

# Florida interview stirs controversy

September 1, 2006

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## Florida interview stirs controversy

**By Robert Marus**

*ABP Washington Bureau*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP) —Rep. Katherine Harris (R-Fla.) has caused a major stir with comments, published in the Florida Baptist Convention's newspaper and picked up by national media, suggesting the separation of church and state is a lie and failure to elect Christians to public office will cause governments to "legislate sin."

The Florida Baptist Witness recently published a package of articles and interviews with candidates in the state's primary elections for governor and United States Senate.

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## Texas Baptist Forum

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# Texas Baptist Forum

## Special in God's sight

Thank you for your 2nd Opinion column on stem-cell research (Aug. 21). Please allow me to put a personal face on an aspect of that discussion.

Letters are welcomed. Send them to [marvknox@baptiststandard.com](mailto:marvknox@baptiststandard.com); 250 words maximum.

## **Out ((Loud))**

*“While the Lord loves the Jewish people as he loves all people, the church is now the people of God. Events related to the modern state of Israel are not to be connected specifically with Revelation or other books of biblical prophecy.”*

### **Jim Denison**

Pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas and daily blogger ([GodIssues.org](http://GodIssues.org))

*“The United States, a so-called Christian country, has a double standard. With one hand, it gives bombs to Israel, and with the other, it gives milk and flour to those affected by the bombs. Is this Christian? Forget Christian, is this human?”*

### **Albert Isteero**

Editor of the Arabic-language edition of *The Upper Room* daily devotional guide (United Methodist News Service/RNS)  
*“The terrorists sent bombs and bullets. ... Let’s respond with Bibles.”*

### **Johnny Hunt**

National spokesman for Muslim Bible Day, a project that distributes Bibles in Muslim countries.

([www.muslimbible.org](http://www.muslimbible.org) /RNS)

*“In terms of a religion, it’s not the religion that is the terrorist.”*

### **Robert Mueller**

FBI director, speaking about the arrest of an alleged Islamic terrorist cell in Miami. (*Congressional Quarterly*/RNS)

My grandson was adopted as a frozen embryo by my son and daughter-in-law. Because another couple with leftover embryos viewed these “preborn babies” as special in God’s sight, they allowed them to be adopted. As a result, our grandson was born. He has made two trips to the White House in his short life, and hopefully he will be used of God powerfully in whatever he chooses to do.

Again, thank you for the article. May we always be challenged to take the moral high road, for in so doing, we will always be right. Misunderstood, probably; considered taking our standards from another world, hopefully; achieving the only recognition that will ultimately matter, assured.

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## **Evangelicals part company with Bush on North Korea**

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### **Evangelicals part company with Bush on North Korea**

**By David Anderson**

*Religion News Service*

WASHINGTON (RNS)—When evangelical pastor and best-selling author Rick Warren announced he would undertake a preaching mission to North

Korea next year, it raised a number of eyebrows in the conservative religious community.

North Korea, after all, is a keystone in President Bush's "axis of evil" and, according to the State Department and human rights organizations, a gross violator of human rights and religious freedom.

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## On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Gerald Bastin** has resigned as pastor of Tilden Church in Tilden.
  - **David Bush** to Six Mile Church in Six Mile as founding pastor.
  - **Jeff Huckeby** has resigned as pastor of First Church in Earth.
  - **David Keith** has resigned as interim minister of music at Broadway Church in Fort Worth, where he served 12 years.
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# Seminary pulls plug on trustee's online sermon

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## Seminary pulls plug on trustee's online sermon

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

FORT WORTH (ABP)—A trustee at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary endorsed the concept of a private prayer language in an Aug. 29 chapel sermon at the school, setting off a wave of discussion in the Southern Baptist blogosphere and triggering the seminary's leaders to ban free distribution of the sermon through the school's website.

Dwight McKissic, a new Southwestern trustee and pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, delivered the sermon in which he recounted how, while a Southwestern student in 1981, he had an experience of speaking in a "private prayer language" and that the experience has repeated itself.

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# Sweet dreams of urban transformation

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## Sweet dreams of urban transformation

**By Angela Best**

*Communications Intern*

DALLAS—Metaphors, dreams and emotion provide the keys to transformation, Leonard Sweet told inner-city ministers in a conference sponsored by the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Implementing change effectively requires three steps—reframing concepts into metaphors, sharing big dreams and ambitions, and achieving an emotional engagement with others, Sweet said during the Urban Training Institute of the Southwest.

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## Texas Tidbits

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# Texas Tidbits

**BGCT sponsors battle of bands.** A battle of the bands will highlight Weekend Fest activities leading up to the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting in November. The event is scheduled Nov. 11 in the Dallas Convention Center. The next day, the convention will sponsor a festival at the convention center for families. The BGCT annual meeting begins Nov. 13 at the same location. Bands endorsed by a BGCT-affiliated church or institution are eligible to compete for recording time and opportunities to perform at the BGCT-sponsored Youth Evangelism Conference and Texas Baptist Youth and Singles Congreso in 2007. Band members must be between the ages of 13 and 24. For more information, call (888) 244-9400 or send an e-mail to [bob@bgct.org](mailto:bob@bgct.org). For information about the BGCT annual meeting and related events, visit [www.bgct.org/annualmeeting](http://www.bgct.org/annualmeeting).

**Baptist fellowships send medical volunteers to Lebanon.** A new Baptist medical disaster relief effort has sent a physician and a nurse to serve north of Beirut two weeks, treating refugees of the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. They are the first two people to serve through the Baptist Medical Disaster Relief Ministry—a joint effort between the Baptist Nursing Fellowship, the Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship and Texas Baptist Men. For information about how to serve through this ministry, call (214) 828-5359 or e-mail [Shirley.Shofner@bgct.org](mailto:Shirley.Shofner@bgct.org).

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# **TOGETHER: Make an eternal difference in a life**

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## **TOGETHER: Make an eternal difference in a life**

I recently attended a church where a new pastor was being received, and the deacon who prayed for the new pastor warmed my heart and caused me to rejoice that this new pastor would have people praying for him like that.

Prayer makes a difference, and Texas Baptists are now entering the time of year when we pray specifically for the missions needs of our state. The Week of Prayer for Texas Missions will be Sept. 10-17.



Executive Director  
BGCT Executive  
Board

Woman's Missionary Union of Texas already has spent the summer laying

the groundwork for the missions needs in our state and beyond. Texas WMU launched a new ministry called “Awakening.” In several locations across Texas, WMU involved women and girls in times of awakening. More than 3,000 gathered to network, study, learn and pray. They have taken a huge step forward in their ability to help churches through awakening the prayers and mission passion of women.

Carolyn Porterfield, executive director of Texas WMU, has a heart for prayer that makes me anticipate so much the annual week of prayer. Our WMU leads the way in most of our churches in encouraging all of us to pray for the spiritual and physical needs of Texas and the world.

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## **Cybercolumn by Berry Simpson: Talking to God**

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### **CYBER COLUMN: Talking to God**

**By Berry Simpson**

I remember being surprised once at a men’s spiritual retreat when a speaker had to defend and explain his direct communication from God. Growing up Baptist, I was more than comfortable with praying directly to God and expecting God to talk to me; I thought it was the standard

expectation. It never occurred to me that maybe some Christians from different traditions found that a strange and frightening concept.

I've learned in the past few years that some people, nonbelievers and believers alike, are offended when someone like me talks about hearing directly from God. They think we're being arrogant and presumptuous. Who are you to expect God to talk to you? Do you think you are that much better than the rest of us? Isn't God busy enough already without having to deal with your personal trivia? Didn't God say all we needed to know in the Bible?

Berry D. Simpson
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# Explore the Bible Series for September 3: Hold fast to the message of Christ

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**Explore the Bible Series for September 3**

## Hold fast to the message of Christ

- Hebrews 1:1—2:4

**By Howard Anderson**

*Diversified Spiritual Associates, San Antonio*

When the various New Testament books were formally brought together into one collection shortly after A.D. 100, the titles were added for convenience. This epistle bears the traditional Greek title, "To the Hebrews," which was verified by at least the second century A.D. Within the epistle itself, there is no identification of the recipients as either Hebrews or gentiles. Since the epistle is filled with references to Hebrew history and religion and does not address any particular gentile or pagan practices, the traditional title has been maintained.

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## **Cybercolumn by Jeanie Miley: What kind of witness am I, anyway?**

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### **CYBER COLUMN: What kind of witness am I, anyway?**

**By Jeanie Miley**

"My friend hurt my feelings," someone told me recently. "She said I was too

much of a Jesus freak, and she really couldn't talk to me about her problems."

I waited, curious about where this conversation was going. I had noticed this person was pretty out-there with her religious language, but it wasn't my business to try to edit or inhibit her.

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# **BaptistWay Bible Series for September 3: Meditate on the words of Scripture for wisdom**

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**BaptistWay Bible Series for September 3**

## **Meditate on the words of Scripture for wisdom**

- Psalm 1

**By David Wilkinson**