

# Texas Baptist Forum

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### Falwell's legacy

I was surprised at the article concerning Jerry Falwell's legacy ([May 28](#)). No mention was made of the evangelical outreach that showed the road to salvation for thousands and thousands of souls over his 50-year ministry.

Actual evangelism as an evangelical Christian will always be his greatest legacy. It wasn't the television, radio, university or controversial comments that his ministry was built upon. It was the winning of souls at every opportunity.

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

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

*“The tragic thing is to think how many churches this Sunday will be treated to safe, nice, harmless, insignificant, intramural and Trivial Pursuit sermons. There are going to be an awful lot of sermons preached in Christian churches ... that actually probably help the world become a worse place.”*

**Brian McLaren**

Author and former pastor (ABP)

*“I feel like I’ve been attending my own funeral.”*

**Billy Graham**

Evangelist, joking about the dedication ceremony of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C. (RNS)

*“I share with my comedian friends who primarily work comedy clubs that if they want a real challenge, come try to make a roomful of Baptist deacons laugh without a two-drink minimum! Then we’ll see how funny you really are!”*

**Chondra Pierce**

Christian comedian (Today's Christian/RNS)

That is the thing that all ministries should be based upon.

Daryl Lott

Houston

### **Huckabee's politics**

Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee responded to President Carter's criticism of George W. Bush's foreign policy by withdrawing from the New Baptist Covenant meeting in Atlanta next year ([May 28](#)). Why? He did not want to appear "to be giving approval to what could be a political, rather than spiritual, agenda."

When I heard Huckabee might be invited to speak in Atlanta, I questioned the wisdom of inviting him. I was concerned a presidential candidate would use this meeting to further his or her own political ambitions. My concern was, unfortunately, brushed aside by those who, though well-intentioned, were eager to "balance" the Baptist Democrats on the podium with Baptist Republicans.

Now Huckabee has, predictably, politicized the spiritual, unable to separate faith from politics.

Either he is using the event to play to his Religious Right base, or he truly cannot understand a Jimmy Carter, who can offer his counsel on political matters, yet—as a real, traditional, mainstream Baptist—can leave those matters at the door and worship with those with whom he disagrees in spirit and in truth. Or maybe it is a little of both.

The New Baptist Covenant meeting promises to be a time of worship, healing and moving people to respond to the challenges that Christ gave us in the Sermon on the Mount.

But it will fulfill its promise only with the absence of those who, in the manner of Mike Huckabee, would turn it into a political rally.

Bill Jones

Plano

### **Newspaper's role**

Have you heard the one about the ace reporter who comes into his news office with an accurately researched, cogently written story about inner city crime? "This is some of the best work I've ever read," his editor says, "but we're not going to publish it because our focus is farm and ranch life. City crime isn't our beat."

Or this one? I peruse several stories in the *Baptist Standard* and discuss them at the church that provides me with the subscription. "You know," I say, "the Standard says Candidate A believes X, while Candidate B believes Y," and, without thinking, I add, "so obviously Candidate B is the one Christians should vote for." And suddenly my church, formerly a haven of nonpolitical fellowship characterized by the spirit of brotherly love, becomes a hotbed of political animus.

I was dismayed to read stories and analysis of the [better-known U.S. presidential candidates](#) in a recent issue of the *Baptist Standard*, even though I didn't fault the information provided. I'm interested in politics and am a political party member, but I believe in separation of church and state.

I don't argue politics at church, and I don't argue religion at political party meetings. I wouldn't read a government publication or a party flyer to help me decide whether to be a Christian or which denomination to join, and I

don't read the *Standard* to help me decide how to vote.

No matter how well-written the articles, politics isn't the *Standard's* beat.

Ann Carson

Amarillo

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