

# Graham urges Southern Baptists to gear up for culture wars\_62804

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## Graham urges Southern Baptists to gear up for culture wars

**By Charlie Warren**

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INDIANAPOLIS—The Southern Baptist Convention should “look up, step up, stand up, wise up and gear up” for America's cultural wars, said outgoing SBC President Jack Graham.

“The moral issues of our time are still on the table,” Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, told messengers during his president's address at the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

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Graham urged Southern Baptists to fight for passage of a federal constitutional amendment that defines marriage as a union between one husband and one wife.

“It must not be redefined,” he said. “To redefine marriage is an attempt to undermine the foundations of this nation. ...



Jack  
Graham

"We believe in the family, therefore we must press for the federal marriage amendment and get this done."

President George W. Bush has called for the added voices of the religious community on this issue, Graham said.

He challenged Southern Baptists to step up and gear up for the task.

"The priority for Southern Baptists is to fulfill the Great Commission," Graham said. "Sharing Jesus is God's agenda. Some say we should just share the gospel and shut up about the rest of this. ...

"But if we don't stand up, speak out, and wise up on these issues, who will be left to deal with the issues of our times? If not us, Southern Baptists, then who? If not now, when? May God help us to do it now."

Southern Baptists are failing in America's cultural war, Graham said, because they lack the power of God.

"We need preachers who are willing to stand up for truth, preach the truth and call sin by its name," he said.

Noting this year's presidential election, he lauded the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's "iVoteValues.com" program to register and inform voters and encourage them to vote on their biblical values and principles.

Preaching from Ephesians 3:20-21, Graham noted that God's kingdom, Jesus the Savior, the Bible, God's mercy and salvation are forever.

“His reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords is forever,” Graham said. “Thus, forever we love and serve him.”

The hope of eternal life must serve as a catalyst for dynamic living today, he added.

“Some say we are in the land of the living on the way to the land of the dying,” Graham said. “That is not true. We are in the land of the dying on our way to the land of the living.”

He said the worthy walk of believers demands their witness to the world—evangelism and missions.

“Only the Holy Spirit can empower our words and witness and break through the darkness of someone's life,” Graham said. “If I know my Bible and believe my Bible and don't walk across the street to share the gospel, I have missed the point.”

He urged pastors to “get over the idea of being CEOs of the church and remember we are called to be shepherds reaching sheep, especially lost sheep.”

He also urged Southern Baptists to reach America's great cities with the gospel.

“We must not relent. We must not retreat. We must not give up an inch of God's territory,” Graham concluded.

“I don't know if we are going to prevail in this cultural war or not. ...

“The one thing I do know is his kingdom is forever.”

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