

Texas Baptist Forum_102003

October 17, 2003

Posted: 10/17/03

TEXAS BAPTIST FORUM: Highest ambition

The church should offer the greatest example of forgiveness, patience, mercy, love and “watching what you say.” Unfortunately, conflict often occurs between pastor and congregation.

The church, where we preach that no one is perfect, should be a place where we do not expect perfection. But it seems rare that we hear about a loving congregation, whose members and pastor actually get along.



However, this is not necessarily the case.

Yes, some churches have problems, but others exhibit a great deal of love. If you and another member or even the pastor have difficulty getting along, try exercising a little kindness.

Remember Proverbs 15:1: “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” Or Proverbs 17:22: “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”

Much, if not most, of church conflict is due to lack of respect. The Bible teaches us to look out for the interests and concerns of another above self.

Jesus taught that service should be our highest ambition. As Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, he taught humility and service.

We all want to be served, but not many want to serve.

First Peter 5 calls upon pastors/shepherds to lead by example, and 1 Timothy 5:17 teaches that leaders “who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.”

Work hard to make a difference in your church. It has to begin with someone!

Bill Adams

Port Arthur

God's purpose for people

Two Semitic language scholars corrected a translational error of Genesis 2:15 that now reads: “And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to worship and to obey.”

God's purpose for every person and nation is to worship and obey him.

Because every person rebels against God to one degree or another, God sent Jesus to pay for our sin so that through Jesus we are enabled to obey God and have our worship of him accepted.

Through Jesus, we are able to be reconciled to God and to each other. This is the gospel message, the good news, for every person who will believe.

Worship and obey God, and share the good news of Jesus with others today.

E.V. May Jr.

Livingston

Time for forgiveness

As mentioned in your editorial on Baylor family values (Sept. 22), our Baylor family needs to practice Christian values (“be-attitudes”) such as you named—love, grace, compassion and forgiveness, and patience, now!

Baylor has a great future through Baylor 2012 under the leadership of President Robert Sloan, just as it has an equally exciting history starting way back in 1845.

Now is the time for all of us to pray for the sweet spirit we need to forgive and to move forward on behalf of the many students who will pass through the halls of learning on her beautiful campus.

Joe Novak

Denton

A larger 'family'

As I read the three side-by-side articles on Baylor University's quest (Sept. 22), one particular passage by Chris Seay struck an emotional chord with me.

“Baylor exists for the sake of the church. She is 'Pro Ecclesia' and 'Pro Texana.' So, resolve these differences. Our success in Texas rests in Baylor's hands.”

I do not understand what he means by “success in Texas” or to whose success he is referring. However, when I first read this article, I felt like he was saying that without Baylor, Texas Baptists cannot survive.

I realize that Baylor has a long and rich tradition of training ministers and others for work in Texas. I agree with most of Seay's article on how the Baylor family needs to reconcile its differences.

But I do not understand how “success in Texas,” whatever that means, rests in Baylor's hands, or at least how it rests solely in Baylor's hands.

Just as there is a Baylor family, Baylor is part of a Texas Baptist family—no one member of which should be considered more important than the other.

David Tankersley

Abilene

Husbands & wives

I take exception to the statement regarding wives that says, “Listen to your wife. God made her to nag, whine and complain,” in the article titled “Christian men urged to beware of falling into sexual sins” about the LifeWay Christian Resources conference (Oct. 6).

Does that also mean that God made husbands to be sneaky, deceitful and weak? I don't think so.

Mae Knott

Kerrville

No. 1 problem

Paige Patterson believes “the war against boys and the establishment of laws to prevent men from hunting and owning guns” is the No. 1 problem in America (Oct. 6). Seriously?

While I could list homelessness, unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, terrorism and numerous other social issues that are worse than a kid not killing something with his dad, how about domestic violence?

How about the fact animal shelters outnumber by three to one shelters for women and children who are in imminent danger from a husband or boyfriend? How about women who live in fear for their lives in their own homes because he's threatened to kill the family?

What about the Dallas Police Department, which answers 20,000 calls a year for domestic disturbance, and only 100 beds in Dallas County are available as an answer to those calls? What about boys who will grow up to abuse their girlfriends and wives because that's what Daddy did?

The statement Patterson made about turning little boys into little girls because boys don't go hunting anymore seems par for the course. However, I cannot recall one verse in the Bible pertaining to godly boys and men where it states, "He must have a gun, a big dog and kill a lot of stuff."

If America's No 1 problem really were that more little boys don't go hunting, this would be an amazing country.

Mindy Ward-Logsdon

Dallas

Manly standards

I was disturbed to read that Paige Patterson said, "Every boy needs a dog, a gun and a dad" (Oct. 6).

I have never owned a gun or even been hunting, and I don't know of anyone in my family-male or female-who owns a gun. Does this make me any less of a man?

When I was growing up, we had a family dog. It was not a “big” dog; in fact, it probably qualified as a “yip” dog. It was the best pet I ever remember having. Does it make me any less of a man because I didn't have a “big” dog?

My father passed away when I was only 11 years old. My mother continued raising me and my sister as a single mom. Does not having a dad through late childhood and adolescence make me any less of a man?

Did the seminary president even consider that one of the things every boy should have is a Bible? He needs to re-think what it really takes to be a man.

Is he looking at the world's standards or God's?

Bob Hewett

Amarillo

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