with four Muslim passengers April 2 when the two groups entered into an argument.

On April 3, a Muslim mob of 500 to 700 people mainly from nearby Noorkey village attacked their colony with firearms and clubs.

Aneeqa Maria Akhtar, a Christian lawyer who is head of The Voice Society advocacy group, said police could have prevented the violence. She said that before the clashes, Muslims made provocative speeches and used mosque loudspeakers to call Muslims to "teach the Christians a lesson," yet police did nothing.

Vietnamese police beat Christian leader to death

CU JUT DISTRICT, Vietnam — A Hmong church leader in the Cu Jut District of Vietnam has been beaten to death in police custody, area sources said.

Police beat Vam Ngaij Vaj around his neck and shoulders and likely used electric shock on him, resulting in his death March 17, said a church leader who spoke with those who viewed the battered corpse.

Vaj and his wife were clearing brush from their field when they were arrested for "illegally destroying the forest" March 16. Hmong churches in the Central Highlands often report harassment by a communist regime that views Christianity as a threat, and the spurious charge of "destroying forest" on their own property was consistent with such harassment.

The husband and wife were transported to a police station and placed in separate cells, Christian sources said. That night Vaj was savagely beaten and tortured by police and the next day local authorities informed his younger brother that he had died.

A photo of Vaj's neck and shoulders show signs of severe trauma. Those who saw the corpse said they suspected electric shock had been used, consistent with the announced cause of death.

In sending out this news about the murder, Hmong Christian leaders risked their welfare by asking for international intervention in hopes of some justice.

Massive bail required of Christian prisoners in Iran

SHIRAZ, Iran — Four Christian converts from Islam arrested in 2012 for alleged evangelistic activities had to post enormous bail amounts in order to be released from an Iranian prison.

Soroush Saraei, Mohammad Roghangir and Massoud Rezaei were released at midnight March 19 after each posted \$80,000 in bail, according to the Iranian media website Mohabat News. The fourth, Eskandar Rezaie, was released this week and posted the same amount.

The four Christians and Shahin Lahooti, who is still in jail, were detained for five months in Adel-Abad Prison in Shiraz.

The judge intentionally set the bail amount high to financially cripple the Iranian Christian community, Khataza Gondwe, Africa and Middle East director for Christian Solidarity Worldwide told Morning Star News.

No second hearing has been scheduled for the case, meaning that they could spend years in legal limbo.

The five men were detained since their arrest October 2012 for allegedly "threatening national security" and evangelizing.

Founding Fathers used Scripture to shape America, historians say

Scripture has had a tremendous influence on the rights of citizens throughout American history, two historians said at a recent Washington forum hosted by the Family Research Council.

"The Bible permeated both private expressions and the public announcements of those who shaped the new nation and its political institutions," said Daniel Dreisbach, an author and a law professor at American University.

During a Q-and-A time, an audience member asked if the Founding Fathers used biblical language because it was such a part of their lives or if they were just being good politicians.

Dreisbach responded by explaining the Founding Fathers used biblical language not just in common speech but when discussing important matters, such as in policy debates.

"Saint Paul is cited about as frequently as Montesquieu or Blackstone, the two most cited secular authors, and Deuteronomy is cited almost twice as often as all of John Locke's writings put together," Dreisbach said.

John Adams' statement that

the Bible is a "republican book" shows many of the Founding Fathers saw the Bible as at least a "great textbook on civic morality," Dreisbach said. The Bible's early models of republicanism and due process appealed to the Founding Fathers, he told the audience.

Adams said, "The Bible contains the most profound philosophy, the most perfect morality and the most refined policy that ever was conceived upon earth. It is the most republican book in the world, and therefore I will still revere it."

James Hutson, an author and a Yale historian, explained the history of rights in light of the Founding Fathers' new republic. He defined a right as "the power to do [something] without interference."

He also provided a brief history and explanation of subjective and

objective rights. The Founding Fathers were afraid of composing positions of power and establishing rights because they had come from systems that did not enforce models of republicanism, due process or separation of powers, Hutson said.

"The great challenge that the founders confronted was how [to] nurture personal responsibility and discipline that facilitates self-government in a regime that is not guided by a tyrant with a whip and a rod," he said.

Dreisbach has written widely on the Founding Fathers' religious beliefs and American church-state relations.

Hutson has been chief of the Library of Congress' Manuscript Division since 1982. He has written extensively on religion in relation to American government and on the life of John Adams. (BP)

"The Bible contains the most profound philosophy, the most perfect morality and the most refined policy that ever was conceived upon earth."

John Adams

UMobile calls for worship film/video scholarship entries

The University of Mobile (UMobile) School of Worship Leadership is accepting entries for its first Worship Leadership Film/Video \$8,000 Scholarship Contest. The competition is open to contestants interested in studying film and television production at UMobile.

There are two categories to enter: short film and worship music video. The short film must be an original faith-based story that is 10 minutes in length. The worship music video must be original and can be documentary-style or a normal story-driven music video

featuring the music of a Christian artist or faith-based lyrics. Students may enter one or both of these categories, but only one entry form is needed.

As part of their entry, applicants should tell why they are interested in the contest, in film and video production, and considering studying film at UMobile.

All entries are due June 1. Contestants will be notified of the awards by June 17.

The scholarship is awarded to new traditional undergraduate students who apply for admissions

and enroll at UMobile. Four will be selected as scholarship winners.

The School of Worship Leadership will award a \$2,000 per year scholarship for four years, totaling \$8,000, toward enrollment at UMobile with intention to study the Film and Theatre concentration.

For more information about the Worship Leadership Film/Video Scholarship Contest, visit www.umobile.edu/worshipleadership or contact Keone Fuqua at kfuqua@umobile.edu or call 251-442-2232. (UMobile)



SBC Representatives Around the World

Time has flown in spite of all the studying we have been doing. When we were younger, it seemed like the school day would never end, but here class time goes fast.

We (David and Jennifer) spend our mornings studying with our "nurturer" and then go home to study for a while before going out again to practice speaking with the people we see in stores, in markets and on the street. Learning a language is mentally, physically and sometimes emotionally exhausting, and we enjoy going home at night to recuperate.

As learners of a language that

has no written form, we feel truly blessed to attend our school. However, there are some prayer concerns. At present, the school has only two teachers. This limits the number of students who can attend classes. One of the teachers has major health issues and needs to work less, but he feels unable to lessen his load because of the number of students. Both teachers would like to work more with believers who need to be disciplined and mentored. Please pray that more teachers who are believers will be found. Also pray that the health of the teachers we do have will be good and that they will be

wise in use of their time and energy.

The last few months we have become better acquainted with a man who makes churros (like doughnuts) and a group of traditional weavers. Please pray that we will have opportunities to share the good news with these people and that we will be bold and not fearful as we speak, using the language we have learned. Pray that our eyes will be opened to the people who are seeking the Way and that their hearts will be softened and open to the Truth.

**David and Jennifer
Northern Africa and the
Middle East**

Darius Morris (center) of the Los Angeles Lakers puts up a shot against the Milwaukee Bucks at the Staples Center on Jan. 15 in Los Angeles, Calif.

'Faith is key'

Los Angeles Lakers point guard Morris maintains faith on basketball court

By Bill Sorrell
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Darius Morris' sole reflects his soul. A point guard for the Los Angeles Lakers, Morris writes Scriptures on the side of his basketball shoes.

It's a practice he chooses, along with social media, to "make it clear" that he is a Christian.

"Hopefully you could tell by the way I act," Morris said of his faith, which got an assist early on from his parents, Dewayne Sr. and Robin Morris.

"They instilled in me at a young age that He is the reason for everything. His grace and mercies are the reason why we are able to function. That is what I believe wholeheartedly in," said Darius Morris, a member of Life Deliverance Ministries in Los Angeles.

His favorite verse, written on his shoes, is Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

"People [were] saying I will never be able to make it to where I am," he said. "I know that is not because I am by myself; it is because of God that I am where I am today. My situation at [The University of] Michigan my freshman year didn't go too well, but I kept the faith and believed in God, and He took me far my sophomore year, and I am able to be here in the NBA."

Morris was named the Most Valuable Player of the 2010-11 Michigan team that fueled his biggest thrill in sports: making the 2011 NCAA tournament. He set the school record for assists in a single season (235) and led the Wolverines in points (15 per game) and steals (36). He was third team All-Big Ten and academic All-Big Ten.

The Wall Street Journal reported that Morris was the most valuable team member among major conferences because he

accounted for 53 percent of the team's points.

Declaring for the NBA Draft after his sophomore season at Michigan, Morris was picked by the Lakers in the second round at 41st overall in 2011. He has averaged 14.7 minutes, 4.8 points, 1.2 rebounds and 1.6 assists during the 2012-13 season, a season that has been his biggest surprise.

The Lakers, who own 16 NBA championships, had their worst start since 1993-94 and were eight games under .500 on Jan. 23, a season-low (although they have since climbed into playoff contention). They have been among the most scrutinized teams in professional sports.

"I try to block it out," Morris said. "A lot of things can be up and down. Your team might be losing. You might not be playing as well. When things don't go right, it really can bother you if you don't have substance to believe in. Faith is the answer to a lot of this stuff. I have faith that it is going to get turned around."

Versatile player

Morris has relied on his playmaking ability, height — tall for a point guard at 6'4" — and versatility to adjust to different team needs while providing defense and offense.

"He brings a lot of length, energy and comes in off the bench and plays very hard on defense, and he can shoot," said Lakers point guard Jodie Meeks. "Darius is a good player."

Lakers center Robert Sacre said that Morris gives Kobe Bryant a break.

"He puts a lot of defensive pressure on the ball," Sacre said. "He is growing as a person and as a player. He is doing well. I'm very impressed with him."

Morris, 22, is working on improving "everything" as he learns from veteran teammates.

"You can never work too hard," he said. "You stay hungry. You might experience success, but you've got to remain humble.



Photo by Evan Gole/NBAE via Getty Images

All the glory goes to Him."

Meeks describes Morris as a humble, laid-back teammate who likes to have fun. Morris laughs when they tell him that he has "a lot of swag."

"That is pretty funny to me," he said.

In his spare time, Morris bowls and watches the Word Network.

"There are a couple of preachers I like on there," he said. "In the season, you can't really attend church."

When he is traveling, he takes his Bible and books by Christian authors.

At almost every NBA turn there are temptations.

"You see a lot of different things," Morris said. "You know that you have to be different. You know that you can't do everything that everybody else does."

Sacre and Meeks have noticed the difference in Morris.

"He prays every day," Sacre said. "He is

very good in his faith. He really believes and is definitely a great role model for young kids. He comes to chapel quite a bit."

"I think he is very spiritual," Meeks said. "He as well as myself and Dwight [Howard]. We go to chapel before every game. Having faith is the key in this league."

While Morris looks to his father and Martin Luther King Jr. as role models, his inspiration to keep going is the challenge of becoming better: a better Christian, a better person and a better basketball player.

"God loves us all and wants us to do well," he said. "You have to maintain that faith to know that things are going to work out. It may not be like we want it to work out, but in the long run, God's planning and timing is different from our times and plans. If we stick with His plans, they are working for our good." ❏

"I know that is not because I am by myself; it is because of God that I am where I am today."

Darius Morris
Los Angeles Lakers