

Texas Baptist Forum

March 17, 2006

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Right next door

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Letters are welcomed. Send them to marvknox@baptiststandard.com; 250 words maximum.



“I’m looking forward to that big reunion up there. God bless you all.”

Billy Graham

The final words of his 418th crusade—in New Orleans— “probably the last evangelistic sermon I’ll ever preach”
(RNS)

“Suggesting a married Jesus is one thing, but questioning the Resurrection undermines the very heart of Christian belief. ... The Resurrection is perhaps the sole controversial Christian topic about which I would not desire to write.”

Dan Brown

Author of The Da Vinci Code, who is being sued for allegedly copying from Holy Blood, Holy Grail, which theorized that Christ did not die on the cross (The Washington Post / RNS)

“If Christians are being persecuted in this country, in my opinion, it's because they've asked for it. We will experience much less persecution, if it exists, when we return to preaching the love of God—that is all that has ever won people to the love of Christ.”

David Currie

Executive director of Texas Baptists Committed (ABP)

“Everybody seems to be imprisoned in their own sectarian or political affiliations. They don't seem to be able to rise above these things.”

Adnan Pachachi

Former Iraqi foreign minister and current Parliament member (New York Times)

It's difficult for one outside the situation to resolve the question whether Baylor should "begin a journey toward Rome" (Feb. 20). What I would offer, however, is a rich resource for the wider discussion of the relation of faith and learning that lies ready to hand, which also seems to be totally ignored in the conversation—namely, the numerous Baptist liberal arts universities where faith and learning are thriving and who do not seem to be in mortal danger of an inevitable secular drift unless we move toward Rome.

Such Baptist General Convention of Texas-affiliated schools are Dallas Baptist University, East Texas Baptist University, Hardin-Simmons University, Houston Baptist University, Howard Payne University, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and Wayland Baptist University. They are not in danger of becoming, "without exception," secular universities. Faith and learning in fact seem to be flourishing in these environments, which do not fit well either alternative model mentioned in the Baylor debate.

Certainly, a difference exists between these universities and Baylor. These are smaller liberal arts universities who focus on teaching as opposed to a much larger research institution. Perhaps it is a matter of scale, where the smaller can more easily accomplish the goal of relating faith and learning than the larger.

Plane mechanic finds calling at Wayland

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Plane mechanic finds calling at Wayland

By Jonathan Petty

Wayland Baptist University

SAN ANTONIO—When Bill Lord arrived at Wayland Baptist University's San Antonio campus, he had no idea what awaited him.

Chaplain's son needs double-lung transplant

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Chaplain's son needs double-lung transplant

By George Henson

Staff Writer

DALLAS—Jeff Matthies' life is filled with irony—deadly irony.

If he had not been such a hard worker, he would be much closer to a

lifesaving double-lung transplant he desperately needs. But if he had lacked drive and perseverance, he probably would have succumbed decades ago to the cystic fibrosis that clogs his lungs.

On the move

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On the move

- **J.B. Cagle** to First Church in Millsap as pastor.
 - **Jeff Carr** to Calvary Church in Brownwood as minister of youth.
 - **Mike Copeland** to First Church in China Spring as pastor.
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LAYING ON HANDS: Ordination practices vary widely among Baptists

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LAYING ON HANDS: Ordination practices vary widely among Baptists

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

Renowned 19th century British Baptist preacher C.H. Spurgeon rejected the practice. Texas Baptist statesman George Truett surrendered to it only at his church's insistence. Christian ethicist T.B. Maston accepted it as a deacon but not as a minister.

TOGETHER: Pray for courageous servant leadership

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TOGETHER: Pray for courageous servant leadership

Leadership is the crucial ingredient for success in any enterprise. Leadership is the difference between a "mob" and a life-giving movement.

Leadership is not about gathering all the power to the leader. It is not about manipulating the church or organization to give the pastor, or the CEO, or a committee, or the deacons, or a board power for which they are not accountable.


Executive
Director
BGCT
Executive
Board

Any church leader will find the Apostle Paul's example remarkably helpful. As he was raising money to relieve the famine victims in Jerusalem, he was careful to give a report of the offering's progress. He sent a respected leader to give an account of the use of the money they were gathering and distributing on behalf of the churches. "We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men" (2 Corinthians 8:20-21).

Cyber column by Berry D. Simpson: Thanks for asking

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CYBER COLUMN: Thanks for asking

By Berry D. Simpson

The other night, Cyndi was at home working on the computer, printing invitations for a church media ministry banquet, when she asked if I would stuff invitations and stamp envelopes. Later, after midnight, after we finished the project, she apologized: "I'm sorry to ask you to put down your book and help, and then you had to stay up so late. I know you already had your own projects to do without having to help me with mine."

I said: "You and I are not easy people to help. We always want to do everything ourselves. We both maintain high standards, and we love to be creative, and that's seldom a group thing, and we try to give each other space to live our own lives. Neither of us wants to be clingy or high-maintenance. So I am grateful for a chance to help you. You don't ask often enough."

Berry D. Simpson

RIGHT OR WRONG? A woman as pastor

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RIGHT OR WRONG? A woman as pastor

Our Baptist congregation is more than 100 years old. We always have had men as pastors. Now, we are without a pastor and cannot find a man who will come to serve us. We have a young lady who recently made public her call to ministry. Is there any merit in considering her to fill the position of pastor for us?

NAMB trustees ask task force to investigate

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NAMB trustees ask task force to investigate

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)—Trustees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board are asking a task force to see if there is any truth to allegations—first reported in the Georgia Christian Index—that the mission

board's evangelism and church-planting efforts are lagging and improperly reported.

Churches can minister through schools, inner-city pastor maintains

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Churches can minister through schools, inner-city pastor maintains

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

ARLINGTON—Churches once again can become the center of communities across Texas, but they may have to hit the books to do it, an urban pastor said.

Schools bring communities together, said Eddie Sanchez, pastor of Ross Avenue Baptist Church in Dallas. Children and parents regularly are involved in school-related activities, creating a ministry opportunity for churches willing to lend a helping hand.

Follow Jesus, and evangelism happens

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Follow Jesus, and evangelism happens

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

ARLINGTON—God calls Christians to take their faith with them wherever they go, said Victor Rodriguez, pastor of South San Filadelfia Baptist Church in San Antonio.

Christ does not ask people to develop strategies that rely on their knowledge but wants their actions to reflect their beliefs, Rodriguez told the Baptist General Convention of Texas Hispanic Evangelism Conference. If people do as Christ desires, non-Christians will come to faith.

Christian witnessing requires readiness

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Christian witnessing requires readiness

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

ARLINGTON—The most important part of sharing one's faith is being ready to do it, said Javier Elizondo, Baptist University of the Americas vice president of academic affairs.

Javier Elizondo of the Baptist Uni-versity of the Americas preaches at the Hispanic Evangelism Conference.
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Spreading the gospel takes place in a variety of ways, Elizondo told the

Hispanic Evangelism Conference. Some people will knock on doors up and down a street. Other Christians will share their faith with a waiter at a restaurant. Many Texas Baptists will talk about their beliefs with their friends.