

Consultant calls salvation wholeness, not just a “point-of-sale” transaction

March 3, 2007

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Consultant calls salvation wholeness, not just a ‘point-of-sale’ transaction

By Tony Cartledge

North Carolina Biblical Recorder

CONOVER, N.C. (ABP)—Despite decades of tweaking evangelistic methods, scant evidence backs up the claim that many Christians are experiencing true life change, Ron Martoia believes.

Perhaps that failure is because Christians in the Western world have been prone to think of salvation as a “point-of-sale” transaction that focuses on getting to heaven instead of appreciating that Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament promise of “shalom,” a concept that suggests wholeness, wellness and peace, explained Martoia, a ministry consultant who works with churches.

Ron Martoia

Abolitionist Wilberforce's life a model for modern Christians, historian says

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Abolitionist Wilberforce's life a model for modern Christians, historian says

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—Even though he lived in England two centuries ago, the life and work of [William Wilberforce](#) remain important examples for modern-day evangelicals, according to the lead historical consultant for a feature film chronicling the famous abolitionist's life.

Kevin Belmonte, a leading scholar on Wilberforce's life and work spoke in a chapel address and a symposium at Dallas Baptist University. The Wilberforce biopic, [Amazing Grace](#), debuted in American theaters Feb. 23.

CYBERCOLUMN by John Duncan: Awaiting spring

March 3, 2007

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CYBER COLUMN: Awaiting spring

By John Duncan

I'm sitting here under the old oak tree, awaiting spring. The sun shines today. Birds sing the glory. And life like a river flows in the joy of ministry.

I mention the river in the flow of ministry because the life of a pastor is a life on the move, full of twists and turns, ups and downs, power-packed with the pleasant and the unpleasant. Eugene Peterson was once asked what he liked about the church, and he replied, "The mess." C.S. Lewis says that in a Christian society there are to be "no passengers or parasites," meaning, of course, that in the church people are Christ-followers, pilgrims on the journey, but they are not to sit idly by and watch like mere passengers but to serve and act, and, that, they are not parasites that destroy the body but "little Christs" (C.S. Lewis) who build up Christ's body. In my years as a pastor, I have seen many passengers and parasites in the church.

John Duncan

Cartoon

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Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

UMHB to 'doctor' teachers. The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor will launch its first doctoral program this fall, when it accepts candidates for the doctor of education degree. The new program, approved unanimously by the university trustees, is pending accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. "Moving this university into the realm of doctoral programs has been the desire of many people for many years, and we are pleased to be able to provide this next level of higher education," university President Jerry Bawcom said. The venture has been

named the Leadership in Educational Administration—LEAD—program. In conjunction with the new degree, the university will establish the Center for Leadership, Evaluation, Alignment and Research—CLEAR—to facilitate and support student and faculty research.



School of Christian Studies installs Celelli. The South Texas School of Christian Studies installed Tony Celelli as the fourth president in its 30-year history Feb. 1. The school is an independent campus with academic ties to Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon Seminary, Howard Payne University, Texas A&M University and Del Mar College. The school offers certificate programs as well as undergraduate and graduate degrees in Christian studies. Celelli emphasized the importance of the school's "cooperative spirit" to work through partnerships: "Using our resources in concert with Howard Payne University and Logsdon Seminary, we educate leaders from various religious traditions and ethnicities. In our diversity of relationships, the unity of the gospel prevails." Celelli, who succeeded Linn Self, earned a master of divinity degree through the school and was an adjunct professor and member of the board of trustees before becoming president. He has been a minister more than 18 years and most recently served on the staff of Second Baptist Church in Corpus Christi.

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March 3, 2007

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RIGHT or WRONG? How to leave

March 3, 2007

Posted: 3/02/07

RIGHT or WRONG? How to leave

How should a pastor or other staff person relate to a search committee and terminate a relationship with their church? What ethical guidelines should shape such a situation?

As anyone associated with a Baptist church has experienced, the comings and goings of church staff members always are trying times. Since Baptists celebrate the autonomy of the local church, staffing churches comes down to decisions and actions of individuals, committees and congregations. In such a situation, any event affecting changes in congregational leadership always will be scrutinized and questioned by others and must be guided by ethical principles.

[Previous Columns](#)

Texas Baptists aid Missouri families

March 3, 2007

Updated: 3/02/07

Texas Baptists aid Missouri families

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

MOUNT VERNON, Mo.—A 21-person Texas Baptist Men team is providing relief in southwestern Missouri, where President Bush has declared a disaster area.

For the fourth time in less than two months, Texas Baptists are helping families across the Midwest recover from what Missouri officials are calling the worst winter storm in 50 years. It pounded several states and claimed at least 90 lives.

BGCT takes decisive action to prevent future abuses

March 3, 2007

Updated: 3/02/07

BGCT implements responses to church-starting scandal

By Marv Knox

Editor

DALLAS—The Baptist General Convention of Texas has implemented steps to prevent recurrence of a church-starting scandal that rocked the convention last year, a special study committee told the BGCT Executive Board Feb. 26.

Still, follow-up action is needed to complete the prevention process, the committee added, noting vigilance will be required to ensure that new church-starting policies are effective and secure.

Oversight group Chairman Jim Nelson.
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Board clarifies its responsibilities, messengers' rights

March 3, 2007

Updated: 3/02/07

Board clarifies its responsibilities, messengers' rights

By Marv Knox

Editor

DALLAS—Messengers to Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meetings never again will be told the convention's Executive Board has "preempted" their authority, if the board has its way.

During its winter meeting Feb. 26-27, the Executive Board approved two documents—a proposed constitutional amendment and a "statement of understanding"—to clarify messengers' ultimate authority and the board's responsibility.

Executive Director Charles Wade
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BaptistWay Bible Series for March 11: Christians are empowered to minister

March 3, 2007

Posted: 2/28/07

BaptistWay Bible Series for March 11

Christians are empowered to minister

- Acts 2:1-24

By Leroy Fenton

Bible Studies for Life Series for March 11: Jesus opens our eyes

March 3, 2007

Posted: 2/28/07

Bible Studies for Life Series for March 11

Jesus opens our eyes

- John 9

By David Harp