

COMMENTARY: Love, not angry slogans, will convince Muslims of God's truth _bridges_90803

October 14, 2003

Posted: 9/5/03

COMMENTARY:
Love, not angry slogans, will convince Muslims of God's truth

By Erich Bridges

Declaration recently spotted on a T-shirt at a mall food court:

Abortion is murder.

COMMENTARY: U.S. overlooks Africa's 'twin towers'_stearns_90803

October 14, 2003

9/5/03

U.S. overlooks Africa's 'twin towers'

By Richard Stearns

The Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States proved the mettle of the American people. We are strong. We are brave. We are a people of faith. And we are generous and compassionate.

Few of us will be called upon to prove our strength by rushing into a burning building. Fewer still to prove our bravery by commandeering a hijacked airplane. But all of us can demonstrate our compassion by helping widows and orphans in need.

Congress returns to face church-state issues_90803

October 14, 2003

Posted: 9/5/03

Congress returns to face church-state issues

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)-As Congress returns to session this month from its

summer recess, a host of church-state issues await on the agenda—from gay marriage to school vouchers.

Death row exonerations reach new high_90803

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Death row exonerations reach new high

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Nine death row inmates have been exonerated this year, the highest number in 15 years, according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

Three men who spent a combined 67 years on death row were freed in late July, bringing to 111 the number of inmates who have been released from death row since 1973.

All charges were dropped against Timothy Howard and Gary Lamar James, childhood friends who were convicted in 1977 in Ohio on robbery and murder charges, after new evidence was presented in Howard's case and James passed a polygraph test. Both men were on death row before Ohio's capital punishment law was overturned in 1978.

Destination Known charts a course_90803

October 14, 2003

Posted: 9/5/03

Destination Known charts a course

By Leann Callaway

Special to the Standard

FORT WORTH—The message behind the music starts with the name for the Fort Worth-based worship band Destination Known.

DOWN HOME: A guy's gotta know his place_90803

October 14, 2003

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DOWN HOME: A guy's gotta know his place

“Scoot over here-closer,” Joanna whispered, tugging at my sleeve.

Ah, nothing like a Sunday morning sermon to bring out the romance in my wife.

And if you believe that, you think everyone in our church's sanctuary tithes, nobody has sinned since last Sunday and we'll eventually enjoy a worship service of hymns without “praise choruses” once more in this lifetime.

EDITORIAL: Prop. 3 will help churches_90803

October 14, 2003

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EDITORIAL: Prop. 3 will help churches

The fate of church building projects across the state rides on the outcome of Proposition 3 on the Texas ballot Sept. 13.

Proposition 3 would authorize the Texas Legislature to provide tax exemptions for property churches buy to expand their facilities. It also

would authorize tax exemptions for property owned by religious organizations and leased for school use.

The bottom line for churches is that Proposition 3 would allow churches and religious organizations to plan for expansion without running the risk of increasing their taxes.

EDITORIAL: 2003 Davis offering unusually vital_90803

October 14, 2003

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EDITORIAL: 2003 Davis offering unusually vital

Texas Baptists are getting ready to raise one of the most important offerings in their history.

Beginning Sept. 14, the Baptist General Convention of Texas will collect the 2003 Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas missions. Rarely, if ever, has an offering been needed more.

Due to a variety of reasons-among them an ailing economy, increased needs within churches, years of denominational controversy and a short-sighted sense of stewardship-the BGCT's Cooperative Program missions-and-ministry budget is slumping. For the third year in a row, receipts are

coming in at a double-digit deficit. We are not alone. A recent survey conducted by the Standard revealed budget woes at numerous state and national conventions. But company does not reduce misery, and Texas Baptists who empathize with the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of our state feel miserable.

CYBERCOLUMN: Shopping addiction_younger_90803

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CYBERCOLUMN: Shopping addiction

By Brett Younger

The New York Times reported that, according to her lawyer, Elizabeth Randolph Roach is a shopping addict who was driven to steal a quarter of a million dollars from her employer by padding her expense accounts. (Why didn't Kenneth Lay think of this excuse?)

Her addiction also compelled her to buy a buckle worth \$7,000 at Neiman Marcus (The reporter didn't say if it was marked down). It also compelled her to buy 70 pairs of shoes at one time. (Why didn't the clerk, like a good bartender, cut her off after 50 pairs?) And she became so engrossed shopping in London that she ran up a tab for \$30,000 and missed her flight

home. (She should have bought a plane).

Brett Younger

COMMENTARY: Reflections on response to missionaries affirming the Baptist Faith and Message_rankin_9

October 14, 2003

9/12/03

COMMENTARY: Reflections on response to missionaries affirming the Baptist Faith and Message

By Jerry Rankin

Asking Southern Baptist missionaries who serve with the International Mission Board to affirm that their work and personal convictions are

compatible with what their sponsoring denomination believes has been an interesting process. It was not unexpected that many among our Southern Baptist constituency who do not agree with the leadership and conservative direction of the SBC – as well as those who are in disagreement with the faith statement itself – would disagree with this initiative.

However, reflection upon the negative response from individuals and the media over the past year has revealed that an alarming number of Southern Baptists have succumbed to the subtle influence of post-modern thinking and theological compromise. Many are offended that denominational workers would be expected to adhere to any defined commonality of faith. It is evident the precious doctrine of individual priesthood of believers is being distorted to justify whatever arises out of self-centered, independent thought, regardless of explicit biblical teaching to the contrary.

See response:
[Creedal use of](#)
[2000 BF&M](#)
['differs radically'](#)
[from historic](#)
[Baptist practices](#)
by Keith Parks

COMMENTARY: Parks: Creedal

use of 2000 BF&M 'differs radically' from historic Baptist

October 14, 2003

9/12/03

COMMENTARY:

Parks: Creedal use of 2000 BF&M 'differs radically' from historic Baptist practices

By Keith Parks

Jerry Rankin and I have a lot in common. We were both missionaries to Indonesia. We have both served as area director for Southeast Asia and as president of the International (Foreign) Mission Board. We agree on several basic beliefs. We agree the Lordship of Christ and the authority of God's Word are foundational to the kind of Baptists we have been historically. We agree churches should expect missionaries they support to have sound doctrine. We agree those who reject absolute truth and embrace theological relativism deny our heritage, dilute our witness and erode the potential of fulfilling the Great Commission task. We both have given our lives in the cause of reaching all people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. When asked to write a response to Rankin's editorial, I was reluctant to do so.

See commentary
[Reflections on
response to
missionaries
affirming the
Baptist Faith and
Message](#) by Jerry
Rankin

I did not want to re-engage in the distasteful controversy that has so damaged our witness and our denomination. But in reading what he wrote, it was clear what he and I believe has happened and why are very different. So I feel obligated as a Baptist concerned about missions and missionaries to state a different view. I believe strongly in the old Baptist saying that we must "Trust the Lord and tell the people." In recent years, the "official Southern Baptist Convention position" is that Baptists can no longer be trusted to make up their own minds on issues. Editors have been fired and some state papers print only what is acceptable to the SBC's elected officials. But it is important to challenge some of Rankin's presumptions. Most of his views mirror those of other leaders who now control the SBC. They differ radically from our traditional Baptist heritage.

Trends noted in white, Hispanic Catholics _92203

October 14, 2003

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Trends noted in white & Hispanic Catholics

WASHINGTON (RNS)-New research shows that Hispanics who are born Catholic are more likely to remain in the church than white Catholics, and Hispanics who leave the church tend to adopt other faiths, while white Catholics do not.

The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University found that in a survey of 982 adults who were born Catholic, 81 percent of Hispanics remained Catholics, compared to 72 percent of whites.

But among “cradle Catholics” who have left the church, researchers found Hispanics were more likely to convert to another faith, while white dropouts were more likely to claim no faith at all.