

Concern for needy people is gospel truth, not partisan politics, CBF's Vestal insists

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Concern for needy people is gospel truth, not partisan politics, CBF's Vestal insists

By Marv Knox

Editor

WACO—God identifies with the poor and the powerless, and Christians encounter Christ when they serve the weakest of the world's citizens, Daniel Vestal told participants in the [Baylor University School of Social Work's](#) annual "family dinner."

"Concern for the poor and the powerless is not partisan politics. It is central and integral to the gospel of Jesus Christ," stressed Vestal, staff leader of the Atlanta-based Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Daniel Vestal,
executive
coordinator of
the Cooperative
Baptist
Fellowship,
addresses a
dinner gathering
sponsored by the
Baylor School of
Social Work.
(PHOTOS/Baylor)

Looking for guidelines for Christian blogs? Start with the New Testament

May 9, 2008

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Looking for guidelines for Christian blogs? Start with the New Testament

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

The New Testament book of James compares the tongue to raging fire and a wild beast that cannot be tamed. And the author of that book never was “flamed” on a blog or in a chat room.

Words have power, whether spoken or written in cyberspace. And Christians don’t get a free pass to ignore the Golden Rule when they log on to their computers, according to ethicist Bill Tillman.

	
Bill Tillman	David Gushee

Blogging Baptists

May 9, 2008

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Blogging Baptists

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

For some people, blogs are like a family reunion where people barely know each other. There’s a lot of talking going on, but there’s little agreement on much of anything.



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But for many of the increasing number of Baptist bloggers, that's the beauty of it.

Blogs become Baptist battleground

May 9, 2008

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Blogs become Baptist battleground

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—One classic joke about Baptists is that wherever two or three are gathered, there are four opinions among them.

The same can be said of bloggers, and Baptists seem to have taken to blogs with particular gusto, on both the institutional and individual levels. But as a democratically governed and notoriously fractious bunch, blogging Baptists also seem to have put a new virtual twist on the time-honored tradition of contentious business meetings.

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Faith Digest

May 9, 2008

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Faith Digest

Panel cites 11 religious freedom offenders. A federal watchdog panel announced 11 countries should be named “countries of particular concern” for their records on religious freedom, including three not currently on the State Department’s list. The [U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) urged the inclusion of Vietnam—removed from the State Department’s list in 2006—along with Pakistan and Turkmenistan. The other countries recommended for the designation of “countries of particular concern” are Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan, which have been on the State Department’s list since 2006. The commission also cited countries on its “Watch List” that require monitoring because of religious freedom violations permitted or implemented by the governments—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia and Nigeria.

Have a Bible question? Ask a Pole. Americans are more likely than Europeans to own and read a Bible, but Poles are most likely to have a basic knowledge of Scripture, according to a Vatican report. The statistics are among preliminary findings of a study of Bible reading in the United States and eight European countries conducted by an Italian market

research firm in preparation for an international synod of Catholic bishops. More than 90 percent of American households contain at least one copy of the Bible, the highest level among the countries studied, according to the study. Three out of four Americans had read at least one passage of Scripture over the previous year, compared to only one out of four Spaniards, who ranked last in that respect. Not surprisingly, exposure paid off in familiarity with the book. When asked seven basic questions about the Bible's contents and authorship, 17 percent of Americans were able to answer all correctly, compared to an average of 15 percent in all the countries studied. But Poles took the prize for biblical knowledge, with 20 percent earning perfect scores on the test. The lowest rank went to the Russians, only 7 percent of whom were able to answer all the questions right.

Willis, Hunt jump in crowded field vying for SBC presidency

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Willis, Hunt jump in crowded field vying for SBC presidency

By Robert Marus

Associated Baptist Press

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (ABP)—A crowded field of hopefuls for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency appears to be developing, with two high-profile candidates set to join three already-announced nominees.

Retired SBC [International Mission Board](#) executive Avery Willis and Atlanta-area pastor Johnny Hunt reportedly will be nominated for the denomination's top position. SBC messengers will elect a new president and conduct other business during the body's annual meeting, scheduled for June 10-11 in Indianapolis.

	
Avery Willis	Johnny Hunt

Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

BGCT serves breakfast during SBC, CBF annual meetings. The [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) will sponsor come-and-go continental breakfasts for pastors during the annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The BGCT meal during the SBC meeting will be 7 to 9 a.m., June 10, in Room 208 of the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. The BGCT breakfast during the CBF

General Assembly is scheduled 7 to 9 a.m., June 20, in Ballroom B of the Memphis (Tenn.) Cook County Convention Center.

Galveston outreach changes lives. About 80 Texas Baptists met with more than 700 people during a Galveston Beach Reach weekend event. Volunteers prayed with 180 people, 35 made professions of faith in Christ and eight rededicated their lives to Christ, according to Gerald Davis, Baptist General Convention of Texas community development specialist who helped lead the beach outreach.

McBeth named Elder Statesman. Baptist historian Leon McBeth will receive the Texas Baptist Elder Statesman Award at a presentation June 1 at Independence Baptist Church in Independence. McBeth taught 43 years at [Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary](#) and has written extensively, including *The Baptist Heritage and Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History*. Events begin at 10 a.m. with Sunday school, taught by Jesse Fletcher, president emeritus of Hardin-Simmons University. During the 11 a.m. worship service, Independence Association President Bill Pitts of Waco will present the Elder Statesman Award. Russell Dilday, former president of Southwestern Seminary and chancellor of the B.H. Carroll Theological Institute, will preach. A church picnic will follow, and guests are asked to bring a covered dish.

UMHB students reach out, dig in to help families in crisis

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University of
Mary Hardin-
Baylor junior
Hallie
Jacobson and
freshman
Lindsey
Weaver help
with a
cleaning
project at the
Families in
Crisis Center
during a day
of Reaching
Out. (Photos
by Lindsey
Sisk/UMHB)

UMHB students reach out,

dig in to help families in crisis

By Laura Frase

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

BELTON—Between looming storm clouds, plenty of mud and even several flat tires on wheelbarrows, nothing stopped [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) students from reaching out to their community. More than 200 students participated in UMHB’s recent Reaching Out community service program.

“As Christians, we’re called to serve,” UMHB junior Hallie Jacobson said. “It’s really important to focus off yourself and on others—and it’s fun.”

Wayland grad records life’s journey on walls of church

May 9, 2008

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Wayland grad records life’s journey on walls of church

By Teresa Young

Wayland Baptist University

PLAINVIEW—When Wendi Vanlandingham received her degree from [Wayland Baptist University](#) at spring commencement, it marked the end of a 12-year journey filled with twists, turns and detours.

In a sort of lasting testament to that road, Vanlandingham recently completed a large mural in the children’s department at [College Heights Baptist Church](#).

Wendi Vanlandingham stands in the hallway of the children’s department at College Heights Baptist Church, where she completed a mural. (Wayland Photo)

Waylanders plan to answer their Macedonian call

May 9, 2008

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Waylanders plan to answer their Macedonian call

By Teresa Young

Wayland Baptist University

PLAINVIEW—In preparation for a two-week mission trip to Macedonia, a group of [Wayland Baptist University](#) students is collecting clothing and other items to be distributed in a village on their trip.

The group, headed by Rick Shaw, director of the Wayland Missions Center and assistant professor of religion, will leave May 29 for the area, traveling first to Macedonia, then to Kosovo, then taking in some sights in Greece.

Rick Shaw
(on piano)
leads the
mission team
heading to
Macedonia
in a worship
song in the
language in
special
classes
preparing
Wayland
Baptist
University
students to
worship and
share
testimonies
in
Macedonia.
Melanie
Vasquez,
Taylor
Phillips,
Khyrstyne
Eckerd,
Micah
Evans,
Amber
Hamilton
and Kevin
Burrow
(front)
rehearse a
song.

Explore the Bible Series for May 18: Make major life adjustments

May 9, 2008

Posted: 5/09/08

Explore the Bible Series for May 18

Make major life adjustments

- Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30; 47:7-12

[By Donald Raney](#)

First Baptist Church, Petersburg

A wise person once said the only thing constant in life is change. Life often requires we alter our plans or routines. Issues related to our job, finances, health or family may force us to adjust our lives in order to accommodate new circumstances or resolve problems.

Storylist for 5/12/08 issue

May 9, 2008

Storylist for week of 5/12/08

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- [Reviewed in this issue:](#) *Questions To All Your Answers: The Journey From Folk Religion to Examined Faith* by Roger Olson,
- *Why Jesus Makes Me Nervous: Ten Alarming Words of Faith* by Joy Jordan-Lake and
- *Connecting Women: A Relational Guide for Leaders in Womens Ministry*

by Linda Lesniewski.



- [Classified Ads](#)
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- [EDITORIAL: Why can't we all disagree agreeably?](#)
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- [2nd Opinion: The morning of many miracles](#)
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- [BaptistWay Bible Series for May 11: When the going gets tough](#)
- [Bible Studies for Life Series for May 11: Communication is key in relationships](#)
- [Explore the Bible Series for May 11: Work toward reconciliation](#)
- [BaptistWay Bible Series for May 18: The only hope](#)

- [Bible Studies for Life Series for May 18: Be trustworthy](#)
- [Explore the Bible Series for May 18: Make major life adjustments](#)

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- [Kelsi Kelso in Nigeria with HandsOn Missions](#)
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- [Prayer must undergird compassion, missionary doctor insists](#)
- [Baylor nursing students meet life-and-death needs in Africa](#)
- [Cameron Byler, SBC pioneer in recreation, disaster relief, dies at 79](#)
- [Ethics and evangelism focus of inaugural lecture at Howard Payne](#)
- [Cancer survivor, age 4, throws out first pitch](#)
- [Baptist Children's Youth Ranch accepts 75 children removed from FLDS compound](#)
- [See articles from the previous 4/28/08 issue here.](#)