

SOUTHERN SEMINARY



The resurrection
Why it matters

Death swallowed up in victory

The French positivist philosopher Auguste Comte once told Thomas Carlyle that he planned to start a new religion to replace Christianity. "Very good," replied Carlyle. "All you have to do is be crucified, rise the third day, and get the world to believe you are still alive. Then your new religion will have a chance."

The cross and the resurrection stand as the pivotal events at the heart of the Christian faith. Christianity stands or falls with the substitutionary atonement wrought by the death of the incarnate Son of God on the cross and the resurrection of the Son of God on the third day. If Christ did not die in our place, then we are still under the divine verdict. If Jesus was not raised, He was merely a victim, and not the Victor.

The church comes each year to this celebration of resurrection because we must constantly remind ourselves and the world of the resurrection hope, and of the reality of the risen Christ. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ must always remain a company of resurrection witnesses, speaking the Gospel of the cross and the risen Christ to a world desperate for genuine hope.

Yet, the world is not always ready to hear the challenging clarity of the Easter message. Words such as sin, guilt, redemption, atonement and salvation are often seen as intrusive, impolite and unsophisticated. Individuals who flee from the admission of their own sinfulness know that the word of the cross and the witness of the resurrected Lord come as judgment, as well as grace.

Some within the church have decided to help the Easter message conform to cultural expectations. David Jenkins, the former bishop of Durham (England) prompted an outcry in the Church of England over his suggestion that the resurrection was "real," but not an historical fact. Christ's resurrection was real, in the sense that the disciples experienced the "livingness" of Jesus. Nevertheless, says the bishop, the resurrection of Jesus was not a bodily resurrection.

Bishop Jenkins' rejection of the biblical doctrine of the resurrection is, as is most often the case, nothing new. The resurrection has been a focal point of theological compromise throughout the history of the church, though some in the contemporary era seem determined to reach new depths of resurrection "redefinition."

The modern flight from the reality of the empty tomb and the resurrected Christ is but another example of the revolt against classical Christian orthodoxy seen in some segments of the church. But the biblical message will not allow such compromise. The Gospels record the bodily resurrection of Jesus

from the dead and the appearance of the risen Christ to the disciples and to others.

Paul left no door open to misunderstanding when he stated: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." (1 Corinthians 15:17) If Christ was not raised, "we are of all men to be pitied." But, Paul proclaimed, Christ has been raised, the first fruits of the resurrection of the believers.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the vindication of the Gospel and the eternal sign of the atonement accomplished on the cross. The resurrection was recognized by the disciples as God's sign that Jesus was indeed the incarnate Son, that His messianic claims were true, that His preaching of the Kingdom of God would be realized, and that His sacrificial death was sufficient for the salvation of sinful humanity. The resurrection is also the sign of his return.

Furthermore, the Scriptures make clear the fact that Jesus' resurrection is the promise of our own resurrection and the concrete hope of life beyond the grave. The reality of the resurrection prompted Paul's triumphant cry: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

The church must never apologize for its celebration of the resurrection. Indeed, though Easter is celebrated as Resurrection Day, each Lord's Day is a resurrection day, and each congregation is a body of believers united in the hope and witness of the resurrection.

The two great annual festival celebrations of the church provide for worship and witness. Churches must be faithful witnesses to the reality of the bodily resurrection of Jesus and bold to speak the truth of His resurrection as both judgment and sufficient hope.

Carlyle was right. The unprecedented and objective historical events of the cross and resurrection stand in judgment against all human pretensions and against religion as mere religion. He is Risen! He is Risen indeed.



R. Albert Mohler Jr.
 R. Albert Mohler Jr.
 President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280



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The Women At The Sepulchre -
The Angel At The Tomb of Christ,
1768 (oil on panel) by Benjamin West
(1738-1820)

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Art Library

The Southern Seminary Magazine (The TIE) (ISSN 00407232) is published four times a year by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, 1-800-626-5525.

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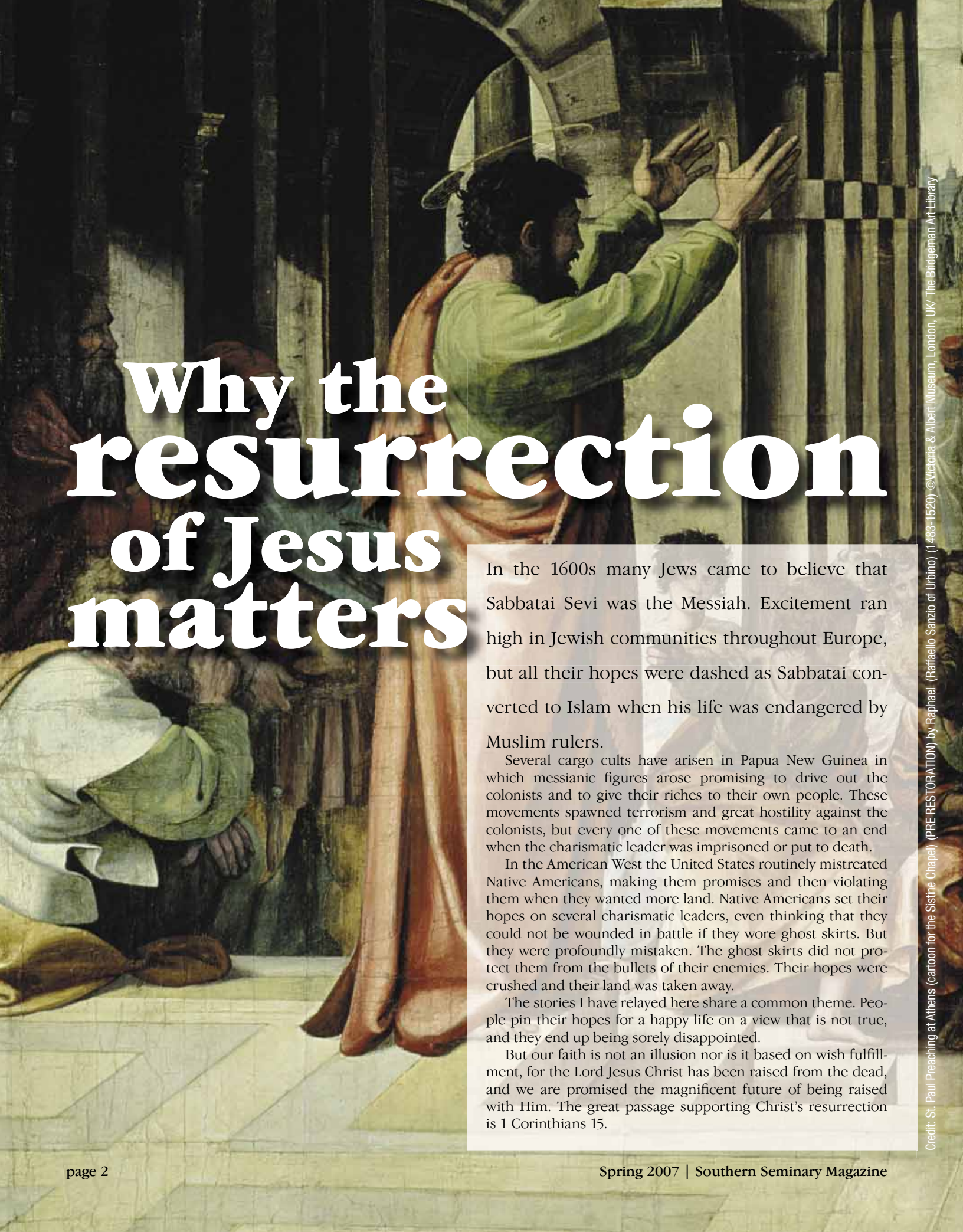
Proofreaders: Allison Parker, Callie Pritchett

Spring 2007. Vol. 75, No. 1. Copyright © 2007 The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Periodical postage paid at Louisville, KY. Postmaster: Send address changes to: Public Relations, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or e-mail us at publicrelations@sbts.edu.



Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the mission of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is to be totally committed to the Bible as the Word of God, to the Great Commission as our mandate, and to be a servant of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention by training, educating, and preparing ministers of the gospel for more faithful service.





Why the resurrection of Jesus matters

In the 1600s many Jews came to believe that Sabbatai Sevi was the Messiah. Excitement ran high in Jewish communities throughout Europe, but all their hopes were dashed as Sabbatai converted to Islam when his life was endangered by Muslim rulers.

Several cargo cults have arisen in Papua New Guinea in which messianic figures arose promising to drive out the colonists and to give their riches to their own people. These movements spawned terrorism and great hostility against the colonists, but every one of these movements came to an end when the charismatic leader was imprisoned or put to death.

In the American West the United States routinely mistreated Native Americans, making them promises and then violating them when they wanted more land. Native Americans set their hopes on several charismatic leaders, even thinking that they could not be wounded in battle if they wore ghost skirts. But they were profoundly mistaken. The ghost skirts did not protect them from the bullets of their enemies. Their hopes were crushed and their land was taken away.

The stories I have relayed here share a common theme. People pin their hopes for a happy life on a view that is not true, and they end up being sorely disappointed.

But our faith is not an illusion nor is it based on wish fulfillment, for the Lord Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, and we are promised the magnificent future of being raised with Him. The great passage supporting Christ's resurrection is 1 Corinthians 15.

We see in this text that forgiveness of sins is based upon the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul says, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3-4). The death and resurrection of Christ are the fundamentals of the Christian faith. No one is a believer who denies Christ's atoning death and his bodily resurrection.

And we cannot say that His death is all that is needed for our forgiveness. Both His death and resurrection are necessary for forgiveness. Verse 17 makes this clear. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins." Notice what Paul tells us here. If Christ is not raised, we are still in our sins.

The greatest joy of our lives is the forgiveness of our sins. Someday, unless the Lord returns first, we are all going to die. And even if we live until his return, we will meet God face-to-face. It won't matter one whit on that day what people think about us. When we meet God, He will determine our eternal destiny. And those of us who trust in Christ can be assured that we will live in His presence forever because our sins are forgiven and we are right with God.

Paul also argues something that may surprise some of us. He insists repeatedly that those who deny the bodily resurrection of believers also deny the bodily resurrection of Christ. We see this in verse 12. "Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" We cannot preach that Christ is raised from the dead and deny the bodily resurrection of believers. This is so important to Paul that he enunciates this truth four times (see also vv. 13, 15, 16). So, if we meet someone who says that dead believers will not be physically raised from the dead, then we must tell them what Paul says, "You don't believe in Christ's resurrection." We can say this on the authority of the Word of God. No one can deny the resurrection of believers and truly believe in Christ's resurrection.

But what is so important about believing in Christ's resurrection? Paul also relays to us the terrible consequences of denying Christ's resurrection: if Christ has not been raised from the dead, then our faith is in vain. "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain." Paul makes the same point in verse 17, "and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins." In other words, if Christ has not truly been raised, our faith in Christ is a charade. It is not enough to say with the hymn, "You ask me how I know he lives? He lives within my heart." Many postmodern people in our world think their beliefs are true because they feel "oh so good" inside. Now I am not denying that Christ lives in our hearts, nor am I denying that we feel His presence. But Paul tells us here that our faith is based on objective events. If Christ has not been raised from the dead in history, our faith is worthless and we should give up Christianity.

If Christ has not been raised from the dead, then what we proclaim to the world is a pack of lies. Notice verse 15 again.

Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain." And he puts it even stronger in verse 16, "Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised." If Christ has not been raised from the dead, then we are lying on God's behalf. And God is not a liar, and He does not give us comforting lies so that we feel better about our future and ourselves.

The Christian faith is ferociously honest. God doesn't need messengers who say nice and comforting things to make others feel better. We preach the Christian faith because it is the truth. We don't ask people to believe in the resurrection because it makes them feel better but because it is the truth. For if Christ has not been raised, then we and our loved ones will go to hell. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." Notice Paul's argument here. He doesn't say, "If Christ isn't raised from the dead, then God doesn't exist and we don't know any truth at all." That's what a modern or postmodern person might say. Paul teaches that if Christ is not raised from the dead then we are still in sins and we will go to hell, and our loved ones who have died believing in Christ are now in hell. They have perished. But because we believe there are good reasons to think that Christ is risen, we are no longer in our sins, and we have the great comfort of knowing that our loved ones who believed in Jesus are with Him.

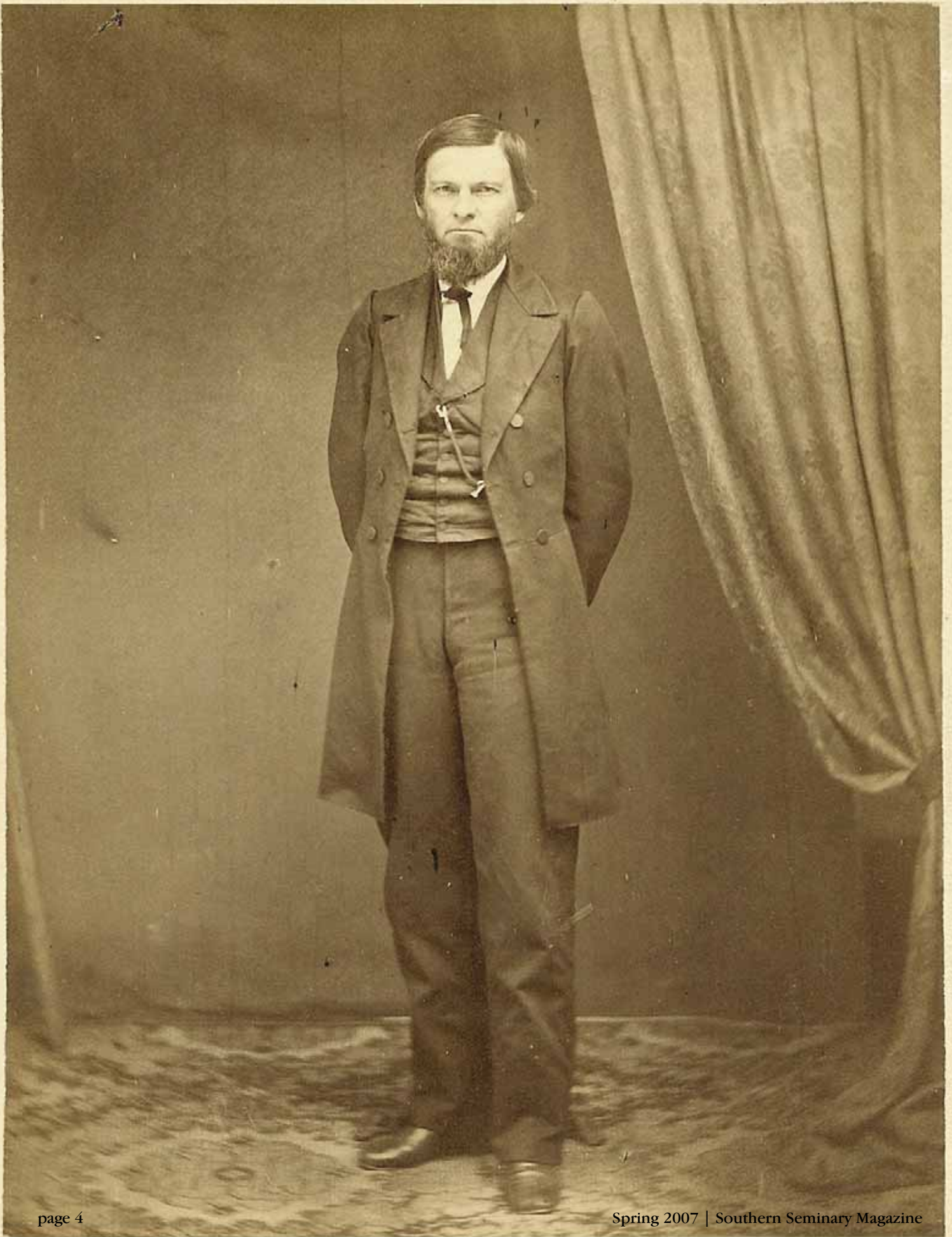
Finally, if Christ is not raised, we are to be pitied for our delusion. Verse 19 says, "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." Paul doesn't say what I have heard some Christians say: "Even if I knew the resurrection weren't true, I would still believe in Christ because life is so much happier with Him." Instead Paul says that it would be a pitiful thing to believe in what is not true. Truth matters to Paul. To hope in Christ and be wrong is miserable.

Those people from Papua New Guinea who believed in cargo cults are to be pitied. They set their hopes on what could not deliver them. Those millions who set their hope on communism as the way to a new world are to be pitied. It was a false hope that did not liberate anyone. Those who think that the American dream is the path of happiness are deluded; it will turn to ashes in their hands. We have a hope that is true, and are not to be pitied, but are of all people the most to be envied. We have hope, and we have the promise of eternal life, and we know that death is simply a stage, a temporary door, and we step from it to a resurrection in which we shall never die. 🙏

"If Christ has not been raised from the dead, then what we proclaim to the world is a pack of lies."



Thomas R. Schreiner is James Buchanan Harrison professor of New Testament Interpretation and associate dean of the School of Theology at Southern Seminary.



The resurrection of Christ completed his work of atonement, and stamped it with divine approval, ‘unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.’ And so, to believe that God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, is to believe the gospel.

John A. Broadus,
Commentary on the Gospel of Mark

Faculty Forum:

The importance of

Christ's

bodily

resurrection

The Southern Seminary Magazine asked theology professor Stephen Wellum, apologetics professor Ted Cabal and Boyce College dean and evangelism professor James Scroggins to share their insights on the importance of the resurrection in the lives of evangelical believers.

The TIE: Many Christians tend to focus on the death of Jesus when thinking about the Gospel. Why is the resurrection an important element of Christian doctrine?

Scroggins: The importance of the resurrection cannot be summarized in a few short sentences or paragraphs. Here are a few thoughts:

- Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and predicted His own death and bodily resurrection on several occasions. The resurrection provides the crowning evidence that He is who He claimed to be.

- In the resurrection of Jesus, God the Father placed His sign of approval upon the person and work of His Son. The bodily resurrection of Christ verifies that His sacrifice at Calvary was acceptable to the Father and effective for the justification of believers. Without the resurrection, we would have no reason to believe that the death of Jesus was adequate to take away sins and ensure eternal life for His followers.

- Because of the Fall, all people are born as slaves to sin. The resurrection breaks the power of sin. Because of the resurrection, believers know that God is in the transformation business: He is working in our lives to help us change and become what He wants us to be.

- In the resurrection, Jesus defeated Satan and all of his demonic powers for all time, fulfilling what was promised in Genesis 3:15.

The resurrection of Christ proves that resurrection is possible. Because God raised Jesus from the dead, we have confidence that He can and will raise all believers in the same way. The bodily resurrection of Jesus removes the inevitability of eternal death.

The TIE: How does the widespread moral relativism in our culture impact our witnessing, and what role does the truth of the resurrection have in witnessing in such a culture?



Cabal: The philosophies dominating our culture are not much different from those which the first Christians faced. Polytheism and naturalistic philosophies such as Epicureanism led to relativism then just as postmodern and atheistic approaches do today. Preaching the good news that salvation in Christ is our only rescue from the coming judgment, and that His resurrection is proof of this, was

ridiculed then just as it is now (Acts 17:31-32). Yet those in any culture who place their trust in Christ discover in Him resurrection power and profound wisdom (1 Cor 1:23-24). Relativists in our day, as much as ever, need to hear the good news of God's salvation in the crucified and resurrected Jesus.

Wellum: To a biblically illiterate, pluralistic and syncretistic culture, we must first place the historical fact of the resurrection within the larger biblical storyline of Scripture. Why? Because unless we do so, the meaning and significance of the resurrection will not be what the Scripture proclaims it to be. Within the Christian frame of reference, the resurrection of our Lord proves beyond a shadow of doubt that salvation has been accomplished, that He is Lord and Messiah, and that He is the judge of the world (see Acts 17:30-31). But apart from the categories and story of Scripture, the resurrection will seem like a strange event indeed.



“The bodily resurrection of Jesus removes the inevitability of eternal death.”

James Scroggins

Scroggins: The role of the resurrection in witnessing is no different today than in any other era. Our ability as Christians to witness for Christ hinges on the facts that the Gospel events actually happened in history, were communicated accurately in the words of the Bible and can be understood clearly by people today. The relativism of our postmodern culture denies the validity of absolute, propositional truth claims. But the claims of biblical, historic Christianity can only be stated in propositional form. The bodily resurrection of Christ – “in space-time,” as Francis Schaeffer liked to say – is the central truth claim of Christianity.

Some Christians may seek to water down or ignore the truth claims of Scripture in favor of a more experiential approach to religion. I have talked with some local church leaders who use phrases such as “You can belong before you believe.” Or they might say, “Don’t worry about the doctrinal stuff – just hang out with us and become a follower of Jesus.” Obviously it is important to build relationships, and of course we have to meet people where they are. But at the end of the day the Gospel of the New Testament writers is contained in clear, propositional statements – and the truth claims of the Gospel must be accepted before one can be saved.

The TIE: Does the doctrine of the resurrection have a heightened apologetic role in countries where other religions that don’t hold to resurrection are dominant?



Wellum: The doctrine of the resurrection is important in every culture. Within Christian theology, it is part of an entire theology or worldview package, which speaks of our great and glorious covenant Lord who not only creates and sustains this world, but also chooses to redeem a people for Himself. It is the solution to the ravaging effects of sin, which leads to

death (Rom 6:23), for in Christ and His cross and resurrection, we have a Lord and Savior who defeats the power of sin and death. Apart from the resurrection, there is simply no hope we can give people, no matter what culture they are from.



“Preaching the good news that salvation in Christ is our only rescue from the coming judgment, and that His resurrection is proof of this, was ridiculed then just as it is now.”

Ted Cabal

of human sin and the fact that Jesus really did die on the cross and was raised as God’s final Word.

The TIE: What is the importance of communicating the truth of the resurrection to our youth? Can the resurrection be an important witnessing tool to/for college students?



Scroggins: The resurrection addresses three major issues that young people in today’s culture are dealing with:

- The perception that life is meaningless. The promise of resurrection means that this life really matters. The Bible teaches that at the resurrection every believer will be evaluated and rewarded based on our works. Our choices, priorities, values, the way we treat people, the

way we serve in the church, the way we share the Gospel – all have eternal significance. Not to mention that when we lead someone to faith in Christ, they are promised the resurrection as well. The resurrection gives life eternal significance. Without the resurrection, life would, indeed, be meaningless.

- Feelings of guilt. The resurrection proves that sin is not all-powerful. Young people in our culture struggle with all kinds of things – sex, drugs, broken relationships, depression, etc. They are living experientially with the effects of sin, even though they often don’t believe in the concept of sin. Many young people today give in to despair because they cannot cope with the overpowering allure, and suffocating results, of

Cabal: I don’t believe the importance of proclaiming the truth of Christ’s resurrection is any less important in any culture. But explaining just what is meant by the historical resurrection will require differing apologetic strategies according to the culture. For example, Hindus will deny the reality of the material world (i.e., the creation), and will thus be blinded to the need for the God-Man to redeem any part of it, including our bodies. Gospel proclamation to them must include the biblical details regarding God as Creator, man as fallen creation and Christ Jesus as the only salvation from the coming judgment. Muslims, however, would not deny the material aspect of creation, but would need a different apologetic tact emphasizing the true nature

sin. The love of Christ and the forgiveness He purchased for believers at the cross is verified in the story of the resurrection of Jesus. And the power of the resurrection means that believers are no longer trapped by guilt and the compulsion to pile sin upon sin.

- Fear of death. Young people tend to believe that they are “bulletproof.” But in moments when young people are forced to confront the stark reality of death (funerals of friends and family, death of celebrities they admire, terminal disease in people they know), the fear, finality and seeming inevitability of death are often overwhelming. The resurrection proves that physical death is not final. When Jesus rose from the dead, God demonstrated that the power of death has been overcome. The God that raised Jesus from the grave promises the same resurrection power to all believers. Hope of the resurrection can be a powerful motivator for young people to consider the claims of the Gospel.

The TIE: What is the relationship between defending the faith, upholding the faith and the truth of the resurrection?

Cabal: The raising of Jesus from the dead demonstrates that His redemptive work is that which was promised through the Hebrew prophets (Acts 13:30-41). His resurrection vindicates His pre-cross claims to be Son of God as true (Rom 1:4) and is essential if the apostolic preaching is to be believed in the first place (1 Cor 15:15).

Thus, it is enormously exciting to be living when the church has the greatest wealth of apologetic riches ever regarding the historical resurrection of Jesus. Though typically motivated and marred by skepticism regarding the New Testament Gos-

Further resources on the topic of the resurrection

William Lane Craig. *The Son Rises: The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus* (Wipf & Stock, 2001).

William Lane Craig, Ronald Tacelli, Paul Copan, and Gerd Ludemann. *Jesus’ Resurrection: Fact or Figment?: A Debate Between William Lane Craig and Gerd Ludemann* (InterVarsity Press, 2000).

Stephen T. Davis. *Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection* (Eerdmans, 1993).

Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul’s Soteriology*. (P&R, 1987).

Gary R. Habermas. *Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* (Kregel, 2004).

J. P. Moreland. *Scaling the Secular City* (Baker, 1987).

N.T. Wright. *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Fortress Press, 2003).

pels, historical Jesus research over the last two centuries has been forced to a greater appreciation of their reliability. In the cynical world of the liberal academy today, scholarly discussion of the historical evidence for Jesus' resurrection is much in evidence. God has not left Himself without witness. Much work has been done by Christian scholars demonstrating that generally accepted facts about the life of Jesus (such as the empty tomb, the disciples reporting His postmortem appearances and the enormous changes wrought in these believers) are best explained by the New Testament Gospels themselves: He is risen indeed!

The TIE: Must people believe in the literal, physical resurrection of Jesus to be saved?

Wellum: My simple answer is, "Yes." Why? For at least two reasons.

First, the historical, physical resurrection of Christ is what Scripture teaches (Mt 28:1-20; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-53; Jn 20:1-21:25; cf. 1 Cor 15:3-11). To deny the physical and bodily resurrection of Christ is to deny the clear teaching of Scripture; to deny the clear teaching of Scripture – especially a point that is so central to the heart of the Gospel – is simply a denial of the Gospel. It must be stated clearly: For the entire New Testament, it would have been utterly unthinkable and inconceivable to argue as some have done in our own day that the resurrection belonged to the category of myth, or that the explanation of it was found in some individual and/or collective hallucinations, or that Jesus' disciples went to the wrong tomb, or even worse, intentional deceit of these early witnesses including Himself. Rather, for the New Testament authors, what was believed and proclaimed, what had been received and now passed on was that Jesus Christ had died, been buried, and by God's mighty action in human history this same Jesus was alive ruling and reigning as Lord in fulfillment of God's salvific plans in human history.

Key Biblical Passages

Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20-21. Texts that lay out the historical account of the bodily resurrection of Christ.

Sermons in Acts. Sermons demonstrating the historical nature of the resurrection and its meaning in light of God's promised salvation from the Old Testament (Acts 2:14-41; 3:11-26; 4:8-12; 7:1-53; 10:34-43; 13:13-52; 17:16-34; 22:1-21; 23:1-10; and 26:1-32).

Romans 1:3-4 and Romans 6. Romans 6 works out how we should live as resurrection people in light of Christ's resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15. Speaks of the relationship between the believer and Christ and the hope of our future resurrection, as well as the necessity of it.

Second, to deny the physical resurrection of Christ is to deny the reality of Christian salvation. This is the apostle Paul's point in the great chapter on the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15. The Corinthian problem was not so much a denial of Christ's physical resurrection, but the physical resurrection of believers. But Paul sees such a close relationship between what Christ has accomplished and its application to us that to deny one is really to deny the other.

These two points remind us that the bodily resurrection of Christ is a non-negotiable part of the Gospel.

The TIE: What impact should the resurrection have on believers' daily lives?



Wellum: The resurrection should have a direct impact on the Christian's daily life in a whole host of ways. Let me outline three important implications that should affect how all Christians live in light of the resurrection.

First, the resurrection should ground our confidence in the truthfulness of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:3-4). The resurrection is proof positive that our salvation has been accomplished, that God's sovereign plan and purposes have been brought to fulfillment in human history and that the Gospel of God's sovereign grace has triumphed. All of this should bring incredible confidence to the believer who now lives this side of the resurrection that the God who makes promises is also the one who keeps them in Christ Jesus (see 2 Cor 1:20).

“... we should be
a Gospel-centered people
who see our task
as taking the good news
to the nations
before it is too late.”

Steve Wellum

Second, the resurrection should ground our hope and confidence in our future resurrection. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 especially makes this point when his entire argument is based upon the assumption of the indissoluble union between the resurrection of Christ and the bodily resurrection of believers.

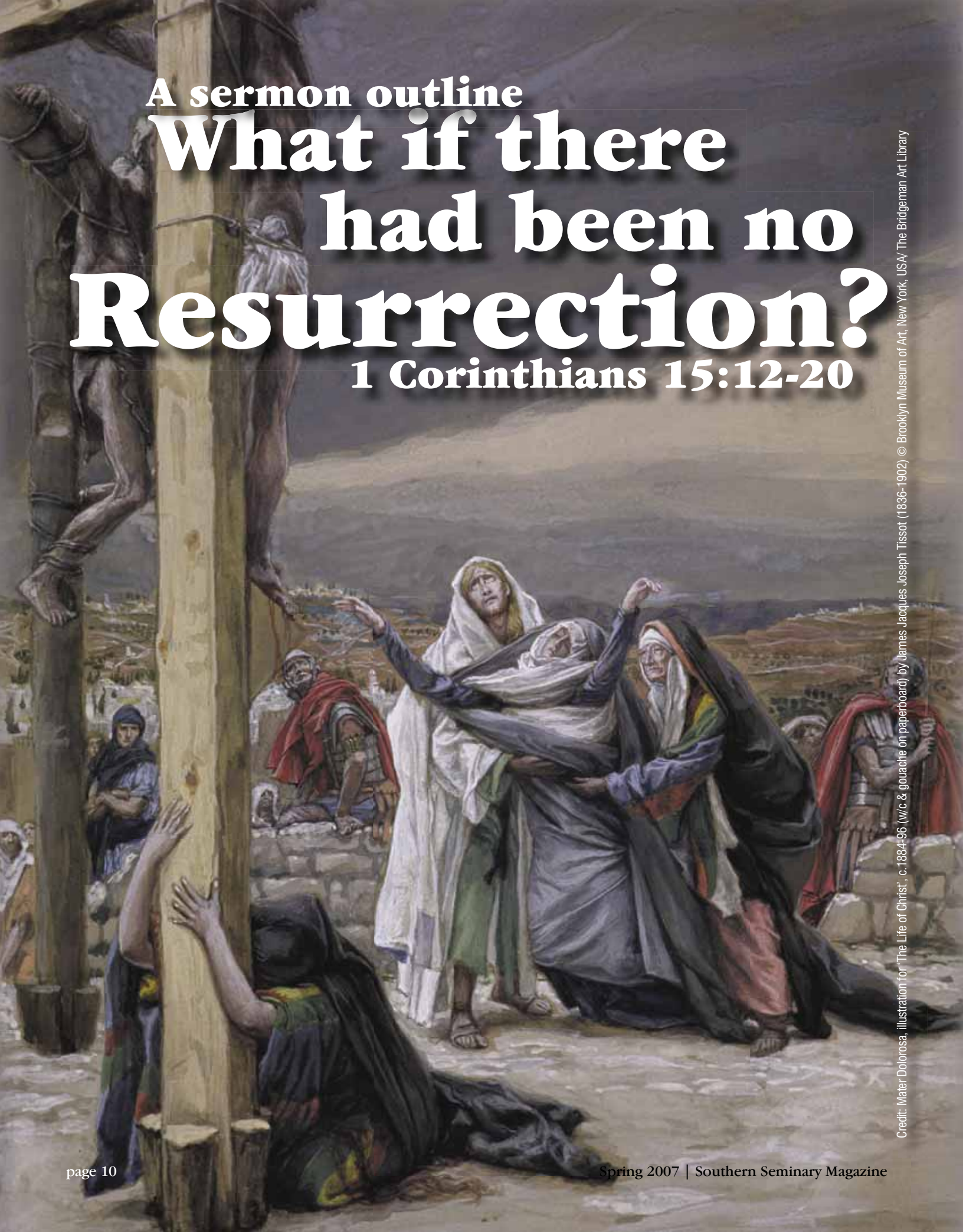
Third, the resurrection reminds us of the urgency of the Gospel. It is important to remember that the resurrection of Christ is not some isolated event in human history. Rather it is part of the plan of God to bring both salvation *and judgment* to this world (see Acts 17:31). The resurrection reminds us not only that salvation has been accomplished, but also that it is only a matter of time before Christ returns as the Judge (see Jn 5:16-30).

Thus, living in this resurrection era of fulfillment – this interim time between the comings of Christ – means that we should be a Gospel-centered people who see our task as taking the good news to the nations before it is too late. Not only is this our incredible privilege, it is also our solemn responsibility. May we be found faithful in proclaiming our crucified and resurrected Lord, for His glory and our good. 🙏

A sermon outline

What if there had been no Resurrection?

1 Corinthians 15:12-20



Credit: Mater Dolorosa, illustration for 'The Life of Christ', c. 1884-96 (w/c & gouache on paperboard) by James Jacques Joseph Tissot (1836-1902) © Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA/ The Bridgeman Art Library

Sometimes, when we have nothing better to do, we play “What If?” “What If?” is an exercise in speculation, in which we wonder how things in our world might have been different. For example, what if Adam and Eve had not eaten the fruit of the forbidden tree? Would someone else in subsequent generations have introduced sin into the human experience? What if you had not met your spouse? Who would you have married? What if you had taken a job in Toledo instead of Memphis? How would the course of your life have been impacted?

While this game yields virtually endless possibilities for the imagination, most of the time the “what if?” question cannot be answered. But with respect to one of the central doctrines of the Christian faith – the doctrine of the resurrection – the Apostle Paul asks, and authoritatively answers, the “what if?” question.

First Corinthians 15 is the great resurrection chapter in the Bible. The chapter begins with an assertion of the resurrection of Jesus as central to the Gospel (vv. 1-4). That Jesus was raised bodily from the dead is in accordance with the claims of the Old Testament Scriptures (v. 4), and was affirmed by many credible eye witnesses (vv. 5-11). In spite of these authenticating proofs, Paul notes in verse 12 that some among the Corinthians were denying the resurrection of the dead. And he argues that if this denial is correct, then Christ could not have been raised from the dead (v. 13).

But what if Christ had not been raised from the dead? What if there were no resurrection? What would the consequences be, if Christ had not been raised from the dead? Paul spells out in verses 14-19 six alarming consequences that are true if Jesus is still in the tomb.

- I. If Christ is not raised from the dead, the Gospel message is useless. (v. 14)
- II. If Christ is not raised from the dead, the believer’s faith is useless. (v. 14)
- III. If Christ is not raised from the dead, those who preach the Gospel are deceivers. (v. 15)
- IV. If Christ is not raised from the dead, the believer is still dead in sin. (v. 17)
- V. If Christ is not raised from the dead, those who have died believing in Jesus have perished. (v. 18)
- VI. If Christ is not raised from the dead, the Christian is an object of pity for misplaced hope. (v. 19)

Conclusion

All of these consequences are real if Christ is not risen from the dead. But verse 20 triumphantly declares, “But now Christ has been raised from the dead!” And because He is risen, the Gospel is true and transforming; the believer’s faith is rightly placed in Christ; Gospel preachers are truth-tellers; the believer has been granted eternal life; those who have died in Christ are in His glorious presence even now; and we live in confident hope, both now and for all eternity. The answers to these “what if’s?” are not mere speculations; they are grounded in the authority, grace and power of God Himself. ☩



Robert Vogel is Carl E. Bates professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary.

Grave signs



I knew my grandfather's funeral wouldn't be elaborate or expensive. He was a big-hearted Baptist, generous with his grandchildren but spending little on himself. This was a man who refused the "luxury" of air-conditioning in south Mississippi, a place where most people consider air-conditioning a necessity.

He left instructions that he didn't want anyone spending money on a casket, embalming fluid, or an elaborate funeral. He wanted to be cremated, the cheapest way possible to dispose of his earthly remains. No one asked my opinion on this, but I wept bitterly at the thought of this great man being reduced to ashes in the twinkling of an eye.

I could understand my grandfather's request. He was a practical man who wanted to save money for his family. And the financial racket of cushioned caskets, catered "celebration services," and steel-vaulted graves is a scandal, to be sure. What I couldn't understand was how few of my fellow Christians joined in my horror at the thought of a Christian man's cremation.

Of all the issues of controversy among Christians, I find few more incendiary than whether or not we should, well, incinerate the bodies of our loved ones. I find that Christians become agitated, defensive, and personally insulted more quickly on the question of cremation than on almost any other contemporary question. And I find this odd.

A Christian burial seems, in this culture, more and more nonsensical: a waste of money, a waste of otherwise usable land, a waste, perhaps, even of emotion, as we try to "hold on to the past" and fail to "move through our grief and get on with life." But if someone had asked any previous generation of Christians or of pagans if cremation were a Christian act, the answer would have seemed obvious to them, whether they were believers or infidels: Christians bury their dead.

Today, however, an anti-cremation stance is often ridiculed by Christians as, at best, Luddite and, at worst, carnal. When I counsel a family to reject the funeral director's cremation option, I am often asked: "Can't God raise a cremated Christian just as He can raise a decomposed buried Christian?" The question is more complicated than whether

God *can* reconstitute ashes. Of course he can. The question is whether we *should* put Him in a position of having to do so in the first place.

Better to Bury or to Burn?

Stephen Prothero's landmark study, *Purified by Fire: A History of Cremation in America*, demonstrates that cremation flourished before Christianity and withered away when the Church spread through Europe and beyond. Prothero argues that cremation was virtually unknown in early America, its proponents limited to anti-Christian "freethinkers" who saw in the act of cremation a defiant rejection of the resurrection of the body.

Most Christian cremation proponents dismiss the history of cremation ideology as irrelevant to the discussion, as simply a version of the genetic fallacy. After all, few Christians cremate with any thought of nineteenth-century debates, much less of ancient paganisms.

And the Church has toned down its previous horror at the thought of cremation. The Catholic Church, for instance, lifted its formal disapproval of cremation, stating in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body." And the "freethinkers" among us are consumed with other things these days than funeral rites.

It is interesting, however, that cremation rates are high in areas of North America least touched by Christian memory: in the Pacific Northwest, for example. One would be hard-pressed to find a more predictable map of the so-called Bible Belt than to look at the states where cremation is still least socially acceptable: from the Catholic/Baptist gumbo of Louisiana through the mountains of eastern Kentucky and West Virginia.

This is not to say that Bible Belt Christians have a theological position on cremation; most don't. There is an unthinking, almost instinctive revulsion, a revulsion that can thus be lost in the decades to come.

And, indeed, traditionalist Catholics and fundamentalist Christians may well be hyper-scrupulous when they see in cremation a pagan act. But the question very rarely is even considered: Were the atheists and Gnostics of yesteryear on to something when they saw in cremation a statement of belief, or the lack thereof? Were our Jewish and Christian forefathers doing something theologically and personally meaningful when they buried their dead?

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Some Christians chafe at the discussion because there is no Bible verse forbidding cremation. This charge is especially relevant to a Protestant such as this author, who believes in the Reformation principle of *sola Scriptura*.

But *sola Scriptura* does not mean that Scripture is the only authority to which one should listen, but that Scripture is the final and non-negotiable authority, the norm that norms all other norms. I look to Mapquest, not to Leviticus, to find my way from Louisville to Chicago, but if Mapquest — or the Third Vatican Council or the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention — tells me there was never a City of Jericho, I submit to the authority of Scripture over theirs.

Moreover, *sola Scriptura* has never meant merely a concordance approach to the Bible (Where's a verse on sex reassignment surgery? Not one? Then it's fine? Well, no). There is a comprehensive storyline to Scripture, against which we must judge our actions, especially the actions of our churches as we testify to the reality of the Gospel.

Burial Care

The question is not simply whether cremation is always a personal sin. The question is not whether God can reassemble “cremains.” The question is whether burial is a Christian act and, if so, then what does it communicate?

Of course God can resurrect a cremated Christian. He can also resurrect a Christian burned at the stake, or a Christian torn to pieces by lions in a Roman coliseum, or a Christian digested by a great white shark off the coast of Florida.

But are funerals simply the way in which we dispose of remains? If so, graveyards are unnecessary, too. Why not simply toss the corpses of our loved ones into the local waste land-fill?

For Christians, burial is not the disposal of a thing. It is caring for a person. In burial, we're reminded that the body is not a shell, a husk tossed aside by the “real” person, the soul within. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:6–8; Phil 1:23), but the body that remains still belongs to *someone*, someone we love, someone who will reclaim it one day.

Our father Abraham did not “dispose” of the “container” previously occupied by his loved one. Moses tells us that “Abraham buried *Sarah his wife* in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan” (Gen

23:19, emphasis mine). His burial of his wife, returning her to the dust from which she came, honored our foremother, in precise distinction from the shamefulness with which our God views the leaving of bodies to decompose publicly (Isa 5:25).

The Gospel of John tells us that “Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days” (John 11:17). The Holy Spirit chose to identify this body as *Lazarus*, communicating continuity with the very same person Jesus had loved before and would love again.

After the crucifixion of Jesus, the Gospels present us with an example of devotion to Jesus in the way the women — and Joseph of Arimathea — minister to Him, anointing him with spices, specifically anointing, Mark tells us, *Him* and not just “His remains” (Mark 16:1), and wrapping him in a shroud. Why is Mary Magdalene so grieved when she finds the tomb to be empty? It is not that she doubts that a stolen body can be resurrected by God on the last day. It is instead that she sees

violence done to the body of Jesus as violence done to *Him*, dishonor done to His body as dishonor to *Him*.

When Mary mistakes Jesus for the gardener, she tells Him she is despondent because they “have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him” (John 20:13). This body was, at least in some sense, still her Lord, and it mattered what someone had done to it. Jesus and the angelic beings never correct the devoted women. They simply ponder why they seek the living among the dead.

Burial is a fitting earthly end to the life of a faithful Christian, a Christian who has been “buried with Christ in baptism” and is waiting to be raised with him in glory.

Graveside Eschatology

Scripture also tells us that there is a specifically *Christian* way to grieve, not “as others do who have no hope” (1 Thess 4:13). Christian grief, the way the Christian community deals with its dead, signals what it believes to be true about the dead in Christ.

This is why God deems as faith Joseph's committing his bones to his brothers for future transport into the land of promise (Heb 11:22; Gen 50:25). Why does this matter? Cannot God resurrect Joseph in Egypt, and deliver him to Canaan at the last day? Joseph of all the sons of Israel understood the providence of God (Gen 50:20). But God saw in Joseph's concern for his bones, that they be with the people of God in the land he promised them, to be an act of trust.

After all the years of wandering, the miracles, the suffering, the bloodshed, that brought the Israelites into the land,

the capstone of the conquest of Canaan was the men of Israel burying the body of Joseph at Shechem (Josh 24:32). Joseph's eschatology was seen in the way he committed his bones to his brothers — and in the way they honored them as a testimony to his faith and theirs.

Burial is a fitting earthly end to the life of a faithful Christian, a Christian who has been “buried with Christ in baptism” and is waiting to be raised with him in glory (Rom 6:4). A Christian burial does not mean that we are “in denial” about the decomposition of bodies — that is part of the Edenic curse (Gen 3:19). It does mean that this decomposition is not what, in this act of worship, we proclaim as the ultimate truth about the one to whom we've said goodbye.

Burial conveys the image of sleep, the metaphor Jesus and his apostles used repeatedly for the believing dead (John 11:11; 1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:13–14). It conveys a message, a message quite different from that of a body already speed-decayed, a body consumed by fire.

The Voice of Jesus

We should not find it unusual when Christians are the last ones left to picture death graphically with the image of sleep. The metaphor of sleep doesn't mean that the dead are unconscious, but that they will be awakened.

When Jesus was called to the home of the synagogue ruler's daughter, He quieted the funeral mourners by saying, “She is not dead but sleeping.” And in one of the most poignant passages of Scripture, Luke tells us, “And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand He called, saying ‘Child, arise’” (Luke 8:53-54).

Christians at a burial site remind themselves and the watching world, by committing a seemingly “sleeping” body to the ground, that one day this same northern Galilean accent will ring from the Eastern skies — and “they that hear shall live” (John 5:25).

I suppose I shouldn't find the heat that comes from the cremation debate all that surprising. It is deeply personal, especially for those of us with loved ones resting now in urns or scattered beneath oak trees or embedded in man-made reefs off the coast. What bothers me as a Christian minister is not so much that some of us are cremated as that the rest of us don't seem to care.

Like the culture around us, we tend to see death and burial as an individual matter. That's why we make our own personal funeral plans, in the comfort of our living room chairs. And that is why we ask the kind of question we ask about this issue: “What difference does it make, as long as I am resurrected in the end?”



“...It means hoping that our Christian burial plots preach the same Gospel that our Christian pulpits do.”

Recognizing that cremation is sub-Christian doesn't mean castigating grieving families as sinners. It doesn't mean refusing to eat at the dining room table with Aunt Flossie's urn perched on the mantle overhead. It doesn't mean labeling the pastor who blesses a cremation service as a priest of Molech.

It simply means beginning a conversation about what it means to grieve as Christians and what it means to hope as Christians. It means reminding Christians that the dead in the graveyards behind our churches are “us” too. It means hoping that our Christian burial plots preach the same Gospel that our Christian pulpits do.

I wish my grandfather hadn't been cremated. As I preached his funeral, I wished I could join with centuries of Christians in committing his body, intact, to the ground. I hated his cremation, but I didn't hate it as others do, as those who have no hope. Instead, I thanked a faithful God for a great man's life.

And then I paused in recognition, knowing that one day the wisdom of the embalmers and the power of the cremators will be put to shame by the Wisdom and Power of God in the eastern skies above us. And I expect it will be glorious to see what the voice of Jesus can do to a south Mississippi funeral home's medium-price urn. ☠

“Grave Signs” is reprinted from the January/February 2007 issue of *Touchstone: A Magazine of Mere Christianity* (www.touchstonemag.com).



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Mary, did you know?



Mater Dolorosa (oil on panel) by Weyden, Rogier van der (1399-1464) © Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library

The problem of Mary largely centers on the problem of Christ. If one has an orthodox view of Christ, how does this involve Mary? When and under what physical circumstance did the incarnation occur? For our salvation, God must intervene and what is done must be worthy of the offended glory of God. Also, for our salvation, the requirements legitimately established for human beings at their creation to live in the enjoyment of the divine blessedness must be met in real humanity. God expected humanity to obey, or pay, and either or both must be done.

In other words, one person must be both God and man if any human being at all is to be restored to a position in which he can enter into the joy of the Lord. John's statement of this is "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only-begotten of God, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:12). Jesus is the Christ and, thus, that one person embodying both the infinitely glorious, uncreated, self-existent, immutable, intrinsically holy divine nature in the person of the eternally generated Son of God as well as the earthy, conceived, created, finite and morally developing nature of true humanity. For such a person to exist, He must be born, He must have a mother in which this miraculous union takes place. Exactly at this point Mary comes in.

When the angel told Mary that she would conceive in her womb, bring forth a Son to be named Jesus and that this Son should be great and be called "the Son of the Highest," and that the Lord God would give to Him, this Son of hers, the throne of his father David and that He would reign forever, she asked a most reasonable question: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Lk 1:30-34). Nothing could be clearer from the juxtaposition of immediate events with historical prophecy than the fact that Mary's Son would be God.

Since she would have such a Son, and she did not disbelieve the angel, how would this take place? The answer given her involves both sides of the descriptions given in the angelic announcement. First, her Son as conceived so as to be born from her — "The Holy Spirit will come upon thee;" and this child as the Son of the Highest — "the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." On that basis the holy being born and certainly her Son, though conceived in a supernatural impregnation by the creative power of the Holy Spirit, would at the

same time, because of the immediate involvement of the eternally generating power of the Highest maintain every aspect of the divine nature as the Son of God. “The holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Lk 1:35).

It should be no wonder to any of us that this consideration — two miracles of infinite importance inextricably embracing one another took place in a singular moment within Mary — has driven her observers to a sense of hushed privilege in her presence. For example, Elizabeth speaking by the Holy Spirit, said, “Blessed are you among women.” Then she gave the startling confession of Mary’s status when she exclaimed, “How in the world did this happen to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

That miracle within the womb of a human mother prompted Proclus, Bishop of Cyzicuum, to describe Mary as “The spotless treasure-house of virginity; the spiritual paradise of the second Adam; the workshop, in which the two natures were annealed together; the bridal chamber in which the Word wedded the flesh; the living bush of nature, which was unharmed by the fire of the divine birth; the light cloud which bore him who sat between the Cherubim.”

“Mother of my Lord!” said Elizabeth. “The workshop in which the two natures were annealed together,” wrote Proclus. And though on the face of it, the language seems both incongruous and irresponsible, it nevertheless rings true in light of the biblical text itself and the demands of salvation that the phrase describing Mary in the orthodox creedal literature as “Mother of God” is warranted. In fact, to seek to describe her in some other way comes short of the necessary scandal of the cross.

When Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, refused to use the language, Mother of God, his description of the incarnation could not rise above a kind of adoptionism. This view could only say Mary was the mother of a man so closely aligned in will and affection with the Son of God that He never willed or loved in any other manner than the Son of God and could, thus, be called “Son of God.” That Christology, just like modern liberalism, could only produce a view of salvation that was moralistic, built on the possibility of imitation of this man whose relation with God made Him the Christ. That clearly is not what God had in mind in saving sinners.

Just at this point, however, we must stop. The language about Mary is not intended to glorify her or set her apart as worthy of veneration. Nor are we to infer from her virginal Spirit-conception of true humanity and simultaneous reception of the person of the Son eternally begotten of the Father in her womb that she herself is of a different nature from other sinful humans or in need any less of a Savior. She is blessed by grace for us all in that she is the link with humanity, and in God’s decree, the human nature that was foreknown, foreordained (1 Pt 1:20) for Christ was determined as coming through Mary.

Not only did this mean He could shed blood for us, but also for her; not only would He be the Advocate for us, but for her. Not only would He be the “Lord our righteousness” for us, but for her. As she confessed, she magnified and rejoiced in “God my savior” (Luke 1:47).

Does this miraculous and complex conception demand that Mary be free of original sin? Is the Roman Catholic dogma of the immaculate conception correct? Was she “by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God . . . preserved exempt from all stain of original sin?” There is neither biblical evidence nor theological necessity for this. Mary’s being “blessed” meant only, that like the Ephesians (Eph 1:6), she had received grace, favor, from the sovereign decree of God. Neither their blessing of grace nor hers involved a freedom from original sin (Eph 2:1-3).

Is bodily assumption true? No. The dogma of Mary’s bodily assumption without corruption into Heaven received papal approval in 1950. Not only is there no biblical evidence for this, and none even claimed by Roman Catholic theologians, its development doesn’t begin until around the eighth century taken from apocryphal literature, *Transitus Beatae Mariae*. This literature was condemned earlier by Pope Gelasius. Nothing other than an unwarranted high veneration of Mary has led to such a pronouncement.

Should we invoke Mary in our prayers and expect her to be a mediatrix? Has she, as the mother that willingly surrendered her Son, entered into a relationship with Him and with us as “the most powerful Mediatrix and Conciliatrix of the whole world?” Does she share the redemptive work of Christ? Is she now in a position as a grantor of mercy and a guarantor of grace? Not only have such ideas no warrant from Scripture, they clearly contradict the apos-

toxic message that focuses on Christ alone, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

While we must claim as our own the christological message that announces Mary as “the mother of my Lord,” we must not allow the emphasis to shift from Christ to her. Surely this exaltation of Mary, as creature and sinner, is pure idolatry and contradicts the very reason why in the first place the title “Mother of God” was accepted as both biblical and soteriologically sound. “Mary, did you know that the Son that you delivered would soon deliver you?”

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Tom J. Nettles is professor of historical theology at Southern Seminary.

That's what I love about ministry



Former songwriter sees providence in call to plant churches

Adam Dorsey has packed so much living into the past decade it might make for a good country/western song.

As any fan worth his salt knows, an authentic country verse contains at least three elements: a major heartache book-ended by loving and leaving. Dorsey, a master of divinity student at The South-

ern Baptist Theological Seminary and accomplished writer of country songs, has experienced all three in spades over the past 10 years.

Loving

In talking to Dorsey, three main loves emerge: Christ, family and music. A native of Riverside, Calif., Dorsey was converted as a young boy. His love for country music also took root at young age and accelerated at 16, when Dorsey's

father gave him his first guitar. A songwriter was soon born.

"I've probably written 200 or 300 songs since I was 16," Dorsey said. "I started writing songs immediately to help me learn to play the guitar. It is definitely something God has given me a love for and the ability to do on some level."

At 18, Dorsey moved from California to Nashville to pursue a career as a songwriter. In 1997, his senior year as a music business major at Middle Tennessee



“I had this new wife whom I loved dearly, but we weren’t getting to spend any time together. It was pretty frustrating, but God was definitely working in our lives and looking back, we know that now.”

Heartache

In 2001, Dorsey seemed to be at the pinnacle of his big break. Craig Morgan, a relative newcomer to Music Row, recorded a Dorsey-penned number titled “Old Green Tackle Box” for Atlantic Records. Cold disappointment – and the dog-eat-dog reality of the music business – slapped Dorsey in the face when Atlantic decided not to release the song.

A few months later, the couple learned that Christi was going to need a liver transplant. So accelerated was her liver disease that Vanderbilt University immediately put Christi on its transplant list. Worse, the couple’s doctor told them that the liver condition would prohibit child bearing. In December of 2003, the Dorseys joined a waiting list to adopt a baby.

“We really learned to trust God,” he said. “We strongly desired to have our own child, but as soon as we got the news we started thinking about adoption. As hard as it was to accept, we still knew God’s plan was better than ours.”

Soon, Dorsey learned that Morgan had taped one of his songs, “That’s What I Love About Sunday,” for an upcoming album. But the news was tempered a few days later when Dorsey’s publishing company informed him that his contract would not be renewed.

To make matters even more confusing, Dorsey said something strange was going on inside his mind. As he and Christi were growing under sound biblical teaching at First Baptist Church of Spring Hill, Tenn., Dorsey began to sense that God was calling him out of the music business and into the ministry.

“I couldn’t get the sense of God’s calling to ministry off my mind,” he said. “I told Christi, not knowing what in the world she would think, but she said, ‘I’ve thought for a while that He was.’”

Leaving

Dorsey’s call to the ministry proved to be, in the words of George Strait, “a fire he couldn’t put out.” Yet, the commercial success as a songwriter that had eluded him was approaching at the speed of the Orange Blossom Special. In November of 2004, Broken Bow Records – a small independent label – released the first

single from Morgan’s new album: “That’s What I Love About Sunday.”

By March, the song chronicling Lord’s Day activities with a Mayberry ethos had climbed to No. 2 on the Billboard Hot Country Singles chart. On March 26, 2005, it reached No. 1, where it remained five weeks, setting a record for chart success by a song from an independent label. Starting up at Dorsey’s song, which was co-written by Mark Narmore, were songs by big-label artists such as Brooks & Dunn, Montgomery Gentry, Alan Jackson and Rascal Flatts.

“We started watching the charts, and it just kept climbing higher and higher,” he said. “It didn’t make any sense for a song from a small independent label to climb that high. God definitely blessed us. I watched this knowing the whole time that I was going to leave songwriting for the ministry. Never did I doubt God’s calling.”

In November of 2004, the Dorseys had adopted their son, Jacob. The young birth mother chose the Dorseys to adopt her son in spite of Christi’s liver disorder, which remains unresolved today.

“We saw God work in an incredible way with us adopting Jacob,” he said. “The birth mother chose our profile because her grandfather had a liver disorder and was completely cured. What we thought might prohibit us from adopting God used as a catalyst for adopting Jacob.”

In May of 2005, the Dorseys bade farewell to Nashville and moved to New Orleans where Adam enrolled at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. But their leaving days weren’t over. In August, Hurricane Katrina demolished the Crescent City and put New Orleans Seminary, and most of the Dorseys’ worldly possessions, under water. Soon the family found itself on the road again, this time bound for Louisville, Christi’s hometown, and Southern Seminary.

After initially thinking their sojourn at Southern would be temporary, the Dorseys decided to stay. They hope to serve as church planters in Newfoundland, far from the steel guitars and neon lights of the Music City.

“I have learned very clearly that we can make our plans, but God is in control. While I will miss songwriting, I know that preaching the Word is a far greater calling because it will impact eternity.”

By Jeff Robinson

State University, Dorsey met the woman who a year later would become his wife – Christi Leigh Doyle. That year, Dorsey also signed his first publishing deal, one that paid \$800 per month.

Dorsey seemed to be on the fast track as one of Nashville’s bright young songwriters. But little did he know that God was going to teach him the discipline of patience as he toiled for seven years without scoring a major label recording, waiting tables to help support his family.

“Both Christi and I worked during the day, and I waited tables at night,” he said.



Stinson helping churches do more for families

People around Southern Seminary know Randy Stinson as a man who talks a lot about families.

As dean of Southern's School of Leadership and Church Ministry since Aug. 2006, Stinson has emphasized that local churches must do more to help hold families together. On top of his duties as a dean, Stinson also serves as executive director of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW), a non-denominational organization housed at Southern that promotes the teachings of the Bible about gender roles and families.

With all this talk about families, some may wonder: how is family life in Stinson's own home?

"Our home is characterized by peace and by gratitude and by forgiveness," he said. "It is marked by a realization that we're all sinners, but we all love each other and we have obligations to one another. It is a happy place. That is the fruit of living out the principles of Scripture in your home."

Stinson and his wife Danna have been married since 1991 and have five children: Gunnar, Georgia, Fisher, Eden and Payton.

"The principles that we have in our home are the same ones that I teach," he said. "It is my responsibility to be the leader in the home. It is my wife's and my responsibility to disciple our children. It is our responsibility to guard our personal lives with vigilance and diligence. It is our responsibility to seek council from others who are godly."

Stinson began to realize the need for a greater emphasis on families in the evangelical world shortly after he was saved at age 17 in his home state of Florida. He noticed that families in the church generally were not strong and that even ministers' families often experienced significant strain.

When he became a youth pastor in south Georgia, Stinson noticed the same problems among families in his new church.

"I began to realize that the weaknesses generally stemmed from poor leadership from the husband and father in the home and lack of compelling models of family life," he said. "That was a theme of my early ministry. It began to

be a particular burden of mine for my family and for other families in the ministry as well."

To gain additional training for ministry, Stinson earned a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., in 1996. After graduation from Southeastern, Stinson came to Southern to pursue a master of theology in hopes of eventually serving in higher education at a Baptist college. During his time at Southern he began to write about and research more deeply the Bible's teachings on gender roles.

By 2000 Stinson had completed his Th.M. and was pursuing a doctor of philosophy degree at Southern. During his Ph.D. work the position of CBMW executive director opened up and Stinson was offered the job. He says God providen-

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tially used the CBMW position to cement his conviction about the importance of answering gender questions correctly.

"The work of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood put me in a situation to really understand even at a greater depth the importance of gender roles in the home, the importance of an appropriate structure in the home and in the church and helped me understand at a deeper level the ramifications of getting this wrong," he said. "The health of the home is at stake. The health of the church is at stake."

CBMW's work particularly helped Stinson understand the range of issues that require a biblical understanding of gender roles.

"The way we talk about God in our worship is at stake with the popularity now

of feminine God language," Stinson said. "Even with regard to gender-neutral Bible translations there's a lot at stake here."

Stinson completed his Ph.D. in systematic theology in 2005 and shortly learned that yet another door was opening where a person with strong convictions about the family was needed. Brad Waggoner, the dean of Southern's leadership and church ministry school, became director of LifeWay Research at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in 2006, leaving the position of dean open.


Russell D. Moore, Southern's senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology, called Stinson about assuming the dean position and adding a significant family ministry emphasis to the leadership school curriculum. Stinson accepted the offer.

"What made this fit for me was what God had already been doing in my life," Stinson said. "It fit with my ministry commitments. It fit with my leadership commitments, my gifts and my personal desires. It fit perfectly with what I would want to do with the rest of my life – train pastors and pastorally-trained staff members to have a grand view of the family and have a really clear ministerial strategy for reaching families and helping to grow strong families."

Such a ministry program "not only allows families to turn toward one another. It also genuinely reaches the lost because then you have a plan that not only underscores the family but also brings others into your family who do not have a family," he said.

The leadership school will not take a drastically new direction, Stinson noted, but will simply add new components to an already successful program.

"I'm not talking about a revolutionary change," he said. "But it is a very significant change that I think is necessary if we are going to really adequately train families."

Stinson says his ultimate vision is to produce an army of ministers with such a grounded view of the family that they in turn produce an army of families that experience the peace that comes from righteousness. 

By David Roach



Spared for Gospel service: the story of Paul Chitwood

Thirty minutes saved Paul Chitwood's spiritual life.

At age 17, Chitwood had been a professing Christian for nine years, but time and complacency had left him in a state of rebellion against the Lord.

One day Chitwood, his two brothers and a friend were on their way to a local fishing hole when his older brother clipped the front bumper of a truck going around a curve. The impact spun their car around, causing the truck to broadside it and spin it into a rock wall.

Having sustained only cuts and bruises, Chitwood climbed out of the car, but the other three young men were knocked unconscious. Unsure of whether his brothers and friend would live, Chitwood dragged them from the vehicle and for 30 minutes waited by himself for emergency help to arrive. God used those 30 minutes, and the whole experience, to shape Chitwood's life.

"The Lord used that to get my attention and show me that I am not invincible and that I did not have an unlimited amount of time to do what I said I was going to do – and that is live my life for Him," Chitwood said. "Physically, I had only cuts. But emotionally and spiritually the Lord cut me deeply through that experience, which was something that needed to be done."

All of Chitwood's companions survived the accident. Chitwood said it was a miracle that his younger brother lived, as he had to be flown to the University of Tennessee hospital with a ruptured spleen and diaphragm. Chitwood's older brother broke his neck, and his friend in the car also had a ruptured spleen and other internal injuries. Chitwood came out with minor injuries and a renewed desire to serve the Lord.

A year later – during his first year at Cumberland College – Chitwood committed his life to vocational ministry at a revival at his home church, First Baptist Church in Jellico, Tenn.

Chitwood grew up in Jellico with his father and two brothers. At age 2, Chitwood's mother abandoned the family, leaving his father to care for the three boys. His father faithfully took the boys to

First Baptist, and when Chitwood was 8, he and his two brothers professed faith in Christ and were baptized.

Chitwood graduated from Cumberland in 1992, and from there it was off to Southern Seminary, where he earned his master of divinity in 1995.

In 1993 Chitwood began serving as senior pastor of South Fork Baptist Church near Owenton, Ky., which he said the Lord used to confirm his calling to the pastorate.

"I received a lot of affirmation from the Lord's people at South Fork, [where] there are some very godly folks," he said. "Also, internally, the Lord used that time of serving as their pastor to affirm His calling in my life. I drew a lot of joy in being able to care for the Lord's people and minister to them on His behalf."

Chitwood pastored two other churches in Kentucky after South Fork, and in 2003 he began as pastor of First Baptist Church in Mount Washington, Ky., where he continues to serve today.

In the late 1990s, Chitwood returned to Southern to begin work on a doctorate from the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth and in 2001 graduated with a Ph.D. in evangelism and church growth.

"I was really introduced to apologetics for the first time and some of the deeper issues in orthodox theology," he said of his doctoral work. "In particular, a theology of evangelism seminar under Tim Beougher helped me understand the glory of the Gospel message and the glory of Christ in giving His life for sinners."

In 2002, Chitwood began serving as a trustee with the International Mission Board and this year started his second four-year term. Chitwood also recently completed a one-year term as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and serves as adjunct professor of evangelism at Southern.

From his conversion at age 8 until today, Chitwood said he recognizes the hand of God on his life.

"The Lord has been far more gracious to me than I have ever deserved," he said. 🙏

By Garrett E. Wisball



Drake follows God's call to Southern

At times, discerning God's calling can seem as difficult as finding a diamond ring in a Florida swamp. Other times, realizing God's call is as clear as a freshwater spring.

In 1977 at Stephens Park in Dallas, Texas, Steve Drake had a freshwater spring experience. A student at Criswell Bible College at the time, Drake was driving his car through the Texas park, praying for God to reveal His will for his life.

"Two or three times in my Christian life, God has answered my prayer so completely and so clearly that I knew immediately His will for me," Drake said. "I remember so clearly praying that day and having the words 'Southern Seminary' enter my mind. I went home and told my wife, and since that day, we have felt like God wanted us at Southern Seminary."

Over the next 30 years, God confirmed this calling as Drake earned two degrees from the seminary and filled various roles at Southern for the past 11 years, including nine as a professor.

Most recently, Drake served as associate professor of evangelism and supervisor of doctor of ministry students in the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evan-

gelism and Church Growth. Before that Drake taught as an adjunct and assistant professor of Christian ministry and directed the Supervised Ministry (now Applied Ministry) program.

Drake's road to Southern did not begin easily. After earning a bachelor of arts from Criswell College in 1979, Drake's application to Southern was twice rejected with the explanation that he did not have enough liberal arts credits. Drake accepted a pastorate in Georgia but after three years applied again at Southern, this time in person. Able to convince the seminary's administration to give him a chance, Drake was accepted to the seminary in 1983.

Drake graduated with a master of divinity in 1986 and a doctor of ministry in 1994, and two years later Douglas Walker, senior vice president for institutional relations at the seminary, asked him to work in the development office. Drake had pastored for eight years in Alabama and was the senior pastor at First Baptist Church in Ashville, Ala., when he received the call. After discussing the offer with his family – including his youngest son, Aaron, who was about to enter his senior year of high school – Drake accepted the position.

After two years in the development office, Drake became adjunct professor of Christian ministry. Drake said his time as a professor of Christian ministry and

director of Supervised Ministry brought his fondest memories at Southern.

"When I taught Formation for Christian Ministry, I was able to interact with young students looking toward pastoral ministry and share with them the nature of pastoral ministry," he said. "Down-to-earth, practical issues like what to do at your first deacons meeting or what to do when a member of your congregation dies. All students had to go through the Supervised Ministry Experience program to graduate, and getting to interact with the students and serving in that capacity was my greatest blessing at Southern. I believe each era of my ministry has been a training ground for the next assignment. I will take from Southern great lessons and great memories as we move to Nashville."

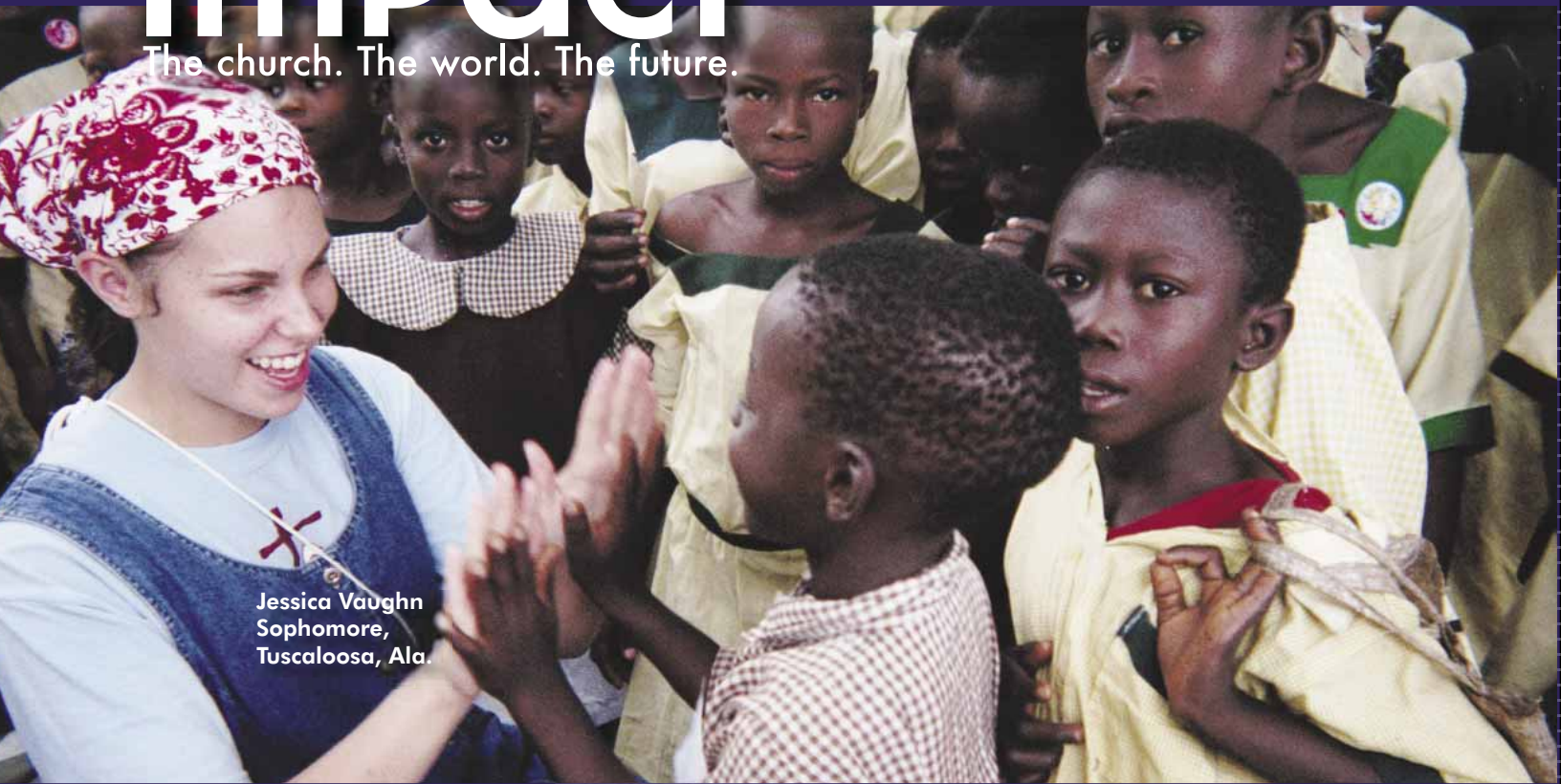
On March 1, Drake began as director of corporate relations at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, Tenn., but he said he will always treasure his time at Southern.

"Every day, on the way to work, I would say, 'I cannot believe that I am getting to teach at Southern Seminary,'" Drake said. "Southern is such a historic bastion of godly intellectualism, and to be a part of it in some small way was truly a blessing." ❧

By Garrett E. Wishall

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Jessica Vaughn
Sophomore,
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

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SOUTHERN NEWS AND NOTES

Mohler recounts lessons learned in recent illness

Drawing on lessons learned from his recent stay in intensive care following abdominal surgery, R. Albert Mohler Jr. told students and faculty at Southern Seminary's spring convocation that the assumption of strength can be a preacher's greatest weakness.

"In the midst of my recent experience I was reminded in an altogether new way of just how weak we are and indeed how weak I am," Mohler said.

After nearly a week of intense abdominal pain, Mohler was admitted to Louisville's Baptist Hospital East on Dec. 27 and underwent surgery the following day. In the days following surgery the development of blood clots led doctors to move Mohler to the hospital's intensive care unit. He was discharged from the hospital Jan. 10.

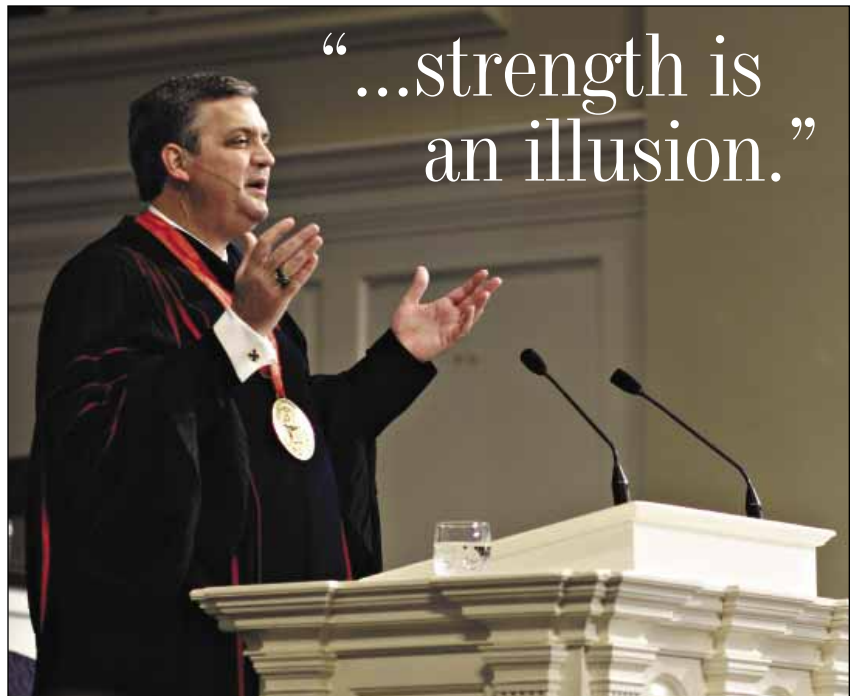
"I was convicted of the fact that the last time I preached in this pulpit I thought myself strong – not in a particular way, just in the general way. I trusted that when I got up in the morning I would be able to preach, and I was excited about that prospect and I gave myself to it with seriousness. I never feared the night before that I would not be able to do it. I took that for granted," he said.

"And yet I did not take for granted that I would be here this morning. I did not take as an assurance that I would be here to preach this message this morning. ... I must confess to you that strength is an illusion."

Preaching from 1 Corinthians 2, Mohler noted that the apostle Paul was not ashamed of weakness because God uses weak human beings to communicate His Gospel. Preachers must realize their weaknesses so that they do not falsely appear to be self-sufficient, he said.

"[The preaching of the cross] takes us where no marketer can possibly take us, where no rhetorician would ever want to take us – and that is to a ground of execution, where there is no display of what the world knows as power, but rather what the world would see as abject weakness, waste," he said. "Paul said that's the power of the cross. That's the power that saves."


Mohler related the stories of David Miller, a preacher afflicted with



“...strength is an illusion.”

a crippling muscle disease, yet still preaches from a wheelchair, and James Montgomery Boice, the pastor of Philadelphia's Tenth Presbyterian Church who died in 2000 six weeks after being diagnosed with liver cancer.

For both men some of the most powerful ministry came during times of greatest physical weakness because God's power was apparent through them, Mohler said.

He challenged students to be thankful for their weaknesses, to realize their mortality and to use the strength they have to preach the message of Christ. 

By David Roach

Princeton prof: Stem cell debate must focus on life of embryo

Embryonic stem cell research is fundamentally wrong because it destroys human beings who deserve moral respect, Princeton University professor Robert P. George said Feb. 8 in the Norton Lectures at Southern Seminary.

George argued that stem cells may not be the cure-all that stem cell research advocates are proclaiming them to be.

"The fact that there's been a lot of hyping going on and that embryonic stem cells probably will not prove to be the therapeutic miracle that they have been hyped to be isn't fundamentally the reason we should be opposed to the use of those cells," said George, who serves as McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and director of the James Madison Program in



Robert P. George

American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton.

"The reason we should be opposed is a moral reason. [Embryonic stem cell research] involves, at least for now, the destruction of innocent human life to obtain the cells."


The Norton Lectures are a series of addresses on science and philosophy in their relations to religion. The series was established in 1910 by a gift from George W. Norton II and an additional bequest from the will of his widow, Margaret McDonald (Muldoon) Norton.

George argued that advocates of embryonic stem cell research have obscured the fundamental issue in the current debate over the practice.

"If we were to contemplate killing mentally retarded infants to obtain transplantable

organs, no one would characterize the controversy that would erupt as a debate about organ transplantation, now would they? The dispute would be about, rather, the ethics of killing retarded children to harvest their vital organs," he said.

"By the same token, our contemporary debate is not about embryonic stem cell research. No one would object to the use of embryonic stem cells in biomedical research or elsewhere if they could be harvested without killing or harvesting the embryos from whom they've been obtained or if they could be obtained from embryos lost in miscarriages."

He argued that an embryo is as much a human as a person at any other stage of development such as adolescent, child or fetus. Even secular science books reject the idea that an embryo is not a distinct and complete human, he said. 

By David Roach

More than 700 attend annual collegiate conference

More than 700 college students gathered at Southern Seminary February 9-10 to wrestle with the question "Does God Care About Sex?" at the school's annual Give Me An Answer collegiate conference.

Southern professors addressed 21 questions related to the Christian worldview and sexuality ranging from "How have the arts been affected by the culture?" to "Is it a mandate for all married people to have children?" and "Should we kiss dating goodbye?" Sessions also examined gender issues such as biblical manhood and womanhood and a number of others looked at dealing biblically with sexual temptation (see sidebar).

Scott Davis, director of admissions for Southern Seminary, said marriage and parenting classes were among the best attended. Students attended the conference from as far away as Branson, Mo., and Washington, D.C.

"I anticipated some interest on marriage and parenting classes, but our session on 'Reflecting God in Your Marriage' was the first to reach full capacity," Davis said.

"One student enjoyed the conference so much that he copied me on an email that he sent to others from his church, commending

the conference and providing a mild rebuke to them for not attending."

Davis said the question and answer sessions that followed each elective session brought many deep questions related to sexuality and a Christian worldview.




"Usually in a Q and A session dealing with the sensitive issue of sexuality, you have someone who is going to ask a juvenile question," he said. "What we found out was that there were very serious questions that were being asked

— some dealing with very private issues. It confirmed to us how important it is to provide answers to these kinds of questions.

"I would encourage the leaders of the groups that came to make sure that they learn to develop their listening skills. There were more questions out there than we could deal with in the allotted time and these would provide fertile soil for some serious Christian thought and discipleship."

Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. and Theology School Dean Russell D. Moore served as keynote speakers. Mohler opened the conference by showing students that a biblical view of sex is a crucial part of a comprehensive Christian worldview.

"The conversation we are having is one that the world does not believe we can have, and that is a conversation in which we are going to talk simultaneously about sex and the glory of God," Mohler said. "The very fact that that sounds unusual to those who have minds attuned to the spirit of this age is a symptom of the confusion of our times." 

By Jeff Robinson

Profs defend believer's baptism

Is the doctrine of baptism a minor theological issue that matters little in the greater scheme of biblical teaching?

Adoniram and Ann Judson, famed Baptist missionaries, did not view baptism as a third-tier issue. In the winter of 1812, the Judsons began a long ocean voyage from Massachusetts to the mission field in India.

The couple was convinced that God had called them to a lifetime of Gospel service in India, and on the way to the field the Judsons studied their Bibles intensely. Both had been raised in godly Congregationalist families and baptized as infants.

However, as they spent days studying the Scriptures, the Judsons became convinced that only believers should be baptized. Upon reaching Calcutta the two were baptized by immersion in keeping with their newfound biblical convictions.

The editors and essayists of a new book, "Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ" (Broadman & Holman Academic), concur with the sentiments of the Judsons, whose story opens the foreword by Baptist theologian and historian Timothy George. Baptism, while it is not required for one to become a Christian, is a critical issue that Scripture regularly connects with belief and salvation, the essayists say.

"Believer's Baptism" is edited by Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, both professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Schreiner serves as the James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Wright is assistant professor of church history.

Essayists argue stringently that baptism is not a teaching that should be dismissed lightly as a peripheral doctrine, particularly by Baptists whose forefathers were persecuted for insisting on believer's baptism.

"Such sentiment (that baptism is a minor issue) is misdirected, for baptism is regularly connected in Scripture with belief and salvation," the editors write in the introduction. "Baptism is the initiation rite into the Christian church. Those who label it as minor are imposing their own categories onto the Scriptures instead of listening to the Scriptures."

The book argues on biblical grounds that baptism is the rite that initiates believers into the church, a rite that is to be administered to believers alone. The essayists also critique

arguments for infant baptism and seek to demonstrate the unbiblical nature of baptizing children.

"Baptism is important precisely because it is tied to the Gospel, to the saving work that Christ accomplished in his death and resurrection," the editors assert. "We do not think baptizing infants is merely a minor mistake, even though we rejoice in the evangelical credentials of many with whom we disagree.

"Believer's baptism accords with the Gospel because it teaches that the objective work of God in salvation necessarily leads to the subjective response of faith... We believe that baptism should be reserved for believers because it preserves the testimony of the Gospel by showing that only those who have repented and believe belong to the church. Only those who have exercised faith are justified. Hence, only those who have trusted in Christ should be baptized. Restricting baptism to believers only, therefore, preserves the pure witness of the Gospel."

Essayists include Schreiner and Wright, along with four other scholars with ties to Southern Seminary, including:

- Robert H. Stein, senior professor of New Testament at Southern, who examines baptism in Luke and Acts.

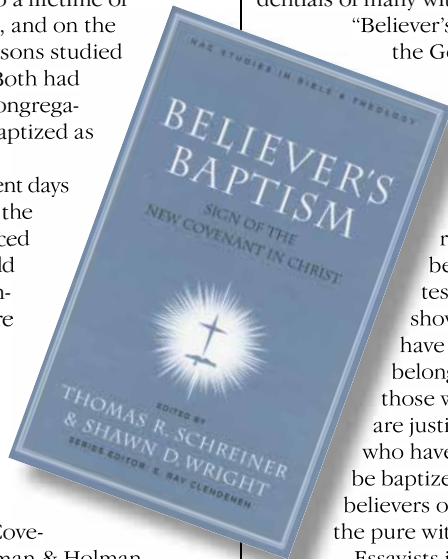
- Stephen J. Wellum, professor of Theology at Southern, who analyzes the relationship between the old and new covenants and responds to key biblical arguments for infant baptism.

- Duane A. Garrett, professor of Old Testament interpretation at Southern, who interacts with Reformed scholar Meredith Kline and his view of New Testament baptism.

- Mark E. Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., and Southern Seminary trustee, whose chapter concludes the book and underscores practical issues related to baptism in the local church. Dever tackles such questions as the method and timing of baptism.

Additional contributors include Andreas J. Köstenberger, Steven A. McKinion, Jonathan Rainbow and A.B. Caneday, who assess various biblical issues and historical movements including baptism in the Gospels, baptism in the early church, baptism among the early Anabaptists and baptism in the Stone-Campbell Restoration movement of the early 19th century.

By Jeff Robinson



Southern Seminary Upcoming Events

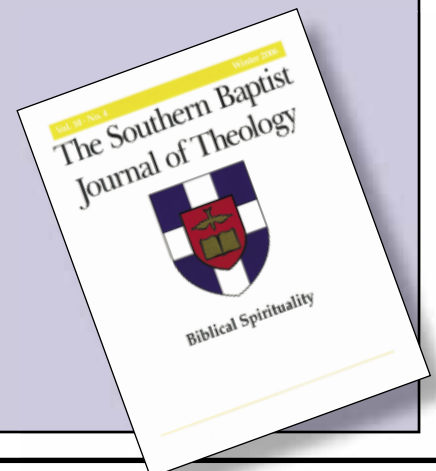
- April 16-20** Great Commission Week
- April 23** Women's Auxiliary Luncheon
- May 11** Boyce Graduation
- May 18** Seminary Graduation
- June 12-13** Southern Baptist Convention, San Antonio, Texas
- June 13** Southern Seminary Luncheon at SBC
- August 10** New Student Orientation
- August 13** Fall Semester begins

New SBJT examines Biblical Spirituality

In the 21st century mainstream culture, spirituality has reached new heights of popularity.

However, much of what passes for spirituality is nothing more than vacuous self-worship in direct conflict with what Scripture demonstrates to be authentic, Christ-centered spirituality.

Essayists in the latest edition of the Southern Baptist Journal of Theology sift through numerous issues raised by contemporary spirituality and set over against it a genuine, biblical spirituality. Essayists include editor Stephen J. Wellum, along with Southern professors Shawn D. Wright, Robert L. Plummer and Michael A.G. Haykin.



Mohler debates secularist online

Though the Christian church has evidenced shortcomings in every era of its history, Christians have done much more good than harm in Western society, R. Albert Mohler Jr. said Feb. 20 in the first ever online panelist chat on a faith-oriented web site sponsored by The Washington Post and Newsweek magazine.

"The modern concerns for human rights, the rights of women, and the protection of the vulnerable have been driven by Christian concerns and the belief that every individual, male or female, is created in God's image," said Mohler. "This is a far more substantial basis for human rights than secular theory."

Participating in the chat with Mohler was author and atheist Susan Jacoby, whose latest book is "Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism." The chat occurred in conjunction with "On Faith," a web site where more than 60 panelists post responses to religious questions posed at least once a week. "On Faith" is hosted by Newsweek managing editor Jon Meacham and Washington Post writer Sally Quinn.

On the question of organized religion's impact on Western society, Jacoby argued that Christianity helped support evil practices such as slavery and the oppression of women.

"The Christians in the north who were part of the abolitionist movement were ... virtually run out of town by the orthodox religious denominations," Jacoby said.

Mohler countered that although many Christians argued for the continuation of slavery, Christian arguments were the force that ultimately led to the abolition of slavery.

"No doubt that southern Christians were not only complicit in the slave trade, but often ardent defenders as well," he said. "Beyond

this, theories of racial superiority were rampant in the culture (look at Lincoln's letters) and too many Christians shared in that as well. Nevertheless, the abolitionist movement was overwhelmingly Christian and the Christian arguments are what won the day."

On the question of the fair treatment of women, Jacoby argued that Christianity was opposed to the movement for women's rights in both the 19th and 20th centuries.

"Religion, all of it, has been dragged kicking and screaming by women of faith who wouldn't take no for an answer into the 21st century," she said. "The women's rights movement was always, essentially, a secularist movement. It could not be otherwise because all religions have historically justified the subordination of women."

But Mohler said Christianity has always taught that all people are of equal worth. He added that the Christian worldview grounded the protection of women in Western culture.

"There was no secularist movement when the notion of individual rights and protections emerged in Continental law and British common law," Mohler said. "These foundations were explicitly Christian. Christianity pervaded the worldview and nothing else was imaginable."

In response to a question posed by moderator Caryle Murphy about the contemporary emphasis on spirituality rather than religion, Mohler argued that Christianity is losing its influence in the West.

"The shift toward individual 'spiritualities' and a spiritual 'quest' is a sign that Christianity has lost influence in the larger culture — no question about that," he said. "Of course,

this is a great concern to me.

"As for the proliferation of other religions, I can only observe that the postmodern supermarket of faiths so evident in America doesn't even come close to the diversity found in the Roman Empire at the birth of Christianity. We have been here before — and the issue is Christian faithfulness in the midst of such diversity."

Jacoby argued that the new emphasis on spirituality is a sign of the intellectual decline of popular culture.

"[I]n America, organized religion has lost ground to a flabby 'spirituality' that makes no real demands on people," Jacoby said. "As a secularist, I see this amorphous spirituality as another sign of the dumbing down of popular culture. No demands, no history, nothing except what you personally feel at a given moment."

Mohler concluded that people who have been redeemed by Jesus have made a valuable impact upon the world.

"In terms of the impact of Christianity, my first and foremost concern is the impact upon the individual lives of those who have come to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior," he said. "But the fact is that these transformed lives have made an incalculable impact upon the world."

"The Christian church is not a perfect representation of the Gospel — we are still sinners though saved by grace. Secularists and others do us a favor when they point out our inconsistencies. This chat is a good start on a profitable conversation."

On Faith is available online at <http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith>.

By David Roach

<http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/>



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Adoption a picture of the Gospel

Reflection on how people become a part of God's family and God's command to care for orphans reveals the value and importance of adoption, Randy Stinson said Jan. 30 at the first Pendergraph women's ministry event of the spring semester.

Stinson, dean of the School of Leadership and Church Ministry and executive director of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, said the nature of the Gospel shows

book of James the Bible says it is," he said. "It says this is true religion, 'Taking care of widows and orphans.' Adoption is highlighted by the fact that James talks about orphans and later in the same passage God talks about being a Father to the fatherless."

In addition, the Stinson's were active in pro-life causes and began to think they should adopt some of the children they consistently urged women to have. Stinson also said

adoption is fundamentally connected to the husband's role to lead, protect and provide.

"When I talk to other men, I try to get across to them that the roles of leading, providing and protecting are not just to be applied in the home," he said. "Those roles are also supposed to spill out into the streets, and take form in caring for the weak, the helpless and for orphans. My challenge to men is to not be so self-preoccupied and self-absorbed and to think about the sacrificial act of adoption."

Moore said people often ask him if the two boys he and Maria adopted from Russia were brothers or not.

"I usually say, 'well, they are now,'" Moore

said, generating a response of laughter.

The Moore's adopted Benjamin and Timothy — both 5, but from different biological parents — from a Russian orphanage in July 2002 after years of infertility and three miscarriages. Moore said the infertility and miscarriages were horrible, matured he and Maria spiritually and has allowed them to minister to other couples in similar circumstances.

"Seeing the way that God moved in this (the infertility and adoption process) has helped us understand providence more and trust God more," he said. "Infertility and miscarriage were horrible, but at the same time we are able to step back and say, 'If it weren't for infertility and miscarriage we wouldn't have Benjamin and Timothy.' We wouldn't understand the grace of God the way that we understand it, we wouldn't understand what it means to love each other the way that we understand it and we wouldn't understand how to teach the Gospel." ❖

By Garrett E. Wisball



Randy Stinson responds to a question at the Pendergraph women's ministry event, Jan. 30. Stinson is joined by his wife Danna (right), Russell D. Moore and Maria Moore. Photo by John Gill

that adoption is important to God and thus it should be important to the church.

"Outside of Christ, we are all orphans," he said. "All people are born outside of the family of God and the only way to get into the family of God is through Christ. The doctrine of adoption is at the heart of the Gospel and if we are going to be a Gospel-centered people we should take seriously this thing (adoption) that is in front of all of us. Actually adopting someone is a stark picture of the Gospel."

Randy and his wife Danna, and Russell D. Moore, senior vice president of academic administration and dean of the School of Theology, and his wife Maria recounted their respective adoption experiences and fielded questions at the event.

The Stinson's adopted two girls — Eden, 7, and Payton, 5 — from Taiwan in November 2004. Stinson pointed to James teaching about orphans in Scripture as a key reason behind he and Danna's interest in adoption.

"The first reason why Danna and I thought adoption was important is because in the

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Sept. 25-27 Mullins Lectures with Dr. Paige Patterson

Oct. 25-27 Heritage Week

Oct. 22 January Bible Study Preview Conference

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Southern Seminary 'changing lives,' Coursey says



Marty Coursey is a man who does what works.

That's why he has expanded his businesses. That's why he teaches a Sunday School class that meets at an innovative time. And that's why he gives to Southern Seminary.

"Southern is doing fantastic things," Coursey, who lives in Henderson, Ky., said. "So we said, 'On top of giving to our local church, rather than giving to other charities, Southern Seminary is changing lives, so that's where we need to give our money to help.'"

Many people are not aware of how many ministries Southern provides for both pastors and lay people, he said. By allowing the public to attend chapel services, sending professors to preach in local churches and publishing theological resources, Southern provides services that Christians should feel motivated to support, Coursey noted.

"Southern has done so many great things, and Dr. Mohler has done so many great things for not only the pastors and the preachers, but for the laypeople," he said.

"We continue to see our gift to the seminary growing in our life," Coursey added. "I encourage everybody, whether they're a Southern Baptist or not, to give to Southern Seminary. It's changing lives."

Coursey was first introduced to Southern when Danny Akin, who then served as the seminary's senior vice president for academic administration, conducted a marriage seminar at Coursey's church, First Baptist Church of Henderson. Soon after the seminar First Baptist's pastor resigned. In the interim, Akin and Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. preached at the church and helped it find a new pastor.

The new pastor, Todd Linn, was a doctoral student at Southern and further introduced Coursey to Southern.

"Our church is growing," Coursey said. "We're growing not only

numerically, but we're growing spiritually as well because of his training that he received at the seminary. And that rubs off on us."

At First Baptist, Coursey serves as a deacon and teaches an adult Sunday School class that meets at an unconventional time — Sunday evenings. The class was developed for adults who teach preschool and children's Sunday School in the mornings and do not get an opportunity to attend an adult Bible study class. Others began attending the class along with the preschool and children's teachers, and now Coursey leads the group in studies through books of the Bible.

Another part of Coursey's church involvement is leading a theological reading group at 5:30 every Tuesday morning. The group, which includes the pastor, reads through theologian Wayne Grudem's "Systematic Theology" and discusses its contents.

In addition to his ministry activities, Christian commitment characterizes Coursey's business endeavors as well. He owns an industrial supply business that his grandfather started as a machine shop in 1938. In the 1960s the family transformed the business into an industrial supply company. Today the business supplies materials and maintenance to clients in Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana. He owns a hardware store as well.

A member of the Southern Seminary Foundation Board since 2005, Coursey hopes that his activities in every arena of life result in changed lives. Changed lives are definitely being produced at Southern, he said.

"It's changing lives," he said of Southern. "It's not only changed the life of our pastor and his wife, but it's changed my life — and I haven't even attended Southern Seminary. It's just doing great things, and when I see something great that's what I like to support."

By David Roach



Build a Legacy

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People and Places

Southern Seminary has a rich history of alumni serving Christ throughout the world. The intent of this section is to help the seminary family stay close – whether that be through the news of a new ministry position, a retirement, a birth or a death. To submit information to People and Places, call 502-897-4143 or e-mail irprojects@sbts.edu.

Rod Elliott has been elected senior pastor of Kelleytown Baptist Church, Hartsville, S.C. He is pursuing a doctorate's degree at Southern Seminary.

30s **J. Chester Badgett** ('39) and his wife celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on Sept. 15, 2006.

40s **Paul D. Clasper** ('47) was a recipient of 2006 Unitas Distinguished Alumni Award from Union Theological Seminary.

Morris H. Elliott ('47) was recognized by the Florida State Chaplains Association as the Longevity Volunteer Chaplain of 2005.

G. Othell Hand ('49) and **Mrs. Martha Hand** ('48) celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on July 19, 2006.

50s **George** ('57) **Kimsey** and his wife, **Joyce**, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 16.

W. Ralph Bobo ('58) is a retired national senior adult consultant missionary through the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and is now co-pastoring a church in Georgia with his son.

James K. Sparkman ('58) retired as the director of missions in 1999 and is now the pastor of Lick Creek Baptist Church in Tennessee. Sparkman and his wife also celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 2006.

Samuel Webb and his wife ('58) will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on March 15.

Harold (Pete) Beard ('59) retired from teaching at Central Missouri State University.

60s **Paul Geriche** ('60) has published *Prince of Preachers: The Apostle Paul*.

Tom Cannon ('61) retired in the spring of 2004 from public education in Georgia and South Carolina.

William L. Weedman ('63) has retired from the Illinois Baptist Convention staff after serving 25 years.

Johnnie Hall ('64) retired from the Tennessee Baptist Convention in December of 1996 after serving for 38 years.

Robert (Bob) Dottley ('65) and his wife, **Jeanette**, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 30.

Paul Peak ('67) was honored at First Baptist Church of Murfreesboro, Tenn., with a retirement reception. He had served at the church since 1972.

Robert G. Woods ('67) retired from the pastorate in 2005.

Judy Ries Dale ('69) is the special assistant for communication and lay resources in the moderator's office for Metropolitan Community Churches.

70s **C. Michael "Mickey" Anders** ('73) is the new pastor at Elkhorn Christian Church in Lexington, Ky.

Mark A. Stover ('75) is involved in a variety of ministries, including Upward Basketball, visitation, and he also ministers to people at Wal-Mart in Beckley, W.Va.

Bobby "Bob" Blankenship ('77) is the minister of music at Edgewood Baptist Church in Nicholasville, Ky.

Charles B. Davis, Jr. ('77) is the piano player for Gethsemane Baptist Church, Greensboro, N.C.

Michael Duduit ('79) is the editor of *Preaching with Power* published in July 2006 by Baker Books. The book includes 20 interviews from Preaching Magazine.

Stephen W. Smith ('79) has recently pub-

lished two new books: *Embracing Soul Care* and *The Transformation of a Man's Heart*. Smith and his wife are also the founders of Potter's Inn in Colorado.

80s **Mildred Deer Cone Webb** ('80) is serving as music director of Ridge Spring Baptist Church.

Wilbert H. Goatley, Jr. ('81) is pastor of Calvary Missionary Baptist Church in St. Louis, Mo.

Donald E. Keeney ('82) joins the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest as the director of the Booher Library.

William N. Miller ('82) has recently retired and is presently the pastor of McKenglee United Methodist Church in Kevil, Ky.

Gary Burden ('83) is pastor of Bethesda Baptist Church in Clayton, N.C.

Lieutenant Colonel Daniel E. Harrison ('83), an army chaplain has transferred from Minnesota to Fort Carson, Colo. He is the chaplain trainer for First Army Division West.

Gary W. Barkley ('84) has been elected the ninth president of Seinan Gakuin University in Japan. The inauguration ceremony took place on Dec. 14 at the university.

Carrol K. Davenport ('86) was ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church in June of 2006. She is the assisting priest at Trinity Episcopal Church in Kirksville, Mo.

Kenny Lamm ('86) spent two months in Malaysia last summer working with the International Mission Board and churches in the Kuala Lumpur region. This is also Lamm's 20th year serving as the worship pastor of Front Street Baptist Church in Statesville, N.C.

Rhonda G. Nash ('88) was named Baptist campus minister at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va., on Aug. 1, 2006.

Mark Thomas ('89) is a visiting scholar in philosophy and religion at El Centro College in Dallas, Texas.

90s **John E. Ward** ('90) recently retired on disability, but he is hoping to continue in the ministry through preaching whenever the Lord allows.

Bret Robbe ('91), pastor of Clearview Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn., is director of the leadership and adult publishing area for LifeWay.

Paul Wilson ('91) and his wife, Christy, serve as full-time foster parents for Chick-Fil-A's Winshape Homes. Paul also serves as president of Soles4Souls, a non-profit organization that distributes new and used shoes worldwide.

Dennis Culbreth ('94) is president of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia.

Randy Pressnell ('94) is pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Mt. Carmel.

Miguel A. De La Torre ('95) recently published his newest book, *A Lily Among Thorns: Imagining A New Christian Sexuality* by Jossey Bass Publishers.

2000s **G. Scott Whetzel** ('00) is the associate director of discipleship ministries for West Virginia Baptist Convention.

Timothy "Tim" Gregson ('01) is the director of music at First Presbyterian Church, Aurora, Ill. He married Melissa Hohm on June 18, 2005. They currently reside in Aurora.

R. Scott Savell ('01) is a United States Air Force chaplain and is stationed at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. He is endorsed by NAMB and the SBC.

Harold S. Turner ('01) is the interim minister of music at FBC, Calhoun City, Miss.

Curtis W. Jetton ('02) is the pastor of Union Baptist Church in Hartford, Ala.

Frederick "Fred" Winters ('02) was reelected to a second term as president of the Illinois Baptist State Association. Winters is also the recipient of a sabbatical grant from the Eli Lilly Foundation and will be touring the cities of the Protestant Reformation. He will also celebrate his 20th year as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Maryville on June 3.

Scott Eanes ('03) recently celebrated 20 years of ministry as senior pastor of Fairview Baptist Church, Statesville, N.C.

Dallas Bivins ('05) is director of missions of the Sullivan Baptist Association in Kingsport, Tenn.

Justin Rader ('05) is pastor of Clinch River Baptist Church.

Stefanie Parsons ('06) was married to Mark Anthony Randall on Aug. 5, 2006. They are expecting their first child in July.

BIRTHS

Mr. and Mrs. Randy Woods ('91) announce the birth of their first grandchild, Zoe Dylan Cribbs, born on Aug. 31, 2006.

Lori Chitwood Bailey ('95) and Jerald are the parents of Caleb Joseph, born Oct. 2, 2006. Lori is also the minister of music at First United Methodist Church in Guntersville, Ala.

Mr. and Mrs. Cade Farris ('04) announce the birth of their second child, Charles Carson, born on Aug. 29, 2006. Cade is the minister to adults at FBC of Opelika, Ala.

Mr. and Mrs. Colin Garbarino ('05) announce the birth of their second daughter, Evangeline Mae, on March 25, 2006.

Mr. and Mrs. Matt Arden ('06) announce the birth of their daughter, Sophia Jane, born on Aug. 7, 2006. The Arden's currently live in Yuby City, Calif., where Matt is serving as the associate pastor for River Valley Christian Fellowship. They may be contacted at twoillinifans@yahoo.com.

DEATHS

Ray Langley ('44) on Aug. 16, 2006. Rev. Langley served churches in Arkansas after graduating from Southern.

William F. Crowe ('50) on Sept. 6, 2006.

S. Carter ('50) on Oct. 4, 2006 at the age of 85. He pastored several churches in the Baptist General Association of Virginia during his ministry of 35 years. Upon retirement he also served as interim pastor of churches within the association.

James H. Martin Jr. ('52) on Nov. 29, 2006. He devoted his life to the Christian ministry for more than 56 years.

William George Wilson ('53) on Oct. 4, 2006. His life was spent loving his family, serving to his church and his Lord Jesus Christ.

John Winston Lucas ('54) on Dec. 13, 2005 from Parkinson's disease.

James C.D. McDaniel ('54) on Feb. 8, 2005.

Grady Randolph, ('54) executive secretary of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, on Sept. 24, 2006 at the age of 86.

Loran Moore ('55) on March 30, 2006 in Bloomington, Ind.

Maurice L. Swinford ('55) on June 24, 2006 at the age of 78 in Memorial Hospital of Carbondale. During his pastorate, Swinford served churches in Illinois and Indiana. He also served as executive director of Illinois Baptist State Association from 1988-1993.

William Snell ('56) on Jan. 14, at the age of 76.

Albert L. Cardwell ('56) on Oct. 7, 2006 in Macon, Ga.

The wife of **Mr. Robert K. Lindholm** ('57) on June 16, 2006.

The wife of **Dr. Max Lee** ('59) on March 17, 2006.

John P. Holcomb ('68) on Nov. 29, 2006 in Richmond, Va.

Bob R. Melvin ('72) on Sept. 6, 2006.

Sandra Lee Holtzclaw ('77) on July 3, 2006 after a brief illness. She was a retired secretary of Sullivan Baptist Church in Kingsport and her husband, Tommy, was a retired director of missions for the Sullivan Baptist Association.

William B. Coddington ('87) on Dec. 30, 2005 at the age of 58.

MISSIONS

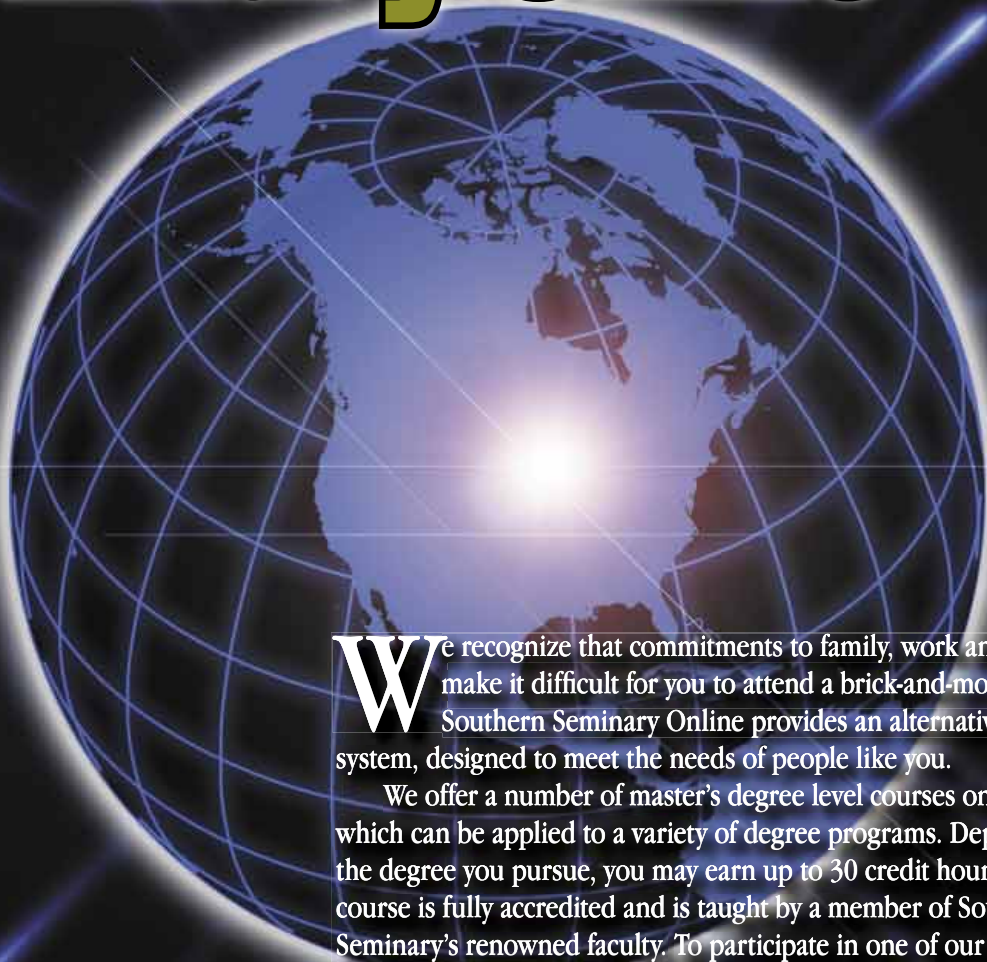
Glen Borders ('81) and his wife, Cile, were appointed on Sept. 13 during a service at FBC, North Spartanburg, S.C. The couple will be serving in central and eastern Europe.

Amanda Nicole Dillon ('06) was one of 67 new Southern Baptist missionaries appointed on Oct. 31, 2006, in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

SPECIAL NOTE

Ridgecrest Staffers Reunion, August 9-11, 2007. For reservations call 1-800-588-7222.

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**The Southern Baptist
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Roll Call 2006

A Letter From Our President



Dear Friend,

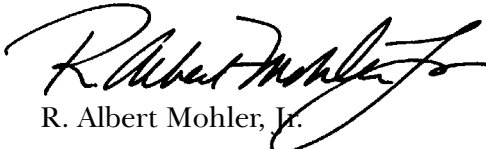
Each year it is a privilege to recognize those who have supported Southern Seminary in a significant financial manner. The generous support provided by friends of this institution has enabled us to continue our pursuit of theological excellence in training students to be faithful ministers of the gospel. In a day when many in our culture have denied absolute truth, we maintain an uncompromising commitment to the truth of God's Word as the foundation for effective ministry.

We are humbled that God has blessed us in many remarkable ways. Our enrollment continues to climb, as more and more students are directed by the Lord to study at Southern in preparation for a lifetime of ministry. These students are being equipped by many of the leading evangelical scholars of our day who comprise our excellent faculty.

None of these blessings would be possible without the support of the generous people whose names appear in this report. The annual *Roll Call* is an expression of our thankfulness to those who have invested in Southern Seminary, and also a reminder of our gratitude to God for blessing this great institution. Because of the prayerful support and financial gifts of our friends, Southern Seminary remains faithful to its calling.

Please know of my personal gratitude for you as a partner in the ministry of the gospel. May God continue to bless you according to the glorious riches that are ours in Christ Jesus.

Sincerely,


R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

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Individuals, denominational groups, and businesses contributing a minimum of \$1,000 in 2006 are members of the President's Associates. Within the President's Associates are several specific giving societies: Distinguished Associate, Leaders Associate, Founders Associate, John A. Broadus Associate, and Associate.

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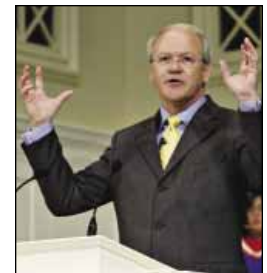
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Capt. Joseph G. Lerner

NEW MEXICO

Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Beckett

NEW YORK

Mr. Dan M. Bishop

NORTH CAROLINA

Mr. & Mrs. David Horner
Mr. & Mrs. Seth Macon

OHIO

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas D. English
Rev. & Mrs. J. Scott Gruner

Mrs. Florence Hsieh

OKLAHOMA

Mr. & Mrs. Joe T. Cox
Mr. and Mrs. Harold D. Mathena

PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. & Mrs. Carl E. Baldwin

SOUTH CAROLINA

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Mr. & Mrs. Duke K. McCall, Jr.

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Mr. & Mrs. Alan Berry
Rev. & Mrs. Arthur C. Bruner, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. J. Michael Duduit
Drs. Richard K. Fisher, Jr.
& Susan G. Fisher

Mr. & Mrs. Elder Glenn
Mr. & Mrs. Frank C. Ingraham
Dr. & Mrs. Robert D. Miller
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas S. Rainer
Mr. & Mrs. W. B. Scrivner

TEXAS

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Dr. & Mrs. Lucien E. Coleman, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. James T. Draper, Jr.

VIRGINIA

Mrs. Billie H. Parks
Mrs. Charles S. Webb, Jr.

WASHINGTON

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas P. Haass

Businesses, Denominations, and Foundations

ABFE

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
The Association of Theological Schools
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
BellSouth Communication System
Stuart, Florida
The Campbell Group, LLC
Portland, Oregon
Coca-Cola Company
Atlanta, Georgia
Commonwealth Life Insurance
Louisville, Kentucky
Florida Baptist Convention
Jacksonville, Florida
Hamer Foundation
Kenova, West Virginia
Jolley Foundation
Greenville, South Carolina
Jolly Evangelistic Foundation
Dalton, Georgia
McCulloch Memorial Endowment Fund
Dallas, Texas
Michael-Walters Industries
Louisville, Kentucky
National City Bank
Louisville, Kentucky
Nations Bank
Petersburg, Virginia
New York Baptist Convention
East Syracuse, New York
George W. Norton Foundation
Louisville, Kentucky
OfficeScapes, Inc.
Bartlett, Tennessee
Oklahoma Baptist Foundation
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Patterson-Barclay Foundation
Atlanta, Georgia
Rademaker Corporation
Louisville, Kentucky
The Marilyn June Robinson Foundation
Santa Barbara, California
Rockwell International Corporation
Seal Beach, California

South Carolina Baptist Foundation
Columbia, South Carolina
South Central Bell
Birmingham, Alabama
Virginia Baptist Foundation
Richmond, Virginia
Waste Management, Inc.
Oak Brook, Illinois

Churches

Broadmoor Baptist Church
Jackson, Mississippi
Covenant Life Church
Gaithersburg, Maryland
First Baptist Church
Bowie, Maryland
Harmony Baptist Church
Crystal Springs, Mississippi
Memorial Baptist Church
Arlington, Virginia
Trinity Baptist Church
Etowah, Tennessee
Walnut Street Baptist Church
Louisville, Kentucky

Estates

J. Felix Arnold Estate
Nashville, Tennessee
Ruth Averitt Estate
Lexington, Kentucky
R. G. Connaway Estate
Elizabethtown, Kentucky
Bill O. Davis Estate
Dalton, Georgia
Gwynn M. Day Estate
Richmond, Virginia
Leta Bateson Eaton Estate
Calabasas, California
Martha A. Goodwin Estate
Apex, North Carolina
H. V. Gritz Estate
Fort Worth, Texas
Samuel W. Holdcroft Estate
Petersburg, Virginia
Arthur Lloyd Estate
Lexington, Kentucky
Richard R. Lloyd Estate
Nashville, Tennessee
Evelyn E. Maydwell Estate
Louisville, Kentucky
Miss Margaret McKinney Estate
New Market, Tennessee
Mrs. J. G. Mohler Estate
Greenville, Ohio
Mrs. Mary J. Nanney Estate
Paris, Tennessee
Ira J. Porter Estate
Louisville, Kentucky
Mabel P. Scruggs Estate
Guthrie, Kentucky
O. M. Seigler Estate
Atlanta, Georgia
Edmund C. Smith Estate
Memphis, Tennessee
Ethel Washington Estate
Gainesville, Georgia
Cinda Mae Wilson Estate
Cincinnati, Ohio

Trusts

M. C. Thomas Trust
Charlottesville, Virginia

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1932

Rev. W. L. Baker

1935

Mrs. Gladys M. Huntwork
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Dr. Raymond A. Coppenger
Mr. & Mrs. William F. Johnson
Ms. Wilma J. Weeks

1938

Dr. & Mrs. Duke K. McCall, Sr.

1939

Dr. & Mrs. J. Chester Badgett
Dr. & Mrs. M. O. Owens, Jr.

1940

Dr. Reuben H. Falwell, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Robert W. Pratt
Mrs. Virginia P. Provence

1941

Mrs. Rhoda E. Tallant

1942

Miss Sara Craddock
Rev. R. Bruce Griffith, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Paul G. Locke
Rev. & Mrs. Claude B. Love, Jr.

1943

Mrs. Jean H. Brown
Dr. J. Randolph Gambill
Rev. & Mrs. W. Luther Tracy

1944

Rev. & Mrs. W. B. Bolt
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Dr. J. Winston Crawley
Dr. Richard G. Crowe
Dr. & Mrs. B. F. Hawkins
Mr. Edward H. Hodgens
Dr. & Mrs. Harold E. Lindsey
Dr. & Mrs. Roy C. McClung
Rev. & Mrs. Merle F. Pedigo

1945

Rev. & Mrs. T. L. Anderton
Rev. H. Richard Bills
Mrs. Marjorie E. Hardesty
Dr. & Mrs. George A. Jones
Dr. & Mrs. J. E. Jones
Rev. & Mrs. Henry V. Langford
Rev. R. D. McAllister
Rev. & Mrs. Thomas L. Rich, Jr.
Dr. Robert H. Willets

1946

Dr. & Mrs. David Q. Byrd, Jr.
Mr. James A. Crisp, Jr.
Dr. Andrew M. Hall
Dr. & Mrs. G. Othell Hand
Mrs. Velma P. Hart
Ms. Lucy R. Hoskins

Dr. & Mrs. John C. Huffman
Rev. & Mrs. Charles A. Kuszmaul
Mrs. Edith D. Rich
Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Thomas
Rev. William F. West, Jr.

1947

Dr. & Mrs. James C. Barry
Rev. & Mrs. Edgar J. Burkholder
Mrs. Floriene Byrd
Dr. & Mrs. Robert S. Cooper
Dr. & Mrs. Eugene I. Enlow
Rev. & Mrs. Tom D. Gullatt
Dr. & Mrs. Coley L. Leopard
Rev. & Mrs. Dargan B. Lucas
Rev. Harry W. Mattingly
Dr. & Mrs. J. R. Noonkester
Rev. & Mrs. J. Troy Prince
Rev. Hughlan P. Richey

1948

Miss Anna L. Cowan
Mrs. Erlene P. Denson
Dr. & Mrs. David R. Grant
Mrs. Martha J. Hand
Rev. & Mrs. John E. Hasel
Miss Laura Frances Snow
Chap. Forrest H. Watkins

1949

Mrs. June S. Baggett
Dr. & Mrs. Herbert E. Bergstrom
Rev. Charles J. Evans
Rev. & Mrs. Laurin H. Gardner
Mrs. Lucille G. Grant
Miss Virginia Highfill
Mrs. Violet M. Jones
Ms. Mary E. Young

1950

Mrs. Elsie C. England
Rev. Francis E. (Jack) Eppes
Rev. & Mrs. Edgar U. Hoover
Rev. & Mrs. Don A. McGuire
Mrs. Rose C. McIlwain
Ms. Ellen Marie McIntosh
Mrs. Naomi Noonkester
Ms. Mary C. Page
Rev. & Mrs. J. O. Reed, Jr.

1951

Rev. & Mrs. Q. Clyde Bush
Mrs. Bessie Davis
Rev. & Mrs. Crate Jones
Rev. & Mrs. Archie D. King
Dr. & Mrs. Paul W. Kolb
Rev. & Mrs. B. F. McIlwain
Rev. & Mrs. Robert A. Mowery
Mr. Thomas B. Pettyjohn
Rev. Dr. & Mrs. E. Moss Robertson
Chap. Parker C. Thompson

1952

Mrs. Martha Bargo
Chap. & Mrs. James C. Blanchard
Rev. & Mrs. Arthur C. Bruner, Jr.
Mrs. Barbara J. Davis
Rev. & Mrs. Walter R. Davis
Gordon & Miriam Flesher
Rev. & Mrs. Howard H. Golden
Chap. & Mrs. Clifton E. Land
Mrs. Geneva S. Link
Mrs. Clara L. Matthews
Rev. & Mrs. Robert E. Medearis
Dr. & Mrs. Paul H. Miller

Rev. & Mrs. Paul B. Nix
Rev. & Mrs. H. K. Sorrell
Miss Constance A. Via
Ms. Elizabeth Zorn

1953

Ms. E. Hortense Barnes
Dr. Roy Z. Chamlee, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. C. M. Cummings
Rev. & Mrs. Cornelius B. Davis
Rev. & Mrs. Ralph H. Dovenbarger
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph P. DuBose Jr.
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Mr. & Mrs. J. Archie Hampton
Rev. & Mrs. L. D. Holt
Chap. & Mrs. H. Marlowe Link
Dr. & Mrs. Richard D. Lucas
Mrs. Patricia R. Permenter
Rev. & Mrs. Billy G. Rivers
Miss Ada H. Young

1954

Dr. & Mrs. Kelly E. Blanton, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. Alvin D. Bozard
Rev. & Mrs. James L. Britt
Rev. & Mrs. C. Richard Broome
Rev. & Mrs. George W. Chapman
Mrs. Pauline W. Dodson
Mr. & Mrs. Justus L. Garrett
Mr. & Mrs. Morris J. Hardwick, Jr.
Chap. & Mrs. Alexander N. Hollis, Jr.
Dr. Jack R. Kennedy
Dr. & Mrs. Charles C. Moore
Mr. Paul C. Mosteller
Rev. & Mrs. William R. Myers
Rev. & Mrs. Clint A. Oakley, Jr.
Mrs. J. Passailaigue
Mr. & Mrs. Sherman B. Richards
Rev. Chester L. Self

1955

Dr. & Mrs. Harold L. Anderson
Rev. & Mrs. William E. Arnold
Dr. David H. Bentley, Jr.
Rev. William F. Bowen, Jr.
Mrs. Bob Brannan
Rev. & Mrs. Harold F. Bratcher
Mr. & Mrs. Ned H. Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Russell B. Carroll
Dr. & Mrs. George R. Glenn
Dr. & Mrs. Edgar E. Hatfield
Rev. & Mrs. George B. Kimsey
Rev. Richard A. & Mrs. Alice A. Landess
Rev. & Mrs. Gene E. Moffatt

1956

Mrs. Mary P. Sample Barlow
Mr. & Mrs. John G. Barth
Mr. & Mrs. Henry F. Campbell, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. James O. Coldiron
Mrs. Shirley Forsen
Dr. & Mrs. Wilbert H. Goatley
Mr. & Mrs. Garvin C. Martin
Rev. & Mrs. Alan G. Moor
Mr. & Mrs. W. Paul Payne
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Mrs. Frances Sharron
Rev. & Mrs. Bill L. Withers

1957

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Baker
Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Blue, Sr.
E. Byron & Barbara P. Boyer
Rev. & Mrs. Hugh B. Brooks
Rev. & Mrs. Fred H. Brown

Mrs. Carolyn W. Budgett
Rev. James G. Crouch
Dr. & Mrs. H. Posey Gaines
Mr. & Mrs. William E. Hungate
Mr. & Mrs. William D. Jaggars
Dr. & Mrs. Glen A. Kirsch
Mr. William C. Mathis
Dr. & Mrs. Robert D. McCray
Mr. & Mrs. James T. Nolen
Mr. & Mrs. Norman J. Orr
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Mr. & Mrs. Roy H. Silvers, II
Dr. & Mrs. George W. Thompson, Jr.

1958
Rev. & Mrs. William R. Bobo
Rev. & Mrs. Robert H. Brindle
Dr. & Mrs. Charles L. Chaney
Rev. & Mrs. Alfred S. Eastin
Rev. Dick Edmonds
Rev. & Mrs. Robert D. Hatzfeld
Rev. & Mrs. Richard A. Hearn
Dr. & Mrs. E. M. Heddon
Mr. & Mrs. Eddie J. Henson
Dr. & Mrs. Herbert R. Higdon
Mrs. Dorothy McDermitt
Rev. & Mrs. Lewis I. Myers, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. J. H. Olive
Rev. & Mrs. George J. Palmer
Dr. & Mrs. James A. Puckett, Sr.
Rev. & Mrs. Charles K. Sharpe
Rev. & Mrs. James K. Sparkman
Dr. & Mrs. Eugene H. Stewart
Rev. & Mrs. Willis H. Tassie
Dr. Bill Clark Thomas
Dr. Palmer J. Whitt
Rev. & Mrs. Charles R. Woods
Rev. Donald L. Zuberer
Chap. & Mrs. Vasten E. Zumwalt

1959
Ms. Cosette M. Baker
Dr. & Mrs. Harold D. Beard
Mr. Dan M. Bishop
Dr. & Mrs. Robert L. Bowers
Rev. & Mrs. Clifton Courtney, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Norman L. Gardner
Miss Eunice Heath
Rev. & Mrs. William B. Jennings
Dr. & Mrs. H. Raymond Langlois
Rev. & Mrs. James A. Latimer
Mr. & Mrs. Donald E. Lytal
Dr. Robert B. Mussman
Mr. & Mrs. James S. Rice
Miss Carol J. Smith
Rev. & Mrs. Lovell J. Sorrell
Dr. & Mrs. Dick Thomassian

1960
Dr. & Mrs. James C. Bradley
Mrs. Patricia T. Browning
Dr. & Mrs. Charles Q. Carter
Dr. & Mrs. G. Byrns Coleman
Rev. & Mrs. Harry E. Crosby
Rev. & Mrs. James F. Davenport, Sr.
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Rev. & Mrs. Jerry A. Ostrom
Rev. & Mrs. Howard E. Pryor
Mr. & Mrs. Roy E. Walker
Mr. & Mrs. William L. Williamson

1961
Mr. & Mrs. Ray H. Bateman

Mrs. Frances C. Bradley
Rev. & Mrs. Ira Thomas Caudill
Dr. R. Gent Cofer
Mrs. Bertha Courtney
Mr. & Mrs. Bobby G. Dollar
Rev. Tom W. Harrell, Sr.
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Rev. & Mrs. Larry E. Huntley
Dr. & Mrs. J. Phillip Landgrave
Mr. & Mrs. Donald L. Moor
Rev. Omer G. Painter
Rev. & Mrs. Gene A. Phillips
Dr. & Mrs. James L. Powell, Jr.
Rev. William Y. Sanders
Miss Charlotte M. Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Carl P. Wells, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Donald A. White
Rev. & Mrs. J. Charles White

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Rev. & Mrs. Ladies Bargo
Rev. & Mrs. James W. Browning
Dr. Cline E. Hall
Rev. & Mrs. Gene Weddle

1963
Dr. Leroy N. Johnston, Jr.
Miss Donna K. Kirby
Rev. & Mrs. Donald B. LeMaster
Dr. & Mrs. Victor L. Morlan
Rev. & Mrs. W. Edgar Piercy

1964
Mrs. Nancy J. Bottom
Dr. & Mrs. B. Carlisle Driggers
Mr. & Mrs. Johnnie Hall, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest O. King, Jr.
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Mrs. Rose Marie B. Robinson
Rev. & Mrs. Howard L. Watson

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Dr. & Mrs. Gene Gafford
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Mr. & Mrs. Andrew J. Hensley
Dr. & Mrs. Robert H. Jackson
Rev. & Mrs. William D. Jones
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Mr. & Mrs. Douglas T. Strader
Mr. & Mrs. Donald W. Ward
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne S. Welch
Dr. & Mrs. Jerrell G. White
Rev. & Mrs. Norman M. Willie

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Chap. & Mrs. Collum D. Birdwell
Dr. Kenneth W. Bush
Dr. & Mrs. Paul L. Camp
Mr. & Mrs. James L. Cook
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry L. Foster

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Rev. & Mrs. James E. Heard
Dr. & Mrs. Bill F. Mackey
Rev. & Mrs. David McMichael
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Mrs. Mary S. Thompson

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Rev. & Mrs. Charles C. Burress
Dr. & Mrs. R. C. Huisinga
Mr. & Mrs. Paul D. Learned
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel R. Sparks
Miss Evelyn L. Stone
Dr. & Mrs. W. Judson Vaughn

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Mr. & Mrs. Dickie J. Bruce
Mr. & Mrs. Everette R. Burnette
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Rev. & Mrs. Irmal L. Elliott
Mrs. Max W. Ernest
Rev. & Mrs. Donald R. Garrison
Dr. & Mrs. Leonard E. Griffiths
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Mr. & Mrs. Clifton Ray Richardson
Dr. & Mrs. Fred A. Steelman

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Dr. & Mrs. Robert S. Clark
Rev. & Mrs. John E. East, III
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Dr. & Mrs. Baylon L. Hilliard
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Mrs. Carol Ann Mathis
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Rev. & Mrs. Ben R. Wiseman

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Rev. & Mrs. F. J. May
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Rev. & Mrs. Maxie A. Threatt
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Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence H. Williams
Mrs. Sandra M. Williams

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Rev. & Mrs. James A. Britt
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald O. Brown
Rev. & Mrs. Stephen D. Brown
Dr. & Mrs. David M. DeBord
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Dr. Jerry R. Flora
Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth S. Hemphill
Rev. & Mrs. J. Randall Jones
Dr. & Mrs. Victor McKinney, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. David N. Roberts
Mr. Frank Timmerman, Jr.

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Dr. & Mrs. Barry G. Allen
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas M. Atwood
Mr. John A. Chamness
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Mr. Terry L. Sammons
Rev. & Mrs. T. Gary Watkins
Rev. & Mrs. Robert H. Watts

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Miss Dona J. Crowe
Mrs. Susan R. Hocking
Dr. & Mrs. Don R. Mathis
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Norwood, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Satterfield
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Williams, Jr.

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Rev. & Mrs. R. Roger Becks, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. Thomas M. Byerly
Dr. & Mrs. Gary R. Cook
Mr. & Mrs. Greg E. Cope
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth M. Hayes
Rev. & Mrs. Mark A. Stover
Mr. & Mrs. John Robert Strange

1976
Rev. & Mrs. Glen D. Flowers
Mr. & Mrs. David K. Langerfeld
Mrs. Connie G. Marrett
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Dr. & Mrs. R. Philip Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Larry E. Rollins
Mr. & Mrs. Alan C. Rumm
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Dr. Ronald & Dr. Sandra Turner

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Mr. & Mrs. Clyde C. Allen Jr.
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Mr. Charles E. Dyke
Dr. & Mrs. Roger M. Evans
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Mr. & Mrs. Samuel R. Janis
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Mr. & Mrs. Harold B. Price
Dr. & Mrs. S. E. Rittenhouse
Rev. & Mrs. Israel W. Stewart Jr.
Tom & Linda Terry
Dr. & Mrs. Richard E. Trader
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Turner, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Virgil Warren
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne E. Wiles
Dr. & Mrs. Michael J. Young, Sr.

1978
Rev. & Mrs. Ronald L. Avant
Mrs. Yvonne B. Bleakly
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Dr. & Mrs. Robert D. Cochran
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Mr. & Mrs. Gregory L. Craig
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Rev. & Mrs. Gerald V. Stump Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen E. Thompson
Chap. & Mrs. R. Steve Tufts
Mr. Steven C. Waldenga
Rev. & Mrs. Terrell L. Walker
Rev. & Mrs. Donald West

1979
Mr. Mrs. John S. Bleakly, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. Dennis N. Bradley
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Dr. & Mrs. J. Michael Duduit
Mrs. Clair H. Dunlap
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Dr. & Mrs. Paul Theophilus
Mrs. Deborah L. White
Rev. & Mrs. G. Bryant Wright, Jr.

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Dr. & Mrs. William I. Barkley, Jr.
Ms. Linda M. Blincoe
Rev. & Mrs. Roscoe L. Bolton, III
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Bonenberger
Dr. & Mrs. Gregory B. Brewton
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Mrs. Deborah E. Cochran
Dr. & Mrs. Daniel E. Hatfield
Dr. & Mrs. Paul E. Hindman, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. Robert A. Langlois
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Dr. & Mrs. Dennis A. O'Neill
Mrs. Nancy Price
Mr. & Mrs. J. Reese Ray

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Dr. R. Brian Bonney
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Rev. & Mrs. Ronald R. Davis
Dr. & Mrs. Dan D. Haskins, Jr.
Rev. E. Chris Jackson
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Mr. William P. Jones
Rev. & Mrs. Donald R. McMaster
Mrs. Eveline F. Miller
Rev. & Mrs. Cecil H. Reid, Jr.
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Mr. & Mrs. Steven W. Winberry
Dr. & Mrs. Keith F. Winfree

1982
Mr. & Mrs. Dearl L. Bunce
Mrs. Patricia C. Bush
Rev. & Mrs. Richard A. Childs
Mrs. Menda Sue Hatfield
Rev. & Mrs. John W. McDaniel
Don & Julie Sivyer
Mrs. Fannie C. Tam
Dr. Timothy & Mrs. Fannie Tam

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Dr. & Mrs. Robert D. Bailey
Chaplain & Mrs. David E. Bates
Rev. & Mrs. John A. Bates
Rev. & Mrs. Richard A. Childs
Mrs. Dorothy Frady
Chap. & Mrs. Daniel E. Harrison
Dr. & Mrs. Timothy A. McCoy
Dr. & Mrs. R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Edward W. Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. Harry L. Nurse, Jr.
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Mr. Lindy L. Robertson, Jr.
Mr. Lynn Allan Sandusky

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Mr. & Mrs. John D. Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry A. Clonts Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Charles R. Esary
Rev. & Mrs. Robert G. Fuller
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth W. Hamersley
Mr. & Mrs. Peter A. Huff
Mr. & Mrs. Richard H. Hunt
Mr. & Mrs. James D. Shuttler

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Mr. & Mrs. Louis Forsythe II
Rev. & Mrs. Randall W. Hollingsworth
Dr. & Mrs. John E. Hurtgen
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey S. Langdon
Rev. & Mrs. Fred P. Lowrance
Dr. & Mrs. Edward C. Lyrene, Jr.
Mrs. Betty M. Meneses
Rev. & Mrs. Larry W. Polston
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas S. Rainer
Rev. & Mrs. B. Keith Sanderson
Mr. & Mrs. Carter G. Stewart
Dr. & Mrs. Roger W. Wischmeier

1986
Mr. & Mrs. Clinton D. Batcheller
Dr. & Mrs. James E. Castlen
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen D. Drake
Mr. & Mrs. Rickey D. Hatley
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Rambo
Dr. & Mrs. David H. Ray
Dr. & Mrs. John R. Rogers, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. James O. Stepp
Mrs. Linda K. Thompson
Dr. & Mrs. Douglas C. Walker, III
Mr. & Mrs. Hugh W. Wicks

1987
Miss Joy Lee Comingore
Mr. & Mrs. Mark A. Croston, Sr.
Rev. & Mrs. G. Brian Hendricks
Rev. & Mrs. Jay P. Hurley
Mr. & Mrs. William J. McKiddy, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph E. Newton
Rev. & Mrs. Thomas A. Seesing
Dr. & Mrs. Jeff C. Smoak, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Ronald L. Sprunger
Rev. Michael B. Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy L. Waits

1988
Mr. & Mrs. Randall E. Beard
Rev. & Mrs. Albert D. Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth D. Heiney
Miss Paula Jean Pierpoint
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis R. Redstone
Rev. & Mrs. James H. Simmons
Dr. & Mrs. Derek L. Staples
Mr. Kenneth B. Weathersby

1989
Rev. & Mrs. Henry T. Ledbetter
Dr. & Mrs. Michael W. Routh
Mrs. Elva Anne Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel E. Thomasson

1990
Dr. & Mrs. Robert W. Bell
Mr. Donald R. Crossley
Mr. & Mrs. Paul L. Mutschler
Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Porter
Dr. & Mrs. Robert W. Segrest
Dr. & Mrs. Mike R. Shelton
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Turner
Mr. James A. Turner, Jr.

1991
Mr. Dennis Boyd Brinkworth
Mr. David A. Hasker
Mr. & Mrs. William Jackson
Rev. & Mrs. Roy E. Life
Mr. & Mrs. D. Gary Martin
Rev. & Mrs. Philip R. Morris
Rev. & Mrs. Walter K. Price
Mr. & Mrs. William M. Shrader
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas D. Stubblefield
Rev. & Mrs. Paul L. Wilson
Rev. & Mrs. Randy A. Woods, Sr.

1992
Mr. Stephen C. & Rev. Debra R. Allen
Mr. & Mrs. Sidney M. Cottingham
Mr. & Mrs. Robert T. Helm
Dr. & Mrs. Charles E. Lawless, Jr.
Mrs. Sai Soon Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Michael G. May
Dr. Paul Edward Peak
Mr. & Mrs. David L. Withers

1993
Rev. & Mrs. Joseph Harper, Jr.
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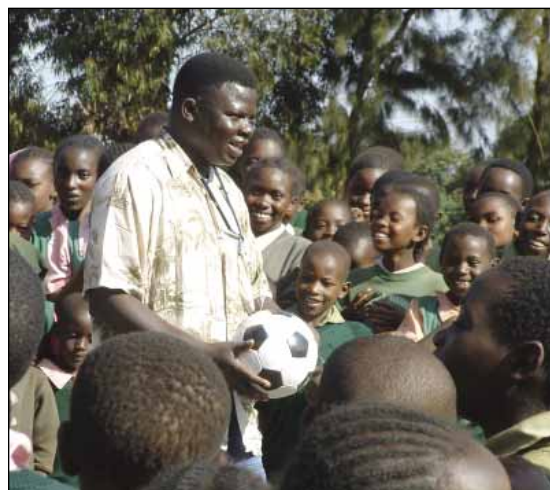
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