

# SOUTHERN SEMINARY

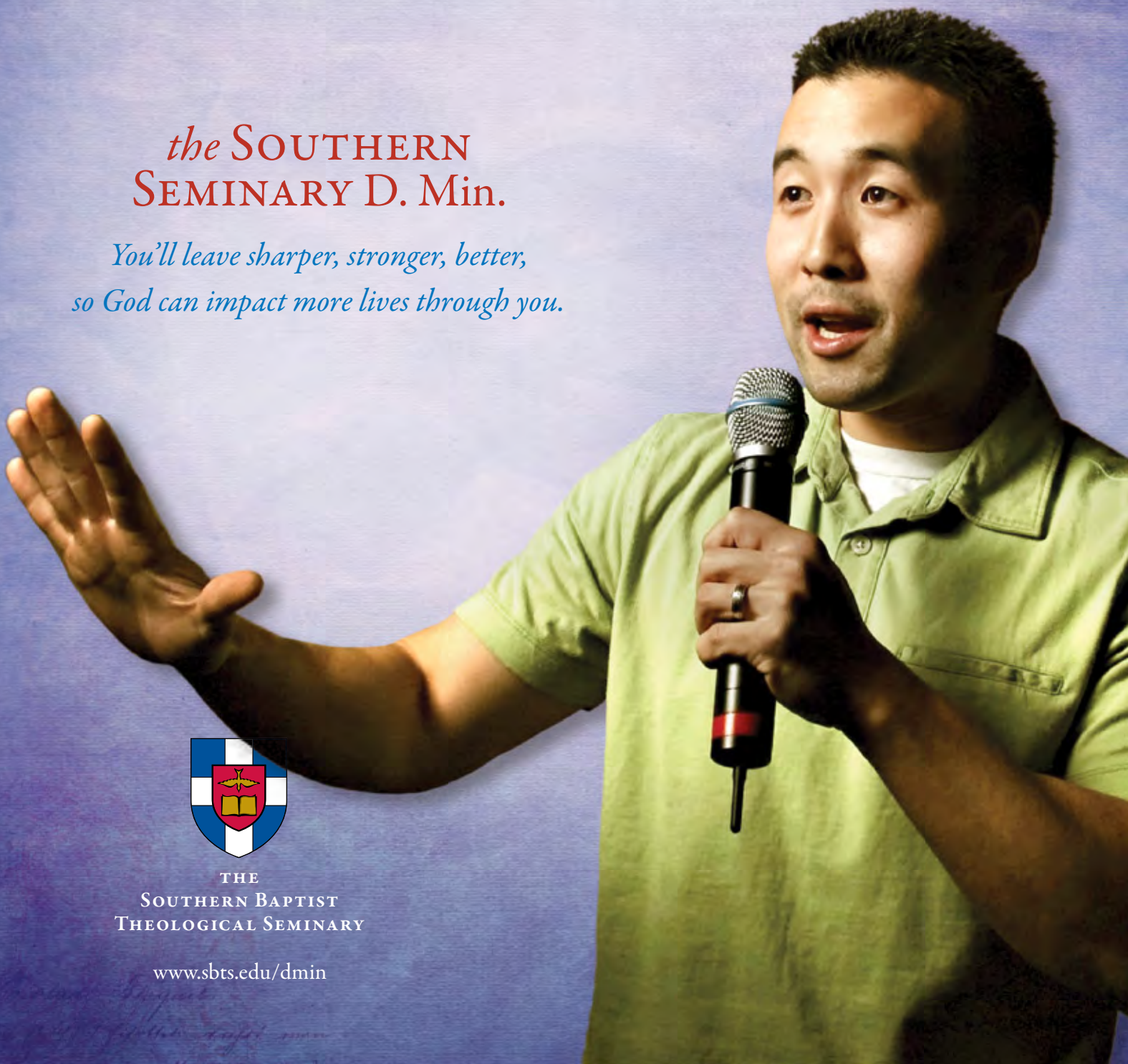
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SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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#### ON THE COVER

The pulpit on the cover is from  
Clifton Baptist Church. Photo  
by John Gill.



President R. Albert Mohler Jr.

## A LETTER *from the* PRESIDENT

**I**N SOME CIRCLES, preaching has fallen on hard times. An open debate is now being waged over the character and centrality of preaching in the church. At stake is nothing less than the integrity of Christian worship and proclamation.

How did this happen? Given the central place of preaching in the New Testament church, it would seem that the priority of biblical preaching should be uncontested. After all, as John A. Broadus – one of Southern Seminary's founding faculty – famously remarked, “Preaching is characteristic of Christianity. No other religion has made the regular and frequent assembling of groups of people, to hear religious instruction and exhortation, an integral part of Christian worship.”

Yet, numerous influential voices within evangelicalism suggest that the age of the expository sermon is now past. In its place, some contemporary preachers now substitute messages intentionally designed to reach secular or superficial congregations – messages which avoid preaching a biblical text, and thus avoid a potentially embarrassing confrontation with biblical truth.

*The recovery and renewal of the church in this generation will come only when from pulpit to pulpit the herald preaches as never sure to preach again and as a dying man to dying men.*

The shift from expository preaching to more topical and human-centered approaches has grown into a debate over the place of Scripture in preaching, and the nature of preaching itself.

Under the guise of an intention to reach modern secular men and women “where they are,” the sermon has been transformed into a success seminar. Some verses of Scripture may be added to the mix, but for a sermon to be genuinely biblical, the text must set the agenda as the foundation of the message – not as an authority cited for spiritual footnoting.

Charles Spurgeon confronted the very same pattern of wavering pulpits in his own day. Some of the most fashionable and well-attended London churches featured pulpiteers who were the precursors to modern needs-based preachers. Spurgeon – who managed to draw a few listeners despite his insistence on biblical preaching – confessed that “the true ambassador for Christ feels that he himself stands before God and has to deal with souls in God’s stead as God’s servant, and stands in a solemn place – a place in which unfaithfulness is inhumanity to man as well as treason to God.”

The current debate over preaching may well shake congregations, denominations and the evangelical movement. But know this: the recovery and renewal of the church in this generation will come only when, as Baxter reminds us, “from pulpit to pulpit the herald preaches as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.”

# THE PRINCE of PREACHERS

## \*ON\* Preaching

“The kind of sermon which is likely to break the hearer’s heart is that which first has broken the preacher’s heart, and the sermon which is likely to reach the heart of the hearer is the one which has come straight from the heart of the preacher.”

“Surely if men’s hearts were right, short sermons would be enough.”

“If you always enjoy sermons, the minister is not a good steward. He is not acting wisely who deals out nothing but sweets.”

“You are listening to a man who professes to speak by God, and for God, and to speak for your good; and his heart yearns over you. Oh, it is solemn work to preach, and it should be solemn work to hear!”

“It is not the bigness of the words you utter, but the force with which you deliver them.”

“The preacher’s work is to throw sinners down into utter helplessness that they may be compelled to look up to Him Who alone can help them.”

“The power that is in the gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher; otherwise men would be the converters of souls. Nor does it lie in the preacher’s learning; otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach until our tongues rotted, till we would exhaust our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless the Holy Spirit be with the Word of God to give it the power to convert the soul.”



*C. H. Spurgeon*

“We hear complaints that the minister speaks too harshly and talks too much of judgment. Saved sinners never make that complaint.”

“If some men were sentenced to hear their own sermons, it would be a righteous judgment upon them; but they would soon cry out with Cain, ‘My punishment is greater than I can bear.’”

# IN SHORT

news reviews events thoughts

## SBTS grad killed in church shooting

BAPTIST PRESS

A gunman shot and killed a doctor of ministry graduate from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary March 8 during a morning worship service at First Baptist Church of Maryville, Ill.

Fred Winters, 45, was preaching in the 8:15 a.m. service with about 150 people in attendance at the St. Louis-area church when the gunman, identified in media reports as 27-year-old Terry Joe Sedlacek, walked down the aisle, exchanged some words with the pastor and opened fire, shooting Winters four times in the chest.

When the gunman's .45-caliber semi-automatic weapon jammed, he drew a knife and slashed two church members as they wrestled him to the ground, according to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The attacker stabbed himself in the neck, and he and one of the church members were in serious condition after surgery. The other injured church member was treated and released.

Winters, meanwhile, staggered about



halfway down a church aisle before collapsing and dying of his injuries at a local hospital, the newspaper said. He is survived by his wife Cindy and daughters Alysia, 14, and Cassidy, 12.

Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern, expressed his care and concern to Winters' family. "Fred Winters was already a seasoned pastor when he entered the Doctor of Ministry program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary," Lawless said. "Still he wanted to continue learning, growing and pushing himself to be the best pastor he could be. That kind of leadership will be missed. We are praying for his family and his church."

## Southern Seminary Goes Global

By DAVID ROACH & ROBERT E. SAGERS

During the recent winter break, three leaders at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary took their theological expertise to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. traveled to Central Asia; Russell D. Moore, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology, led an 11-day study tour of Israel; and Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth, traveled the Pacific Rim assessing the region's theological education.

Mohler taught historical theology, encouraged cross-cultural workers and shared the Gospel throughout his travels Jan. 22-30. Timothy Beougher, professor of evangelism and church growth at South-

ern, and 12 students accompanied Mohler.

One of the trip's highlights for Mohler was discussing the Gospel with a group of Muslim scholars. He and his team also dialogued with the theology faculty at a local university.

Moore co-led a trip to Israel Dec. 27-Jan. 6 with William Cook, professor of New Testament interpretation. Some of the trip's 44 participants earned course credit for the experience in conjunction with their studies at Southern Seminary and Boyce College. During the trip Moore and Cook taught Old and New Testament introductory courses.

The group visited historic biblical sites including Tiberias, the Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Caesarea Philippi, Capernaum, Cana, Nazareth, Mount Carmel, the Jordan River and Bethlehem.

## Sunergos Partners Seek to Bring Gospel Light to Coffee Industry

By PHILIP BUCHAN

Students returned from winter break to a redesigned Founder's Café filled with the rich aroma of gourmet coffee. Southern Seminary now serves Sunergos Coffee, a locally roasted brand that offers flavors from around the globe.

Matthew Hustad and Brian Miller, co-founders of Sunergos, take their commitment to providing quality coffee with utmost seriousness.

"We do all that we can to both present and preserve the unique flavor of each kind of coffee bean we use," Hustad said.

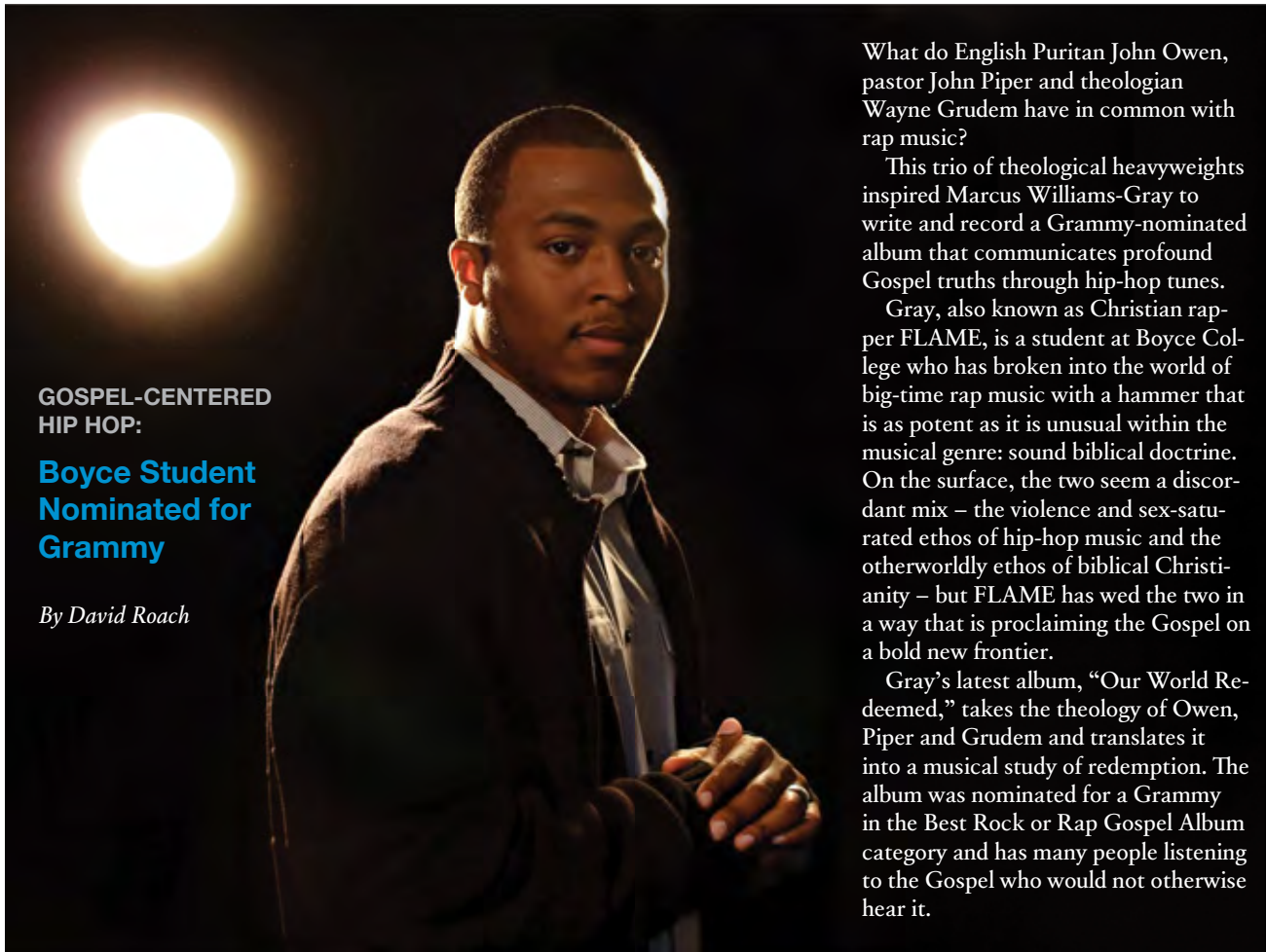
Although Southern only recently began selling Sunergos coffee, the seminary's connection with the company stretches much further into the past. Hustad and Miller met at Southern in the fall of 2001 while both pursuing master of divinity degrees. Their friendship blossomed when they discovered their mutual love of coffee roasting.

By the Spring of 2002, the men began considering how they could turn their hobby into a business.

Once the spring semester ended, both men took jobs at local coffee shops in order to build capital and to learn more about the industry. They bought a roaster and began selling their own flavors to local shops. In September 2004, Sunergos opened an espresso bar on South Preston Street.

Since then, the company has continued developing its wholesale business, and it plans to open a second store on West Woodland Avenue next spring.





**GOSPEL-CENTERED  
HIP HOP:**

**Boyce Student  
Nominated for  
Grammy**

*By David Roach*

What do English Puritan John Owen, pastor John Piper and theologian Wayne Grudem have in common with rap music?

This trio of theological heavyweights inspired Marcus Williams-Gray to write and record a Grammy-nominated album that communicates profound Gospel truths through hip-hop tunes.

Gray, also known as Christian rapper FLAME, is a student at Boyce College who has broken into the world of big-time rap music with a hammer that is as potent as it is unusual within the musical genre: sound biblical doctrine. On the surface, the two seem a discordant mix – the violence and sex-saturated ethos of hip-hop music and the otherworldly ethos of biblical Christianity – but FLAME has wed the two in a way that is proclaiming the Gospel on a bold new frontier.

Gray’s latest album, “Our World Redeemed,” takes the theology of Owen, Piper and Grudem and translates it into a musical study of redemption. The album was nominated for a Grammy in the Best Rock or Rap Gospel Album category and has many people listening to the Gospel who would not otherwise hear it.

**From Music Row to Church Planting:  
Dorsey Ministering in Newfoundland**

*By JEFF ROBINSON*

Less than five years ago, Adam Dorsey broke into big-time country music by writing a hit song about the Lord’s Day.

Today, Dorsey and his family are praying that the Lord will use them as human instruments to break the Gospel into an infinitely more meaningful arena: the hearts of the people of Newfoundland.

Dorsey, who penned Craig Morgan’s “That’s What I Love About Sunday,” which charted at No. 1 among country singles in March 2005, graduated from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in December 2007 and, with his wife, Christi, and son Jacob, is working

as a church planter for the North American Mission Board in Newfoundland.



**Born in Fuller Dormitory:  
The Story of Annabelle  
Sophia Van Tine**

*By GARRETT E. WISHALL*

As Jarrett and Michelle Van Tine went to bed on Nov. 17, they would have been thrilled to know they would have a little girl in their arms six hours later.

They would have been shocked to know she would be born in their apartment in the very bed in which they slept. At midnight, Nov. 18, Michelle woke up with intense contractions. Over the next hour, Michelle continued to have back-to-back contractions, which was unusual so early into labor.

*(Continued on next page)*

Cont., Van Tine, p.7

Jarrett helped Michelle down the stairs from their second floor apartment in the midst of contractions and they got to the parking lot around 3:45 a.m. But Michelle didn't make it into the car. Jarrett called their childbirth instructor, who told him to call an ambulance. He did and an EMS team arrived 10 minutes later.

A female EMS worker who had experience delivering babies intervened, and 15 minutes later, at 4:18 a.m., Annabelle Sophia Van Tine was born in their apartment. Mother and baby were both fine, with no complications.



## Founders' Reopens; LifeWay Facelift Complete

By GARRETT E. WISHALL

The most theologically sound mall in the country now operates on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

And you don't have to endure inappropriate advertising to enjoy it.

The Mall at Southern Seminary includes the LifeWay Campus Store, Fifth and Broadway, the newly expanded Founders' Café and Edgar's, a shop selling menswear.

Andy Vincent, associate vice president for auxiliary enterprises, said the new features are designed to serve students.

"Since it (the Honeycutt lounge area) is a hub of activity for our students, we are trying to make it feel inviting and open," he said. "There is now continuity with the flooring and design. We are seeking to better serve our students and guests by offering these updated venues and trying to best meet their needs."

Founders', which reopened Jan. 26, has tripled its seating area and has several new menu items. The new seating area includes an expansion of the downstairs seating and a spiral staircase that leads upstairs into what used to be the student study lounge.

Founders' now features a Panini menu and entrée salads prepared to order in addition to its past line of pizzas and calzones. Vincent said new and faster equipment will allow Founders' to serve customers more efficiently.

LifeWay's storefront now matches Fifth and Broadway and the lounge area has been expanded to better accommodate traffic flow, Vincent said. LifeWay started an interior renovation in mid-February, but will remain open throughout the renovation.

*(Continued on next page)*







*Cont., Founders, p.8*

Edgar's opened the first week of February. Southern is partnering with a local salon to offer barber service in Edgar's, and the store also sells leather portfolios, journals and pens.

Founders' offers a new line of espresso drinks, which will continue to feature Sunergos Coffee, a locally roasted brand that offers gourmet flavors from around the globe.

Finishing touches for Founders' include new furniture and artwork.

"We will have new furniture for the expanded area downstairs and upstairs," he said. "The décor will also be completed with artwork over the next several weeks."



### Calendar of Events

MARCH 23-27

*Missions Emphasis Week*

APRIL 17-18

*Boyce College Preview Conference*

APRIL 23-25

*Scene@Southern Preview Weekend*

MAY 8

*Boyce Graduation*

MAY 15

*Seminary Graduation*

JUNE 23-24

*SBC Annual Meeting  
Louisville, Kentucky*



## Worldliness – Honest Talk About Seduction

By R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.

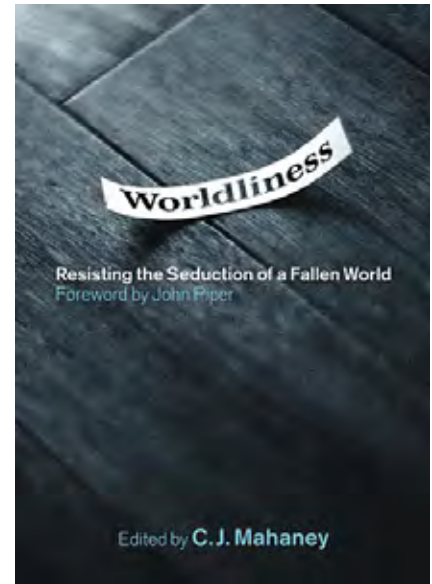
My friend C. J. Mahaney and a few of his friends have written a powerhouse of a book in *Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World* (Crossway). In its essence, worldliness is “a love for the fallen world,” Mahaney explains. “It’s loving the values and pursuits of the world that stand opposed to God.” More emphatically, it is “to gratify and exalt oneself to the exclusion of God.”

Just in case anyone might miss how to apply this, Mahaney and his team go right after major temptations inherent in worldliness. Craig Cabaniss writes about worldliness and media with good insight. To no surprise, Bob Kauflin goes after music, bringing the same theological insights he brings to his music ministry.

Take this zinger, for example: Kauflin warns that a sign that music has become an idol is when our passion for Christ has waned but our passion for music has not.

Dave Harvey writes about worldliness and “our stuff.” (Loved his warning about “virtual giving.”) Mahaney then turns to worldliness and dress, offering good and much needed advice, and Jeff Purswell concludes by talking about the Christian’s right understanding of the world. We are not here by accident.

Worldliness offers other good features, including a foreword by John Piper. Most importantly, the book is Gospel-centered and avoids both legalism and antinomianism. Read it, savor it, ponder it... and then give a copy to someone else.



### RECOMMENDATIONS

*Southern Seminary magazine asked several pastors across the Southern Baptist Convention to provide their favorite books on preaching.*

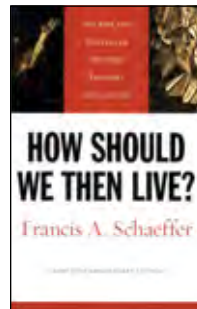


#### “Steps to the Sermon”

by H.C Brown, Gordon Clinard and Jesse Northcutt

RECOMMENDED BY

Bill Henard, *senior pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky.*

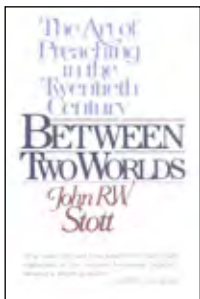


#### “How Should We Then Live?”

by Francis Schaeffer

RECOMMENDED BY

Mac Brunson, *senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.*



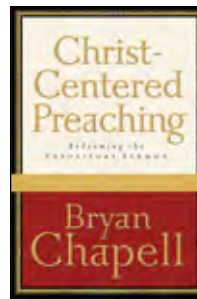
#### “Between Two Worlds”

by John Stott

RECOMMENDED BY

Al Jackson, *pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church, Auburn, Ala.*

James Merritt, *senior pastor of Cross Pointe Church, Duluth, Ga.*



#### “Christ-Centered Preaching”

by Bryan Chapell

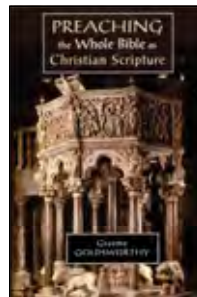
RECOMMENDED BY

J.D. Greear, *lead pastor of the Summit Church, Durham, N.C.*



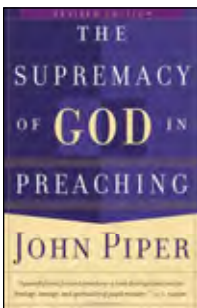
**“The Passion Driven Sermon”**  
by Jim Shaddix

RECOMMENDED BY  
David Platt, *senior pastor of The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, Ala.*  
Bill Henard, *senior pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky.*



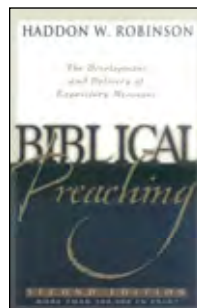
**“Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture”**  
by Graeme Goldsworthy

RECOMMENDED BY  
Spencer Haygood, *senior pastor of Orange Hill Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga.*



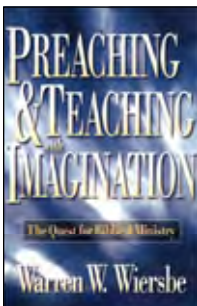
**“The Supremacy of God in Preaching”**  
by John Piper

RECOMMENDED BY  
Andy Davis, *senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Durham, N.C.*  
Buddy Gray, *pastor of Hunter Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala.*



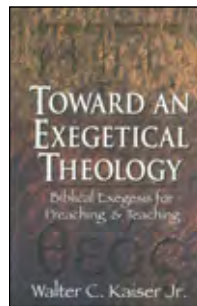
**“The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages”**  
by Haddon W. Robinson

RECOMMENDED BY  
Johnny Hunt, *pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.*



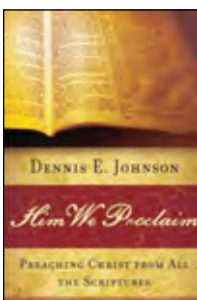
**“Preaching & Teaching with Imagination”**  
by Warren Wiersbe

RECOMMENDED BY  
Ken Fentress, *senior pastor of Montrose Baptist Church, Rockville, Md.*



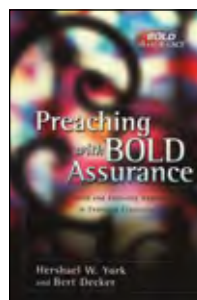
**“Toward an Exegetical Theology”**  
by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.

RECOMMENDED BY  
Ken Fentress, *senior pastor of Montrose Baptist Church, Rockville, Md.*



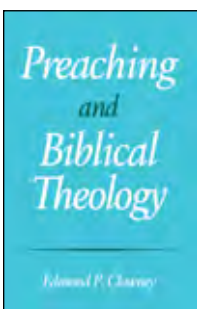
**“Him We Proclaim”**  
by Dennis E. Johnson

RECOMMENDED BY  
Greg Belser, *pastor of Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton, Miss.*



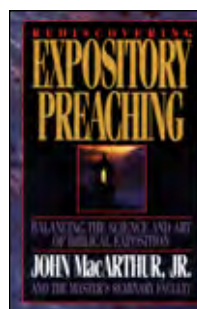
**“Preaching With Bold Assurance”**  
by Hershael York and Bert Decker

RECOMMENDED BY  
Kevin Ezell, *senior pastor of Highview Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.*



**“Preaching and Biblical Theology”**  
by Edward P. Clowney

RECOMMENDED BY  
Russell D. Moore, *dean of the School of Theology and senior vice president for academic administration. Moore is also the preaching pastor of the Highview Baptist Church Fegenbush campus.*



**“Rediscovering Expository Preaching”**  
by John MacArthur, Jr.

RECOMMENDED BY  
Dan Dumas, *senior vice president for institutional administration. Dumas is also the lead pastor for Eastside Community Church.*

## Don't Let the Ministry Keep You from Jesus

By DONALD WHITNEY, *associate professor of biblical spirituality*, from the sermon, “*The Almost Inevitable Ruin of Every Minister...And How to Avoid It*,” from 1 Tim. 4:15-16 (<http://biblicalspirituality.org/ruin.html>)

“Don't let the ministry keep you from Jesus. And that's just what will happen – the ministry will turn your attention from Jesus – unless you ‘Pay close attention to yourself.’

“You might be thinking, ‘How could this happen? My whole life is built around Jesus. Not only am I living for Him in general, but I have given myself to study His Word and minister to His people and do the work of building up His kingdom every day. How could the ministry of Jesus keep me from Jesus?’ Remember that this command, ‘Pay close attention to yourself’ was first written to a minister. And we refer to 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus as the Pastoral Epistles because they are God-given instructions to those in the ministry, and then applicable to every other Christian. So the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, his younger protégé in the ministry, to pay close attention to himself precisely because it is so easy for a minister not to



pay close attention to himself and to be spiritually ruined by the ministry.

“The ministry keeps you from Jesus when it keeps you from hearing from Jesus. But remember that ‘the ministry’ is ‘the ministry of the Word’ (Acts 6:4). There is no real ministry apart from the Scriptures, for the Scriptures are the

Lord speaking to us. And when you don't have time to sit at the Master's feet and hear what He says to you through His Word, something is keeping you from Jesus. And how can you regularly speak for Jesus with power without regularly hearing from Jesus?

“The ministry also keeps you from Jesus when it keeps you from talking to Jesus. Are you still a person of prayer? If you don't have time for unhurried, long-lasting time with Jesus, your life is not only too busy and too complex, chances are you are being deceived. Paul wrote of this concern to the Corinthian Christians when he said, ‘*But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ*’ (2 Cor. 11:3).”

## Illustrating the Sermon

By DAVID PRINCE, *pastor of preaching and vision of Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky., and adjunct instructor of Christian preaching at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*

A sermon illustration is a story that helps explain, make clear and connect listeners to a biblical truth. Consider three vital guidelines for effective sermon illustrations.

### Throw your illustration books away.

Regurgitating a story that captivated the heart and mind of another preacher as it intersected with a biblical truth is an impersonal, sure fire path to stale, anemic preaching. Effective sermon illustrating is far more dynamic and challenging than spending \$29.99. Powerful illustrations are gained by the preacher's commitment to “take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). The gathering of illustrations is not confined to office hours and study time but is a 24 hour a day intersection of biblical truth with life.

### Think of an illustration as a window and not a painting.

Paintings are designed to be examined and appreciated as a focal point to draw your attention to them. That is the way many people use sermon illustrations: they become the focal point of the sermon. Windows exist for the purpose of providing an opportunity to see something else clearly. They are indispensable but are designed to focus your attention elsewhere. Sermon illustrations are indispensable windows that are designed to focus your attention on biblical truth.

### Illustrations concretize the message of the text.

Sermon illustrations should never be utilized as an end in themselves. A potential illustration is not acceptable because it is compelling, humorous, encouraging

or convicting. An illustration is only acceptable to the degree that it helps move biblical truth from the abstract to the concrete. Preachers should prepare with the presupposition that listeners

always assume the application of biblical truth is for someone else. Therefore, sermon illustrations must not be clichéd, vague or general; but rather, precise, vivid, real world stories that keep people from personally evading the force of what is being communicated. Effective illustrations are a primary means to communicate to hearers, “I am talking to you.”



## What to Do When You Lay An Egg

Q&A with **HERSHAEL YORK**, Victor and Louise Lester  
Professor of Christian Preaching

*Q: What should a preacher do when he realizes in the middle of a sermon that it's not his best effort?*

**YORK:** Adrian Rogers told me, "If you lay an egg, stand back and admire it." Sometimes the best thing to do is just own it. I simply pray, "Lord, use this anyway," and I get to my conclusion as quickly as I can.

*Q: Should a preacher ever apologize for preaching a bad sermon?*

**YORK:** If it is the result of a lack of preparation, I think you should. But sometimes there is a squalling baby or some kind of disruption that continues throughout the sermon and ruins the connection between preacher and congregation. It has nothing to do with the preacher, so no apology is needed then.

*Q: How would you apologize if you were ill prepared?*

**YORK:** I would perhaps the next service say, "Church, I need to apologize. I was



not as prepared as I should have been. The sermon I preached was not what the Word of God or you deserve. God be my helper, I will do better." Don't ever apologize before a sermon because God might do something unique.

*Q: How should a preacher recover in his next sermon?*

**YORK:** Just do it as well as you can. Make sure that you learn from the mistake and forge ahead.

*Q: Are bad sermons a normal part of a preacher's life, or should a preacher be worried that he's abnormal if he delivers a bad sermon?*

**YORK:** Bad sermons are like Jesus said of offenses: It is impossible but that they should come, but woe unto him through whom they come. Everybody's going to preach bad sermons. When bad ones come, the wonderful thing is that sometimes the Spirit of God uses them in spite of all the things we do and say.

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**IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE GOSPEL THEOLOGY WITHOUT URGENT MISSIOLOGY. IF WE DON'T LIVE URGENTLY TO ACCOMPLISH THE GREAT COMMISSION, THEN WE HAVE BAD THEOLOGY."**

—David Platt, lead pastor, The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, Ala., Sept. 4, 2008

See more quotes from Southern's Chapel 2008 series on page 38. To listen to Chapel sermons please visit [www.sbts.edu/resources](http://www.sbts.edu/resources).

## Let Scripture Drive Preaching

By **MICHAEL DUDUIT**,  
Southern Graduate; Editor,  
*Preaching Magazine*

Preaching adapts and changes, but it must never lose its connection to Scripture. Preaching is ultimately and always the communication of what God has said in His Word; when we are no longer saying what God has said, we are no longer preaching.

If you were to ask a hundred evangelical pastors in the U.S. if they were expository preachers, probably 75-80 percent would say they were. If you listened to those same preachers on Sunday morning, however, you would quickly learn that the definition of expository preaching is pretty varied.

Expository preaching has come to be understood so broadly that any preacher who makes significant use of Scripture in the sermon tends to think of himself as an expository preacher.

In expository preaching, the biblical text drives the sermon – the text is what gives shape to the sermon. Unlike sermons where the preacher takes a text and departs from it, exposition lives with the text – explaining, exploring, illustrating and applying the insights of that portion of God's Word. As a result, there are a number of different forms which expository preaching can take and still be properly understood as exposition.

We do expository preaching because there is an inherent power in the faithful proclamation of the Word. God has not promised to honor your word or mine, but He has promised that His own Word will not return to Him void.

That is, when the Word of God is faithfully explained and applied in preaching, God works through His Word to touch and transform lives. By opening God's Word and placing it before our people, we create the context in which the Holy Spirit will do His work. You and I have no authority in and of ourselves, but the Word of God has a divine authority and power that we should recognize. As ambassadors for Christ, we do not speak for ourselves but on behalf of the One whom we represent.

# The Three Marks of Authentic Expository Preaching

By R. Albert Mohler Jr.



When it is done rightly and faithfully, authentic expository preaching will be marked by three distinct characteristics: authority, reverence and centrality. Expository preaching is authoritative. Moreover, it stands upon the very authority of the Bible as the Word of God. It requires and reinforces a sense of reverent expectation on the part of God's people. And finally, expository preaching demands the central place in Christian worship and is respected as the event through which the living God speaks to His people.

## ***Expository preaching is characterized by authority***

The Enlightenment culture that gave birth to modernity was subversive of every form of authority, though it has taken some centuries for this rebellion against authority to work its way throughout society. In the postmodern culture of the West, authority is under attack in every form, and a sense of personal autonomy is basic to contemporary ideals of human rights and freedom.

Some homileticians suggest that preachers should simply embrace this new worldview and surrender any claim to an authoritative message. Those who

have lost confidence in the authority of the Bible as the Word of God are left with little to say and no authority for their message. Fred Craddock, among the most influential figures in recent homiletic thought, famously describes today's preacher "as one without authority."

Contrasted to this are the words of Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "Any study of church history, and particularly any study of the great periods of revival or reawakening, demonstrates above everything else just this one fact: that the Christian Church during all such periods has spoken with authority. The great characteristic of all revivals has been the authority of the preacher. There seemed to be something new, extra, and irresistible in what he declared on behalf of God."

In all true expository preaching, there is a note of authority. That is because the preacher dares to speak on behalf of God. He stands in the pulpit as a steward "of the mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1), declaring the truth of God's Word, proclaiming the power of that Word, and applying that Word to life. This is an admittedly audacious act. No one should even contemplate such an endeavor with-

out absolute confidence in a divine call to preach and in the unblemished authority of the Scriptures. The preaching ministry is not a profession to be joined but a call to be answered.

## ***Authentic expository preaching creates a sense of reverence among God's people***

The congregation that gathered before Ezra and the other preachers demonstrated a love and reverence for the Word of God (Nehemiah 8). When the book was read, the people stood up, an act that reveals their sense of expectancy as the Word was read and preached.

Expository preaching both requires and eventually cultivates an attitude of reverence on the part of the congregation. Preaching is not a dialogue, but it does involve at least two parties – the preacher and the congregation. The congregation's role in the preaching event is to hear, receive, and obey the Word of God. In so doing, the church demonstrates reverence for the preaching and teaching of the Bible and understands that the sermon brings the Word of Christ near to the congregation. This is true worship.

Lacking reverence for the Word of God, many congregations are caught in a

frantic quest for significance in worship. Christians leave worship services asking each other, “Did you get anything out of that?”

Expository preaching demands a very different set of questions. Will I obey the Word of God? How must my thinking be realigned by Scripture? How must I change my behavior to be fully obedient to the Word? These questions reveal submission to the authority of God and reverence for the Bible as His Word.

Likewise, the preacher must demonstrate his own reverence for God’s Word by dealing truthfully and responsibly with the text. He must not be flippant or casual, much less dismissive or disrespectful. Of this we can be certain – no congregation will revere the Bible more than the preacher does.

***Expository preaching must be at the center of Christian worship***

It is worth noting again: Worship properly directed to the honor and glory of God will find its center in the reading and preaching of the Word of God. Expository preaching cannot be assigned a supporting role in the act of worship. It must be central.

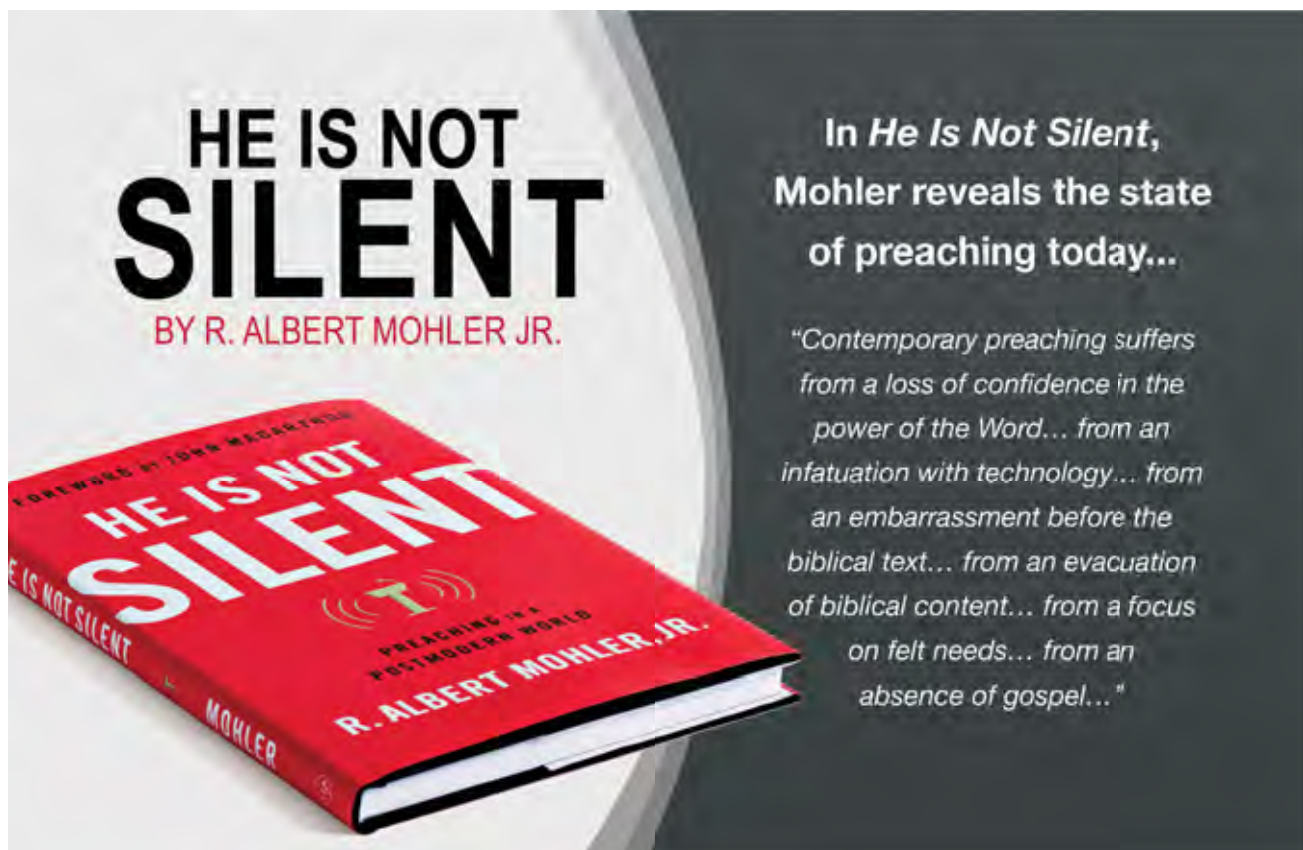
## Expository preaching demands a very different set of questions. Will I obey the Word of God? How must my thinking be realigned by Scripture? How must I change my behavior to be fully obedient to the Word?

In the course of the Reformation, Martin Luther’s driving purpose was to restore preaching to its proper place in worship. Referring to the incident between Mary and Martha in Luke 10, Luther reminded his congregation and students that Jesus Christ declared that “only one thing is necessary” – the preaching of the Word (Luke 10:42 NASB). Luther realized that the most important reform needed was to reestablish the reading and preaching of the Word as the central act of Christian worship.

That same reformation is needed in American evangelicalism today.

Expository preaching must once again be central to the life of the church and central to Christian worship. In the end, the church will not be judged by its Lord for the quality of its music but for the faithfulness of its preaching. The preacher will be judged for his preaching and the congregation will be judged for its hearing – and for the preaching it has demanded.

Excerpted from *He Is Not Silent: Preaching in a Postmodern World* (Moody Press, 2008) by R. Albert Mohler Jr. Used by permission.



**HE IS NOT SILENT**  
BY R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.

**In *He Is Not Silent*, Mohler reveals the state of preaching today...**

*“Contemporary preaching suffers from a loss of confidence in the power of the Word... from an infatuation with technology... from an embarrassment before the biblical text... from an evacuation of biblical content... from a focus on felt needs... from an absence of gospel...”*

The image shows a red book titled "HE IS NOT SILENT" by R. ALBERT MOHLER JR. The book cover features the title in large white letters and a small graphic of a speaker with sound waves. The background is a dark grey gradient with a white curved line.

# The Devil Is a Boring Preacher: THE HIGH STAKES OF DULL SERMONS

By Russell D. Moore



**T**HE DEVIL IS a preacher. From the third chapter of the Bible onward, he is opening up God's Word to people, seeking to interpret it, to apply it, to offer an invitation.

So the old Serpent of Eden comes to the primeval woman not with a "Black Mass" and occult symbols, but with the Word she'd received from her God – with the snake's peculiar spin on it.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Evil One preaches peace – just like the angels of Bethlehem do – except he does so when there is no peace. He points God's people to the particulars of worship commanded by God – sacrifices and offerings and feast-days – just without

the preeminent mandates of love, justice and mercy. Satan even preaches to God – about the proper motives needed for godly discipleship on the part of God's servants.

In the New Testament, the satanic deception leads the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees to pore endlessly over biblical texts, just missing the point of Christ Jesus therein. They come to conclusions that have partially biblical foundations – the devil's messages are always expository – they just intentionally avoid Jesus.

But the devil is boring.

That seems like exactly the opposite of what would be true of Satan. We think of the tempter – and his temptations – as

darkly exciting, tantalizing, seemingly irresistible.

But that's not at all the case. False teaching in the Scripture – and in the ages of the church ever since – is boring. It's boring because the goal isn't to engage people with preaching. It's to leave the "desires of the flesh" alone, so that the hearers may continue in their captivity to the prince of the power of this air.

For some, dull sermons are themselves a sign of godliness. After all, Jesus and the apostles were often poorly received – but they were never boring. They provoked shouts of happiness or warrants for arrest, but they never prompted yawns.



If lost people don't like your message because they're hostile to the Gospel, you're in good company. But if you're boring the people of God with the Word of God, something has gone seriously awry. It may be that you preach just like the devil, and that you don't even know it.

### HEARING FROM CHRIST ISN'T BORING

Sometimes preachers bore because they don't understand the nature of Scripture. The Bible, after all, captures not only the intellect, but also the affections, the conscience and the imagination. That's why the canon includes stories and parables, poetry and proverbs, letters and visions.

So if you find yourself translating a Psalm into the structure of a Pauline epistle before you can preach it, you're not letting the Scripture do its work in gripping the hearts of your people. And you don't understand the meaning of the text – a meaning that's about more than simply collected ideas.

Not even the most straightforward, rigorously doctrinal passages of Scripture are singularly intellectual. The apostles are visual preachers. Paul speaks of gouging out eyes (Gal 4:15), giving his body over to be burned (1 Cor 13:3) and compares himself to a nursing mother (1 Thess 2:7), while James writes of a tongue aflame (Jas 3:6) and fattened hearts in a day of slaughter (Jas 5:5).

Preachers who would rage against boredom can start by learning to listen to the literary power of the text. This means, for one thing, learning to form moral imaginations that can be fired by the text. For the sake of your congregation, limit your television, and stop surfing the Internet for hours on end. Read some good fiction, some poetry, listen to stories being told – and thereby shape an imagination that recognizes literary structure, beauty and coherence.

### CONFRONTING THE DEVIL ISN'T BORING

Some preachers bore because they misunderstand the nature of human rebellion. Sermons typically bore because they rest on abstractions at best, or on clichés and platitudes at worst. Abstract ideas can easily be distanced from human sin – and shopworn, recycled slogans are too familiar to threaten. Satan loves such

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*“...if you're boring the people of God with the Word of God, something has gone seriously awry. It may be that you preach just like the devil, and that you don't even know it.”*

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preaching because it leaves his authority over human rebellion unthreatened.

Like Saul convincing himself that he had kept God's command to destroy “all” the property of the Amalekites (1 Sam 15), or like David's self-delusion in thinking that somehow his own adultery was justified (2 Sam 12), all of us are prone to dodge the truth-seeking nature of biblical proclamation. Vague abstractions do not expose the conscience. It's not enough then to say, “Husbands love your wives” (Eph 5:25); we must point out with concrete application what it looks like to love your wife.

Beyond that, a sermon information dump – with PowerPoint outline point by sub-point by sub-sub-point – can “safely” distance your people from Christ. A sermon that simply collates and regurgitates what you've read in commentaries can make the Word of God a matter of cognition not submission, making it easy for your people to disregard this Word just like they disregard the weight loss plan's commercials on television or the flossing ad campaigns they see from the dentist's chair.

The devil doesn't mind boring sermons, so long as you allow him to preach too. He doesn't mind the Word being heard so long as it's the appetites that really enliven his people. And he doesn't mind the Gospel going forward as long as God's people hear his accusations of them.

But if you grip people with the drama of the Gospel of Christ, if you jolt them into seeing the ancient newness of the Word of God, then you'll have a demonic insurrection on your hands.

You preach verse-by-verse through the text? You do well. But preach it with vision and passion. The demons, they preach also – and they're boring.

*Russell D. Moore is dean of the School of Theology and senior vice president for academic administration at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also serves as a preaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church, where he ministers weekly at the congregation's Fegenbush location. Moore is the author of The Kingdom of Christ and Adopted for Life. To read an expanded version of this article, please visit [www.russellmoore.com](http://www.russellmoore.com).*



#### QUOTABLE

“This is to me a very serious matter; there is something radically wrong with dull and boring preachers. How can a man be dull when he is handling such themes? I would say that a ‘dull preacher’ is a contradiction in terms; if he is dull he is not a preacher. He may stand in a pulpit and talk, but he is certainly not a preacher.”

– D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES

# Preaching for Conversions

The true power of such appeals is not found in the eloquence of the speaker or in the emotions of the listener but in the faithfulness of the God who still speaks through His Word.

By Timothy Paul Jones

**I**N THE CHURCHES where I first came to know Jesus Christ, no service was complete without an invitation – a time for the people in the pews to respond to the message by making their way down the aisle. Especially during weeklong revival services, “Just as I Am” inevitably ran out of verses before the polyester-clad preachers ran out of steam. And so, with “every head bowed, every eye closed, and no one looking around,” the preacher would call for “one more, just one more” as the pianist continued to play. As a child, I remember watching these visiting revivalists through half-closed eyes, waiting for the preacher’s furtive nod to the pianist that would bring the invitation to an end.

Whatever you may think about invitations in general or about those preachers’ particular methods, one thing is clear: ***They weren’t afraid to preach with the expectation of conversions.***

Neither were the preachers and prophets whose words the Holy Spirit has preserved in the pages of the New Testament.

John the Baptist heralded the coming of Christ with a call to turn from

one way of life to another (Mark 1:3-5). When Jesus made His way back to Galilee from the desert of temptation, His proclamation to the people was, “The kingdom of God is at hand! Repent and believe the good news.” (Mark 1:15). Repentance was an imperative in Simon Peter’s message on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38). In a letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul put it this way: “We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God!” (2 Cor 5:20).

Proclamation from Southern Baptist pulpits has historically reflected this openness to preaching for conversions. John A. Broadus – second president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the pastor who baptized missionary Lottie Moon – never seemed ashamed to aim his proclamations with an expectation of conversions. An eyewitness declared that, when Broadus preached to troops during the Civil War, “Again and again would the vast congregations be melted down under the power of the great preacher, and men ‘unused to the melting mood’ would sob with un-

controllable emotion.” In a message on the resurrection, Broadus declared that Christ “rose triumphant over death and over sin and over Satan on our behalf” and then implored his hearers, “Have you experienced this new life? Have you continued in it?” Broadus ended another sermon by asking pointedly, “To which class shall we belong, to those who receive or those who reject the Light of the World, our only Savior?” In this, the practices of Broadus stood in continuity with his teachings on revival preaching: “Urge *immediate decision and acceptance of the Gospel terms*, with public confession of Christ,” Broadus instructed his students.

## Gospel Preaching and Popularity

In a culture intoxicated with the rationalization and justification of every possible lifestyle, calls for “immediate decision and acceptance of the Gospel terms” will never be particularly popular. After all, to urge such decision is to declare implicitly that *the way hearers are* is not *the way hearers ought to be* – this, in a world where *the way people are* is widely assumed to be the inescapable result of



social and biological inclinations. Possibilities for popularity plummet even further when proclaimers of the Word introduce the inconvenient truth that explicit faith in Jesus represents the sole pathway for persons to become how they ought to be.

Early in my ministry, there were a couple of years when I flirted with theological liberalism and found myself uncertain about the exclusivity of the Gospel. During those months, I looked back on the decision-seeking preachers of my childhood with embarrassment and disdain. Convinced that I had grown beyond the need to call for conversions, I placed as many miles as possible between my pulpit and the proverbial sawdust trail.

I soon realized that – without a passionate conviction that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is necessary and exclusive – preaching quickly degenerates into therapeutic moralisms, denuded of power and authority. I assuaged my conscience during those months by appealing to an aphorism supposedly spoken by a popular medieval saint: “Preach the Gospel at all times; if necessary, use

words.” What I wasn’t willing to admit at the time is that, because the Gospel includes assent to specific truths about a specific person, preaching the Gospel requires words. A Gospel without words is something less than the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### What I Learned at a Funeral

Oddly enough, it was at a funeral that I glimpsed the full folly of my false wisdom. A drug overdose had claimed a young woman’s life, and the funeral director asked me to officiate at a memorial service. When I arrived at the funeral home, I wasn’t certain whether I was at a memorial service or a rock concert. The family had littered the front lawn with beer bottles, and a few family members had clustered near the corners of the building, smoking something stronger than tobacco.

Moments before the service, the sister of the deceased woman slipped into the chapel, bypassing the activities outside. She asked if she might share a few words with the mourners after my message, and I agreed. After an opening hymn, I proceeded to present the well-polished

platitudes that I had prepared for the service. When I stepped aside, the sister stepped to the microphone. Roughly and without the slightest rhetorical flourish, she shared how Jesus Christ had saved her and how other members of their family would likely suffer the same fate as her sister unless they turned from their present way of life. Sitting beside that casket, I watched as God used this woman’s words to transform the hearts of some of her hearers.

At first, I watched the scene with condescending smugness. Then, God began to break me. This woman, plainspoken and only recently converted, was speaking the truth that I should have proclaimed with clear and shameless confidence. I, who had been called and trained to preach the Gospel, had bartered that calling for a fleeting sense of inclusivity. That moment represented far more than my recognition of the utter bankruptcy of theological liberalism. The conviction that I felt in that moment also marked the beginning of a journey back to boldness in my preaching. I can’t claim that my preaching has been perfect ever since that moment. I can say this, however: From that moment onward, my preaching has centered on the cross of Christ, and I have never hesitated to preach with the expectation of conversions.

There may have been times when those old-time evangelists leaned too hard on emotional appeals as we sang one more verse of “Just as I Am.” But this I know: It is equally dangerous to err in the other extreme. As long as there are persons who have yet to embrace the Gospel, there is a need for preaching – and not just any preaching. What is needed is Gospel-centered preaching that boldly appeals to lost men and women to turn to Jesus Christ. The true power of such appeals is not found in the eloquence of the speaker or in the emotions of the listener but in the faithfulness of the God who still speaks through His Word.

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*Timothy Paul Jones is assistant professor of leadership and church ministry at Southern Seminary.*



# His tuition would be twice as much at other seminaries.



*Southern Seminary's students enjoy a lower tuition because of our four income streams: The Annual Fund, Cooperative Program gifts, the endowment and tuition.*

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– 1 –

The Cooperative Program is the Southern Baptist Convention's cooperative mechanism for funding missions and ministries. Each year Southern Baptist churches give millions of dollars through the Cooperative Program that are divided among Southern Baptist entities, including Southern Seminary.

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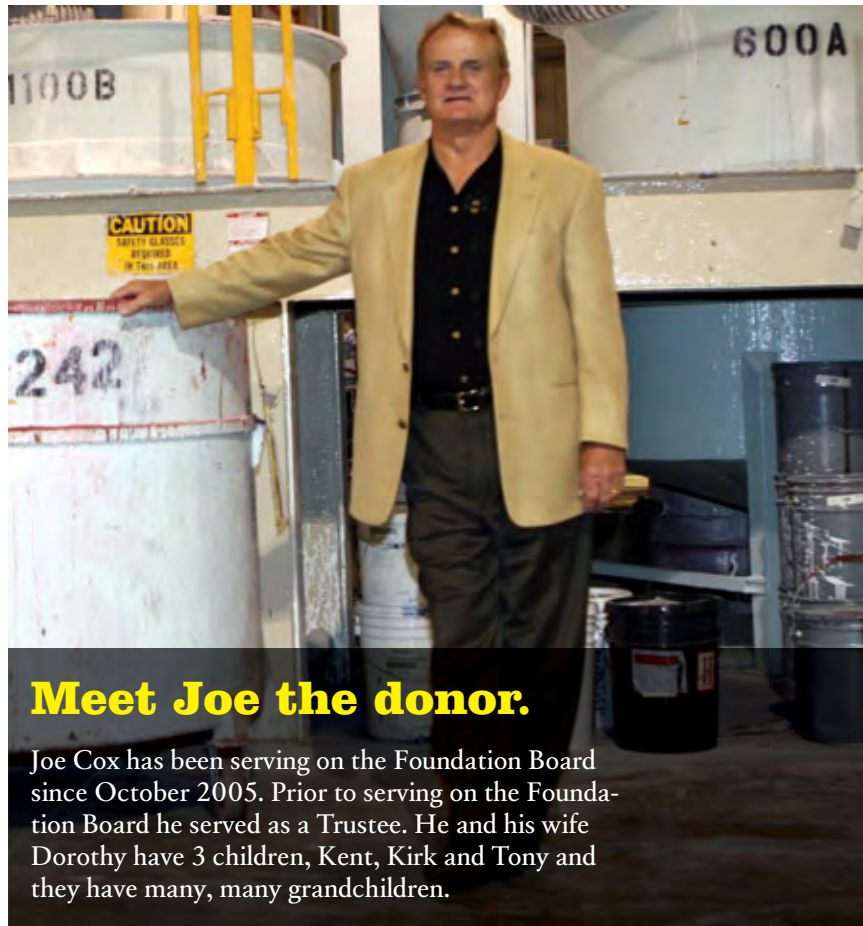
The Annual Fund is made up of gifts by friends of Southern. These gifts go directly to the school's budget, and gifts to the Annual Fund are the best way prospective donors can impact the lives of students. By donating \$42 per month to the Annual Fund, a donor can give \$500 per year. An \$84 gift each month translates into \$1,000 per year.

– 3 –

The endowment fund has been built primarily through gifts from estates. The seminary invests endowment funds and uses approximately 5 percent of the endowment for the budget each year. Estate gifts and careful estate planning by Southern's friends help to grow the endowment annually.

**Tuition is always the last budget component calculated in order to ensure that student costs are as low as possible.**

**Tuition at Southern is consistently lower than at other evangelical institutions thanks to the faithful support of the churches and individuals of the Southern Baptist Convention.**



### **Meet Joe the donor.**

Joe Cox has been serving on the Foundation Board since October 2005. Prior to serving on the Foundation Board he served as a Trustee. He and his wife Dorothy have 3 children, Kent, Kirk and Tony and they have many, many grandchildren.

Joe Cox sat in an Oklahoma bar, gazing at his reflection in the mirror when God spoke to his heart.

Trapped in a life of alcoholism and sin, Cox felt the Lord tell him that he either had to live for Christ or risk losing his life. Cox chose Christ. Thirty-six years later he continues to grow in his Christian commitment and expresses that commitment by giving to Southern Seminary.

“The people that I’ve seen that have gone through the school there show that they’ve just turned out some remarkable, godly people that have a passion to bring the truth back out without distorting it,” Cox said of Southern.

Cox’s journey to Christ began when he quit attending church as a teenager. Soon after graduating high school Cox developed a drinking problem and fell into a life of sin despite being married and having a young son.

By the time 1972 arrived, Cox had visited multiple churches and even been baptized three times. Yet he had never repented of his sins and truly committed his life to Christ. That all changed as he sat in the bar at noon.

When he sensed God calling him to salvation, he got up and drove home.

“I got on my knees there in my house and just asked God to change my life and forgive my sins and make me a new creature,” he said.

Soon after his conversion Cox joined First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla. Over the years, Joe and Dorothy Cox and their family increased their levels of Christian commitment and eventually were introduced to Southern Seminary.

“Anybody that would be exposed to the atmosphere and all of the godly people up there and the way things are conducted would just want to share and give to Southern,” he said.

*Southern Student Aaron Coe Making a*

# **Big Impact on the Big Apple**

*By Jeff Robinson*



When the towers of Manhattan's World Trade Center crumbled to the ground as a result of terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Aaron Coe's ministerial affections began to rise for the city of New York.

A lifelong Southern Baptist who had grown up in Southern church culture, Coe no longer saw New York as the intimidating, larger-than-life city that never sleeps, but as a mission field where God's glory should be made known.

"For the first time I saw New York as a place where real people lived," he said. "Before

then, it was kind of like Disney World to me. You go on vacation, you see it on TV all of the time, but no real person really lives there. But 9/11 kind of put a major human face on it, and I was like, man, these are real people and this is a big deal.

"For my wife and I, our hearts started being turned toward New York, but it wasn't something that we even felt like we had the capabilities of responding to in any way. We were just kind of sensitive to the realities that were going on there."



**C**oe, a master of divinity student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Louisville native, went to work for the North American Mission Board in Manhattan in 2003 as part of the organization's New Hope New York emphasis. In 2006 he resigned his position and answered a call to plant a church in Manhattan.

The congregation began with eight people meeting in the living room of Coe's apartment. Today, the church has more than 180 in attendance and meets on Sunday mornings at a Manhattan public school and in an art gallery on Sunday evenings. Fittingly, the congregation is named "The Gallery Church," a title with a double meaning, partly intending to grab the attention of the vast Manhattan arts community, but also to communicate a message with deeper theological significance.

"The reality of the name really goes to the core of our theological belief that we as believers are on display for the greatness of God and for the glory of God," Coe said.

"That's what our purpose in life is. And when you think about what an art gallery does, it puts great works of art on display and in the process, makes the artist famous. And I really believe at the core of who we are we are seeking to spread the fame of God."

Ministering outside the South, particularly in the fiber-transient culture of New York, has required something of a proclamational paradigm adjustment for Coe. No longer is it possible for Coe to toss around words common to the evangelical lexicon without substantively defining them.

Christian terminology does not go down easily in Manhattan, a city of 1.7 million people where master's degrees



#### NEW YORK CITY QUICK FACTS:

**8,274,527**

*Population*

**38 percent**

*Over 15 years of age and never married*

and doctorates are as common as skyscrapers. Unlike the Bible Belt, where the evangelical presence is ubiquitous, The Gallery is one of a handful of evangelical congregations that exist in Manhattan.

"Here in Louisville, you expect to get a lot of nods and amens out of your preaching, but it's not that way there," he said. "You've got to explain carefully everything you say and back it up with biblical evidence."

**"HERE IN LOUISVILLE, YOU EXPECT TO GET A LOT OF NODS AND AMENS OUT OF YOUR PREACHING, BUT IT'S NOT THAT WAY THERE ... YOU'VE GOT TO EXPLAIN CAREFULLY EVERYTHING YOU SAY AND BACK IT UP WITH BIBLICAL EVIDENCE."**



“It’s been a real learning curve for me. I’ve had guys come up to me after a message and say, ‘That’s terrible. I don’t agree with that. I don’t know where you got that.’ And they weren’t being mean; they just thought my explanation was weak. You’ve got to bring well-reasoned arguments when you teach in New York.”

The church has sought to make its voice heard in the community – no small task in a city awash in competing cultural messages – through involvement in such activities as AIDS/HIV testing. In some New York neighborhoods AIDS/HIV is pandemic, so The Gallery has worked with a local clinic to sponsor several AIDS/HIV testing events. For example, in one event, the church focused on the Chelsea community, where one in four gay men suffers from the deadly virus.

Last spring, The Gallery sponsored “City Uprising,” an event in which church members rearranged their personal schedules – many taking a full day off – to serve the city for several days. The church assembled more than 200 workers who performed various acts of service, including a cleanup day at Bronx Park, an outreach to local artists and AIDS/HIV testing through 21 area clinics. Clinics performed an astounding 800 tests.

The Gallery’s AIDS/HIV involvement has caught the eye of both famous politicians and well-known evangelicals; last year, Coe was invited to speak at a nationally noted conference on AIDS/HIV at Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church. In Southern California he met with Warren and wife Kay and was one of four pastors to gain an audience with then New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. Clinton was the presumed front-runner for the Democratic nomination for president at that time.

When one of the pastors told Clinton that evangelicals have often emphasized the good of the soul while perhaps neglecting physical needs such as the AIDS/HIV epidemic, Coe said Clinton’s reply surprised him a bit.

“She said, ‘Well, that may be true, but in my own denomination the opposite has been true; we’ve cared more about the society and neglected the soul,’” Coe said. “I thought, ‘There’s probably not an evangelical person on this campus that would imagine she would say something like that’.”

*“We are learning that you don’t have to be at a church of 20,000 people to have an influence on the culture”*

AIDS/HIV activism has helped The Gallery to begin to break up the hard soil that is New York so that the seed of the Gospel may be planted, Coe said. The church claims several attendees who work in venues that shape culture in New York and beyond, including a staff member of New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and a director for FOX News.

Coe and his wife Carmen have been married for more than 10 years. They were high school sweethearts at Whitefield Academy in Louisville and now have a son, Ezra James, who is two. Coe said he and his family are learning that while New York is a difficult spiritual atmosphere, God is building His church there in ways that may not be obvious to the broader culture.

“We are learning that you don’t have to be at a church of 20,000 people to have an influence on the culture,” Coe said. “You’ve just got to be there and be faithfully teaching and preaching the Gospel and getting involved in people’s lives to show them the love of Christ.”

*For a video interview with Aaron Coe, please visit [www.sbts.edu/resources](http://www.sbts.edu/resources).*

**385 years**

*Since NYC was first founded (1624)*

**\$20**

*Average price of lunch*



# PASTORAL MARGINS

*finding balance in ministry and in life*

*by Hershael York*



*“They made me keeper of the vineyards,  
but my own vineyard I have not kept.”  
(Song of Solomon 1:6)*

Pastors often feel torn between church and home, between ministry to others and ministry to family. Though I would never deny the challenge maintaining that balance presents, family and ministry are not in competition or contradictory to God’s perfect plan and will for our lives. If I feel like they are, then I am doing something wrong.

God doesn’t issue competing calls. If His Word is true, then He has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). We have all the time, resources and opportunities we need to do God’s will. That means that we can never claim a lack of any of those things as the reason we don’t succeed at home.

Though the complexity of life guarantees that ministers will always feel some tension between ministry and family, a few key principles can drastically reduce such tension and ensure that life doesn’t rip apart at the seams.

## *Make the Word of God Central*

The primary task of a parent is to train the heart of his child to love the Lord. The child’s life must be saturated with God’s Word. Instructing the child in the Word of God goes far beyond regular devotions. It means that every facet of life must relate to the Word. The child needs to see an evident love for the Lord and His Word that permeates every part of family life. Too many pastors spend time preparing sermons and lessons for church members while neglecting to impart a heart for God to their own children.

*“If God has called him to shepherd both a family and a church, then God is most glorified when he sees that these ministries complement each other rather than compete.”*



In the same way, my primary task as a pastor is to teach my people how to feed on the Word of God so that they can glorify Him through worship and witness, obedience and devotion. If I make the Word central in both my home and my church, then those purposes will never be at odds. My intentions in my home and in my church will coincide and overlap in wonderful ways.

*Be Fun to Live With*

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). If your Christianity makes you dreary and dull, you don't understand the ministry

of the Holy Spirit nor what Christ has done on your behalf. If pastors would reflect the joy of the Lord in their ministry, marriage and home, people around them would be delightfully drawn to the Lord.

*Don't Just Spend Your Time, Invest It*

A minister has to learn to invest his time wisely rather than merely letting it pass. He must choose to be present for the events that matter. Adrian Rogers used to say, "The pastor who is always available is seldom worth anything when he is." Whether dealing with his church or his family, no minister can be there

for everything. A pastor can overindulge his church as surely as he can overindulge his children. The key is to set an example of faithfulness, discipline and integrity.

Because of my schedule, I did not attend all of the ball games, school events or performances of my children. We would have an honest talk about an event's level of importance. If one of my sons said to me, "This is important to me. I want you there," then I would do everything possible to make it happen. By the same token, I sometimes had to explain that because of a previous com-

mitment I had made, I had to be away. I could not break my word.

That kind of commitment made it easier for my family to understand when, at other times, I had to miss some events. I want my children to know how high a priority they are to me, but I do not want them to ever think that they are the center of the universe around which everything else revolves. Some crises and needs are more significant than their soccer games. But in the same way, I want my church to know that some needs in my family are more important than the WMU dinner.

#### *Include Your Family in Ministry Tasks*

A friend of mine used to tell me, “Wherever you go, take someone with you.” Following his advice, I always tried to take one of my sons on visits to homes and hospitals, and to preaching engagements. I used those opportunities to teach them how to care for people, how to live a godly life or just to listen to what was on their hearts.

In the same way, I include my wife in my sermon preparation, frequently asking her for advice in crafting the sermon, searching for illustrations or the best way to relate truth to a contemporary audience. Now that our sons are grown, she accompanies me almost everywhere I go. By including her in my ministry, we have grown closer and my church sees us as a team. I am also less likely to face moral temptation or simply to grow distant from her. By including my family I cultivate trust, camaraderie and competency.

#### *Ministry and Family Fit Together*

No pastor can find the perfect formula for success, the failsafe recipe for balancing church and home, ministry and family. But if God has called a man to shepherd both a family and a church, then God is most glorified when he sees that these ministries complement each other rather than compete.

*For the longer version of this article, please visit [www.sbts.edu/resources](http://www.sbts.edu/resources).*



*Hershael York serves as associate dean of ministry and proclamation and the Victor and Louise Lester Professor of Christian Preaching at Southern Seminary. York is also the senior pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky.*

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*“Though I would never deny the challenge that maintaining that balance presents, family and ministry are not in competition or contradictory to God’s perfect plan and will for our lives.”*

# Southern Announces New Training Model for Family Ministry

By Garrett E. Wishall

**T**HE School of Leadership and Church Ministry at Southern Seminary has introduced a family ministry model that centers on equipping parents to biblically train their children.

Designed for future associate pastors, the new approach, called the Family Equipping Ministry Model, seeks to address a weakness in the ministry of many local churches, said Randy Stinson, dean of the School of Leadership.

“One of our main concerns has been that over the last 20 years the discipleship of children and teenagers has not been as effective as it should be,” he said. “One of the reasons that is true is because parents have either not been trained, not been held accountable, or both, to being the primary disciple-makers of their children.

“The Family Equipping Ministry Model espouses a partnership between the home and the church where the church oversees and equips the members of their church, in particular parents, to disciple their children.”

Southern now offers a master of arts degree in family ministry as well a master of divinity with that emphasis. Students may also apply for a doctor of philosophy or doctor of ministry degree in family ministry. A doctor of ministry degree in family ministry is presently in development.

The School of Leadership, under Stinson’s leadership, developed an informal coalition with Family Life Ministries, led by Dennis Rainey, and several local churches to create the new family ministry model.

The Family Equipping Ministry Model operates with the following definition of family ministry, developed by Timothy Paul Jones, assistant professor of leadership and church ministry at Southern: the process of intentionally and persistently realigning a congregation’s proclamation and practices so that parents – and especially fathers – are acknowledged, trained and held accountable as the persons primarily responsible for the discipleship of their children.

This definition appears in Jones’ forthcoming book “Perspectives on Family Ministry” (B&H Academic, 2009).

Jones said the most crucial element is the emphasis on parental responsibility.

“According to one recent survey, 85 percent of parents admitted that they were responsible for their children’s spiritual growth,” he said, “yet, with few exceptions, these parents had no plans for their children’s spiritual training and had experienced no training or accountability in their churches for such a task.”

Jones said that local church leaders must prioritize teaching parents about their responsibility to train their children.

“Many parents aren’t actively rebelling against God’s expectation – they’ve simply never been informed of their responsibility,” he said. “The church has a responsibility to train parents, especially fathers, to plan and to engage in an active and intentional discipleship process with their children.”

Stinson said the local church tested and theologically grounded new approach differs from the Family-Integrated Church Model (FIC) that has become popular in some circles.

“The FIC essentially does away with youth pastors and age-graded ministry,” he said. “The Family Equipping Ministry Model, while advocating a restructuring of the various ministries of the church,

utilizes various trained pastoral positions and does not do away with age-graded ministry.”

Stinson said an emphasis on family ministry is particularly valuable in view of the breakdown of the family in much of the contemporary culture.

“As we train the next generation of associate staff members, we believe more in depth training in family ministry is going to be required in a culture that is pressing for the fragmentation of the family,” he said. “We want to train people to bring the family together.”

Jones said parents and local church leaders working together will provide children with the focused, biblical upbringing they need.

“To envision the family-equipping model in action, imagine a river,” he said. “The river represents children’s growth and development. One riverbank signifies the church, and the other riverbank typifies the family. Both banks are necessary for the river to flow forward with focus and power. Unless both riverbanks support the child’s development, you are likely to end up with the destructive power of a deluge instead of the constructive possibilities of a river.”

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For more information on the various family ministry degrees offered at Southern Seminary, visit [www.sbts.edu/family](http://www.sbts.edu/family).

**Is your church hurting families?**

*At Southern we're serious about family ministry.*

[www.sbts.edu/family](http://www.sbts.edu/family)

A man wearing a maroon pinstriped button-down shirt and blue jeans is holding an open Bible. He is looking down at the pages. The background is a plain, light color.

# Life Lessons for a New Pastor

*By Jimmy Scroggins*

*Preaching is important for a husband and a father of a family and you need to be prepared.*

**S**INCE JULY, I have had the privilege of being the pastor at the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach, Fla. Prior to this assignment, I had served as a teaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, and as dean of Boyce College, the undergraduate institution of Southern Seminary. I was used to managing budgets, leading a large staff and preaching and teaching on a regular basis. I regard the leaders that I served with in Louisville – Kevin Ezell, R. Albert Mohler Jr. and Russell D. Moore – as tremendous, godly examples of leadership, from whom I learned much. When I accepted my current position as senior pastor, I believed that I was well prepared for the job. But there is definitely something different about being THE head guy – the final place in a church where the buck actually stops. It is from this experience as a new pastor that I offer a set of “life lessons” for new pastors like me.

**Invest heavily in new relationships.**

The lifeblood of successful leadership in a church is relationships with your people. Church people want to get to know their new pastor – let them! Early morning breakfasts and meetings with key constituencies in homes are great ways to connect. A flurry of relationship building at the beginning of your tenure will allow you to amass important leadership capital and accelerate the pace of any changes you need to make.

**Talk less than you think you should, listen more than you think you should.**

New pastors (especially young ones) may be tempted to constantly put on “mini-demonstrations” of their biblical scholarship, theological knowledge, expertise in financial matters, counseling acumen and aptitude for all things leadership. But a learner’s posture, particularly at the beginning of your tenure, will ultimately prove more productive.

# *Important, but you must remember you are a father. You are a pastor. You need to love your people. You need to take the time to love your people.*

Take time to personally evaluate existing leaders. As soon as you arrive on the scene, and often even before, all sorts of people will pull you aside and give you information and opinions about staff members, deacons, committee members, Sunday School teachers, etc. Listen carefully, take mental notes, but don't buy everything that your new "friends" are selling. Find out for yourself – you will likely be surprised.

## **Make a careful study of the history and tradition of the church.**

Listen a lot. Ask a lot of questions. Look at the church records – minutes from business meetings, old bulletins, financial statements, etc. Talk to as many former pastors as you can find. It is much easier to know how to lead going forward if you are familiar with how the church got into its current state.

## **Carefully calculate the best timing for changes.**

In many cases, your new church needs to change (that is often why the previous pastor left, and why they now have you). But don't forget that the church has survived to this point doing things a certain way. It can survive a little bit longer until you have earned the leadership credibility to implement change in a healthy way. If your key leaders aren't "with you" yet, it probably isn't time to make the change. It is a dangerous and often foolish thing for a new pastor to stand alone.

## **Don't be paralyzed by opposition.**

No matter how much time you invest in relationships, how much you listen, and how well you communicate, you will rarely have 100 percent support for significant decisions. Make them anyway. If a majority of key leaders are on board and agree with you on the timing, then you can do it. If you wait for unanimous support you will be paralyzed forever.

## **Don't 'go negative' on previous leadership.**

You will feel like you have to bash earlier decisions in order to point out the need to change the status quo. But don't forget that the "man in the arena" at the time probably did the best he knew to do. And hindsight really is 20/20.

## **Be sure to pay attention to your study.**

There are many demands on a new pastor. Your family is in the midst of transition, your new church members need your attention, and there are important connections to be made in the community. But you cannot lead well if you do not preach powerfully. Carve out the time and the physical space for sermon preparation so that you can skillfully feed the Word to your people. What good is listening, credibility and vision for the future if you can't deliver in the pulpit?

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*Carve out the time and the physical space for sermon preparation so that you can skillfully feed the Word to your people.*

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## **Be BALANCED in your approach.**

Preaching is important, but you must remember you are a husband and a father. You are a pastor. You need to love your family and you need to take the time to love your people. Over time, you will be able to develop leaders that will take some of the day-to-day administrative, and even pastoral care, responsibilities off of your shoulders. But for now those things are probably all on you. Don't run from other responsibilities by retreating to your study.

## **Pay serious attention to personal integrity and accountability.**

Your sexual and financial integrity are absolutely critical to your leadership platform. Don't be alone with a woman you are not related to (your wife, your mom, your daughter, etc.). Avoid private communication with women, including email, text, phone and Facebook. Get appropriate protection and accountability for your computer. Don't personally handle money. Above all – tell your church people the truth. They can handle it.



*Jimmy Scroggins is the senior pastor at the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach, Fla. Prior to this, he served as the dean of Boyce College at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (2004-2008) and the teaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky. (1997-2008).*

*Scroggins received both his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Southern where he currently serves as a member of the Alumni Council.*

*Scroggins and his wife, Kristin, have five sons, James, Daniel, Jeremiah, Isaac and Stephen, two daughters, Anna Kate and Mary Claire, and are expecting their eighth child in April 2009.*

# P ROFS *in the* Pulpit



**RUSSELL D. MOORE**

*Senior Vice President for Academic Administration; Dean of the School of Theology*

Preaching pastor of the Highview Baptist Church Fegenbush campus



**HERSHAEL YORK**

*Associate Dean of Ministry and Proclamation; Victor and Louise Lester Professor of Christian Preaching*

Pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church, Frankfort, Ky.



**MARK COPPENGER**

*Professor of Christian Apologetics*

Pastor of Evanston Baptist Church, Evanston, Ill.



**A**S SOUTHERN SEMINARY seeks to pass on the truth, legacy and vision handed down by its forebears, local church involvement is an integral part of this mission. The administration of Southern recognizes that the school exists to equip the next generation of Gospel ministers to defend the truth once for all delivered to the saints. The administration believes that the primary place such truth is defended and passed on is in local churches across the country and around the world.

The faculty at Southern encourages service to the local church through classroom teaching, integrating instruc-

tion on how theology, church history and practical ministerial issues play out in the local church. The faculty also models local church commitment and involvement through the example of their own lives.

Every professor at Southern is an active member of a local church, and many serve in volunteer teaching or discipling capacities. Several members of the faculty assume vocational pastoral roles at local churches in the Louisville area in addition to their responsibilities at Southern. The following is a list of some of these men who labor weekly to pass on the Gospel and serve as an example to Southern's student body.



**TROY TEMPLE**

*Assistant Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry*

Lead pastor of the Highview Baptist Church Southern Indiana campus



**TOM SCHREINER**

*Associate Dean of Scripture and Interpretation; James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation*

Preaching pastor of Clifton Baptist Church



**CHAD BRAND**

*Professor of Christian Theology*

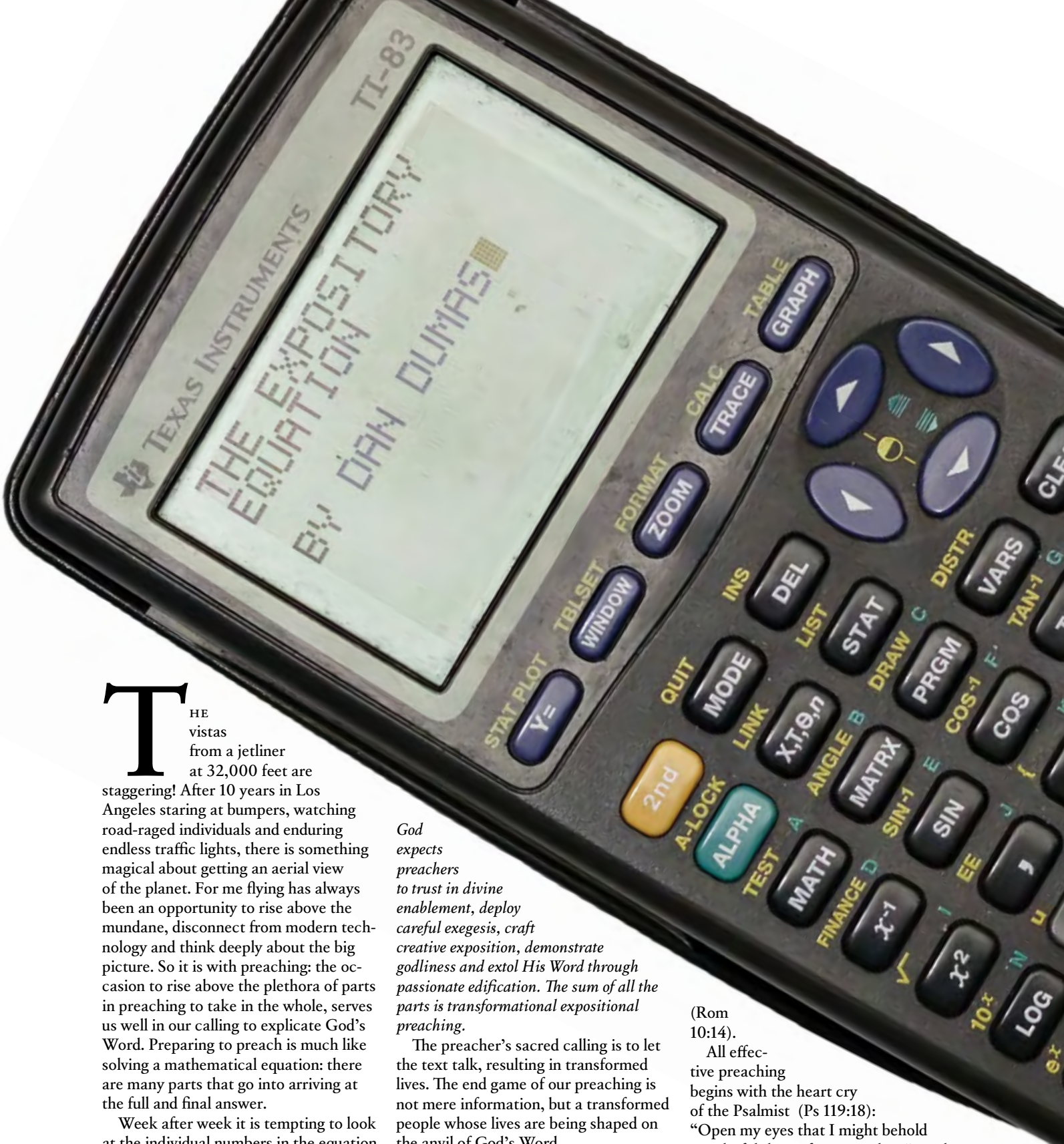
Pastor of Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Ky.



**BILL COOK**

*Professor of New Testament Interpretation*

Senior pastor of Ninth & O Baptist Church



**T**HE vistas from a jetliner at 32,000 feet are staggering! After 10 years in Los Angeles staring at bumpers, watching road-raged individuals and enduring endless traffic lights, there is something magical about getting an aerial view of the planet. For me flying has always been an opportunity to rise above the mundane, disconnect from modern technology and think deeply about the big picture. So it is with preaching: the occasion to rise above the plethora of parts in preaching to take in the whole, serves us well in our calling to explicate God's Word. Preparing to preach is much like solving a mathematical equation: there are many parts that go into arriving at the full and final answer.

Week after week it is tempting to look at the individual numbers in the equation of a faithful preacher, while forgetting the big picture of what God expects. From 32,000 feet above expository preaching, we discover the vista of God's entire plan in the preaching experience, the expository equation:

*God expects preachers to trust in divine enablement, deploy careful exegesis, craft creative exposition, demonstrate godliness and extol His Word through passionate edification. The sum of all the parts is transformational expository preaching.*

The preacher's sacred calling is to let the text talk, resulting in transformed lives. The end game of our preaching is not mere information, but a transformed people whose lives are being shaped on the anvil of God's Word.

This simple equation captures hours, if not a lifetime, of disciplined study and living, thus yielding the fruit of an effective preaching ministry in the local church. From 32,000 feet let us rekindle our understanding of all that God requires in being a Gospel preacher

(Rom 10:14).

All effective preaching begins with the heart cry of the Psalmist (Ps 119:18): "Open my eyes that I might behold wonderful things from your law." Without divine enablement we can understand the grammar of the text but not its significance. God must intervene on our behalf as we study the Scriptures. Divine enablement (illumination) is where we begin our studies, what we lean on throughout our careful examination of

God's Word and where we end in faithful preaching. Not only do we need enablement to see, but we also need the Spirit's supernatural unction to boldly proclaim the Word of God.

As we crack open the Scriptures in both its original languages and translation, we must apply the science of hermeneutics to derive the meaning of the Scriptures. This method of interpretation is not novel to the preacher; we apply the science of interpretation to all of life whether we are reading *USA Today* or a love letter from our spouse. Week after week we deploy careful

exegesis by approaching a text with a literal, grammatical-historical and theological method to garner the meaning of Scripture.

## **"Our sacred calling is to let the text talk, resulting in transformed lives. The end game of our preaching is not mere information, but a transformed people whose lives are being shaped on the anvil of God's Word."**

ture. If we don't have the meaning of Scripture, we cannot claim to be accurately handling God's Word.

Once we understand the meaning of the text, we must not think the hard work is complete at this point. Sadly, many preachers stop short, content with mere facts without any thought to the art of expository preaching. There are two sides to our study: the science of hermeneutics, and the use of creativity to craft a cogent and compelling exposition. The latter is often forgotten; here, we apply color, structure, correlation, transition,

flow, illustrations, commentary and application about what the text means (Neh 9:8), resulting in a clear and compelling exposition.

The bottom line: each week we spend half of our study time in the first century (the science) and half in the 21st century (the art). Bridging these two centuries is the art of expository preaching – understanding the text and making it understandable is of prime importance to the man who would be a faithful expositor.

In addition to working hard at the task of faithful exposition, a preacher's life must back up his message. One could argue that God has been preparing the preacher during his entire life as a believer, and the preacher has been preparing himself to stand before the people to proclaim with deep confidence his findings (1 Tim 4:16). If our hearts and minds are not right, then our sermons will not be right. In the expositional equation it is

always God's ideal to have the preacher practice what he preaches even before he preaches the message. Our lives need to be exemplary to our message. Godly example provides the people with a flesh and bones illustration of what the text looks like in everyday life. All the while we are reminded that the power to transform lives through clear exposition is a work of the Spirit of God and the preacher possesses no ability in himself to change people. God's desire is for us to validate the message by our example.

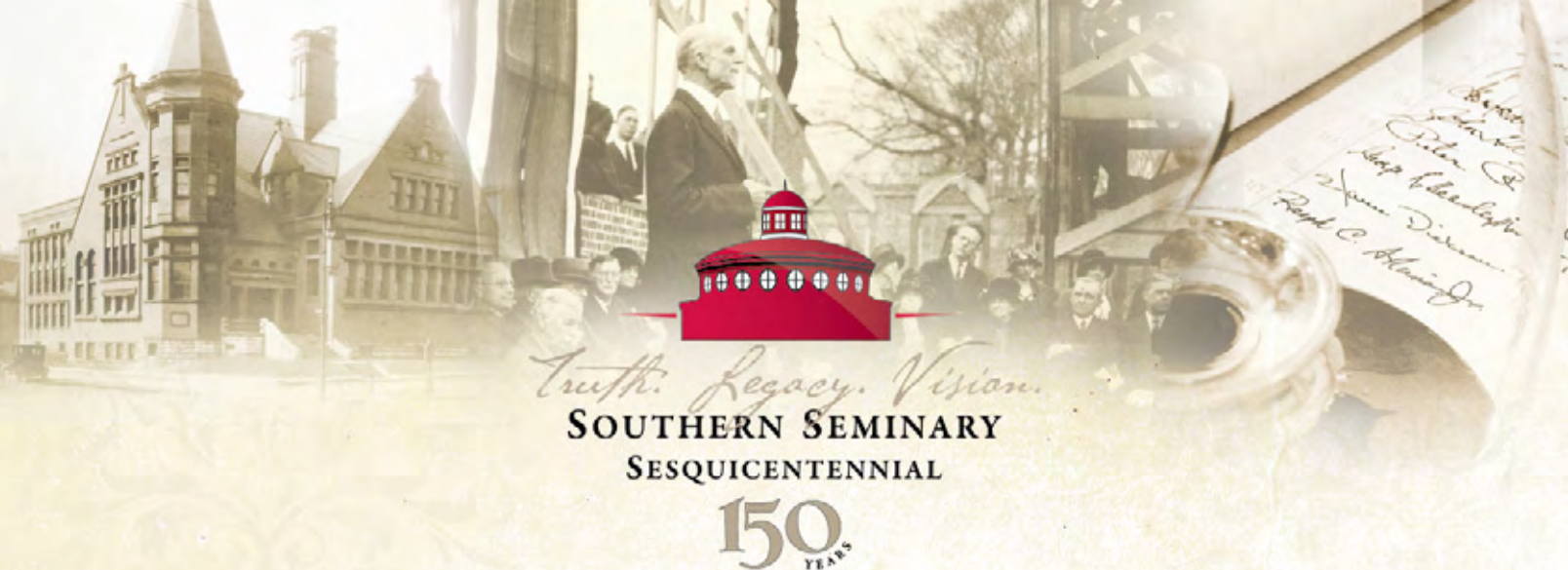
Finally, standing flat-footed and delivering a running commentary to your people falls short of God's ideal for text-driven preaching. Preaching is far more than a data dump of a minister's entire discovery. Delivery does matter; working hard at the proclamation is crucial. This is the vortex in the preaching experience where everything comes together to provide natural, passionate edification. This passion is born out of knowing the mind of God on the subject, being thoroughly prepared, convincing in our content, precisely applied, contagious in our example and captivating in our delivery, all of which must be superintended by the Spirit's work.

Observing the Word at work in the life of people is the preacher's reward week after week as he faithfully declares the Scriptures. I challenge you to continue to do the math, ensuring all of the expositional equation is deployed in your preaching.

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*Dan Dumas is the senior vice president for institutional administration.*





*Truth. Legacy. Vision.*  
**SOUTHERN SEMINARY**  
SESQUICENTENNIAL

**150**  
YEARS

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**EVENT CALENDAR**

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*January*

- Commissioned art unveiled
- Convocation – luncheon and remarks following

*February*

- New Southern Seminary website launch
- FEBRUARY 18–19: Conference: Southern Seminary and the History of American Christianity

*March*

- MARCH 3–5: Mullins Lectures with Dr. Hughes O. Old

*April*

- APRIL 21: The Sesquicentennial Dessert Reception
- APRIL 21: Sesquicentennial Pavilion ribbon cutting ceremony / Time capsule placed

*June*

- JUNE 23–24: Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting
- JUNE 24: Dedication of new Sesquicentennial Pavilion
- JUNE 24: Campus Open House
- JUNE 24–25: Kerygma Conference - A Conference on Expository Preaching
- SBTS Day designated by City of Louisville

*September*

- SEPTEMBER 11: Sesquicentennial Campus-Wide Celebration
- Great Commission Week

*October*

- Heritage Week
- Final service of Heritage Week concludes 150th celebration

# From the beginning, he believed in the *power of the Word.*

He believed that the hope for dying men was to hear the Word, and he believed that preachers of the Word could be better prepared. With these convictions James P. Boyce led Southern Baptists to open an institution to *prepare ministers of the Gospel.*

Boyce and the other founders opened The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in *October of 1859.* It was an untimely beginning. They overcame that initial struggle, but other tests in other generations have demanded fresh resolve to preserve and to advance what they began. The mission of the seminary has grown and ultimately prospered through the unfolding years. The successes and the struggles cause us all the more to *celebrate what God has done* through this institution and to commit ourselves to the vision of the founders, to the truth of Christ's church and to preserving this legacy for future generations.



*Truth. Legacy. Vision.*  
**SOUTHERN SEMINARY**  
**SESQUICENTENNIAL**  
**150**  
YEARS



# Said at Southern

The following are quotes from the pulpit of Southern Seminary chapel services in 2008.

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*“Christian discipleship is inherently dangerous. Christ Himself told us that it was. He said of His own disciples that He sends us out as sheep among wolves.”*

—Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr., Aug. 21, 2008.

**“Don’t ever get over the cross. Don’t ever fail to be moved by the cross.”**

—Jerry Vines, retired pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla., Aug. 26, 2008.

**“We have seen more advance in fulfilling the Great Commission in the 21st century than we have in my entire lifetime.”**

—International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin, Oct. 21, 2008.

“If we don’t see people the way God sees people, we will never be passionately concerned for them like God is concerned for them.”

—Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt, Oct. 16, 2008.

**“Does God matter to you? If He matters to us, we need to always recommit ourselves to be passionate for Him in the good times and bad.”**

—Maj. Gen. Douglas Carver, United States Army Chief of Chaplains, March 25, 2008.

*“The kingdom of God does not consist in talk, but in power. We must realize that we are preaching the Gospel from a power far beyond ourselves.”*

—Ray Ortlund Jr., pastor, Immanuel Church, Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 30, 2008.

**“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE GOSPEL THEOLOGY WITHOUT URGENT MISSIOLOGY. IF WE DON’T LIVE URGENTLY TO ACCOMPLISH THE GREAT COMMISSION, THEN WE HAVE BAD THEOLOGY.”**

—David Platt, lead pastor, The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, Ala., Sept. 4, 2008.



**McClellan Taking Dean's Position at OBU; Two Installed to Endowed Chairs**

*By Jeff Robinson*

Mark McClellan, professor of Christian Theology and Missions at Boyce College, has been named dean of the faculty at Oklahoma Baptist University, R. Albert Mohler Jr. announced during spring convocation Feb. 3 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

McClellan will join the administration of David Wesley Whitlock, who took office as OBU's 15<sup>th</sup> president last fall.

During convocation, Mohler also installed two professors into endowed chairs: Jesse T. Atkinson as the J.M. Frost Assistant Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry and Hal Pettegrew as the Gaines S. Dobbins Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry.



**HAL PETTEGREW**

*Gaines S. Dobbins Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry*



**JESSE T. ATKINSON**

*J.M. Frost Assistant Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry*

*At Southern, you don't just read great books, you are taught by the authors.*

**He needs a teacher.**

We think his teacher should be a Christian who teaches from a biblical worldview.

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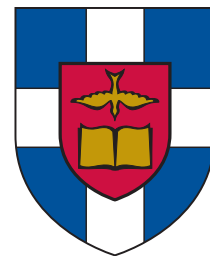
# OPEN HOUSE

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2009  
2-5 PM

Sesquicentennial Pavilion dedication at 2 pm

*Tours of the campus and schools will be available.  
There will be refreshments on the quad, audio tours,  
a welcome video and much more!*



THE  
SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY