

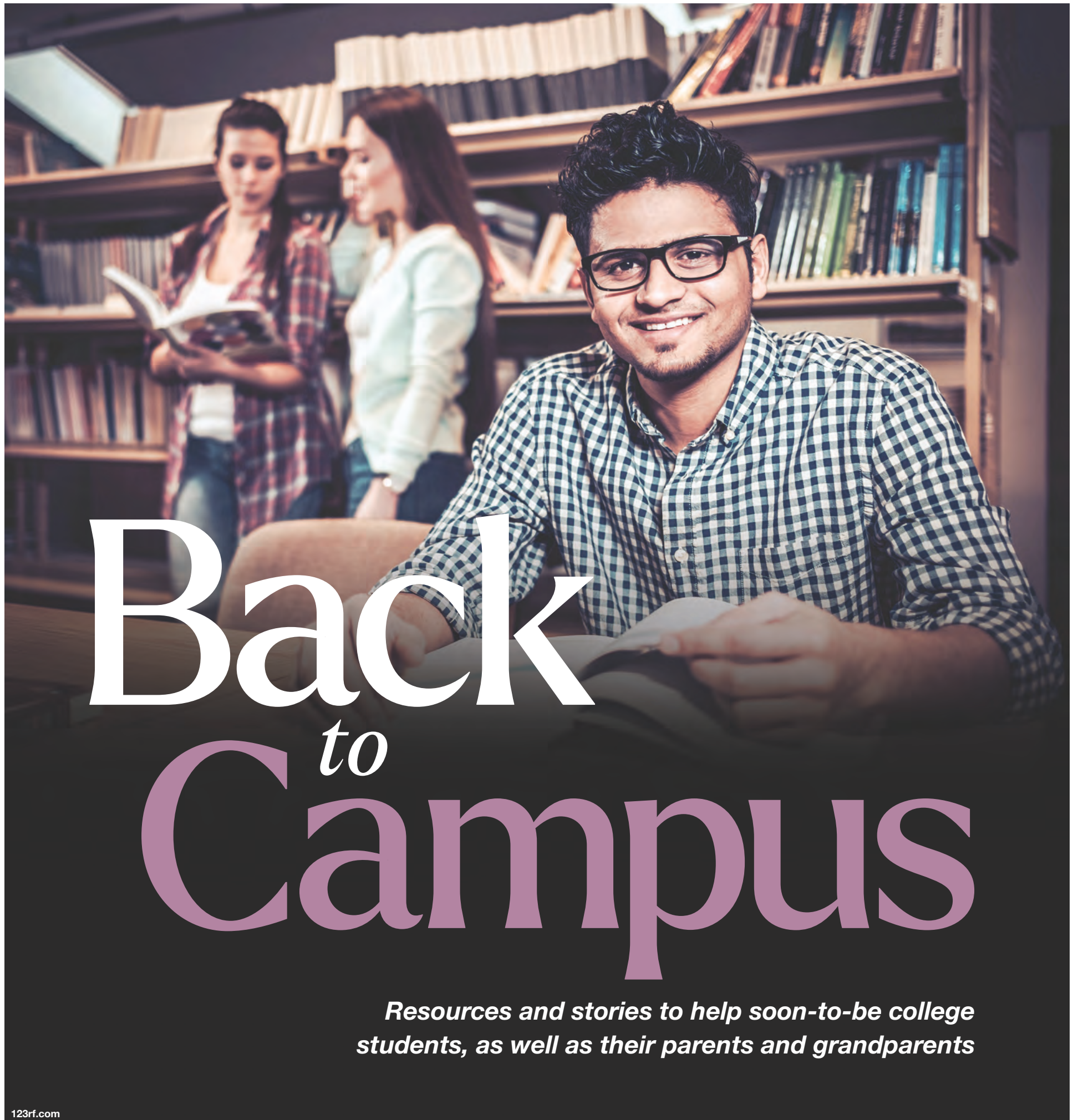
SPECIAL EDITION

# The Alabama Baptist

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July 28, 2022

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Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.



# Back *to* Campus

*Resources and stories to help soon-to-be college students, as well as their parents and grandparents*

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## THANK YOU

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## The Alabama Baptist

"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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The crossword puzzle can be found on page 25.

OPINION



# RASHIONAL THOUGHTS

By Jennifer Davis Rash, President and Editor-in-Chief

[jrash@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:jrash@thealabamabaptist.org) @RashionalThts

GUEST EDITORIAL

## What if we see ‘once in a lifetime’ as opportunity and challenge?

**W**riting a “senior prophecy” was an annual tradition at my high school.

Members of the graduating class were asked to share a single sentence imagining where life might take them in the next decade.

Some classmates were practical, planning careers as teachers, social workers and cosmetologists.

Others leaned toward the fantastical, dreaming of professional sports success and homes in exotic places.

If there were a gold medal for writing class prophecies, my classmate Brent Thompson, pastor of Heflin Baptist Church, would get it.

Though he has two daughters, not two sons as predicted, he did marry his high school

sweetheart, Angie, and he is still preaching the gospel.

Mine was clearly a reflection of current events.

That fall, I soaked in every moment of the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, South Korea, where U.S. athletes Florence Griffith-Joyner, Carl Lewis, Janet Evans and others brought home gold medals.



**By Carrie Brown McWhorter**  
Content Editor

The spectacle of the Olympics, viewed on a small TV screen in my rural Alabama home, fascinated me then just as it does today.

My senior prophecy, which imagined life as a member of the International Olympic Committee (see photo, below left), reflected that fascination.

So when Birmingham-area churches and the Birmingham Metro Baptist Association encouraged folks to volunteer for the 2022 World Games in Birmingham, I signed up.

I knew this was likely as close as I would ever get to that class prophecy written all those years ago, a “once in a lifetime” opportunity as many of my fellow volunteers and I called it.

The phrase “once in a lifetime” is usually reserved for special events.

In reality, each new day, with all its varied encounters and experiences, could be described as “once in a lifetime.”

So could a new school year. Soon students and teachers will head back to their classrooms in public and private preschools, elementary, middle and high schools and colleges across the state.

Whatever the 2022–23 academic year brings, it’s bound to be different than previous years, and that makes it a “once in a lifetime” year.

What might it look like to view that descriptor not just as an opportunity but also a challenge? A chance to step out in faith, set goals, get out of our comfort zones and try something that might broaden our own spiritual horizons and build the Kingdom?

Here’s my challenge to you: Write a “prophecy” for the year ahead.

At the end of this year, will you have learned more about Jesus through personal or small group Bible study?

Will you have made a new friend or maybe two?

Will you have invited five people to church or discipled someone?

Perhaps you will have read a book on prayer or spiritual gifts.

Write your prophecy down. Put it in your Bible or post it somewhere you will encounter it daily.

The simple act of writing down your goal will help you keep it in focus in the days and months ahead.

Then pray. Pray for the Spirit’s guidance and take steps to achieve the goal set forth in your prophecy.

In this “once in a lifetime” year, let God amaze you with what He can do with a willing and committed heart.

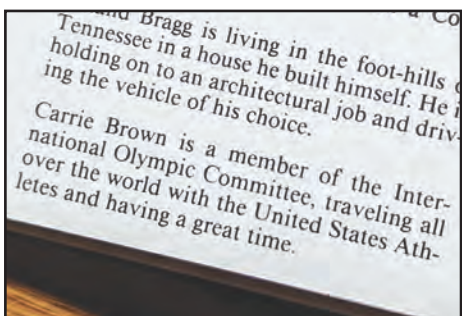


Photo by Carrie B. McWhorter

Sometimes humorous, sometimes serious, the senior prophecy is a tradition in which members of the graduating class predict what life will look like in 10 years.



Photo courtesy of Carrie B. McWhorter  
TAB content editor Carrie McWhorter volunteers at Barber Motorsports Park during the 2022 World Games in Birmingham.

# Your Voice



Share your comments, letters to the editor, blog excerpts, social media posts

## BCMs focus on mission to reach, equip, send

By Ben Edfeldt

SBOM director of collegiate and student ministries

**U**niversity VP to BCM campus minister: We just purchased an apartment complex that will house most of our international students, and we want your ministry to help us serve our students because we know you love our university and will serve our students well.

*BCM campus minister on another campus:* This past year we had a student who began to engage our ministry through various outreaches. Over time this student began coming to

one of our small group Bible studies and our large group worship gatherings.

She heard the gospel, responded and now she is training to become a leader for us.



EDFELDT

These are stories happening every year in your BCMs across the state.

Baptist Campus Ministries exists to reach the thousands of students on our university campuses who don't know Christ.

BCMs exist to disciple and equip the students who have a relationship with Jesus, which will result in sending hundreds of students each year on

missions and ultimately to their churches and career fields.

### Get connected

As we begin another year of reaching, equipping and sending students, we are grateful for your partnership as you give through the Cooperative Program, serve alongside us on campuses across the state and pray for us as we reach campuses that are overwhelmingly unreachable.

If you know of a student attending college this fall, we'd love your help to get them connected. You can visit [bcmlink.org](http://bcmlink.org) for more information about specific BCMs or ways to contact us.

### Critical first weeks

The first couple of weeks are the most critical for freshmen, and our BCMs will offer multiple ways for them to connect.

We want to help.

This generation is passionate, teachable and sendable, and when Alabama churches, through the BCMs and our partnering collegiate church plants, point students to Jesus we will ultimately see our churches grow and the nations reached.

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Find more resources for high school and college students and their leaders from the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions at [ymlink.org](http://ymlink.org), [onemissionstudents.org](http://onemissionstudents.org) and [bcmlink.org](http://bcmlink.org).*

As demonstrated in Matthew 8:26, 16:15, Luke 10:26 and many other passages, Jesus knew the power of a good question.

In contrast, in much of the teaching that occurs within churches today, the only question commonly asked of students is, "Do you have any questions?"

In these cases, questions are viewed strictly as a problem for the teacher to solve rather than an essential tool in learning.

What value do questions have in discipleship? Let's consider.

Questions are useful for engaging your audience.

Listening is generally a passive activity. Though listening can be made more active through note-taking, often your audience will not be engaged in doing so. ...

Questions give the listener an outlet for participation, turning them from a passive participant into an active one.

Even if a learner does not answer the question aloud, just thinking about their answers to the question is an active response keeping them attentive to the teaching.

If we desire our audience to learn we must keep them engaged, and questions are the simplest rhetorical tool for promoting engagement.

**T.J. Blankinship**  
[bogardpress.org/blog/post/blog-post-the-value-of-questions](http://bogardpress.org/blog/post/blog-post-the-value-of-questions)

## Call is simple: 'Follow Me'

The call Jesus put to potential disciples was "follow Me." It's really simple.

Amid assignment deadlines, exams, projects and papers, the same call comes to university students: Follow Jesus.

The temptation is to postpone. They think, "I will spend more time with Jesus when the semester is over, and I have free time."

Really? There's going to be stress and busyness of another kind when this version is over.

The only place you can follow Jesus is where you are right now. As a wise older believer

shared with me one time, "If you're not serving Jesus now, it's likely that you will never serve Him. You will just keep postponing, waiting for the 'right time.'"

That time may never come. I have a secret to share with you. Life will always be busy. There will always be something for you to do.

What are you waiting for? Will you follow Jesus even in your busyness? The right time is now.

**Gary Brittain**  
Baptist campus minister  
Jacksonville State University

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“I have stored up Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”

PSALM 119:11

When people sincerely ask how they can help and support Samford, I ask for their faithful prayers.

This is a community of prayer. This campus and its people are bathed in prayer every day from faithful people all across the globe, and we covet those prayers.

We appreciate the ways people pray for this place, its people and its mission.

This is a university filled with faithful people who are totally wed to the unique mission we have to combine faith and ideas.

We want to contribute to our students' critical thinking skills. We want them to listen to the best arguments for ideas outside

of the prevailing Christian worldview so they can, as the Bible tells us, bring a ready defense for their faith in a world that frankly is questioning those ideas. We do that with care.



TAYLOR

We want to expose our students to the world of ideas, and we want them to navigate with grace and truth the competing ideas in the world.

That doesn't mean we're losing our Christian moorings. It doesn't mean we don't take the Bible seriously.

Students at Samford are quite eager to engage in conversations about things like having grace-filled conversations, embodying civil discourse and disagreeing well with others while still being

a winsome messenger of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We had some really good conversations this past year at Samford about civil discourse and the role of civil discourse among faithful communities. Our students led the way.

They don't always have all the answers, nor do we. But they are really eager to engage in conversations with one another about how they can treat one another, especially those with whom they disagree, with grace and charity while also fighting for the truth as they see it. I'm very encouraged by that.

**President Beck Taylor**  
**Samford University**

(Adapted from a recent TAB Media special report at [tabonline.org/beck-taylor](http://tabonline.org/beck-taylor))

## The seriousness of our mission

As we at the University of Mobile gear up for another academic year, I cannot help but reflect on the seriousness of our mission.

As a historian who has spent 43 years studying politics and societal trends, I am convinced this nation, now more than ever before, needs the product we in Christ-centered education offer.

Even a casual glance at current events bears this out.

From mass shootings, to emotional and mental health issues, to racial strife, to fear of our economic future, all demonstrate that we must produce graduates who are not only experts in their respective fields of study, but who are also grounded in the principles of faith.



BURNETT

The "Higher Purpose" that is the key part of our university motto compels us to turn out students who are, in the words of Paul, "made holy, useful to the Master, and prepared to do every good work" (2 Tim. 2:21).

The good news is that the faculty and staff of the University of Mobile are ready, able and willing to meet these challenges.

From move-in day (Aug. 12) forward, we will teach, mentor, equip and send out the young men and women who have been placed in our care. It is always exciting to watch the anxiousness of that first day soon give way to confidence and, eventually, to boldness.

I am so very grateful for the Alabama Baptist family who support us so generously. With that support comes an expectation that we will remain faithful to our calling and mission as the convention's higher education entity.

Please know we are here to serve the local church. If we can assist your local ministry in any way, do not hesitate to reach out. We look forward to the start of our 61st year.

**President Lonnie Burnett**  
**University of Mobile**

## From the *Twitterverse*

### @rvelunta

Christian Education is not about training the laity to become "little pastors." Since the church is 99% laity, Christian Education should be about inspiring, empowering and enabling the laity to be the best lay people. #education #Christian-Education

### @LeavellCollege

"And may the LORD make you increase and abound in love..." #walkwithChrist

### @LincolnLearning

Electives are a great way to dive into topics of interest.

### @LC\_University

Challenges and obstacles can make it feel like you can't move forward. But really, you just need

to take a second. Follow these three strategies when the occasional speed bump appears.

1. Positive thinking. Create an affirmation you can remind yourself of anytime you need an extra boost!

2. Visualization. Imagine the tactics you will use to be successful in overcoming the obstacle.

3. Control the controllable. Make a list of things that are within your control and focus your energy on those next steps.

### @FreeHomeSchl

Through practice, gently and gradually we can collect ourselves and learn how to be more fully with what we Do. SO PRACTICE UNTIL YOU CAN'T GET IT WRONG

### @faithwesteagles

How our students treat each other is very important to us. In our classrooms we model how to love one another with a Christ-like love.

### @HomeschoolDr

According to Barna Group research, most will walk away from their family's faith tradition and values sometime between their late teen and early adult years.

### @BoyceCollege

As the excitement and anticipation grows for the coming semester, it's a perfect time to begin praying for this new semester.

### @SEBTSBushCenter

Our congregations need age differences. There's beauty in age diversity in the church.



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# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

BY LANELL DOWNS SMITH | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## College students encouraged to nurture spiritual growth and discipleship

**A**s a young man, Cliff Knight set two alarm clocks to wake him up early for a quiet time with God.

More than 40 years later, the associate pastor and minister to families at Lakeview Baptist Church in Auburn now awakens “at the crack of dawn” naturally to engage his mind and heart with the Lord.

Not every believer is an early riser, but that’s not the point. De-

veloping spiritual disciplines can increase contentment and help believers find God in everyday habits.

### Means to God’s grace

Believers sometimes struggle to feel God’s presence, but the spiritual disciplines of Bible study, prayer and fellowship are the means to God’s grace, Knight said. Developing habits like memorizing Scripture and journaling helps believers sense the Lord is there, waiting to commune with them.

“Those [disciplines] set my life on a course,” Knight recalled. “The Lord has been faithful to sustain me and walk me through life.”

He talks candidly with students about the death of his son, Ben, in 2017, describing how practicing spiritual disciplines helped him and his wife, Toma, find peace in the Lord.

“I’ve been carrying verses in the front of my wallet over my license for four years,” Knight related. “Any time that hurt comes back, I

open up my wallet and literally just hold these verses in my hand and reread them.

“I know them by heart now. But I reread them and say, ‘This is the truth about God.’”

### Setting a D.A.T.E.

Zach Beasley, Baptist Campus Ministries campus minister for Alabama State and Tuskegee universities, said a consistent quiet time is not only biblical, but Jesus Himself set the example. Jesus set a time

“

YOU THEN, MY CHILD, BE  
**STRENGTHENED BY THE GRACE**  
 THAT IS IN **CHRIST JESUS,**  
 AND WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM ME  
 IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY WITNESSES  
**ENTRUST TO FAITHFUL MEN,**  
 WHO WILL BE ABLE TO  
**TEACH OTHERS ALSO.**

2 T I M O T H Y 2 : 1 - 2

”

and location for prayer and fellowship with the Father, Beasley said.

“I define [quiet time] as a Divine Appointment To be Edified (D.A.T.E.), a spin-off phrase I heard when I was in college,” Beasley said.

#### ‘Our perfect example’

“Jesus rose early to meet with the Father. And Jesus is our perfect example, which means we should probably meet with God early. This is not to condemn anyone who doesn’t. It just helps in having a quality quiet time.”

Beasley encourages students to follow in the footsteps of Christ by looking for a place where they won’t be disturbed while spending time praying and praising God.

While hobbies, careers, academic pursuits, relationships and financial planning are important and worthy of attention, God’s word doesn’t outline a compartmentalized version of life, said Jerrod Brown, BCM campus minister for Metro Mobile Baptist Campus Ministries.

Instead, discipleship is the normal, expected life for the Christ-follower, Brown asserted. Believers are called to be actively focused on and engaged in the Kingdom mission.

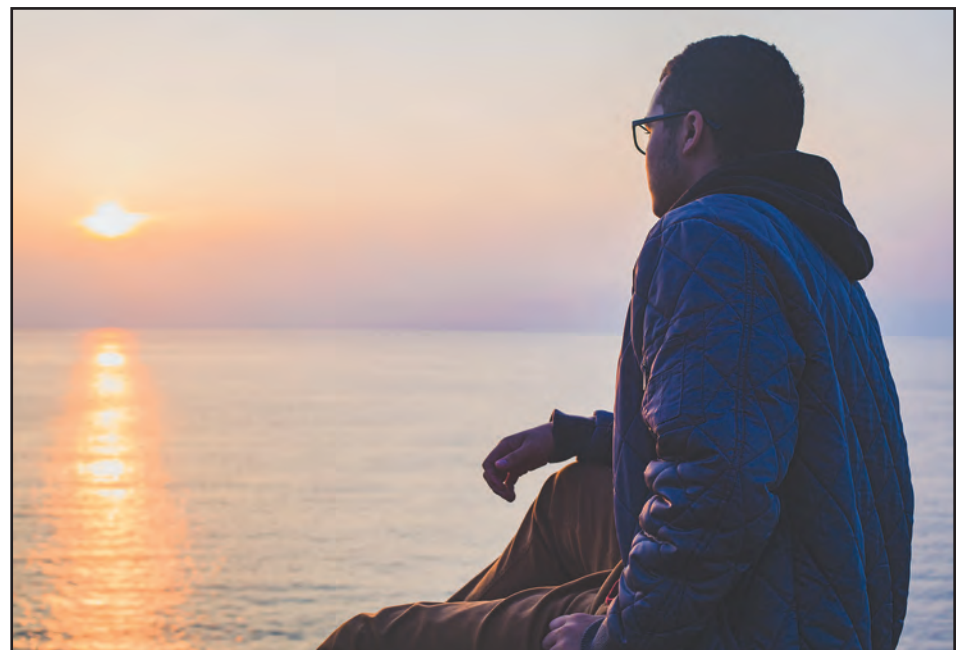
“The Apostle Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, exhorts his young disciple to share what Paul himself had taught him with other faithful men who would be able to ‘teach others also,’” Brown noted. “This exhortation is for young Timothy, the early church and the contemporary church — pass on the gospel and the life of the disciple to other faithful people who will pass it on to others.”

“Paul shows us that this labor includes multiplying our efforts through other believers,” Brown explained. “Not only are we to ‘teach others also’ (2 Tim. 2:1–2), but they are to teach others as well. We are not to embrace simply ‘discipleship’ but ‘missional discipleship’ that trains others for the labor expected of all disciples.”

Discipleship is a community

endeavor, said Will Spivey, college ministry pastor at First Baptist Church Opelika. God helps believers look more like Jesus by using the community of faith to help shape believers to grow in spiritual maturity and self-awareness, he said.

“What we want to do is have the ability as Christians to grow more and more like Jesus,” Spivey declared. “Part of that is having a biblical understanding of our emotions and how to have control of them and then also growing in self-awareness.”



# Filling the gap

BY DAVID ROACH | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## Helpful tips on how to discern a ministry call

**C**onnor was a popular high school senior in Decatur interested in joining a discipleship group at Chick-fil-A led by his student minister. At first he didn't take it seriously. But a pep talk from then-student minister Larry Hyche changed everything.

Connor began to grow spiritually. Then he went to college and started disci-

pling others. Finally, a summer working at a Christian camp convinced Connor he was called to ministry. Today he is a campus minister in South Carolina.

### Helping students

Connor is typical of many Christian college students, said Hyche, who served 20 years in local church ministry before his current assignment as men's spiritual development specialist for

the Alabama State Board of Missions.

As college students consider their future careers many wonder whether they are called to ministry, and Hyche wants to help them answer that question.

"I've seen more students at least start the conversation about the call to ministry in the last 10 years," he noted. "I think there's more of an awareness of the need for workers."

An increase in collegians entering ministry is needed. According to the Barna Group, the median age of U.S. Protestant pastors jumped from 44 to 54 between 1992 and 2017. Over the same period, the percentage of pastors under 40 dropped from 33 to 15.

The pool to replace those aging ministers appears to be shrinking — two-thirds of pastors (69%) say it's becoming more difficult to

find mature young Christians who want to enter vocational ministry, Barna reported.

### Vision 2025

Last summer the Southern Baptist Convention took a step to fill the gap. As part of Vision 2025, SBC messengers affirmed a goal to increase the total number of ministry workers on the field through a focus on "calling out the called" and preparing them to serve.



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Hyche hopes more Alabama college students will enter ministry as part of that emphasis.

### Getting started

The first step to discerning a ministry call is differentiating between a passion to minister and God's leading to enter ministry as a vocation, Hyche asserted, noting they are not the same things. "Every Christian is supposed to be involved in serv-

ing the Lord actively. That's the general call or universal call to ministry. [But] don't mistake the healthy Christian life for a call to ministry."

When a believer senses he or she is called to vocational ministry, Hyche noted, there are several ways to confirm it:

▶ Consider whether the work of ministry brings peace.

▶ Make sure there is a passion for ministry.

▶ Listen for others to confirm the call, especially spiritual people with whom you have close relationships.

▶ Verify that the Holy Spirit consistently repeats the call.

▶ Fast and pray. "Get away with God to confirm the call," Hyche said.

After a believer senses confirmation, preparation is

***"Every Christian is supposed to be involved in serving the Lord actively. That's the general call or universal call to ministry. [But] don't mistake the healthy Christian life for a call to ministry."***

Larry Hyche  
State Board of Missions

key, beginning with ensuring there is spiritual growth and service, Hyche said.

Volunteering is an important way to determine the specific ministry area into which God is leading, said Hyche, who sensed his call to ministry as a young man.

"I was just trying to discern which area," Hyche recalled. "So a mentor recommended I take every missions opportunity I could physically go on. So I did. It was very sound, practical wisdom."

### Trusted mentor

Once the called believer identifies a specific ministry area in which to work, shadowing someone in that area can be helpful.

"Pick their brain," Hyche urged.

A trusted mentor is another important part of preparation.

Also, if a future minister is in a dating relationship, they should ask whether the boyfriend or girlfriend is open to ministry.

College students "are potentially about to be en-

gaged," Hyche said. "If they're wrestling with a call to ministry and they think they have found the one person that they're going to marry, that needs to be brought up in a conversation."

### Feeling called

Meghan was another student who discerned a ministry call under Hyche's guidance. In high school she was smart, musically inclined and good at illustrating biblical principles. In college she began serving in ministry, then discerned her call.

"She's full-time in children's ministry and is now in her second church," Hyche said.

For more information about vocational ministry Hyche recommends reading "Is God Calling Me?" by Jeff Iorg, "Discerning Your Call to Ministry" by Jason Allen and "The Call to Ministry," published by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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# Be content

BY ERIN ROACH | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## Prepare for ministry by living within your means

Students who believe God may be calling them to ministry should be especially mindful of establishing healthy financial habits, campus minister Bill Morrison advises, since modeling behavior after biblical admonitions can free up resources to help advance the Kingdom.

“You have to choose who or what you’re going to serve,” said Morrison, BCM

campus minister at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “Jesus addressed the subject of money more than any other subject in His teachings because it has such an attraction for us.

“[Money] gives us a false sense of security.”

### Direction

Students must consider what direction they want their lives to go, Morrison said — whether to serve

God or serve money, which is temporary.

“Be rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share,” he said, quoting 1 Timothy 6:18. He also advises students to view college as their job, even if they also do part-time work.

“You’re in college to do work, to prepare for doors to be opened later on in life, and you should do that as an offering of worship to God,” Morrison said.

A job, he added, “isn’t something that gets [people] to be able to enjoy their weekends or provide great vacations. It does that, but that’s not the sole purpose of having a vocation. It is God’s will for us as believers to work hard and to offer that work to God.”

Something people today should remember is to leave margin in their lives, Morrison noted, advising against rushing from one obligation

to another, always eating out and wasting money on fast food.

### Be disciplined

“Leave some margin, and prepare some of your meals at home if you live in an apartment,” he urged. “Take advantage of campus dining if you are required to have that. Be disciplined about how you manage your time because so much money is wasted by college students

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tithing 10% to their local church, contributing 10% to retirement and setting aside 3–5% for “benevolence.”

“If you hear of a missions opportunity at your church or somebody’s raising money, you have a built-in budget to be able to spontaneously give to that,” Morrison said, adding, “You don’t want to live where every dollar goes just to the necessities of life. You want to live within your means but also build in a way that you can be a blessing with what God blesses you with.”

Financial guidance has been necessary in every generation Morrison has led in his nearly 35 years of campus ministry.

“When you get out of college and get your first real job, it’s so tempting to try to show people that you are successful and that you have it together by what you acquire,” he said.

He’s seen many students graduate, buy a new car and

sign up for years of payments when they are driving a car that could be reliable for several more years.

As soon as the last payment is made, they often trade it in and start another six-year note, Morrison observed.

“It’s just incredible the drain on financial resources to live that way.”

### Live differently

Instead, if graduates resist the desire to impress friends and establish good financial habits, they’ll be in a better position for the future, Morrison said.

“When you get a home, don’t demand that you start in the same kind of house

that you grew up in,” he noted. “Be content with what you can afford. Most Americans fall short of being content and get in that chase of having to impress people and acquire things.”

The message of pursuing contentment and managing resources wisely is especially important in this generation, Morrison noted, because “there is so much status attached to what we own.”

Christians, though, find their identity in a different place, he said.

“It’s important for Christians to live differently and have a different goal with the resources God gives us.”

eating out two or three times a day.”

Morrison also advises students to work while in college so they don’t have to take out more student loans than necessary. As soon as they graduate, he suggests students use the first six months to pay as much as possible on their loans before interest starts accumulating.

“Pay it off as soon as you can,” he advises.

If students will be wise about how they structure long-term debt, it can free up monetary resources for the work of ministry, Morrison added.

### ‘Limited resource’

“For most of us, money is a limited resource, so it’s important to not live in debt and to account for every dollar.”

He urged graduates to get in the habit immediately of

*“I think it’s important for Christians to live differently and have a different goal with the resources God gives us.”*

**Bill Morrison**  
BCM minister, University of Alabama at Birmingham



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# ‘Culture training’

BY LANELL DOWNS SMITH | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## WMU/IMB partnership assists MKs transitioning to college and the US

**A**labama Woman’s Missionary Union will host the 2022 MK ReEntry Retreat Aug. 1–6 at WorldSong Missions Place in Cook Springs for children of missionaries (MKs) entering college in the United States for the first time.

The annual event, a partnership between state and national WMUs and the International Mission Board, provides a setting where MKs can process the transition to college and envision what life in the U.S. will look like.

Each year some 80 MKs from around the world attend the retreat designed to

teach the life skills they will need to adjust to living in the U.S. and navigating college life.

The retreat helps them prepare for the transition spiritually, academically, emotionally and mentally.

### Leaving home

“MKs are going through a culture training because to them the U.S. is not their home country,” explained Alabama WMU Executive Director Candace McIntosh. “Where they grew up is home. So just like their parents had to learn how to do life in another country, the reverse is true for their children.”

MKs will have recreation

and fellowship time at the retreat and are encouraged to connect with a local church near their college.

They often make close friends at the retreat which, McIntosh noted, help them not feel quite so alone during the transition.

IMB coordinates event programming and connects with missionaries to invite transitioning students. State WMU organizations sign up years in advance to sponsor the annual retreat and pay for housing, food and transportation.

Many students come directly from the missions field. Some missionary parents plan stateside furlough so they are in the U.S. to



Photo courtesy of Candace McIntosh

help their student transition to college life.

The retreats have a long history with Alabama WMU, which hosted the first one for 19 students in 1987. It was the effort of then-executive director Beverly Miller, along with Audrey and Bill Cowley who were missionaries-in-residence at Samford University.

### ‘Labor of love’

“The labor of love began at the requests of personnel on the field who saw a great need for their children heading back to the U.S. to attend school,” McIntosh said.

Alabama and Texas WMU sponsored the retreat on a rotating basis for the first few years providing lodging, meals, local transportation and arrangements, with programming assistance from the IMB.

Some other states provided funds for MKs to travel to the retreats.

In 1996, state WMU executive directors and IMB

Alabama WMU will host the annual MK ReEntry Retreat at WorldSong Missions Place in Cook Springs Aug. 1–6.

personnel assumed responsibility for the project, with assistance from national WMU, and churches and individuals are encouraged to help.

Churches are needed to adopt an MK by providing for their needs during the retreat. For a \$100 donation per student, items like

sheets, towel sets and school supplies will be provided, purchased by WMU.

“Adopters” commit to pray for the student during the retreat

and write a personal note.

Churches and individuals also can provide funds for gift cards. Each student will receive a gift-filled bag that includes a \$100 gift card for settling into college.

Contributions are needed to help Alabama WMU purchase the cards.

**To help provide funds for gift cards or to sponsor an MK, visit [alabamawmu.org/mkreentry](http://alabamawmu.org/mkreentry).**

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# Servanthood

BY HAMILTON RICHARDSON | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## NOBTS Birmingham gives students opportunity to learn while serving

For more than three decades, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College have trained ministers at the Birmingham Extension Center (BHM), where students go to school while also gaining valuable experience in serving their local church.

Offering the best majors and helping students find just the right courses are crucial, as is remaining flexible enough to help walk each student through their own educational journey.

One way New Orleans

Seminary does all of that is through distance learning.

“At NOBTS and Leavell College, we want to prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth and fulfill His mission,” said Stephen Hall, executive pastor of NorthPark Baptist Church in Trussville and director of BHM.

Trussville and director of BHM.

“The seminary was an early adopter to the idea of distance learning. Through the years, the extension center has been located at (Lakeside Baptist, The Church at

Brook Hills and Valleydale Church, all in Birmingham).”

Hall said his main work with seminary extension involves helping students connect.

“One of the positive aspects about theological training online and through the extension centers is that pastors and church leaders who are currently serving in Alabama churches can walk through the seminary process while continuing to minister at their current place of calling,” he explained.

“Because of this long history, there are many leaders in Alabama Baptist churches

who have been trained through NOBTS.”

Hall noted the seminary recently updated its teaching plan for students at the Birmingham center.

“A student will be able to complete 100% of their masters of divinity at the Birmingham center,” he explained. “In

addition to the biweekly classes on Mondays, each semester a professor from the main campus ... will be in Birmingham for a weekend hybrid class. This fall we will be offering Christian ethics in the weekend hybrid format.

“If a student takes every class offered in BHM, they will graduate with the 84-hour M.Div. in four years.”

Students in Alabama also have options for online classes, weekend seminars in New Orleans and a full listing of classes at BHM, which gives them access to mentoring professors, adjunct teachers and other students while continuing their ministry.

Hall gets to see first-hand the benefits because one of the other ministers at NorthPark, Wiley Edwards, is working on his degree there.

“I’m currently getting my master of divinity,” said Edwards, minister to students. “My experience at the school has been fantastic.

The professors are very helpful. They are always willing to answer questions and provide feedback.

“The school is committed to preparing its students for ministry,” Edwards continued. “In addition to that, the administration and professors show that they value you as an individual. They are consistently praying for their students. They have a good perspective in understanding that students have demands outside of school as well. ... They understand the seriousness of being prepared for ministry.”

### Local and affordable

One professor who shares the same love for distance learning is Stacey Boutwell, executive pastor of Lakeside Baptist, who has been a regular teacher of history and theology at BHM for more than a decade.

“The camaraderie among the students and faculty and the connection with local churches makes the extension center special,” Boutwell noted.

“The benefit to the students is two-fold: They are able to have local and affordable access to theological education and ministry training; they also benefit from instructors who are currently serving local churches. The latter benefit keeps the truth and skills they’re learning practically connected to local church ministry. The instructors are serving alongside the students.”

For more information about NOBTS, Leavell College and local extensions, visit [nobts.edu](http://nobts.edu).



HALL



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# University of Mobile offers variety of health-care programs

Like much of the U.S., Alabama is experiencing a nursing shortage. New programs and scholarships at the University of Mobile seek to help.

Enrollment is open for UM's new fast-track associate degree in nursing program. Classes begin in

August, and a limited number of scholarships are available.

The fast-track program can be completed in five semesters. Some dual enrollment classes may count toward degree completion.

Sarah Barnes-Witherspoon, dean of the UM School of Nursing, said earning an associate's degree in nursing can be a first step for

students who want to jump-start their career and quickly begin earning a paycheck in the rapidly growing field of health care.

Graduates may then continue their education toward a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree while working full time, she said.

**To learn more about the UM School of Health Professions, visit [umobile.edu/academics/college-of-health-professions](http://umobile.edu/academics/college-of-health-professions).**

The University of Mobile School of Nursing is known for producing compassionate, caring and highly competent health care professionals,

said UM President Lonnie Burnett. Students in the new program will learn using state-of-the-art technology and community-based clinical experiences, preparing them for success, he added.

UM has partnered with Infirmiry Health to offer a limited number of new scholarships for the associate degree in nursing program. Students awarded Infirmiry Health Scholarships agree to work for Infirmiry Health in Mobile for a minimum of two years after graduation, according to a UM news release.

A few scholarships are also available for students pursuing a bachelor's degree in nursing through a partnership with Springhill Medical Center in Mobile.

Students awarded the SMC Scholarship agree to work for the hospital for a minimum of three years after graduation.

UM offers a variety of programs for those interested in health care professions and for health care



Photo courtesy of the University of Mobile

A new fast-track program at the University of Mobile allows students to earn their associate's degree in nursing in five semesters. The program begins in August.

professionals who want to continue their education.

The traditional bachelor of science in nursing is a four-year program offered on campus, with clinical experiences available through more than 20 health care facilities in the region.

## Fast-paced entry

The accelerated bachelor of science in nursing is offered on campus for students

with a college degree or college credits in a field other than nursing who are looking for a fast-paced entry into the nursing profession.

UM offers several online programs too, including master's level nursing programs with emphases in education and leadership, the BSN to doctor of nursing practice degree and the doctor of nurse anesthesia practice. (University of Mobile)



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# Discipleship

BY MAEGAN DOCKERY | WMU FOUNDATION

## Making a difference on campuses through BSU Advancement Fund

**A**s a campus ministries intern at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lissy Sandoval builds relationships and helps women come to know Christ. In her work, she has seen students' lives transformed by the gospel.

### Making disciples

"One of my favorite stories is of a girl named Carla," Sandoval said. "Carla grew up going to church but did not know what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus.

"In her junior year of college, she began to read the Bible with Taylor, who comes from a Buddhist

background. Through this time together, Taylor became a follower of Jesus. Taylor then joined our disciple-making group and began to share the gospel with her friends and read the scriptures with others. She continues to grow and be a fruitful member of our church.

"As for Carla, seeing the transformation that happened in Taylor, she became even more passionate about sharing the gospel.

"She is now one of our rising leaders who leverages her life both in her vocation and as a volunteer to continue to make disciples."

Sandoval serves in part thanks to a grant from the



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WMU Foundation's Baptist Student Union (BSU) Advancement Fund.

Sandoval received the grant as a stipend for her internship.

"Through my ministry on

campus, I have been able to teach multiple women to become faithful disciple makers who are committed to the work of discipleship in our local church, Mill City Church," she explained. "This pipeline has developed into a strong group of women alumni, some who now volunteer with our campus ministry and others who disciple both students they meet on Sundays but also women in their community or workplaces."

The BSU Advancement Fund aids Baptist collegiate ministries on college campuses across the country and provides aid in areas where local Baptist congregations are not able to support Baptist student ministries.

### Intern program

This grant was most recently awarded to the Baptist Convention of New England. collegiate director Andy Haynes said the funds would

be used "to support our 10:2 intern program which provides recent graduates and seminary students support to serve in campus ministry on a campus in New England" — students like Sandoval.

"My goal in ministry is to raise up more Carlas," Sandoval said. "I want to raise up women who get a vision of disciple making and leverage their lives and their gifts to serve the Lord faithfully."

As more and more people see the difference being made in New England and all over the world through collegiate ministry, WMU Foundation leaders pray others will find their missions passion through the BSU Advancement Fund so even more college students will come to know Christ.

"The BSU Advancement Fund grant was honestly an answer to prayer at a time that I wasn't sure if I'd be able to continue in full-time ministry," Sandoval said.

"I am truly grateful for the support you've provided and for your prayers."

Gifts to the BSU Advancement Fund makes ministry possible.

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Mae-gan Dockery is communications manager for the WMU Foundation. This story was originally published by the WMU Foundation and is reprinted with permission.*

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# Taylor reflects on first year as Samford president

Beck Taylor celebrated his first anniversary as president of Samford University in Birmingham on July 1 and said Samford has exceeded his expectations.

“Samford is even better

than I thought,” he told Jennifer Davis Rash, president and editor-in-chief of TAB Media, in a recent interview.

Sharing highlights of his first year back in the city, Taylor said he hit the ground running from day one, and

he and his wife, Julie, “have tried to fit two or three years into this first year!”

“We wake up more excited than we’ve ever been about the future of Samford,” he said. “The more we learn about this place, the more we get to know the people of Samford — from our faculty, staff and students to our alumni and friends throughout the community — the more excited we are about Samford’s future.”

Taylor spent much of his first year traveling through the region building relationships — “listening to people’s Samford stories, listening to how people articulated their excitement about the university and then beginning to articulate my vision and understanding of the future of this place.”

Noting the many roles his wife fulfills as Samford’s first lady Taylor said, “She helps host many events at our home and on campus.



TAYLOR

“She’s a cheerleader for our students, faculty and staff. She really takes that role seriously.”

She also is executive director of Samford’s Legacy League, a scholarship foundation

raising money for the university’s neediest students and providing care and programming.

Taylor said some of his favorite memories from the first year are special bonds he and Julie have forged with students.

“Traveling with students, doing admissions events

with students, going to basketball games with students, going to the University of Florida when Samford played Florida in the fall and cheering along with our students. Anything that puts us close to students.”

In May, Samford received the largest single donor gift ever given to an institution of higher education in Alabama — \$100 million from the Marvin Mann estate.

On June 1, Taylor and university officials announced a \$65 million capital project to

create a new state-of-the-art recreation and athletic complex.

For more information about Samford University, visit [samford.edu](http://samford.edu). For more interviews like this, visit TAB Media Group’s YouTube channel. (Michael Smith)

To see the full interview, visit [tabonline.org/beck-taylor](http://tabonline.org/beck-taylor).



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# ‘Remain rooted’

BY HAMILTON RICHARDSON | THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

## Fleeing temptation crucial to faithful Christian life, student ministers advise

No believer is immune from temptation, but students face an especially challenging culture. To successfully resist temptation, believers must commit to obedience and set strong boundaries, leaders say.

“Believers in Christ need to be prepared, equipped and protected as they live out the life God has called them to live and to be a part of His Kingdom-mission work,” said Ryan Gray, minister to college students and single adults at First Baptist Church Montgomery.

“Most of us have probably heard the cliché phrase, ‘In the world, but not of the world,’” he said. A better paraphrase might be, “Not of the world, but sent into the world.”

“This phrase captures our

purpose and mission within the kingdom of God, but it also places our focus back on who we are in Christ — a new creation, a transformed person.”

That new creation has a new identity, said Matt Daniels, Baptist campus minister at the University of North Alabama.

“You have to know your identity in Christ,” Daniels said. “We are free from sin because of the cross. Knowing that should give us the confidence to flee temptation.”

### Triggers

“We also need to know where temptation lies for us,” he added, since people often have the same triggers that cause them to sin.

“Knowing what those are is crucial,” Daniels said. “If we know that, we can flee.”

Setting healthy boundaries is a key step in fleeing temptation, Daniels said.

“Boundaries are to help us keep in step with the Spirit. It is crucial for us to remain in the Spirit in order to live out our identity in Him.

“So if I know

where temptation is, I have a clear thought process like in Philippians 4:8. I set boundaries and stay disciplined, then I can live in the freedom of Christ.”

Fleeing from temptation and putting up boundaries that protect from sin are important because sin leads to death, Daniels noted.

“It’s the exact opposite of life in Christ, and 1 John

1 is very clear in that if we say we have fellowship with Him but live in darkness, we lie,” he said.

“We cannot be all that God has created us to be if we are willingly partaking in sin. Sin separates us from God, and we are meant to abide in Him as Jesus tells us in John 15.”

### ‘Be watchful’

Facing temptation directly relates to one’s Christian witness, Gray said.

“We have been called by God to make disciples, and as we seek to do this we must be watchful in how we live our lives so we will not let the culture’s values, motives, ungodly morals and ways of thinking infiltrate our lives,” he said.

“We must remain rooted in who the Lord has called us to be and what He has called us to do.”

Believers also must be aware Satan is real and always looking for ways to tempt them to sin, Gray added.

“Satan seeks to steal, kill and destroy,” he said. “Sa-

tan knows our weaknesses, therefore he is going to put targets on the backs of believers in Christ.

“Satan wants to knock Christians off their feet and to push them toward sin, and he is extremely crafty in how he does this,” Gray said.

Strong relationships with other believers can help individuals ward off temptations, Daniels said, and those relationships should begin in the Church.

“Accountability is key for us to flee temptation,” he asserted. “We are many members but one Body. We need each other to stir up good works, as it says in Hebrews 10.”

Every follower of Christ will struggle with sin, but the victory has been won, Daniels reminds students.

“Satan cannot win the battle for our hearts when we surrender it to Jesus, but he can win our mind,” Daniels said.

“Christ has already defeated sin. We must believe that and let that truth dictate our thought life. How we think influences how we live.”



DANIELS



GRAY



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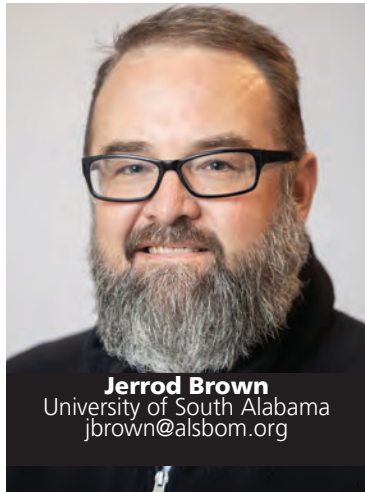
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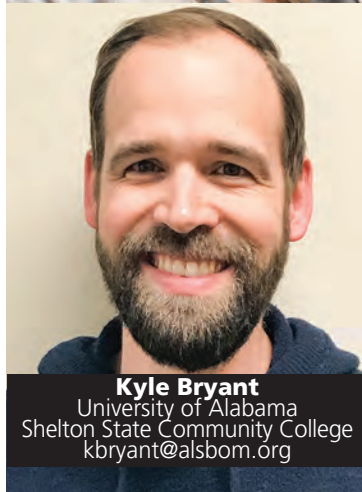
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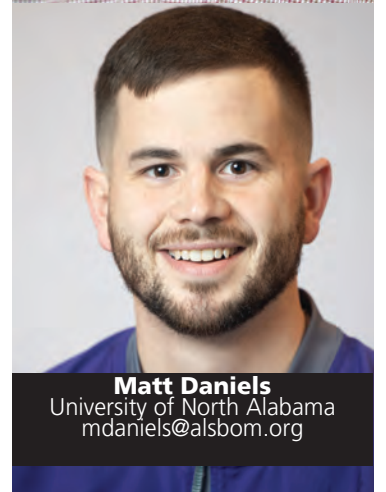
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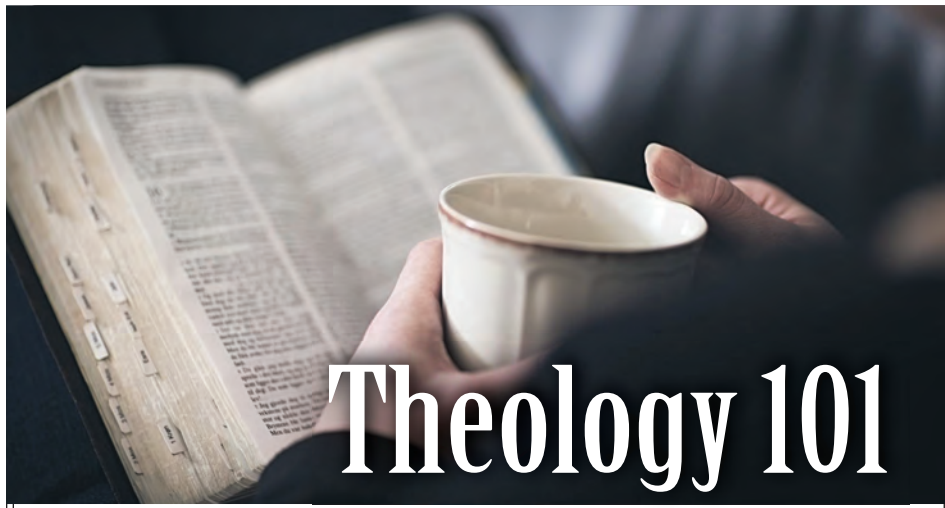
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# Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

## Spiritual Blessings

# God's Provision for Instruction

By Jerry Batson, Th.D.  
The Alabama Baptist

In His first reference to the Holy Spirit as the divine Paraclete, Jesus indicated the Spirit would be with His followers forever to help them when they felt inadequate and alone in their work as disciples.

In the second reference to the Paraclete in John 14:25–26, Jesus promised the Father would send His Spirit as the divine Teacher who would instruct His disciples concerning all Jesus had taught them during His earthly ministry (v. 26).

The Spirit's teaching would embrace all they needed to know to fulfill the commission He would announce to them just before His ascension. That commission envisioned His followers witnessing to the gospel in all the world. Specifically, Jesus indicated the Spirit's instruction would have the character of reminding them of "everything I have said to you" (v. 26). Later, in His time of preparing them for the teaching work that would be theirs after His departure, Jesus indicated the Spirit would go beyond what He had personally taught them, saying in John 16:12–13, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide you into all truth."

Jesus specifically promised His disciples the Holy Spirit would perform two related or complementary assignments: teach them "all things" and remind them of

everything. These two promises are needed by all His followers. Christians in subsequent generations would not need new truth from the Spirit but would need constant recollection of revealed truth given from the Father through the Son, Who dared to claim, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). We need the Spirit's work of teaching us what we need to know and reminding us of what we already know.

## Spirit of Truth

Christians in every generation have the need for what is implied in Acts 1:1 and promised in John 16:12. The opening verse of Acts refers to "all that Jesus began both to do and teach," implying there would be more. John 16:12 is to the point when Jesus said to the disciples, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of Truth has come, He will guide you into all truth."

In short, we may say the Spirit of Truth seeks to guide believers into all truth, granting us understanding or enlightenment to receive all God wants us to know, practice and pass on.

*Jerry Batson is a retired Alabama Baptist pastor who also has served as associate dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and professor of several schools of religion during his career.*



# Alabama news

## OBITUARIES

▶ Pastor **George "Buddy" Lee Majors Sr.**, 81, pastor of **First Baptist Church Sandusky**, died July 13.

In ministry for nearly 60 years, Majors served in several Alabama Baptist churches during his ministry, including as associate pastor of Grace Life Church, McCalla; pastor of Forestdale Baptist Church, Birmingham; and pastor of West Highland Baptist Church, Bessemer. He also served at West Side Baptist, Bessemer (now the Baptist Church at McAdory), and at churches in the communities of Adamsville, Remlap and Pleasant Valley.

He was a graduate of Samford University and New Orleans Seminary.

Majors was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years, Mary Ruth Majors.

He is survived by two sons and four grandchildren.

▶ Former Alabama director of missions **Ricky Creech**, 59, died in a fire July 16 at his lake home in Waccamaw, North Carolina.

Most recently, Creech had been named president and chief executive officer of the Boys and Girls Home in North Carolina.

A graduate of the South Carolina Fire Academy, he held an associate of arts degree from North Greenville University and bachelor of arts in sociology from Furman University.

He held a certificate in theology and a masters in social work from Southern Seminary.

Throughout his 31 years of ministry, he served as director of church and community ministries at Montgomery Baptist Association, executive director of the Birmingham Baptist Association, minister of administration and mis-



MAJORS

sions at Oak Grove United Methodist Church, executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Association, president/CEO of Buckhorn Children and Family Services and chief executive officer of Southstone Behavioral Health Center.

He is survived by his wife, Donna; three children and four grandchildren.

▶ **Don Cooper**, 82, of Scottsboro, died May 29. Saved as a boy and called to preach at Star Baptist Church, Star, Mississippi, he attended Mississippi College, then Southwestern Seminary.

His first full-time church was First Baptist Church Crawfordsville, Arkansas, followed by FBC Southaven, Mississippi, and Calvary Baptist Church, Scottsboro. He also served as interim director of missions for the Tennessee River Baptist Association and as interim and pulpit supply for other churches in the association.

He is survived by three children; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

▶ **Nathan Jernigan** is the new assistant professor of music and worship at **Leavell College**, part of New Orleans Seminary.

He will serve as coordinator of chapel worship and will lead the bachelor of arts in worship ministry and music programs at the college.

He holds degrees from William Carey University, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and New Orleans Seminary.

He previously was the worship pastor at Northbrook Baptist Church, Cullman, and at churches in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

He is married to Meagan.



COOPER



JERNIGAN



Samhsa.gov

## 988 mental health crisis line launches

Young adults in the U.S. are increasingly affected by anxiety and depression as rates rise among all age groups. Efforts to combat the epidemic include a new national 988 crisis number and increased efforts by faith-based leaders to engage students on college campuses.

In 2020 alone, the U.S. had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For people age 10–34 years, suicide is a leading cause of death.

The 988 Lifeline, which debuted nationwide July 16, is one way to help.

Like the 911 dialing code for emergencies, the 988 dialing code connects callers immediately to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. People also can text 988 or chat with someone at 988lifeline.org.

### 24/7 help

The Lifeline is staffed 24/7 with professionals trained in assisting those experiencing mental health-related distress. People also can dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

In 2021, the Lifeline re-

ceived 3.6 million calls, chats and texts. That number is expected to at least double within the first full year after the 988 transition, DHS officials predict.

The push now is to make people aware of the new code, DHS officials said, including those who work with high school and college students on a regular basis, like faith-based campus leaders, who are increasingly seeing connections between faith and mental health.

The need is indeed critical. In December 2021, halfway through the first academic year when most colleges returned to in-person instruction, the U.S. surgeon general issued an advisory on the country's youth mental health crisis.

It found everything from sadness to suicide plans increased by more than 40% in the decade before COVID-19 — and that the pandemic's further impact was “devastating.”

On campus, chaplains and psychologists are teaming up to help students.

“We’re good partners and routinely refer back and forth,” said Calvin Chin, Princeton University’s director of counseling and psychological services. (Carrie Brown McWhorter, with reporting by Religion News Service)

**For more information on the 988 mental health crisis line, visit [tabonline.org/988](http://tabonline.org/988).**

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### CHURCH POSITIONS

#### SENIOR PASTOR

Providence Baptist Church, Town Creek, Alabama, is in search of a senior pastor. Please send resumé to: [jcrosslin89@gmail.com](mailto:jcrosslin89@gmail.com).

#### PASTOR

Emmanuel Baptist Church of Gordo, Alabama, is currently seeking the will of God to direct us to the pastor that He has ordained to lead us at this time. We are currently open to either a full-time or bivocational pastor, whichever way the Lord leads. If you are interested in submitting a resumé for this position, please send it to: [ebcpastorsearch2020@gmail.com](mailto:ebcpastorsearch2020@gmail.com).

#### PASTOR

First Baptist Church Irvington is seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resumé to: [DARBREL59@gmail.com](mailto:DARBREL59@gmail.com).

#### PASTOR

Prayerfully, Hillview Baptist Church is seeking a part-time pastor. Resumé may be sent to: Pastor Search Committee, 800 Heflin Avenue E., Birmingham, AL 35214.

#### WORSHIP PASTOR

FBC Fairhope is searching for a full-time worship pastor to lead corporate worship, including choir, praise team, orchestra and praise band. The ministry also includes administrating children, youth and senior adult choirs and leading several special events during the year. For more information, contact Kerry Flowers at [kerryflowers@gmail.com](mailto:kerryflowers@gmail.com).

#### MINISTER OF MUSIC

Montevallo First Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational minister of music. Please submit resumé to: [mfbcbellsouth.net](mailto:mfbcbellsouth.net). ATTN: Pastor.

#### YOUTH/EDUCATION MINISTER

Taylorville Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of youth/education. An ordained minister with a college degree preferred and at least three years of ministry experience required. A nice pastorium is included in the pay package. Please email your resumé and cover letter to: [rpate@taylorvillebaptist.org](mailto:rpate@taylorvillebaptist.org). Resumé will be accepted until July 31.

#### FAMILY PASTOR

First Baptist Church of Atmore, Alabama, is seeking a full-time

family pastor. He will serve as “second-chair” to the pastor with oversight of volunteers within age-group and small-group ministries, having direct responsibility over student ministry. Resumé may be submitted to: [keving@fbcatmore.org](mailto:keving@fbcatmore.org).

### OTHER POSITIONS

#### MINISTRY ASSISTANT

The ministry assistant for student ministry and social media at Lakeside Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama, is responsible to the minister of discipleship and outreach for providing logistical, clerical and communications support to student ministry and for coordinating, maintaining and executing churchwide digital/virtual communication. This is a full-time position with compensation based upon experience and training. Candidates should contact Dr. W. Stacey Boutwell ([sboutwell@lakesidebaptist.com](mailto:sboutwell@lakesidebaptist.com), 205-313-2907) with questions and for a complete position description.

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#### STORIES SEASON 6: MUD BOGGER STORY

Terry Billings used to spend his life mud racing in his old drinking truck, until one day everything turned on a dime — in Walmart. Now he and his truck have both had a transformation — and have found a very different purpose. This season, the “Stories” podcast shares his story. TAB’s Grace Thornton writes and produces the shows. Listen at [tabonline.org/stories](http://tabonline.org/stories) or wherever you listen to podcasts.

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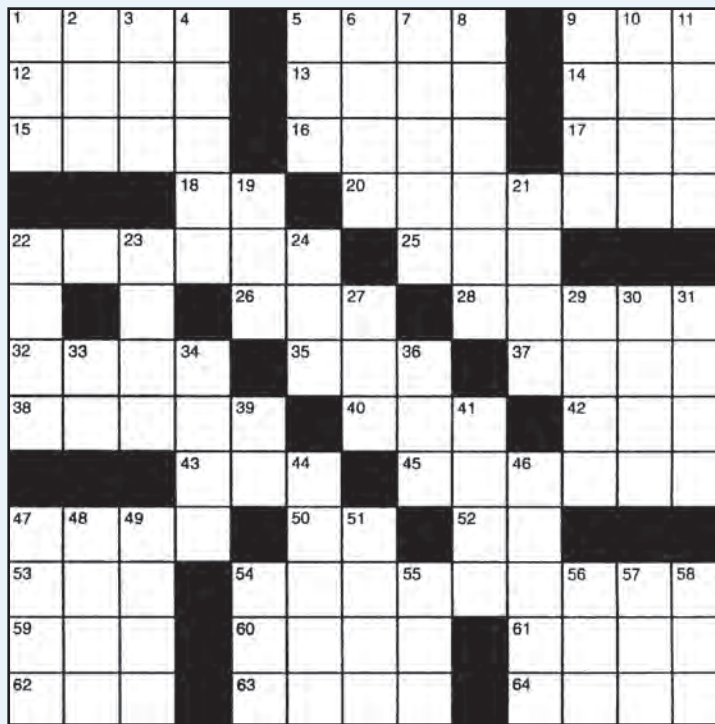
#### TAB HIGHLIGHTS

TAB Highlights is an email newsletter delivered every Monday–Wednesday–Friday with the day’s top stories from the world of faith-based news. The complimentary service is managed by the TAB Media team. Headlines come from international, national and Southern Baptist coverage as well as one story that has been trending during the week. TAB Highlights also provides a link to the latest podcast released from the TAB Media team. To sign up, email [news@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:news@thealabamabaptist.org).

# CHRISTIAN CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

1. Thou shalt \_\_\_ coals of fire on his head. (Rom. 12:20)
5. I must also see \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 19:21)
9. They shall still bring forth fruit in \_\_\_ age. (Ps. 92:14)
12. Bearing.
13. Great god of love.
14. Spicknel.
15. The kings of Midian ... Evi ... Hur, and \_\_\_\_\_. (Num. 31:8)
16. Celebration.
17. Had compassion, and \_\_\_\_\_. (Luke 15:20)
18. West coast state.
20. Thou shalt destroy them that speak \_\_\_\_\_. (Ps. 5:6)
22. Howbeit \_\_\_ fled. (Judg. 4:17)
25. Female saint. (abbr.)
26. Explosive initials.
28. They could not \_\_\_ in because of unbelief. (Heb. 3:19)
32. Anglo-Saxon slave.
35. Only the gold ... silver ... \_\_\_\_\_. (Num. 31:22)
37. The \_\_\_ is fulfilled. (Mark 1:15)
38. Two hundred shekels of silver, and a \_\_\_ of gold. (Josh. 7:21)
40. Sun.
42. \_\_\_ Tin Tin.
43. Adherent to an ism.
45. They departed into a \_\_\_ place. (Mark 6:32)
47. He died in a good old age, full of \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Chron. 29:28)
50. It hath consumed \_\_\_ of Moab. (Num. 21:28)
52. Yes. (Spanish)
53. Undo. (poetic)
54. Belonging to the priest. (1 Kings 1:7)
59. By way of.
60. Ahab \_\_\_ Jezebel all that Elijah had done. (1 Kings 19:1)
61. \_\_\_: he is the father of Jesse. (Ruth 4:17)
62. Put it upon the tip of the right \_\_\_ of Aaron. (Ex. 29:20)
63. Creator of Perry Mason.
64. Cast the \_\_\_(pl) on the



By Janet W. Adkins Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

right side of the ship. (John 21:6)

## DOWN

1. Bring them up unto mount \_\_\_\_\_. (Num. 20:25)
2. How long will it be \_\_\_ thou be quiet? (Jer. 47:6)
3. Priestly garment.
4. We have \_\_\_ with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:1)
5. Sports official.
6. City in Russia.
7. The law was given by \_\_\_\_\_. (John 1:17)
8. That He might know your \_\_\_, and comfort your hearts. (Col. 4:8)
9. \_\_\_ the son of Michael. (1 Chron. 27:18)
10. Yet will they \_\_\_ upon the Lord. (Mic. 3:11)
11. Thou shalt bake it with \_\_\_\_\_. (Ezek. 4:12)
19. O God, Thou \_\_\_ my God. (Ps. 63:1)
21. He that receiveth Me receiveth Him that \_\_\_ Me. (Matt. 10:40)
22. I will \_\_\_ thee out of my ... (Rev. 3:16, ASV)
23. A foolish man ... built his house upon the \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 7:26)
24. Go to the \_\_\_, thou
- sluggard. (Prov. 6:6)
27. "\_\_\_ the season to be jolly."
29. Bind thy head \_\_\_ upon thee. (Ezek. 24:17)
30. Arabian prince.
31. For he \_\_\_ Israel from the house of David. (2 Kings 17:21)
33. Direction. (abbr.)
34. Protection.
36. Cain went out ... and dwelt in the land of \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 4:16)
39. Plural suffix.
41. Add thou not unto His words, \_\_\_ He reprove thee. (Prov. 30:6)
44. The coast reacheth to \_\_\_\_\_. (Josh. 19:22)
46. Israel sent messengers unto \_\_\_\_\_. (Num. 21:21)
47. He sent forth a \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 8:8)
48. Of bees.
49. Into the second went the high priest alone once every \_\_\_\_\_. (Heb. 9:7)
51. A small brook.
54. Did eat.
55. Fruit drink.
56. Lincoln.
57. Retired. (abbr.)
58. Students for a Democratic Society.

All Bible translations are KJV unless otherwise specified.

# Southeastern launches abuse prevention course

**S**outheastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, is launching a free mandatory course on sexual abuse prevention and response for undergraduate, graduate and advanced students.

The course will cover strategies for handling sexual abuse and will clarify biblical and theological foundations for caring well for survivors of abuse, Southeastern reported.

"Sexual abuse in any form should not be tolerated. It is a sinful act against fellow image bearers and an affront to a holy God," said Southeastern President Danny Akin. "Southeastern is committed to preventing sexual abuse and training students to respond well to survivors with proper care and advocacy."

## Biblical imperative

He noted, "As an institution, we recognize that fulfilling the Great Commission means teaching the whole counsel of God's word. It means teaching disciples of Jesus to obey the second great commandment of [loving one's neighbor]."

Students in the course will receive a biblical and theological foundation for protecting the vulnerable, as well as instruction on how to recognize vulnerabilities in ministry, the seminary

reported. The course is designed to inform students about proper responses but also about prevention, creating a culture of awareness and open communication.

Instructors will address implementing protective policies and reporting processes, understanding legal obligations and navigating spiritual and interpersonal challenges relevant to sexual abuse.

## Recognizing risk

"Studies show that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused by their 18th birthday," said Samantha Kilpatrick, an attorney who will help teach the class.

"Churches and ministries are not immune, but often can be more at risk due to lack of awareness or inconsistent prevention policy and practice," Kilpatrick said.

"Unless we understand the prevalence and dynamics of sexual abuse, we are not well-equipped to implement prevention policy, nor are we able to respond well in a Christ-honoring and trauma-informed manner.

"This training is relevant and important in higher education," she noted. "The concepts and principles in this training will benefit all students as they seek to serve both in ministry contexts and in secular spaces." (Southeastern Seminary)



Facebook photo

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For July 31

## Explore the Bible

By Jay T. Robertson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Theology, University of Mobile



### GOD PROVIDES 2 Kings 7:1–15

King Ben-hadad of Aram had his army besiege Israel's capital city of Samaria. Everyone who lived in the city, soldier and civilian alike, felt the impact of the siege. The effect was gradual, but after a period of time, there was a great famine in the city. People were starving. Others paid inflated prices for worthless food. Some people had resorted to cannibalism (6:28–29). Israel's king, likely Jehoram, blamed Elisha for Samaria's problems.

#### Doubts (1–2)

God sent a promise through His prophet declaring an end to the siege. Elisha announced edible food would be cheap and plentiful the next day. The idea of quality food at low prices within the next 24 hours seemed unbelievable.

That was the reaction of the king's captain. He doubted Elisha's word from the Lord. He mocked the prophet's message. He did not think there was any conceivable way for such a thing to come to pass. Elisha then pronounced a judgment on the cynic. Elisha told the captain he would indeed see the plentiful food, but he would not eat any of it. Doubting the promises of God has serious consequences.

#### Desperate (3–8)

Four lepers with nothing to lose became the first to enjoy the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. These lepers were not allowed in the city (Lev. 13:46), but they stayed near the city gate to beg for food. These men knew the Arameans would kill them if the siege was successful, so they cast themselves on their enemy's mercy. They had nothing to lose.

But at twilight, as the lepers set out for the Aramean's camp, the Lord caused the soldiers to hear the sound of chariots, horses and a large army. The Arameans jumped to the conclusion the king of Israel had hired an army from the north and the south to surround and attack them. Overcome with fear, they panicked and ran for their lives. They left behind everything that would slow their

escape, including horses, donkeys and food.

When the lepers reached the Aramean camp, they found it abandoned and loaded with supplies. They had no idea what had happened, but they began to loot the tents and satisfy their hunger. The starving lepers could hardly believe their blessing. They ate their fill, plundered the camp like a great four-man army and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

#### Announced (9–11)

With the sudden reversal of their fortunes, the lepers remembered the crisis back in Samaria. They could not keep this abundant provision secret. This day of good news was not just for them. They were convicted in their consciences.

They feared what the king would do to them if they did not share this good news with him.

So they returned to the city gate and announced what they had discovered. The Arameans had left their camp intact with their horses, donkeys and food. Their message of good news spread from the city gate to the royal palace. The king was informed of the good news in the middle of the night. These lepers became the bearers of good news and hope.

#### Skeptics (12–15)

Due to the harsh realities of the siege and the king's previous dealings with Aram, it was not surprising he feared a trap. He believed this was a clever tactic of the Arameans. His skepticism was deep-seated, and only an appeal by one of his servants could budge him.

The servant suggested the king send five men with horses to go and see. They had nothing to lose except a few horses, chariots and men, but the few might save the city.

The king sent two chariots with horses to go and see. They were to locate the Aramean army and report back to him. These scouts discovered the Aramean army had retreated across the Jordan River. Elisha's prophecy had come true. The people went out and plundered the enemy's camp. God had provided for them.

## Bible Studies for Life

By Roy E. Ciampa, Ph.D.

Armstrong Chair of Religion, Samford University



### WHAT DOES LOVE LOOK LIKE? 1 Corinthians 13:1–13

Spiritual gifts are one manifestation of God's incredible love for us, but they, like everything else we have been given, only find their proper role when that love God has shown us is reflected in all we do.

#### Love must undergird everything we do. (1–3)

Paul mentions a few of the spiritual gifts he discussed in the previous chapter and would discuss in more detail later in this chapter and Chapter 14, including speaking in tongues; prophecy; knowledge; faith; and helping or leading.

In fact, he considers what the most extreme version of these gifts might be. Speaking in tongues might be not merely a supernatural ability to speak in some unknown human languages but instead even the ability to speak in the languages of angels.

Prophecy might be not just some prophetic ability but a prophetic gift so extreme one can understand all mysteries and all knowledge. Paul considers not just strong faith but a faith so strong it can actually move mountains.

Finally, the gift of helping generously or leading in somewhat sacrificial ways could become extreme generosity and sacrificial leadership.

The point is even if we were to have these most amazing versions of some of the spiritual gifts, they would not amount to anything in God's eyes if we are not governed by love (agape).

What doesn't flow from love has no value in His eyes.

#### Love reflects the character of Christ. (4–7)

The Greek word agape came to have deep, Christ-centered theological meaning among Christians because they repeatedly used it as the primary word to describe the love of God revealed in Christ. In these verses, Paul explains what Christ-like love is supposed to look like in practice.

Paul intentionally described love in ways that showed how poorly the Corinthians actually practiced it.

The Corinthians tended to be impatient, unkind, full of envy, boastful, arrogant, rude, self-seeking, irritable, keeping records of wrongs and even rejoicing in unrighteousness. Like us, they failed regularly when it came to bearing all things, believing, hoping and enduring.

Paul clarifies their behavior undermined any claim to reflecting God's love in their lives. Love refrains from all those vices and many more. It shows up in the form of patience, kindness, generosity of spirit, humility, forgiveness, allegiance to righteousness and truth, carrying burdens and holding fast to faith, hope and endurance. Love leads us to reflect the character of Christ and to refrain from everything inconsistent with Christ's character.

#### Love does not diminish, fade or go away. (8–13)

The spiritual gifts (like prophecy, tongues and knowledge) are special abilities given by the Holy Spirit to help us minister to this fallen world in Christ's name.

They are like spiritual superpowers for Christians living in a fallen world.

But once Christ returns, they will be unnecessary. In our resurrected existence, the spiritual gifts will be replaced by abilities to understand and communicate with each other and with God that are as superior as adult thinking is to childish thinking or as superior as seeing someone face-to-face is to looking through a distorted mirror.

We won't need the gift of knowledge when we finally see the Lord face-to-face and know Him fully as He knows us now.

Many things may be left behind in the resurrection, but love will never be left behind. Love will be the essence of our experience for all eternity. Faith and hope may also endure throughout eternity, but love, especially love as it has been revealed to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ, is the greatest of all virtues, and it will reign through Christ for all eternity.

# MEDIA REVIEWS

By Timothy Cokes

Baptist Press

## Billingsley hopes to reach new audience with 'The Shadow of Your Smile'

**C**harles Billingsley, teaching pastor and acclaimed worship leader, has released an album "The Shadow of Your Smile," which represents a new chapter in his musical career.

The album, released in May, contains a blend of well-known songs from a variety of genres including Broadway classics, big band hits and light jazz.

Billingsley currently serves as teaching pastor at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, and though the record is not a worship album, he said he hopes the music will help him reach an expanded audience. Jerry Falwell Sr. once told him "everybody needs a salt ministry."

"I've always felt like I could use my voice to reach a broader audience," Billingsley said.

### Branching out

"I've sung in churches for over 30 years, and it's been wonderful and I don't want to stop that, but I wanted to branch out and just gain a new audience. It's been amazing how accepting a mainstream audience can be. People will show up to simply hear great music and songs that they love."

Songs on the album include "It



CHARLES BILLINGSLEY

BP photo

Had To Be You," "Beyond The Sea," "Bring Him Home," (from "Les Misérables") and "You'll Never Walk Alone."

The album's lone original song is the opening track, "Perfect," which Billingsley wrote for his wife. The record was produced by renowned producer Tim Davis (Barbra Streisand, Lady Gaga) and is Billingsley's debut project with Club44 Records.

Billingsley performed the full-length album, accompanied by the Lynchburg Symphony Orchestra, on May 13 at the Academy Center of the Arts in Lynchburg to celebrate its release.

He also recently performed for Kentucky Baptist Convention leaders and disaster relief workers at a conference in Gilbertsville, Kentucky.

Billingsley said the album's name is simply what he and his team thought sounded the best, but it ended up representing the effect

he hopes the record will have on listeners.

"It's been in my brain to do this for over 20 years," Billingsley said. "I wanted this to be a pure singing record, and the process was very refreshing for me.

"I told the crowd ... as I was performing the record that I just wanted them to leave with a smile on their face. ... It just felt like America had lost its smile, and I wanted to do my part to bring that back."

The album represents an exciting and joyful new chapter for Billingsley, which he contrasted with the difficult season he went

through around this time two years ago when he was in the hospital with COVID-19.

### 'Frustrating' time

He was diagnosed with the virus March 27, 2020, his wedding anniversary. He was gearing up for the release of a new album in early

April but ended up in the hospital a few days after his diagnosis.

He said despite the "frustrating" experience, the dark time helped remind him of his love for singing and worship.

"God really had to teach me some things through that experience, and He really deepened my relationship with Him," Billingsley said.

### Rediscovered joy

"I had the worst 10 days of my life physically after leaving the hospital, but probably had the best 10 days of my life worshipping the Lord, and I really grew close to Him during that time. I rediscovered the joy of singing. It reminded me how to worship Him again."

Billingsley hopes to partner with churches and other organizations to host concerts that nonbelievers would be willing to attend simply to hear great music.

He hopes the simple, positive messages of the album will encourage audiences in the same way he has been encouraged through the process.

"I'm not going to preach to audiences, but I am going to ask them to consider the condition of their soul," Billingsley said. "I hope that when they leave they've had a wonderful time, but that they also start to think if there may be something more to life. I hope they leave with more joy and hope in their heart than they did when they came.

"One thing I want people to walk away with is just a new appreciation for the goodness of life. I just want people to put on this record and just enjoy life. This record is a celebration of that."

### EDITOR'S NOTE

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