

Pastors' conference explores what makes a 'man of God'_62705

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NASHVILLE, Tenn.- Vision, valor, vigilance, vitality and victory are the five components of a man of God's ministry, Adrian Rogers told those attending the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference.

"We have so many preachers today who are living lives of quiet desperation, drawing their breath, drawing their salary and waiting for retirement," said Rogers, pastor emeritus of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn. "They need to get a fresh vision of Almighty God. Never has there been a day, an age or an opportunity to preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ like there is today."

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Rogers headlined the two-day Pastors' Conference in Nashville, wrapping up the conference after 10 other speakers. Steve Gaines, pastor of Gardendale's First Baptist Church in Gardendale, Ala., and president of the Pastors' Conference, led a time of prayer for Rogers, who is fighting cancer.

Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, exhorted pastors to "preach Christ."

Southern Baptists "seem to be losing a sizable portion of our evangelistic passion," Fish said, noting pastors also can get caught up in defending the gospel rather than preaching it.

Speaking from Ephesians 3:8, he urged pastors to preach about Christ, the cross and the Resurrection, "and not merely on Easter morning."

As Fish concluded his sermon, he was honored with a video and ovation for his 40 years as evangelism professor at Southwestern. Fish was presented a check for \$31,000, collected from former students and others in honor of him.

Jerry Falwell, in his first outside engagement since being hospitalized in May, focused on preachers having a message, a mission and a vision.

Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., said the message for Baptists included several fundamental beliefs such as the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture, the deity of Christ and the substitutionary atonement of Christ for all men.

Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore spoke on the importance of acknowledging God, even in adverse situations.

Moore was ousted as Alabama's highest judge in 2004 after refusing to remove a monument of the Ten Commandments he had erected in

Alabama's state judicial building in Montgomery. The famed memorial was on display in Nashville in the exhibit hall during the Pastors' Conference and SBC annual meeting.

Moore said his decision to defy court orders was "about the acknowledgement of God."

He urged pastors and churches to take a stand for God. "God is sending a spiritual awakening across our land. ... It is a great time to be alive and face freedom to acknowledge God."

Other speakers included Pastor Mac Brunson of First Baptist Church in Dallas; Pastor Johnny Hunt of First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga.; Ergun Caner, dean of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va.; evangelist Voddie Baucham of Spring; prayer conference leader Don Miller of Fort Worth; former SBC president Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla.; Alabama evangelist Junior Hill; and Jerry Tidwell, pastor of Ellendale Baptist Church in Bartlett, Tenn.

Officers elected to serve for the 2006 Pastors' Conference were: President Bryant Wright, pastor of Johnson's Ferry Baptist Church, Atlanta; Vice President Doug Munton, pastor of First Baptist Churchin O'Fallon, Ill.; and Secretary Gary Urich, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Bolivar, Mo.

Compiled from reports by Stella Prather, Jennifer Rash, Grace Thornton, Lisa Watson and Erin Webster

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