

BGCT workshop explores the doctrine of God

November 13, 2008

FORT WORTH—Sharing the gospel in a world of many religions and beliefs requires Christians to have a firm grasp on who God is and what makes him unique from the many other gods in the world, said James Semple, author of the new Bible study book [*Bible Truths About God*](#).

Published by BaptistWay Press, the book covers 10 major questions about the doctrine of God. The answers give a glimpse of what makes Christianity the true religion and helps Christians share that truth with people of other or no beliefs, Semple told participants at a workshop during the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting.

Doctrines about God “are particularly apropos today, because there are so many weird doctrines out there about God,” said Semple, retired director of the BGCT State Missions Commission. “But what we find is that people are really interested in doctrine, as long as it’s not dull, dry and dead.”

In his workshop, Semple provided an overview of the book. He began by talking about belief in God, stating research has shown 92 percent of people in the world believe in a god of some kind. He used testimonies of leading scientists and converted atheists to show that faith in God is not the outdated belief some may think it is.

“Belief in God is normal, and it is natural and reasonable,” he said. “Scientists are often driven to faith by the realization of the complexity of the universe.”

Evidence from the natural world provide grounds for believers to witness about the existence of God, he said. But the success of that effort requires

openness on the part of the other person.

“There’s no way to convince someone who doesn’t want to be convinced,” he said. “But there’s enough evidence out there for them to at least consider.”

With more than 4,000 recognized world religions, Semple said, Christians can find it hard to wade through the various beliefs about God and gods in order to understand how to witness to those of different religions. He provided an overview of some of the major world religions—Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Mormonism—and explained the knowledge of the one true God requires knowing the path to the truth.

Semple went on to touch briefly on the names of God and his attributes, including those compassionate qualities of love, mercy and grace that are so vital, he said, to the Christian faith since they lead to salvation.

But the final chapter—knowing God personally—is one of the most important, Semple said, as it brings all the other information into perspective.

“You can learn all about God and never really know him, just like you can know all about the dietary information in food and healthy eating and still eat Hostess Twinkies every day,” Semple said.

“It’s not just about intellectual knowledge, but a daily walk with God in our lives.”