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TEXAS BAPTIST FORUM: Poor strategy

The Baptist General Convention of Texas' decision to conduit funds so fired/resigned International Mission Board personnel can continue in their former places of service has a pleasant ring to traditional Southern Baptists.

But it is poor missions strategy.


E-mail the editor at marvknox@baptiststandard.com

In its early days, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was swamped with inquiries from missionaries about switching their appointment to CBF. Our early missions leaders (Keith Parks and Harlan Spurgeon) wisely counseled those under FMB appointment they would need to resign from their current appointment, apply to the Fellowship and importantly, if appointed, they would not serve where they had previously. Parks and Spurgeon made wise decisions then. They are wise practices for the BGCT now. The great risk is exporting the Southern Baptist Convention mess to areas of the world where the Baptist witness is fragile at best. It breeds local confusion and prolongs turmoil.

Traditional Southern Baptists long for days that are gone and will never

return. The proactive way to face the future is to simply face the future. There are more than 2 billion who have yet to hear the name of Jesus.

The wise counsel for fired/resigned IMB personnel is to pray the good work they started will carry on. Trust it to those who chose to remain. Live in confidence that God is opening new doors to share the gospel. Continue their God-given call but in a fresh setting among those who have yet to hear. And pray God prospers groups that facilitate the holy calling to missions service.

Harold A. Phillips

Liberty, Mo.

Dispensationalism & peace

One member of our extended family purchased a home and for religious reasons installed a second dishwasher. It seems that just keeping two sets of dishes (one to be used for foods containing meat and another for those with milk) is not enough; the dishes also must be washed separately.

To most of us, this seems like a rather ridiculous practice, especially since it is apparently based very loosely on just a single verse in the Bible, Exodus 23:19, which states, "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk."

Was this sort of strained interpretation part of what Jesus was warning his disciples against when he told them to be on their guard against "the yeast of the Pharisees"?

Much of what is known as dispensational theology looks suspiciously like the product of similar human speculations except that its Talmud is called the Scofield Reference Bible.

Until recently, I had regarded most of those speculations as a sort of harmless hobby; however, it is becoming evident that some on the Far Right are needlessly complicating the Middle East peace process with their beliefs. They may even outdo the Israelis themselves in arguing that the Palestinians have no rights whatsoever to any part of Palestine.

I beseech thee therefore, brethren, to read through the whole Bible at least once without using the dispensational spectacles and consider whether some other conclusions about Israel's place in the plan of God might possibly be correct.

James O. Morse

McGregor

Proud of fundamentalism

I have been a fundamentalist for 53 years and proud of it. My fundamentalism is defined by a dear friend, Herschel Hobbs, as set forth in his book, "The Fundamentals of Our Faith," which I have taught in Bible classes in a very respected university and Bible institute.

I also agree with a well-respected author, Leon Morris, who states fundamentalism is a wonderful, God-honoring position, and it is not, as he states, "bibliolatry," as some would have us to believe.

May God help us to be this type of fundamentalist and respect the Bible as the "fundamentals of our faith."

R.T. Ware

El Paso

Separation of church & state

Judge Roy Moore in essence says he has the right to place any monument he wants in the courthouse. If Moore were a Buddhist, almost every American would say placing a statue of Buddha in a courthouse would be illegal.

Moore broke the law by openly defying a court order from a higher court. In America, what is illegal for one is illegal for all.

I wonder how many lost souls have been attracted to Christianity by these recent events? I suspect more are repulsed than are attracted by these demonstrations and rhetoric. Rather than unthinkingly following a pied piper, we should rejoin our Baptist forefathers who had the foresight to insist on separation of church and state.

Charles McFatter

Semmes, Ala.

Pick & choose

I cannot comprehend the ongoing controversy concerning the removal of the Ten Commandments from the Alabama courthouse when the majority of Christians totally ignore the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."

Can we pick and choose any one to disregard?

Consider Deuteronomy 12:32: "See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it."

Ted K. Bailey

Carrollton

Single parents

Running short of copy at the Baptist Standard? In finding it for the most part informative of Texas Baptists and the progress made to counter otherwise overbearing conservatives, I happened upon “Seven in 10 U.S. children still live with two parents” (Sept. 8). This is information I really need to know as a Baptist?

Really! What does that say to the otherwise forgotten three children who don't live in a two-parent environment and to single parents? They don't fit the mold as the traditional Baptist family unit?

Try to convince my two children we are not a family. Come on guys, you are beginning to teeter into the land of the apocalypse.

As a single mother of two who has contributed greatly to singles and Texas Baptists steering away from this mindset, I view this as a non-eventful article for a broad-based informational tool of Texas Baptists. Next time you need an additional article, I'd be glad to contribute by telling the challenges that “singles” face with rearing our children alone, juggling between job and a Christian family lifestyle, overcoming the affirmation that married adults are overall more wholesome than single adults. In many cases, I think not.

I'd go a step further to comment on the success of having met those challenges, the inspiration that children contribute to the single parent in their faith walk and how those children encourage and motivate us to capacities that we didn't know were present when suffocated by a non-contributing marital partner.

Sandra Magee Womack

Pasadena

God's 'glory'

John Piper and those who follow him would do well to study the biblical meaning of God's "glory," as well as the dictionary definition (Sept. 8).

Exodus and 2 Corinthians give the clearest explanation. Note these verses:

"Moses said to God, 'Show me your glory, I pray'" (Exodus 33:18). "God answered, 'You cannot see my face; ... while my glory passes by ... I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen'" (Exodus 33:20, 22-23).

Here, God directly equates his glory with his face, the revelation of his true nature.

In 2 Corinthians 4:6, we have the same identification: "It is God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

We bring glory to God by helping people see what God is like, by introducing them to Jesus Christ. God wants no other glory.

Velma Stevens

Fort Worth

Word of God

Which Bible is the true word of God?

We have hundreds of "new," "revised" and "improved" versions to choose from.

Now, the Southern Baptist Convention's LifeWay Christian Resources has come up with another version, the Holman Christian Standard Bible.

I care not what Bible other Baptists may choose, but as for me, I will continue to use my old King James Version.

I am convinced it is God's preserved word. ...

Also, the Ten Commandments are God's word, and he expects us to obey them.

We were told in John 14:15: "If you love me, keep my commandments."

Like Ted Koppel said, "They are the Ten Commandments, not the Ten Suggestions."

If our U.S. Supreme Court outlaws the Ten Commandments and the Holy Bible, this nation will be in danger of God's judgment.

We were warned in Psalm 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Elsie Graham

Olmito

What do you think? Submit letters for Texas Baptist Forum to marvknox@baptiststandard.com or Box 660267, Dallas 75266-0267.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.