

# **Christians must reclaim their good name, Ratliff urges Texas Baptists\_22105**

February 18, 2005

Posted: 2/18/05

## **Christians must reclaim their good name, Ratliff urges Texas Baptists**

**By Ferrell Foster**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

AUSTIN—Christians have become the victims of identity theft in politics, as so-called conservative Christians espouse views that are “inconsistent with our Christian faith,” according to former Texas Lt. Gov. Bill Ratliff.

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## **To evaluate Texas' taxes, follow the money, experts explain\_22105**

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# To evaluate Texas' taxes, follow the money, experts explain

**By Ferrell Foster**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

AUSTIN-Where does the state get money for all the good things Texans might want their government to do?

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## 2nd Opinion: How much sex before the promise?\_22105

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### COMMENTARY:

## How much sex before the promise?

**By Richard Ross**

Almost every Sunday morning, I'm in a different pastor's office. Often the ministers gather for prayer before I preach.

Before we pray, here is what they often say: "Bro. Richard, we are just thrilled with what God has done through True Love Waits. What a powerful movement that literally has brought positive change to the U.S. and now to

the world.”

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# Cybercolumn by Berry D. Simpson: Find a way\_22105

February 18, 2005

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## CYBER COLUMN:

### Find a way

**By Berry D. Simpson**

C. S. Lewis wrote: “We often say, ‘I never expected to be a saint; I only wanted to be a decent, ordinary chap,’ and imagine when we say this we are being humble. Of course, we never wanted, and never asked, to be made into the sort of creatures (God) is going to make us into; the question is not what we intended ourselves to be, but what he intended us to be when he made us. We may be content to remain what we call ‘ordinary people,’ but he is determined to carry out a quite different plan.”

Berry D. Simpson
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God uses a wide variety of methods to carry out his plans. For me, God works me over when I run. I believe he gives me dreams of training better and longer and faster, dreams of running another marathon (or even

further), so he can use that training process to mold me into his image. However, I don't think he really cares that much how well I run. I think he cares more that I learn patience and dependability and courage than whether I can run 20 miles at a stretch or lower my times for quarter-mile repeats at the track. He wants me to be like him, and he'll use running and backpacking, reading and journal-keeping (or as in Cyndi's case, dancing and performing and generally living on the edge), as tools in his hands to carry out his intentions. When I look back over my life, I can see how God has done exactly all that. I've learned deep lessons and felt surprising changes in my heart as a result of running day after day in the cold rain or blowing sand or 100-degree heat.

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## **Doves look to Smith\_22105**

February 18, 2005

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### **Doves look to Smith**

**By Adelle M. Banks**

*Religion News Service*

NASHVILLE (RNS)—Longtime Christian artist Michael W. Smith topped the field of nominations for the Dove Awards, which will be awarded by the Gospel Music Association in April.

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Michael  
W.  
Smith

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# **DOWN HOME: Knothole worthy 'Senior Dates' list\_22105**

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## **DOWN HOME: Knothole worthy: 'Senior Dates' list**

Those folks down at the schoolhouse really know how to hurt a guy.

They didn't mean to do it, of course. They were just trying to be helpful when they sent a sheet of paper home with our youngest daughter, Molly, the other day.

When Molly's big sister, Lindsay, started kindergarten in 1989, I wondered about the sheets of paper they'd carry home through the years. I wondered what percentage of those important papers actually would arrive in our home.

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# **EDITORIAL: What would Jesus put in the budget?\_22105**

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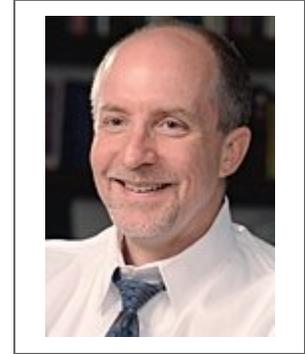
## **EDITORIAL: What would Jesus put in the budget?**

A seminary professor once told a roomful of ministers-in-training: "A budget is the barometer of a church. Look at its budget, and you can tell where a church is going. You can see what it really values. You can determine its priorities."

He was correct, of course. And the principle applies to any institution, whether it's a family, a civic club, a state or a a nation. That's why Christians ought to pay close attention to the budgets being promoted by President Bush and Governor Perry. Those budgets don't simply reflect how we'll pave highways, pay for a war, fund education or finance Social Security. They say an awful lot about what kind of people we are.

Unfortunately, they say we're the kind of people who look at the bottom line of our checkbooks before we look into the anguished eyes of the abused, abandoned and neglected. Increasingly, we're the kind of people who are hoodwinked by the deceptions of special interests, not motivated by the common good. We're conned by the promises and platitudes of the wealthy elites but turn a deaf ear to the honest pleas of the working poor, our neighbors who serve us at almost every turn.

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# **Most BGCT universities show spring enrollment gains\_22105**

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## **Most BGCT universities show spring enrollment gains**

Most universities affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas experienced higher enrollment this spring compared to last year:

Baptist University of the Americas broke its enrollment record for the fourth consecutive semester, with 208 students from 17 countries, up from 207 reported last year.

- ◆ Baylor University enrollment dropped to 12,715 students from 12,815 last year. The university attributed the drop to higher graduation rates and smaller class sizes the past two years.

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# **Florida Baptists, others launch effort to pass state marriage amendment\_22105**

February 18, 2005

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## **Florida Baptists, others launch effort to pass state marriage amendment**

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—The Florida Baptist Convention is among a coalition of organizations that has announced a drive to amend the Florida Constitution to ban same-sex marriage.

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## **Georgetown senior volunteers**

# find warm welcome in West Africa\_22105

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African villagers' natural respect for their elders provided a welcoming context for a mission team of senior adults from First Baptist Church in Georgetown.

## Georgetown senior volunteers find warm welcome in West Africa

**By Sue Sprenkle**

*International Mission Board*

Women and children lined the footpaths throughout the West African

village, each wearing their finest festive clothes and adornments. Warriors escorted their Texas Baptist visitors from the main road to this village made up of mud and stick homes.

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# **Texans discover redemption in reality TV\_22105**

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## **Texans discover redemption in reality TV**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

Jeff Johnson once thought reality television shows have no redeeming qualities.

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# **Kingsville church focuses on lay-led ministry to serve community\_22105**

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## **Kingsville church focuses on lay-led ministry to serve community**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

KINGSVILLE-Many Christians say Texas, with its estimated 10 million non-Christians, is a mission field. Iglesia Bautista Central is acting like it's serving in one.