

Commentary: Baptism: Tensions in Baptist identity, Part 4

November 3, 2025

Wade Berry examines the place, meaning and mode of baptism, particularly for Baptists, for whom it is a sacred symbol and act of obedience.

Editorial: I was hungry. Did you feed me?

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“I was hungry, and you said it’s because I’m shiftless and lazy.”

“I was hungry, and you told me to get a job.”

“I was hungry, and you said it’s not your problem.”

“I was hungry, and you looked the other way. Literally.”

“I was hungry, and you fed me.”

Hunger is in the news, whether we’re talking about 42 million Americans eligible for SNAP benefits or 500,000-plus Gazans suffering from famine. By the way, the two situations are not equivalent.

One reason hunger is in the news is because the current political wrangling in the U.S. capital has the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits 42 million Americans rely on in its crosshairs.

This editorial is not about the politics involved, politics I consider cynical. This editorial is about clear biblical teaching on addressing hunger. In short, hunger should not exist among Christians, but it does. When Jesus asks us about that, he's not going to ask which political party is to blame. He's going to ask what you and I did about it.

What does Scripture say?

Most reading this already know what Jesus said about the sheep and goats. But I'm going to paraphrase it anyway.

"When [the King](#) arrives, he will sit on his throne and separate the blessed from the cursed.

"The blessed will be those who, when the King was hungry, fed him; thirsty, gave him something to drink; was a stranger, welcomed him; was naked, gave him clothes; was sick, took care of him; was in prison, visited him.

"The cursed didn't do any of that.

"The blessed will say, 'When did we do all of that?'

"And the King will say, 'You did it to me when you did it for one of the least of these my brothers and sisters'" (Matthew 25:31-46).

I tell you, this passage haunts me and always has.

When Isaiah recorded God's description of proper fasting, he wrote:

"Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen ...
Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" (Isaiah 58:6a, 7).

Twice in Leviticus, God's law forbids harvesting every bit of food from the land. Instead, God's people are to leave some for the poor and foreigner (Leviticus 19:9-10; 23:22).

The earliest church sold what they had "to give to anyone who had need" and "shared everything they had" so "there were no needy persons among them" (Acts 2:45; 4:32-35).

Scripture also instructs us to feed our enemies when they are hungry (Proverbs 25:21; Romans 12:20).

This is just a sampling of how Scripture says God's people are to respond to hunger.

And hunger is all around us.

Hunger in the United States

If we look at just one number—42 million Americans—we do not have to look far to see a person needing food assistance. Forty-two million translates to roughly 12 percent of the [U.S. population](#), or more than 1 in 10 Americans—or more than the entire population of Texas and Michigan combined.

We have among us in the most prosperous nation in history more people qualifying for food assistance than the population of each of 196 of the world's 233 countries—including: Canada, Ukraine, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Australia, Somalia and many more.

Let that sink in.

The United States, at roughly \$30 trillion, is the world's largest economy by more than \$20 trillion. By itself, Texas is the world's eighth largest economy, at more than \$7 trillion. How can we be so prosperous and so

hungry at the same time?

Come on, y'all!

Add to this the fact the United States is so closely identified with Christianity, a faith built on Scripture like I quoted above, that we must face the charge we're not putting our money where our mouth is.

Thank goodness that's not true of all of us.

What is expected of us

This editorial isn't about politics, but I am going to say a word about politics.

The [U.S. Department of Agriculture's home page](#) this morning, Oct. 29, stated: "Bottom line, the well has run dry." The bold announcement at the top of the USDA home page placed full blame on Senate Democrats for the stoppage of SNAP benefits effective Nov. 1.

Christians, we cannot allow ourselves to be sucked into the current blame game and name-calling between Republicans and Democrats. We as Christians are commanded to live beyond and better than that.

Part of living beyond and better than that is being concerned about hunger without political footbaling, being concerned about hunger even when it's not in the news, being concerned enough about hunger to do something about it ourselves.

Examples we can follow

One thing we can do is fast from feeding our consumer economy so we can feed our neighbors. We Christians spend a lot of money on entertainment,

creature comforts and the latest greatest, while criticizing our government for how it spends our tax dollars. We can do better.

[A food truck](#) in the Four Corners area of New Mexico posted on Facebook, Oct. 27: “Starting Nov. 1st We will be offering a 4pc boneless wings to kids 15 and under on us! No purchase and *no questions asked*. Kids must be present and limit 1 per child. Just ask for the ‘Kid Special’ and we’ll take care of you” (emphasis added, because Jesus didn’t ask questions either)!

A follower responded: “Alright-this is our sign to take care of businesses that take care of community. Let’s FLOOD their food truck with support!!!”

Christians have restaurateurs among us. Surely, we can help them help others like that.

When my wife and I were seminary students 25 years ago, we went through a period when money was tight. This is a common experience among seminary students. Thanks to [the Sutherland family’s feeding ministry](#), we were able to fill in some food staples. That ministry still operates today. May their tribe increase.

I am thankful for food banks, food pantries, feeding ministries and others doing their part to alleviate hunger. They need our help.

And we need to do more than make feeding the hungry a weekend project. We need to include it in our budgeting, our earning and our spending. We need to make it our way of living.

To learn about hunger and its effects, [view this fact sheet](#). To learn more about ways you can help alleviate hunger, [view this information from the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty](#) or visit the [Texas Baptist Hunger Offering website](#).

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Letter: Faith misused in Gaza's destruction

November 3, 2025

A Baptist Standard reader states his opinion about the use of faith to justify the destruction and devastation of Gaza.

Commentary: A Palestinian Christian's faith journey

November 3, 2025

Jack Nassar shares his faith journey, how he became a follower of Jesus and what it means to be a Palestinian Christian.

Commentary: Idols and Christian nationalism, Part 3

November 3, 2025

To keep one's love of country in proper perspective, Nick Acker offers a kingdom-focused three-part response to Christian nationalism.

Voices: Pastoring through corporate prayer

November 3, 2025

Kevin Burrow issues a call to corporate prayer, giving testimony to its power for his church and for his family.

Commentary: Tensions in Baptist identity, Part 3

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Wade Berry seeks to shed light on how the Bible can help Baptists navigate the turbulent waters of cultural change and socio-political polarization.

Editorial: No kings? But one.

November 3, 2025

Millions of people joined “No Kings” protests and rallies Oct. 18. Christians do have one King. Editor Eric Black explains how that matters.

Commentary: Tensions in Baptist identity, Part 2

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Baptists hail biblical authority. Wade Berry examines doctrinal, hermeneutical, philosophical, historical and church challenges to that stance.

Voices: Concerns about Israeli government lobbying churches

November 3, 2025

Steve Bezner brings attention to the Israeli government’s targeted lobbying

of churches of varying denominations in the United States.

Voices: Pastors are people, too

November 3, 2025

Peary Perry challenges churches to see their pastors as people with all the same needs as the congregations they serve.

Commentary: Idols and Christian nationalism, Part 2

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Nick Acker examines the six main arguments for Christian nationalism and how they measure against the gospel.