

Explore the Bible Series for March 11: Pursue godliness with whole-heartedness

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Explore the Bible Series for March 11

Pursue godliness with whole-heartedness

- 1 Peter 1:13-25

By Kathryn Aragon

First Baptist Church, Duncanville

“If it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing right.” My father’s mantra still rings in my ears. Though I may have grown tired of hearing it as a child, I can’t help but admit his words were right on target, and they apply as well to our faith as they do to our daily lives. If Christianity is worth committing our lives to, isn’t it worth committing our heart and soul as well?

Bible Studies for Life Series for March 4: Jesus forgives the sin of his people

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Bible Studies for Life Series for March 4

Jesus forgives the sin of his people

• John 8:2-11;30-36

By David Harp

CYBER COLUMN by Brett Younger: Ladies and Gentlemen

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February 28, 2007

Posted: 2/23/06

CYBER COLUMN: Ladies and Gentlemen . . .

By Brett Younger

Some are born to greatness. Some have greatness thrust upon them. But only a few get to be the announcer at their son's basketball games. For two seasons, I've had the peculiar privilege of introducing the amazing hoopsters of R.L. Paschal High School. My understated spiel goes like this:

"Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, please take off your hats, put out your cigars, and stand as a Paschal student and future 'American Idol' champion sings our national anthem."

Brett Younger

BaptistWay Bible Series for March 4: Stay focused on Jesus

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BaptistWay Bible Series for March 4

Stay focused on Jesus

- Acts 1:1-14

By Leroy Fenton

Explore the Bible Series for March 4: Life's difficulties are faith's fuel

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Explore the Bible Series for March 4

Life's difficulties are faith's fuel

- 1 Peter 1:1-12

By Kathryn Aragon

First Baptist Church, Duncanville

When I plan a road trip, I never plan the emergencies. I plan the direction of my trip, the stops I will make, where I'll eat and what I'll do. But not planning for emergencies doesn't mean they won't happen. In fact, I go into every road trip expecting difficulties likely will occur.

Disabled rodeo-riding pastor overcomes obstacles

February 28, 2007

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Twenty
years ago,
doctors
told Randy
Bird he
never
would
ride, rope
or walk
again. He
not only
rides and
ropes;
Bird also
is pastor
of Higher
Trails
Cowboy
Church in
Merit,
northwest
of
Greenville.
(Photos
courtesy
of Randy
Bird)

Disabled

rodeo-riding

pastor

overcomes obstacles

By Toby Druin

Editor Emeritus

MERIT—Twenty years ago, in the midst of an almost yearlong stay in a Dallas hospital where medical specialists were putting him back together, doctors told Randy Bird he never would ride, rope or walk again.

They underestimated him. He not only rides and ropes; Bird also is pastor of Higher Trails Cowboy Church in Merit, northwest of Greenville. He hasn't given up on walking again, either, and people who know him and his determination aren't betting against him.



Randy Bird developed a therapy saddle that enabled him to ride and rope, even after a wreck 20 years ago left him unable to walk.

Baptisms, mission dollars follow cowboy church growth

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The top team at the Pastors' Ranch Rodeo at the Cowboy Gathering at Cowboy Church of Ellis County in November included (left to right) Larry Mitchell, pastor of Rim Rock Cowboy Church in Quitman; Jim Strickland, the Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches' new representative in Lubbock; Mike Moss, pastor of Bull Creek Cowboy Church in Lone Oak; and Greg Horn of Fairlie, immediate past president of the Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches and East Texas representative for the fellowship. Moss also was chosen "top hand" at the rodeo. (Photo by Toby Druin)

Baptisms, mission dollars follow cowboy church growth

By Toby Druin

Editor Emeritus

WAXAHACHIE—If it meets its goal, the [Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches](#) will have 250 churches by the end of 2010—congregations that are expected to baptize 7,500 new converts annually, attract 50,000 in worship attendance on an average Sunday and donate more than \$1 million to missions each year through the Cooperative Program of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The goal is an ambitious one, said Ron Nolen, who retired from his job as western-heritage ministries director for the BGCT last fall to become full-time coordinator of the Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches.

Cowboy churches spread, thanks to laid-back approach

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Trading a
traditional
baptismal
for a
horse
trough, a
new
follower
of Christ
is
baptized
at a
cowboy
church.

Cowboy churches spread, thanks to laid-back approach

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

STEPHENVILLE—On a chilly morning in Central Texas, a man in ostrich-skin cowboy boots stood shivering in a water-filled horse trough. Charles Higgs quickly dunked him. Higgs, the pastor of Cowboy Church of Erath County, also baptized the man's wife and two children that same day.

The family-style baptism is just a sign of the times, Higgs said. He was a pastor at traditional churches 28 years but now says he has a passion for people interested in cowboy culture.



In six years, 7,000 people have been baptized at Texas cowboy churches.

Leader roped into service

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Leader roped into service

By Toby Druin

Editor Emeritus

WAXAHACHIE—Ron Nolen got “roped” into the cowboy church business.

Nolen, coordinator of the [Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches](#), was working many hours as a church starter for the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1999, when his son, Matt, a roper, gave him a lariat to try as a

means of relaxation.

Ron Nolen

Cowboy church-planting school slated

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Cowboy church-planting school slated

The first advanced-track [Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches](#) church-planting school will be Feb. 24-25 in Bandera.

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- [Disabled rodeo-riding pastor overcomes obstacles](#)
- [Baptisms, mission dollars follow cowboy church growth](#)
- [Cowboy churches spread, thanks to laid-back approach](#)
- [Leader roped into service](#)
- Cowboy church-planting school slated
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The two-day symposium, designed for new and experienced pastors and lay leaders who want to begin a western-heritage ministry, will include team training workshops on pastor, elder and children's ministries, plus western-style discipleship. Other sessions will focus on Christian leadership skills, communications and conflict resolution.

Presenters at the conference will include BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade; Paul Powell, dean of Baylor University's Truett Seminary; and Joel Gregory, Truett preaching professor.

Following the Saturday sessions, participants will gather for a barbecue dinner, a concert by the Rawhide Fellowship Cowboy Band and an appearance by western movie stuntman Rudy Robbins. For more details or reservations, call (888) 611-2651.

Cowboy Churches: Roundin' Up Strays

February 28, 2007

Posted: 2/16/07

Cowboy Churches: Roundin' Up Strays

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

GEORGE WEST—Wearing a dust-covered cowboy hat and a pair of boots,

Pat Traxler immediately made a connection with needy people in Africa even before he gave them food and water.

Monty Hill,
men's ministry
leader at
Rafter J
Cowboy
Church in
Terrell,
welcomes
worshippers
who relate to
the
congregation's
laid-back
worship style
and affinity
with the
western
heritage.
(BGCT photos
by Barbara
Bedrick)

"It was amazing what that old Stetson could do," said Traxler, pastor of Brush Country Cowboy Church in George West. "They were fascinated. The image struck a chord. Although the people didn't speak English, they knew enough to call me 'cowboy.'"

Former BGCT leader claims race a factor in Valley probe

February 28, 2007

Updated: 2/16/07

Former BGCT leader claims race a factor in Valley probe

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Otto Arango, the central figure in an investigation that revealed misuse and mismanagement of Texas Baptist church-starting funds in the Rio Grande Valley, was singled out for suspicion because he was a financially successful Hispanic from the Dominican Republic, another key figure in the probe has asserted.

E.B. Brooks, former head of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Church Starting Center, made the assertion in a 25-page document he sent to members of the BGCT Executive Board and selected Baptist Building staff.

E.B. Brooks
