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God's truth and the church's mission unchanged

Everything has changed and nothing has changed." This was my initial response to the Supreme Court's June 26 decision legalizing same-sex marriage in all 50 states. The cultural and legal landscape has changed, particularly for evangelicals as we refuse to celebrate the moral revolution and continue to bear witness to the fact that this new morality will lead to very real harms to our neighbors. But in all of this our Christian responsibility has not changed. We are charged to uphold marriage as the union of a man and a woman. We are still commanded to speak the truth in love. We are also commanded to uphold the truth about marriage in our own lives, in our own marriages, in our own families, and in our own churches. And most importantly, the one who is the same yesterday, today, and forever is still reigning at the right hand of the Father (Heb 13:8). In this sense, nothing has changed.

The Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the land, and its decisions cannot be appealed to a higher court of law. But the Supreme Court, like

every human institution and individual, will eventually face two higher courts: the court of history and the court of divine judgment. If individual autonomy and

Clearly, Christians and others who define marriage as the union of a man and a woman by religious conviction face new challenges. We cannot forget that our commission from Christ has not changed. Whether we find ourselves among those who share our moral worldview or among those who are hostile to it, Jesus still commands us to speak his name and make

"Our Christian responsibility has not changed. ... We are still commanded to speak the truth in love. We are also commanded to uphold the truth about marriage in our own lives, in our own marriages, in our own families, and in our own churches."

equal protection mean that same-sex couples cannot be denied what is now defined as a fundamental right of marriage, then others will arrive to make the same argument. For centuries, marriage ceremonies in the English-speaking world have included the admonition that what God has put together, no human being — or human court — should tear asunder. That is exactly what the Supreme Court of the United States has now done.

disciples. We cannot be silent, and we cannot join the moral revolution that stands in direct opposition to what we believe the Creator has designed, given, and intended for us. We cannot be silent, and we cannot fail to contend for marriage as the union of a man and a woman. We cannot be silent, and we cannot fail to speak the gospel to a lost world. My prayer is that this issue of *Southern Seminary Magazine* equips and encourages you to that end.

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Feature Illustrations: Cassie Marcellino
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Robert Chapman, Annie Corser, Mackenzie Miller,
Andrew J.W. Smith
Production Coordinator: Dave Bearden

Subscription information:

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MAIL: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Communications,
2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280

ONLINE: www.sbts.edu

EMAIL: communications@sbts.edu

CALL: 1-800-626-5525, ext. 4000

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Outside Louisville's EMW Women's Surgical Center, a volunteer with Speak for the Unborn begs a client not to abort her unborn child. A volunteer clinic escort orders him to back off.



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News

Mohler calls for gospel action ‘while there’s time’ at Southern Seminary convocation

Cultural hostility to the gospel should compel Christian ministers to proclaim God’s message with faithfulness and urgency while there is still time for repentance, said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. at the Aug. 25 fall convocation.

“More is hanging in the balance than the horror of human terrorism,” Mohler said after recounting the courage of the three Americans who prevented the Aug. 21 attempted mass shooting on a train in France. “The time is coming when the wrath of God will rise up and there will be no remedy. And while there’s time, act. Do. Wring everything out of every course, wring everything out of every test, do everything you do to the glory of God.”

In his convocation address, “Until There Was No Remedy,” Mohler preached from 2 Chronicles 36:15-16, in which the kingdom of Judah persists in rejecting God’s prophets until the Lord judges his people through Babylonian captivity. Mohler said the reality of God’s judgment means seminary students must prepare to act with eternal consequence for those who have not believed “because at some point there will be no remedy.”

“We’re actually preparing a generation of young ministers, church planters, missionaries, and Christian leaders to go out and suffer being mocked and to be the object of scoffing,” Mohler said, referencing cultural rejection of God’s Word.

In addition to those who refuse to profess faith in Jesus as Lord, Mohler said mainline Protestant denominations and their seminaries appear to be “beyond remedy” because of apostate leadership. Mohler expressed his grati-



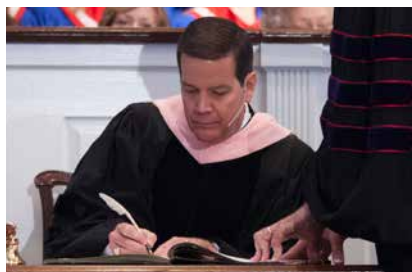
tude for the conservative resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention in the 1980s, which turned the nation’s largest Protestant denomination back to biblical orthodoxy, saying, “A generation ago, Southern Baptists acted while there was still an opportunity for a remedy.”

Prior to Mohler’s convocation address, two professors elected to the

faculty during the spring trustee meeting signed the Abstract of Principles, the seminary’s confession of faith. The professors signed the original document drafted and signed by founding faculty James Petigru Boyce, John A. Broadus, Basil Manly Jr., and William Williams, along with every subsequent faculty member of the school.

Signee numbers 254-255 of the Abstract were Douglas K. Blount, professor of Christian philosophy and ethics, and Joseph R. Crider, Ernest and Mildred Hogan Professor of Church Music and Worship. Blount has previously served on the faculty at Dallas Theological Seminary, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Criswell College. Before coming to Southern in 2011, Crider served as associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Liberty University and minister of music and worship at First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Virginia.

— S. CRAIG SANDERS



Audio and video of Mohler’s convocation address are available online at sbts.edu/resources.

SBC 2015: Mohler says seminaries 'ground zero' for cultural response

Southern Baptist seminaries are “ground zero” for how churches respond to the rapid moral shift in American culture, said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. in his June 16 report to messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

“We’re living in a world that’s going to demand more and ever more when it comes to faithfulness on the part of our students and graduates,” Mohler said, speaking about the imminent Supreme Court decision on the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Prior to the conclusion of the SBC annual meeting, Mohler appeared in a panel on same-sex marriage hosted by SBC President Ronnie Floyd. Mohler said that the SBC and its churches must



be diligent to confess and abide by biblical truth to make certain they do not follow other denominations that now affirm homosexuality and gay marriage.

During the seminary’s June 17 SBC alumni luncheon, Mohler presented the distinguished alumnus of the year award to Kentucky Baptist leader Paul Chitwood. Chitwood, who graduated with his M.Div. (1995) and Ph.D. (2001) from Southern Seminary, serves as the executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Southern Seminary faculty and staff

also played other key roles in the convention proceedings. Matthew J. Hall, vice president for academic services, served as a member of the Committee on Resolutions. Adam W. Greenway, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry, read a passage of Scripture during the June 17 morning worship. — SBTS COMMUNICATIONS

For a full recap of the SBC 2015 annual meeting, visit bpnews.net. Photo by Matt Miller.

Southern Seminary students ‘take ownership’ of mission field at Crossover Columbus

Southern Seminary students took “ownership” of the city of Columbus, Ohio, as their personal mission field during a week-long evangelism class (June 8-13) that culminated with the annual Crossover event. Thirty-two students from Southern Seminary and Boyce College initiated nearly 400 gospel conversations that resulted in

at least 12 professions of faith.

Bevin Center Director Jim Stitzinger III urged students to “take ownership” of their mission field by developing an evangelistic impulse and seeking out the lost for Christ. Southern Seminary produced the “My Mission Field” banner for Crossover Columbus so that students

could write the names of those with whom they were sharing the gospel.

“Our challenge this week is to sharpen our understanding of the gospel and how it’s communicated,” Stitzinger said in the opening lecture. “Understand how our placement in Christ drives our proclamation of Christ.”

Michael Harris, a Boyce junior from Huntsville, Alabama, said he took the course so he could gain practical experience in personal evangelism. Through opportunities to share the gospel on the campus of the Ohio State University, Harris said one person he spoke to made a profession of faith.

“I’ve faced a lot of rejection, and it was encouraging to see the Spirit is working and convicting people of sin,” Harris said.

NAMB’s Crossover event takes place each year prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in the host city. This year, 3,385 people volunteered in the event and initiated nearly 5,000 gospel conversations, resulting in at least 345 professions of faith. SBTS and Boyce students earned course credit for Personal Evangelism. — S. CRAIG SANDERS





Islamic studies professor among new faculty hires for Southern, Boyce

An evangelical scholar of Islam with more than 20 years experience ministering in the Muslim world is among five new faculty hires for Southern Seminary and Boyce College. Ayman S. Ibrahim began his role July 1 as assistant professor of Islamic studies and senior fellow of the Jenkins Center for the Christian Understanding of Islam.

"We are thrilled with the addition of Ayman Ibrahim to our faculty," said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. "His experience and scholarly credentials are without peer in the evangelical world."

A native of Cairo, Egypt, Ibrahim

worked as an engineer for 10 years and had been preaching for 15 years before moving to the United States to pursue formal theological education.

Douglas K. Blount joined the Southern faculty as professor of Christian philosophy and ethics July 1. The Board of Trustees unanimously elected Blount at their April 20-21 meeting. President R. Albert Mohler Jr. told trustees Blount is a "spectacular" addition to the faculty.

Before Southern, Blount was professor of theological studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He completed his Ph.D. in 1998 at Notre Dame, where he studied under noted philosopher and theologian Alvin Plantinga.

David Bosch began his role as associate professor of business administration at Boyce College June 1. Bosch, who previously worked for Fortune 500 companies, will also coordinate the school's Business Administration program. The

four-year degree is designed to integrate business and missions, and will prepare students for intercultural business, nonprofit organization efforts, and local church administration.

Boyce also appointed two-time University of Oxford graduate Jonathan Arnold as assistant professor of Christian theology and church history. Boyce Dean Dan DeWitt described Arnold, who started Aug. 1, as "academically rigorous" and "passionate about Jesus."

Also joining the Southern faculty Aug. 1 is J. Stephen Yuille as associate professor of biblical spirituality. Yuille, who School of Theology Dean Gregory Wills described as a "gifted biblical theologian and preacher," earned his Doctor of Philosophy in Historical Theology at London School of Theology and currently serves as preaching pastor of Grace Community Church in Glen Rose, Texas. —SBTS COMMUNICATIONS

Mohler responds to Supreme Court's same-sex marriage ruling

The Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling striking down state bans on same-sex marriage is a "central assault" on the definition of marriage and poses a threat to religious liberty, said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. in response to the June 26 decision.

"The highest court of the land has redefined marriage," Mohler said in a statement. "Those who cannot accept

this redefinition of marriage as a matter of morality and ultimate truth, must acknowledge that the laws of this nation concerning marriage will indeed be defined against our will."

Mohler's statement appeared in various news outlets around the world. Mohler's new book, *We Cannot Be Silent*, includes an introduction penned in response to the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision.

"We cannot be silent, and we cannot join the moral revolution that stands in direct opposition to what we believe the Creator has designed, given, and intended for us," Mohler's statement read. "We cannot be silent, and we cannot fail to contend for marriage as the union of a



man and a woman. In one sense, everything has changed. And yet, nothing has changed." —SBTS COMMUNICATIONS

The full text of Mohler's response is available online at news.sbts.edu/?p=5666.

Bevin Center sends 89 students to 8 countries

Southern Seminary sent 89 students throughout the world to eight different countries as members of short-term mission trips this summer. The teams, sent by the Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization, ministered to people in four different continents, from East Asia

to the Persian Gulf.

One team traveled to Southeast Asia in late June-early July, working among a culture steeped in Buddhism. One city the team ministered in had 1 million inhabitants and just nine Christians. Nathan Dickinson, an M.Div. student,

said he learned one doesn't "need to know the ins-and-outs of Buddhism" exhaustively to minister the gospel faithfully.

"[It was great] to see the promise of Jesus to build his church played out in reality," he said. — ANDREW J.W. SMITH

More information on the Bevin Center is available online at missions.sbts.edu.



Boyce College soccer team fuses love of sports with passion for missions

The Boyce College Bulldogs soccer team kicked off its inaugural season in September. But the effort to start the program began more than a year ago with the persistence of three students who had a vision for playing soccer to glorify God and share the gospel with others.

Sophomores Nicholas Kampouris, a Business Administration major from Stoughton, Massachusetts, Luiz Moreira, of Campo Grande, Brazil, and Samuel Johnson, of Buchanan, Michigan, sensed the desire to start the program as a means for ministry early in their freshman year. Kampouris said word spread around campus after he opened a Facebook page for Boyce soccer and eventually Southern Seminary's administration approved the program, which will compete in the NCCAA Division II Mideast Region. In 2006, Boyce formed a basketball team which also competes in the NCCAA.



"I want to use soccer in missions because it is the most known sport in the world," said Moreira, a Global Studies student. "In any country you go into, we might not even have a language that we can communicate with, but soccer is a language in itself. It can break barriers and infiltrate societies for missions."

The Boyce Bulldogs soccer team won its first two home games at Louisville's Champions Park, defeating Crown College 5-4 in a dramatic comeback Sept. 12 and outlasting Johnson University 2-1 on Sept. 14. — ROBERT CHAPMAN

For more information on the Bulldogs soccer team, visit boycebuddogs.com.

Legacy Hotel, Norton classrooms among summer renovations

Southern Seminary completed several major renovation projects over the summer, including upgrades to the Legacy Hotel and Norton Hall classrooms.

In the Legacy lobby, finishes have been replaced from the ceiling, walls, and floor to provide an updated design concept without altering the layout and function of the existing lobby. All lobby artwork illustrates Kentucky history, landscapes, and culture with digital watercolors by Mark Paylor. The lobby fireplace is safe and kid-friendly by utilizing steam and light technology to create the look of smoke. R. Inman donated the hotel lobby's piano, which is the oldest one on campus.

The Keesee Educational Fund provided a grant allowing for 10 classrooms to receive desks with outlet plugins and new media services, including Smartboards and lecterns with touch-screen computers.

The new Grinstead entrance sign matches the rest of the seminary branding and architectural features with its dimensional lettering, LED lighting, and the Boyce and Southern seals as mounted plaques on the side. — ANNIE CORSER



Southern Seminary students join 500 to protest Planned Parenthood

A significant contingent of students, faculty, and staff of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary bolstered 500 pro-life protesters at Louisville's Planned Parenthood office, Aug. 22.

The protest was part of a nationwide effort in 320 cities to bring public attention to the nation's leading abortion provider in the wake of eight undercover videos released since July by the Center for Medical Progress. The videos, which have led to federal and state investigations of the abortion giant, show Planned Parenthood officials and others associated with the group casually discussing the selling organs of aborted children, and perhaps even babies born alive.

Dylan Harrington, a graduate of Boyce College's Worldview Certificate Program, organized the Louisville protest under the auspices of his Ohio-based pro-life group, Created Equal.

"We should not be opposed to protesting," Harrington told the crowd that



clogged both sides of the sidewalk in front of the Planned Parenthood office on Second Street in downtown Louisville, which does not perform abortions. Harrington said organizers counted 500 pro-life protesters.

Other participants in the two-hour-long, peaceful protest included Speak for the Unborn, a ministry led by Southern Seminary Ph.D. student Andrew King (more on p. 28).

Calling defense of Planned Parenthood in the wake of the undercover videos "truly chilling," King said, "Let's

be clear: When we hear talk of tissue donation we must realize that before there is any tissue to donate, there is a life that must be taken."

"We must stand not just against Planned Parenthood and organizations like it," King concluded. "Rather, we must stand against a culture of death armed with a gospel that gives life."

Speak for the Unborn does sidewalk counseling in front of Louisville's sole abortion clinic — EMW Women's Surgical Center — each week seeking to persuade women not to abort their unborn children.

The pro-life protest was briefly disrupted by two pro-Planned Parenthood demonstrators who yelled repeatedly, "Pro-life, that's a lie; you don't care if women die!"

Following speeches by leaders of the participating organizations, the throng of protesters marched around the block and concluded in a time of prayer.

Sean Perron, a Master of Divinity student who participated with his wife, Jennifer, said after the event, "I was able to talk with two young mothers from the neighboring community who had not heard that Planned Parenthood was selling baby parts. I am hopeful that the protest raised awareness about the deception of Planned Parenthood."

Timothy Keiser, a Ph.D. student, tweeted, "Hundreds singing, 'Jesus Loves the Little Children' in front of Planned Parenthood 'was one of the best moments' of the Louisville protest.

— JAMES A. SMITH SR.



Events



Schreiner, Joslin discuss Hebrews ‘warning passages’ at Alumni Academy

The book of Hebrews urges believers not to fall away but instead to behold the excellencies of Christ, said two New Testament professors at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary’s Aug. 6-7 Alumni Academy.

“It’s worth it to stick with Jesus, no matter what happens, because he’s better; he’s better than anything or anyone else,” said Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Southern Seminary, to the 150 alumni and prospective students at the event.

Schreiner and Barry Joslin, professor of Christian theology at Boyce College, lectured on the book of Hebrews at the Alumni Academy. Each has written a commentary on the epistle — Schreiner most recently in the Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation Series, while Joslin’s forthcoming work will be released in the Christian Focus Commentary Series in 2018.

Much of the challenge of understanding Hebrews lies in the many warning passages, which actually comprise the theme of the letter: “Don’t fall away, because Christ is a better priest, a better covenant, and a better sacrifice,” Schreiner said.

Schreiner traced the various interpretations of the warning passage in Hebrews 6 — including the Arminian view that Christians who fall away from the faith will be under God’s judgment, and the Reformed view that the warnings describe individuals who are “almost Christians” but haven’t fully believed. He then offered his own reading of the passage,

arguing the warning passages act as the means of preserving elect believers from falling away.

“The warnings are always effective in the lives of the elect. God uses the warnings as a means to keep us [in the faith],” Schreiner said.

Although there are difficult passages in Hebrews, they are not impossible for Spirit-indwelt believers to grasp, Joslin said.

“These are the Scriptures, God has given them to all of his people in every age. He intended them to be understood. They are not beyond the believer’s ability to understand,” he said.

Christians should push themselves to understand the Bible deeply and accurately, even the most difficult texts like Hebrews, Joslin said. While Hebrews requires a significant level of familiarity with biblical theology and extensive knowledge of the Old Testament, widely available resources make such understanding possible.

“There’s never been a time in church history where there’s been so many tools, from an extremely academic level to an extremely easy level, to understand the big picture of Scripture from Old Testament to New,” he said.

—ANDREW J.W. SMITH

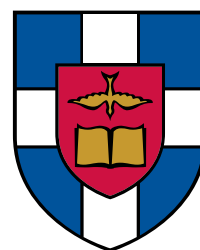
Alumni Academy provides free ongoing instruction for alumni and prospective students of Southern Seminary. To find out more about the program, visit events.sbts.edu.

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D3 youth camp leads students 'by faith' through Hebrews 11

Boyce College's annual D3 youth camp hosted 541 high school students during its two-week run, June 22-25 and June 29-July 2. Students from 12 different states came together on Southern Seminary's campus for the theme "By Faith" and explored one of three tracks through the lens of Hebrews 11: Leadership, Worldview, or Missions. Speakers included Boyce College Dean Dan DeWitt and Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. — SBTS COMMUNICATIONS

For more information on next summer's event, "Run with Endurance, June 20-23 and 27-30, visit events.sbts.edu/d3.

Scholars reflect on history of Christian persecution at Andrew Fuller Conference

Scholars from around the world gathered at Southern Seminary Sept. 15-16 to discuss the history of Christian persecution at the ninth annual conference for the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies. Plenary sessions on biblical theology, church history, and missiology covered persecution from the Roman Empire to present-day sub-Saharan Africa.

Union University Dean Nathan Finn presented a paper on communist persecution of Baptists in the 20th century. Finn, a Southern Seminary alumnus, said the "militantly atheist" governments "routinely suppressed the freedom of religion" between 1917 and 1989 by expelling or executing Baptists. Such brutality continues today in communist countries such as North Korea and China.

"Everyone agrees that Islamic radicalism is the single biggest source of Christian persecution in the world today, but it isn't the only threat," Finn said. "As long as communism continues to eke out an existence, Christianity will be threatened."

Benjamin Hegeman, adjunct professor of intercultural studies at Houghton College and missionary in Benin, presented the conference's final paper, "Islam and the Suffering Bride of Christ in Sub-Saharan Africa." Hegeman said sub-Saharan Africa — which includes Uganda, Sudan, and Somalia — currently

leads the globe in Christian persecution.

"Efforts to debunk, dismiss, or negate the evidence of this growing persecution will not succeed as God will certainly allow a 21st-century 'Foxe's Book of Martyrs' to be written uniquely for Africa," Hegeman said. "Their blood cries out and they, of all martyrs, merit to be heard by the global church."

Steve Weaver, senior fellow for the Andrew Fuller Center, discussed persecution of Baptists in colonial Virginia, reminding attendees that American Christians have not always had religious liberty. With the Church of England as the official church, Anglicans could "prosecute and persecute" Virginia Baptists for

converting their members "by the droves." Weaver said it was not until Thomas Jefferson brought religious liberty to Virginia in 1785 that Baptists were free from mob violence and imprisonment.

Other plenary speakers during the two-day conference included Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Southern Seminary; Brian Vickers, professor of New Testament interpretation and biblical theology at Southern Seminary; Jason Duesing, provost at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Bryan Litfin, professor of theology at Moody Bible Institute. — S. CRAIG SANDERS

Audio and video of the Andrew Fuller Conference plenary sessions will soon be available online at sbts.edu/resources.



Heritage Golf Classic raises \$125K

The 118 golfers and 51 sponsors of the 12th annual Heritage Golf Classic Aug. 24 at Big Spring Country Club in Louisville, Kentucky, helped raise over \$125,000 for Southern Seminary's tuition fund. The self-sponsored team of Jim Brennard, Josh Brennard, Josh Bordas, and Tom Vallett won with a score of 57.

Donors Marvin and Nancy St. John, who are longtime supporters of the event, were the Signature Sponsor again this year. Aquifer, Bachman Auto Group, and Sodexo all returned as Truth Sponsors to this year's Golf Classic.

Organizers also presented the \$5,000 Rick Bordas Student Scholarship to Southern Seminary M.Div. student Alex Duke. The scholarship is named for Rick Bordas, who died in September 2013. Rick Bordas was a longtime friend and supporter of Southern and father of Josh Bordas, a member of this year's winning team. — BONNIE M.C. BURKE



Southern Seminary hosts second annual Aiming High clay shoot

Southern Seminary hosted 31 participants on May 29 at the second annual Aiming High clay shoot at Jefferson Gun Club in Brooks, Kentucky. The winning team consisted of Troy Lawson, George Ganns, Howard Stacey, and Dave Harrell.

"Where else can you shoot sporting clays for the glory of God," Lawson remarked.

Bill and Connie Jenkins sponsored this year's tournament with all proceeds benefiting the Southern Seminary annual fund, which helps lower student tuition.

"We are shooting sporting clays, but our true aim is higher," Lawson said. "When you look down the sights of the event, the target is to raise funds used to equip future ministers of the gospel." — ANNIE CORSER

For more information or to get involved with the next Aiming High clay shoot in May 2016, visit sbts.edu/alumni/.

Guests began their journey by entering Whit's Telehopper to travel to Odyssey.



FALL

Seven carnival rides and 36 inflatables filled the Seminary Lawn and Mullins courtyard.



SOUTHERN  PRESENTS

FESTIVAL

The 11th annual Fall Festival reached record attendance with an estimated 7,000 guests.

Focus on the Family's "Adventures in Odyssey" cast members treated guests to a live performance of classic segments.



"#SBTSFallFestival was a blast regardless of the rain! So blessed to be a part of this amazing community. #home"
— Amanda Belmonte
@aaamandalynn



Adventures in
ODYSSEY

We Cannot Be Silent

(Thomas Nelson 2015, \$24.99) R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Written several months before the Supreme Court's June 26 decision legalizing same-sex marriage, Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr.'s *We Cannot Be Silent* issues a call for faithful, biblical witness that is ever more urgent in the wake of the landmark ruling.

"Our Christian responsibility has not changed," Mohler writes in a special word to the reader penned after the SCOTUS decision. "We are charged to uphold marriage as the union of a man and a woman and to speak the truth in love. We are also commanded to uphold the truth about marriage in our own lives, in our own marriages, in our own families, and in our own churches."

While Southern Baptist leaders like David Platt and Russell Moore recently have written about cultural change at large, Mohler focuses specifically on the sexual revolution. He examines the rise of the homosexual movement, the path to same-sex marriage, the emergence of transgenderism, the revolution's implications for religious liberty, and a theology of marriage and sexuality.

The rapid pace of the sexual revolution has left many evangelicals and conservative Americans wondering how this happened. Mohler places the root of the sexual revolution in the cultural

acceptance of contraceptives, no-fault divorce, reproductive technologies, and extramarital sex.

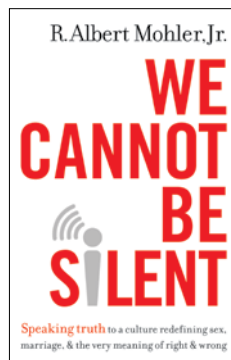
"The sexual revolution began when a significant number of people in modern society decided to liberate themselves from the inherited sexual morality that had been derived from Christianity and informed the cultural consensus throughout human history," Mohler writes.

Where that leaves American culture, according to Mohler, is a nation subverting and marginalizing marriage to the point that some teenagers have never witnessed a wedding. And what that means for evangelicals is a government threatening the right to be a Christian as erotic liberty and religious liberty clash in the public square.

Despite this challenge, Mohler urges Christians to take charge of their moral responsibility and engage the culture with "the compassion of truth," using every opportunity to proclaim God's Word.

Church leaders will find immensely helpful Mohler's inclusion of 30 hard questions, covering topics like attending a same-sex wedding, understanding sexual orientation, and determining the relationship of body and gender.

— S. CRAIG SANDERS



Excerpts from the book:

1

"This new revolution presents a particular challenge to Christianity, for a commitment to the authority of Scripture and to revealed truths runs into direct conflict with the central thrust of this revolution. ... We are facing a complete transformation of the way human beings relate to one another in the most intimate contexts of life. We are facing nothing less than a comprehensive redefinition of life, love, liberty, and the very meaning of right and wrong."

2

"When it is demanded that Christians respond with compassion at the expense of truth, we must understand that any compassion severed from truth is false compassion and a lie against the truth. Scripture teaches that the truth is itself compassionate. The apostle Paul spoke of this in Romans 7 when he explained how the law revealed his sin so that he understood his sin by the indictment of the moral law. ... In the same way, Christians must affirm the compassion of truth in this troubled generation."

3

"The modern notion of sexual orientation helps us see how deeply situated matters of sexual interest, sexual arousal, and sexual fulfillment really are in our lives. ... Nevertheless, this does not mean we are allowed to resign ourselves to whatever sexual orientation and pattern of arousal we discover in ourselves. Rather, as children of God, we must submit ourselves in every respect, including our sexual identities and orientations, to God. This submission is an act of obedience that leads to human flourishing."



Because God is not silent: Mohler discusses preaching and the sexual revolution

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below, Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. discusses his new book, *We Cannot Be Silent*, with Southern Seminary Magazine managing editor S. Craig Sanders.

CS: For those who've read your other works, the first thing they might notice is the implied reference to the title of your book on preaching, *He Is Not Silent*. How is the theme of expository preaching connected to the theme of *We Cannot Be Silent*?

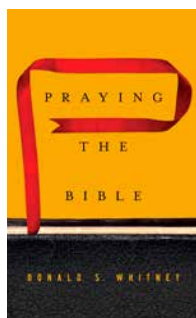
RAM: In the most Protestant sense, that's what we are left with — the expository preaching of the Word. We are also to make arguments to help frame reality, to defend Christian truth, to speak and

minister with compassion to people struggling with these issues. But at the end of the day, we are thrown back on our most basic conviction, which is that the means by which the Holy Spirit brings transformation in lives is the preaching of the Word of God. I guess the best way I know to put this is that that's the proper order: We cannot be silent, but that's because he is not silent. And not only has God spoken and revealed himself in his Word, but he has called out preachers to preach that Word and assigned the responsibility to every Christian to be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within us.

CS: You describe the forward momentum of the transgender movement and how the church might not know how to address it. It's important to note you wrote the book before Bruce Jenner identified himself as a woman. What are your thoughts on the transgender movement now in light of the Jenner saga and how should the church respond?

RAM: You know, I don't claim to be a

prophet by any means, but over 20 years ago, I made the prediction that the transgender revolution would be far greater and more devastating in its effects, more potent in terms of its moral confusion, more complex when it comes to its pastoral challenge than homosexuality and even same-sex marriage. And the reason for that is that same-sex attraction and same-sex relationships is according to Scripture a disordered manifestation of human sexuality, but in the main it is not a denial of personal identity in terms of being male or female. It's often an exaggeration of that. But when it comes to the transgender revolution, it goes right to the heart of what it means to be human beings made in the image of God and whether or not our bodies are part of God's intention for us and also reflect his glory and his purpose for us. And whether or not we are to understand something so basic as being male or female, man or woman, as a matter of constant, fluid negotiation or as an eternally significant divine gift.



Praying the Bible
(Crossway 2015, \$13.99)

Donald S. Whitney

Praying through a passage of Scripture is “the simple solution to the boring routine of saying the same old things about the same old things,” Whitney writes in his new book *Praying the Bible*.

Whitney introduced his method of praying the Bible in his classic *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*.

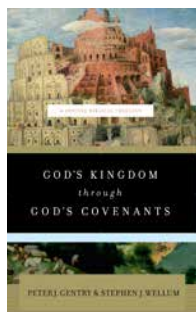
The primary focus in this exercise, Whitney insists, is turning Godward in our prayers rather than reading the Bible for instruction.

“To pray the Bible, you simply go through the passage line by line, talking to God about whatever comes to mind as you read the text,” Whitney writes. “Just speak to the Lord about everything that occurs to you as you slowly read his Word.”

Psalms is the “best place in Scripture from which to pray,” Whitney writes, because the book of praises provides Christians a vocabulary for praising God.

Whitney closes his short and potent book with reflections on how praying Scripture was vital in the lives of Jesus, the early church, and 19th-century minister George Mueller, who recorded more than 50,000 answers to prayer.

— S. CRAIG SANDERS



God's Kingdom Through God's Covenants
(Crossway 2015, \$19.99)

Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum

“Forming the backbone of the Bible’s metanarrative,” *God’s Kingdom through God’s Covenants* seeks to unveil Scripture in light of the biblical covenants. Southern Seminary professors Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum condensed their *Kingdom through*

Covenant (Crossway 2012) to offer a thorough yet concise explanation of the Bible’s storyline.

“In this work, we have done our best to summarize our basic proposal, to avoid a lot of the technical discussion and debate, and to simply outline how we understand the unfolding of the biblical covenants and thus, how our triune God’s plan has been brought to its wonderful consummation in Christ.”

Gentry, Donald L. Williams Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, and Wellum, professor of Christian theology, integrate their strengths of biblical and systematic theology to show how the major covenants find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. After an explanation of each major covenant, *God’s Kingdom Through God’s Covenants* concludes in a theological integration with the final hopes that this book would cultivate a better understanding “of the depth and riches of God’s Word.” —ANNIE CORSER

Church with Jesus as the Hero
(Ashland Publishing 2015, \$11.99)

David E. Prince and Ashland Staff

In *Church with Jesus as the Hero*, David Prince, Southern Seminary assistant professor of Christian preaching, focuses on Jesus to provide churches with a starter kit for Christ-centered ministry.

Filled with practical applications, *Church with Jesus as the Hero* offers a four-step process of seeing the gospel in specific biblical texts. Step one, find the bad guy — that’s you. Step two, find the heroic example pointing to Jesus. Step three, find *the hero*: Jesus. Step four, obey Christ in faith.

“One of the problems many people have in rightly interpreting and applying the Bible is that they immediately attempt to identify with the hero,” Prince writes, “not the bad guy.” Prince, who pastors Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, explains that identifying with the bad guy and seeing the heroic examples in the text as sinners rightly places Jesus as the ultimate, perfect hero.

The book will equip churches as Prince explains how focusing on Jesus as the hero changes church ministry and everything in our lives as we become the “community of the kingdom.” — ANNIE CORSER



Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel
(B&H Books 2015, \$24.99)

Russell Moore

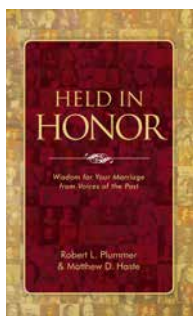
The easiest reader response to books on culture wars is despair. But it’s nearly impossible to read ERLC President Russell Moore’s *Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel* and not come away with a reinvigorated boldness and sense of mission.

Moore’s manifesto for evangelical Christians does not try to reclaim the false concepts of the Bible Belt and a moral majority but rather to embrace a “prophetic minority” that seems “freakish” and “strange” to American culture.

“Our call is to engaged alienation, a Christianity that preserves the distinctiveness of our gospel while not retreating from our callings as neighbors, and friends, and citizens,” writes Moore, formerly dean of the School of Theology at Southern.

Moore reminds Christians seeking to engage the culture what it means to be part of the kingdom of God on a mission for “justice and justification.” After tackling the issues of human dignity, religious liberty, and family stability, Moore presents his vision for convictional kindness: “Kindness does not avoid conflict; kindness engages conflict, but with a goal of reconciliation.” — S. CRAIG SANDERS



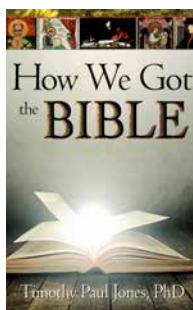


Held in Honor: Wisdom for Your Marriage from Voices of the Past
(Christian Focus 2015, \$14.99)

Robert L. Plummer and Matthew D. Haste
In *Held in Honor: Wisdom for Your Marriage from Voices of the Past*, Robert L. Plummer and Matthew D. Haste offer a collection of prayers, letters, descriptions, and encouragements about marriage paired with devotional readings.

Plummer, professor of New Testament interpretation, and alumnus Haste gather historical documents ranging in date from the Patristic era through the present. Wisdom comes from historical figures like Ignatius of Antioch, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Elisabeth Elliot, and John Piper. Ranging in topics from sexuality, family, loving your spouse, leading each other to God, and the vocation of marriage, this collection will continue to draw marriages back to Christ and the sustainer and foundation for their model of marriage.

“The lesson regarding marriage should be clear: If we are to honor God in our homes, we must look outside of ourselves to those who have sailed these waters before us,” Plummer and Haste write in their introduction. “This book aims to be a guide to anyone interested in applying that bit of wisdom to their own marriage.” — ANNIE CORSER



How We Got the Bible
(Rose Publishing, 2015, \$14.99)
Timothy Paul Jones

In *How We Got the Bible*, Timothy Paul Jones defends the Scriptures against skeptics’ arguments and describes the transmission of the Old and New Testaments from manuscript to canon. Aimed at young believers, particularly high schoolers, the book attempts to equip Christians with sound reasons

for the Bible’s authenticity.

“Eternal eons before God created darkness and light, God had already decided that he would reveal his kingdom not only through spoken words but also through written words,” writes Jones, C. Edwin Gheens Professor of Christian Family Ministry. “The Bible that you possess today is the perfect product of this eternal plan.”

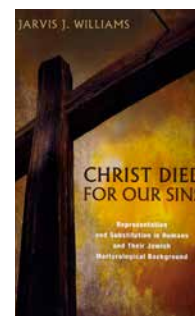
Apart from effectively arguing for the reliability of the Bible, the book is also very accessible and easy to follow. Jones avoids overly technical language while also including extensive footnotes to buttress his arguments. *How We Got the Bible* offers parents and teachers a useful resource to prepare young Christians to face the hardest questions about the Bible and can be paired with a six-session DVD study in Sunday School classes and youth groups. — ANDREW J.W. SMITH

Christ Died for Our Sins
(Pickwick Publications 2015, \$28)
Jarvis J. Williams

Some explanations of the atonement will focus on either representation (Christ taking the sinner’s place on the cross) or substitution (Christ bearing the sinner’s guilt) at the expense of the other, but Paul’s understanding of the atonement in Romans is both representative and substitutionary, writes Jarvis J. Williams, associate professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Seminary.

Williams also argues that Paul drew on Jewish literature to make his argument in Romans — particularly Isaiah 53, select passages from Leviticus, and background texts from the Intertestamental period he calls the Jewish martyrological narratives.

Although *Christ Died for Our Sins* is a technical book intended to contribute to an ongoing scholarly conversation, it does have value for evangelical pastors. While skeptical scholars and critics of orthodox doctrine might claim substitution is a recent understanding of the atonement, Williams convincingly demonstrates it is a fully legitimate category that dates to the Old Testament and Jewish literature. — ANDREW J.W. SMITH



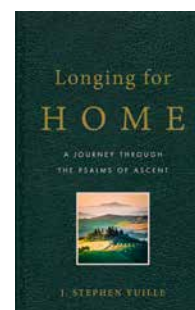
Longing for Home: A Journey through the Psalms of Ascent
(Shepherd Press 2015, \$14.95)

J. Stephen Yuille

Too often Christians struggling in their spiritual journey turn to programs and counselors before turning to Scripture. In *Longing for Home*, J. Stephen Yuille, associate professor of biblical spirituality, provides an in-depth look at each of the Psalms of Ascent — the 15 psalms in chapters 120-134 that Israelites would sing in their journey to Jerusalem — to show how God provides the help believers seek.

“If we listen carefully, they teach us how to look to God in every circumstance of life, and they demonstrate how this shift in our perspective strengthens our faith and enlarges our hope,” writes Yuille, who is also preaching pastor at Grace Community Church, Glen Rose, Texas.

Yuille builds the foundation of this journey on four travel tips: staying focused on the gospel, Christ’s kingdom, future glory, and the mystery of God’s providence. Each chapter examines a particular psalm and its theme, whether that’s Psalm 123 and handling opposition, Psalm 129 and overcoming abuse, or Psalm 133 and maintaining unity. Yuille’s pastoral insight also offers deeply probing questions to conclude each chapter. — S. CRAIG SANDERS



Thoughts



The sexual revolution's coming refugee crisis

By Russell Moore

I recently met a couple who were married on the Fourth of July and baptized the next day. They had been cohabiting for many years and had several children together. They had never known anyone who was part of a church. But when their lives didn't turn out the way they hoped, they were willing to try anything, including a local church. There they ran into an old gospel and new life. As I watched them plunged into the waters of baptism — and as I heard their three year-old son yell from his pew “Wow!” — I thought about how their story may well be the story of the coming generations.

The sexual revolution certainly seems triumphant. After a generation of no-fault divorce, cohabitation, ubiquitous pornography, and the cultural unhinging of sex from marriage and marriage from childbearing, we now see the courts and the culture decoupling marriage from even its most basic reality: gender.

Many assume the sexual revolution will always be triumphant, progressing upward and onward. To assume such is to assume the sexual revolution will be able to keep its promises. It can't.

We live, after all, in a cosmos ordered around the Logos of God, whom we have come to know personally as Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:1-14). Part of the wisdom of the universe is the resilience of the marital one-flesh union. Marriage and the limits of sexuality not only display the gospel (Eph 5:32) but also provide human beings the way to thrive and flourish.

That's why I say the church should prepare for the sexual

revolution's refugees. But there are two sorts of churches that won't be able to reach the refugees of the future.

The first is the church so scared of people we scream at them in anger and condemnation. If we see ourselves as people who are “losing” a culture rather than people who have been sent on a mission, this is how we will be. If we do not love our mission field, we will have nothing to say to it.

The second sort of church gives up or silences its convictions because they're not popular. This too is fear — of rejection, of addressing the issue. That's just not the way Jesus does it. Jesus gets right at the point of guilt and calls the person not only to repentance but also to forgiveness and freedom (John 4:16).

If we are silent about what the gospel says about sexual immorality, we will not only lose our mission, but we will also lose the respect of those we are seeking to reach. How then can they trust us with words of life that can overpower the grave when they see we are not even willing to go against the spirit of the age?

We need to be the people who can remind a wounded world of what we've come to hear and believe: “Come unto me all you who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28). That's good news for refugees, like us.

Russell Moore is the president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and distinguished professor of Christian ethics at Southern Seminary.

A public pulpit for public issues

By Hershael York

Ministry and mission opportunities have taken me to several “closed” countries, nations whose governments consistently silence Christianity. I have seen how routinely and brutally those in power attempt to intimidate Christians into silence. I have returned from each of those experiences with a greater appreciation of the democratic and representative republic in which I live, but also with a deeper resolve to exercise the rights and responsibilities of my citizenship.

Participation in our government is not merely a right, nor even a high privilege, but a sacred and inevitable responsibility for Christian — and especially, Baptist — citizens.

My silence on the moral and social issues of the day is a desecration of every drop of blood shed by every American soldier who fought in defense of that right. If I cower now in the face of public pressure and popular sentiment, I betray bold Baptists before me who built the wall of separation between church and state that ensures the government cannot muzzle or mute my message.

I have the unique privilege to pastor in Kentucky’s capital. Consequently, my congregation is inherently political because the majority of them work for the state in some capacity. Scripture has often led me to positions that are at odds with one or both political parties. I have had reporters show up at my house to ask my response to unflattering things a governor has said about me. And yes, I have had members whom I loved and cared for deeply leave our church over my position on one issue or another.

The consequences of truth should never become a factor in some complex calculation of whether or not we preach it. Nothing I ever preach will be more controversial or more objectionable than the gospel of Jesus Christ. If I am bold enough to preach that God created the world and made man in his own image, how could I possibly keep silent about abortion? If I dare proclaim that Jesus

is the Son of God and the only way of salvation, how could I fear to preach the truth of his words, “He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’”

While I earnestly desire to preach the truth with grace, humility, and patience with those who are struggling or even rejecting it, my great desire is to preach in my church and to engage the public outside my church under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Spirit-anointed preaching avoids no subject, compromises no truth, and fears no reaction.

Under the authority of Scripture and the anointing of the Spirit, no preacher can keep silent as the culture around him rushes headlong toward hell. We

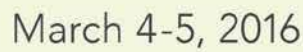
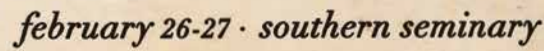
must speak the truth in love, to be sure, but we must speak. No social, political, or moral issue of the day should supplant or eclipse

the gospel, but the gospel should inform every political and social issue.

Exodus 4 records the familiar narrative of Moses at the burning bush, but it also relates the strange truth that God nearly killed Moses as he traveled back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of slavery. God wanted Moses to fear him so he would not fear Pharaoh. If we fear failing, disobeying, and misrepresenting God, we cannot fear man. If we spend time with him and saturate ourselves with his Word, we will never fear to stand before the King and speak the truth.

Hershael York is the Victor and Louise Professor of Christian Preaching at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and senior pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort, Kentucky.





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WE CANNOT BE SILENT

SOUTHERN SEMINARY ALUMNI, FACULTY,
AND STUDENTS ENGAGE THE CULTURE
TO SPEAK THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

Trusting — and telling — the truth

By R. Albert Mohler Jr.

The fundamental axiom upon which evangelical Christians must base every response to homosexuality is this: God alone is sovereign, and he alone created the universe and everything within it by his own design and for his own good pleasure.

With the legalization of same-sex marriage and the normalization of homosexuality gaining momentum, some churches are running for cover. Yet, our Christian responsibility is clear — we are to tell the truth about what God has revealed concerning human sexuality, gender, and marriage. No one said it was going to be easy.

At every point the confessing and believing church runs counter to the cultural tidal wave. Even raising the issue of gender is an offense to those who wish to eradicate gender distinctions, arguing they are merely “socially constructed realities” and vestiges of an ancient past.

Scripture forbids this attempt to remove the infrastructure of creation. We must read Romans 1 in light of Genesis 1–2. As Genesis 1:27 makes clear, God intended from the beginning to create human beings as two genders or sexes — “male and female he created them.” Man and woman are both created in the image of God. They are distinct and yet inseparably linked by God’s design. The genders are different. Their distinctions go far beyond mere physical differences, but the man recognized “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” in the woman (Gen. 2:23).

The bond between man and woman is marriage, which is not a historical accident or the result of gradual socialization. To the contrary, marriage and the establishment of the heterosexual covenant union is central to God’s intention — before and after the fall. Immediately following the creation of man and woman come the instructive words: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (Gen 2:24–25).

Evangelicals have often failed to present this biblical truth straightforwardly. As a result, many of our churches are unprepared for the ideological, political, and cultural conflicts that mark the modern landscape. The fundamental axiom upon which evangelical Christians must base every response to homosexuality is this: God alone is sovereign, and he alone created the universe and everything within it by his own design and for his own good pleasure. Furthermore, he showed us his creative intention through Holy Scripture — and that intention is clearly to create and establish two distinct but complementary genders or sexes. The Genesis narrative demonstrates that this distinction of genders is neither accidental nor inconsequential to the divine design.



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

God's creative intention is further revealed in the cleaving of man to the woman — “his wife” — and their new identity as “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). This biblical assertion, which no contorted interpretation can escape, clearly places marriage and sexual relations within God's creative act and design.

The sexual union of a man and a woman in covenant marriage is thus not only allowed but also commanded as God's intention and decree. Sexual expression is limited to this heterosexual covenant, which in its clearest biblical expression is one man and one woman united for as long as they both shall live.

Therefore, any sexual expression outside of that heterosexual marriage relationship is outlawed by God's command. That fundamental truth runs counter not only to the homosexual agenda but to the rampant sexual immorality of the age. Indeed, the Bible has much more to say about illicit heterosexual activity than it does about homosexual acts.

As E. Michael Jones argued, most modern ideologies are basically efforts to rationalize sexual behavior. In fact, he identifies modernity itself as “rationalized lust.” We should expect the secular world, which is at war with God's truth, to be eager in its efforts to rationalize lust and to seek legitimacy and social sanction for its sexual sins. On the other hand, we should be shocked to see many within the church seeking to accomplish the same purpose and allying with those openly at war with God's truth.

Paul's classic statement in Romans 1 sets the issues squarely before us. Homosexuality is linked directly to idolatry, for it is because of their idolatry that God gave them up to their own lusts. Their hearts were committed to impurity, and they were degrading their own bodies by their illicit lusts.

Their idolatry — exchanging the truth of God for a lie, and worshipping the creature rather than the Creator — led God to give them over to their degrading passions. From here, those given over to their degraded passions exchanged the natural use of sexual intercourse for what God declared unnatural. At this point, Paul was dealing explicitly with female homosexuality. This is one of the very few references to female homosexuality in all of ancient literature, but Paul's message is clear.

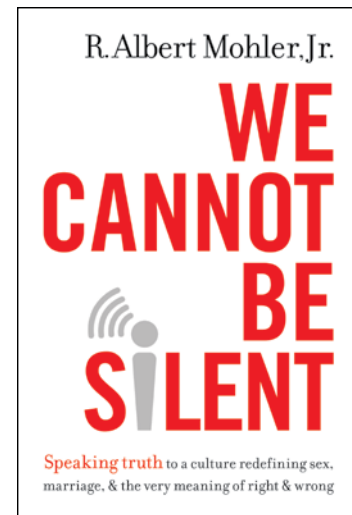
The women involved in lesbianism were not and are not alone. Men, too, had forfeited natural intercourse with women and have been consumed with passion for other men. The acts they commit are without shame. As a result, they received the penalty for their idolatry within their own bodies.

The biblical witness is clear: Homosexuality is a sin against God and a direct rejection of God's intention and command in creation. All sin is a matter of eternal consequence. The redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ is the only hope for sinners. On the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sins and served as the substitute for the redeemed.

Our response to persons involved in homosexuality must be marked by genuine compassion. But a central task of genuine compassion is telling the truth, and the Bible reveals a true message we must convey. Those contorting and subverting the Bible's message are not responding to homosexuals with compassion. Lying is never compassionate — and ultimately leads to death.

In the end, the church will either declare the truth of God's Word, or it will find a way to run away from it. It ultimately comes down to *trust*. Do we trust the Bible to tell us truthfully what God desires and commands about our sexuality? If so, we know where we stand and we know what to say. If not, it is time we admit to the world that we do not have the slightest clue. ➤

R. Albert Mohler Jr. is president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. This article is adapted from *We Cannot Be Silent: Speaking Truth to a Culture Redefining Sex, Marriage & the Very Meaning of Right and Wrong*, published by Thomas Nelson, available Oct. 27.



***We Cannot Be Silent:
Speaking Truth to a Culture
Redefining Sex, Marriage,
and the Very Meaning of
Right and Wrong***
(Thomas Nelson 2015, \$24.99)
R. Albert Mohler Jr.

Our response to persons involved in homosexuality must be marked by genuine compassion. But a central task of genuine compassion is telling the truth, and the Bible reveals a true message we must convey.

The moral revolution didn't begin with same-sex marriage

By R. Albert Mohler Jr.



One of my most vivid memories of childhood is standing with my grandfather, looking out on the landscape after a hurricane had passed through our town. Growing up in Florida, I knew to respect the great storms but I was not prepared to see how much the landscape had been changed. I can remember thinking that I had underestimated the storm — a mistake I was determined not to make again.

Something similar is happening to many Christians in America today. We look out on the horizon around us and realize that our culture has been radically changed. In this case, the storm is a vast moral revolution, and that revolution is not even close to its conclusion.

It is important to trace the moral revolution — how it happened and what it means for our churches and our children — and understand that the most heated controversies of our day did not emerge from a vacuum. This revolution did not start with same-sex marriage, and it will not end there.

The sexual revolution has succeeded faster than its most eager advocates had even imagined, as they themselves now admit. But this revolution could not have achieved such a velocity if the ground had not been cleared by developments that came long before same-sex marriage.

Every Christian church — and every Christian — will face huge decisions in the wake of this moral storm. When marriage is redefined, an entire universe of laws, customs, rules, and expectations changes as well. Words such as *husband* and *wife*, *mother* and *father*, at one time the common vocabulary of every society, are now battlegrounds of moral conflict. As those who demand this revolution make clear, there will be no model of a normative family structure left in its wake.

But this revolution has also reached into our churches. Some are arguing that Christians need to revise our sexual morality and the definition of marriage in order to avoid costly and

controversial confrontations with the culture at large.

I remember standing with my grandfather and looking at a large boat lying on its side, far from the lake. I didn't have to ask how it got there. The hurricane explained everything.

We cannot understand our times without looking honestly at the moral hurricane sweeping across our culture, leaving very little untouched, if not radically changed, in its wake. Christians cannot be silent — not because we are morally superior, but because we know that God has a better plan for humanity than we would ever devise for ourselves.

We dare not underestimate the scale, scope, and significance of this moral revolution. Even more urgently, we cannot underestimate the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's my hope that the church will be found faithful, even in the midst of the storm.

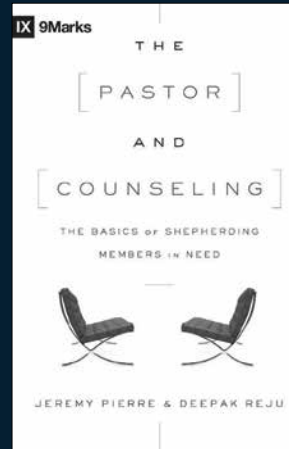
Excerpt adapted from *We Cannot Be Silent*.

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS



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ALUMNI EVENT



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Speak for the Unborn

ANDREW KING PLEADS FOR LIFE AS BABIES ARE THE ON THE BRINK OF DEATH

By Andrew J.W. Smith



On this July Saturday, an unusual number of people gather outside 138 West Market Street in downtown Louisville, Kentucky. The reason for the large turnout is unclear — it could be coincidence, it could be the especially warm morning, or it could be the effect of a series of undercover videos released by the Center for Medical Progress that has drawn national attention. The videos purport to show Planned Parenthood, a nonprofit women’s healthcare provider, profiting from selling aborted baby parts and organs, though the organization has steadfastly denied such conclusions.

Most of the crowd are pro-life protesters, and they congregate more than an hour before the EMW Women’s Surgical Center (which is unaffiliated with Planned Parenthood) opens. Some are pro-life Catholics, some are from various pro-life Protestant groups, and some — a very small group huddling for prayer, dressed in yellow parking vests — are with Speak for the Unborn, an evangelical ministry that bills itself as a ministry of the local church. It intends to “make abortion impossible, both through godly and legal means,” according to its website.

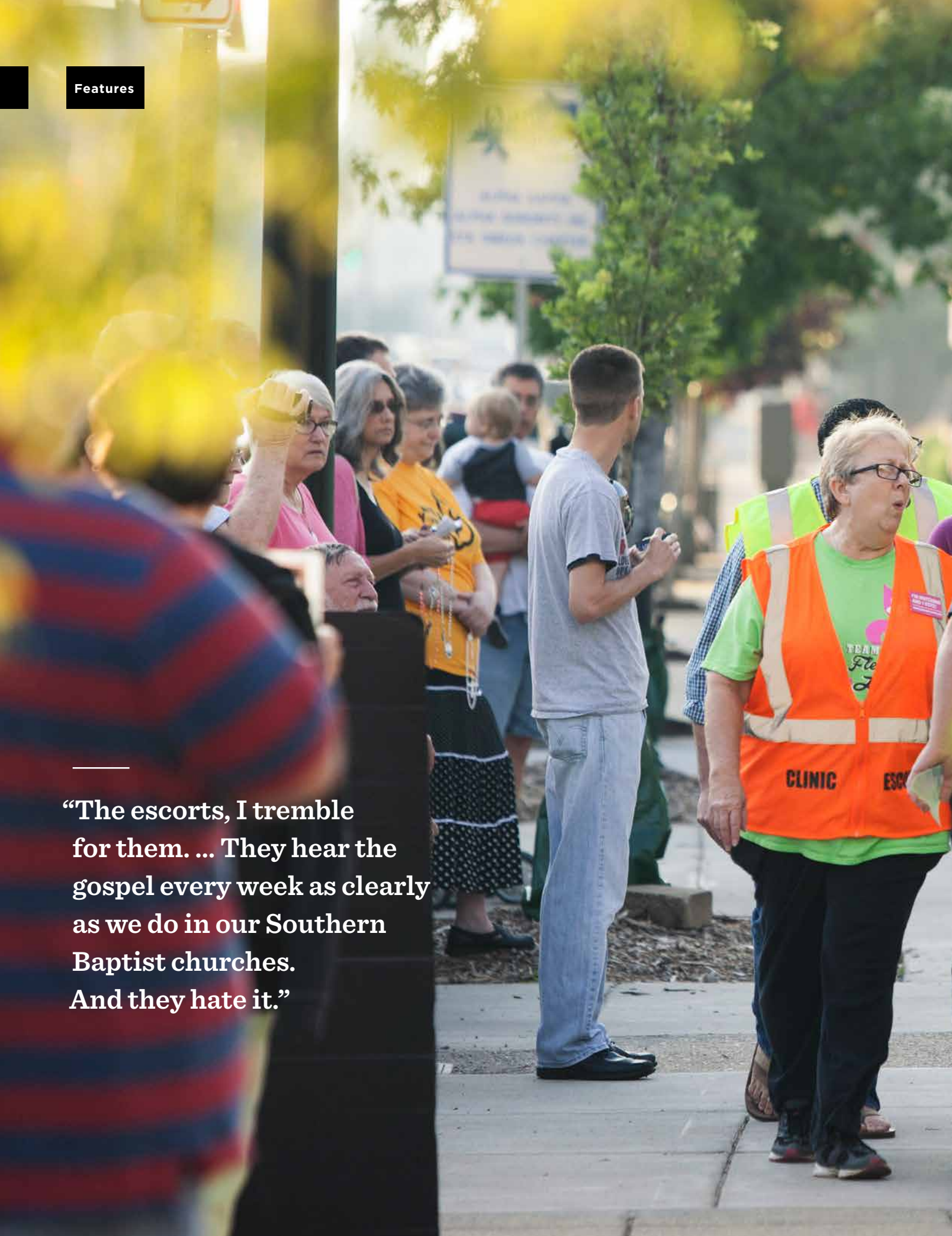
In the center, quietly uttering a prayer asking for the women who visit that morning to “find their hope in the gospel,” is Andrew King, a Ph.D. student at Southern Seminary and director of Speak for the Unborn. For the better part of a decade, King and other volunteers have stood outside EMW, pleading with women to reconsider their decision. “We are quite literally the last line of defense,” King says.

One woman comes around the corner guarded by escorts — pro-choice volunteers who walk women from their cars to the clinic and wear orange vests to identify themselves. King trails close behind, speaking gently to her as he walks. “Please, this is your son, this is your daughter,” he is saying. The woman looks unsettled, her face uneasy and her hands cupped around her ears. The escorts work hard to calm her and drown out King’s plea. Just steps away from the front door of the clinic, the woman abruptly turns, looking panicked and physically ill. Surrounded by protesters, she covers her mouth and sprints back around the corner and toward her car. A group of escorts race after her, urging her to come back to the clinic and have the abortion.

“I don’t want to be radical; I want to be faithful. People are comfortable being pro-life on the ballot, but they’re not so pro-life in front of an abortion clinic. They’re not that pro-life because that’s crazy.”



**“The escorts, I tremble
for them. ... They hear the
gospel every week as clearly
as we do in our Southern
Baptist churches.
And they hate it.”**







“You scared her off!” one of them yells at King. He has seen the escorts respond like this before, but he still shakes his head.

“She changed her mind, and they just ran after her,” King says. “You get to see how pro-choice these people really are.”

King and another volunteer, a member of Sojourn Community Church at his first Saturday with Speak for the Unborn, immediately start praying for the woman. Another from the group says she saw representatives from A Woman’s Choice Resource Center, a crisis pregnancy center next door, speaking with the woman’s boyfriend, who was waiting in the car. It seems, for the moment, the woman has decided not to go through with it.

“People say all the time, ‘Man, you’re radical,’” King said about his ministry in a separate interview with *Southern Seminary Magazine*. “I don’t want to be radical; I want to be faithful. People are comfortable being pro-life on the ballot, but they’re not so pro-life in front of an abortion clinic. They’re not that pro-life because that’s crazy.”

Speak for the Unborn began after Ryan Fullerton, lead pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, challenged his church in a 2009 sermon to get serious about responding to abortion. “We say we’re pro-life,” King, a longtime member at IBC, recalled Fullerton saying. “What are we doing about it?” A couple in the church, Dave and Stacy Hare, responded by organizing groups from Immanuel to stand outside Louisville’s lone abortion clinic on Market Street and minister to women entering EMW. King was among the first volunteers, and when the Hares stepped away a year later, he took leadership of the ministry.

Speak for the Unborn has since added official partnerships with Kenwood Baptist Church and Garfield Avenue Baptist Church, an Immanuel church plant, and five to seven people gather on an average Saturday morning. “That’s not enough,”

King maintains, and it’s easy to see why. That’s less than half the number of orange-vested escorts placed strategically along the sidewalk, and it doesn’t approach the number of other pro-life protesters — both the Catholic volunteers and the other, more confrontational protesters who carry large signs that read: “Never Forget That What Hitler Did In Germany Was Legal” or “Please Don’t Kill Your Unborn Child” with attendant gruesome pictures of aborted babies.

The ones who regularly volunteer for Speak for the Unborn don’t mess around. That morning, one volunteer crouches like a baseball catcher in front of a client on her way into the clinic, pleading with her and quickly backpedaling as an escort shouts in his face to back up. The escort repeatedly addresses him by his first name, a subtle reminder of the countless Saturdays these volunteers show up at the clinic, so often the escorts know them by name. A married couple from Immanuel try to speak with another client while an escort tries to talk over them. “These people think they have the right to tell a woman what to do with her body,” the escort is saying.



The escorts are a whole other outreach of Speak for the Unborn, albeit an indirect and contentious one. Escorts are volunteers too, only motivated to defend abortion rather than fight it. Though they are not affiliated with the clinic, they will try to reach the client’s car first and warn them about “crazy protesters” who might attempt to speak with them. King and other volunteers will try to break whatever stereotype a woman might have of a pro-life protester, often asking questions and trying to listen to the woman’s story for as long as time allows. Meanwhile, escorts will try to distract the woman, talking with her about anything from the weather to the “cracks in the side-

walk,” according to King.

“The escorts, I tremble for them,” King said. “They hear the gospel every week as clearly as we do in our Southern Baptist churches. And they hate it.”

Speak for the Unborn is an unapologetically evangelical ministry of the local church, listing its theological distinctives on its website. It doesn’t partner with non-evangelical pro-life organizations, nor does it open chapters in schools or colleges. King takes great pains to ensure Speak for the Unborn is not associated with a social movement but instead emerges exclusively from a robustly biblical worldview.

“We are explicitly gospel-centered,” he said. “It’s the gospel that motivates us. Though it’s a good and noble thing to stand up for life, I tremble to think that someone would turn away from abortion only to remain under the judgment of God.”

The ministry labors on hard, stubborn soil. Women will change their minds, but obvious fruit of their efforts has been scarce. King is confident their words of grace are the initial planting of a seed the Holy Spirit will water and grow.

“This ministry will cause you to redefine your standard of success,” he said. “My success story is every week, people who would not come near the doors of our church are hearing the gospel more clearly than ever.”

Although some women turn away before reaching the clinic — and King is thankful for anything that keeps a woman from having an abortion — he isn’t always sure it was because of Speak for the Unborn. Some women might decide the stress of walking

into the clinic. It’s no longer just a political or theoretical issue.

“You see normal people just like you and me walking into that clinic. I wasn’t mentally prepared for that. You see a weeping 14-year-old girl, whose grandfather is walking her into the clinic, patting her on the back saying, ‘It will be all right,’” King said. “You don’t unsee that stuff.”

Beyond the sidewalk on Market Street, King hopes to cultivate awareness in churches across the United States, to see other churches speak sensitively but winsomely to the complex issues surrounding abortion, and even to inspire other churches to adopt Speak for the Unborn in their own contexts. He hopes someday for Speak for the Unborn to have its own staff and to send representatives establishing similar ministries in other local congregations nationwide.

A few churches have responded, including Olney Baptist Church in Philadelphia, which is an official chapter of Speak for the Unborn, but overall the response has been muted.

After King recently spoke at a church on evangelical testimony in the face of abortion, a churchgoer approached him. “We’re excited and we’ll continue to pray for you,” the person said. “That’s it, huh?” he replied. Other churches have seemed interested, but don’t adopt a pro-life outreach because they already have too many programs. King bristles at that, too.

“If your church has too many programs to practice your religion, then you need to repent and re-prioritize,” he tells them, alluding to the “true and undefiled religion” of caring for women and children in James 1:27. “This ministry isn’t for everyone,

“This ministry isn’t for everyone, but this ministry is for someone — someone who is not on that sidewalk right now.”

through about 50 protesters isn’t worth it, while others will show up before the clinic opens and decide they don’t want to wait. Stories of hope, like a woman who got an abortion at EMW but was converted later through the ministry of an Immanuel member, are far less common than stories of sadness, like the Kings’ former neighbor who showed up one day on her way into the clinic and shut out Andrew and his wife despite their repeated attempts to minister to her. Other volunteers have reported seeing co-workers and friends walk into EMW.

“You see people you know, if you hang out long enough,” King said. “It’s a lot closer to our lives than people imagine. It’s not some issue that’s out there; people who visit our local churches are walking into these clinics as well.”

Joining Speak for the Unborn is simple, if not easy. King has received countless emails over the last five years, usually whenever a popular evangelical leader blogs about the pro-life movement or whenever abortion appears in the news, whether in the Planned Parenthood controversy or some other news story. Very few follow through.

“The first step is showing up on that sidewalk,” King said. “It can be an intimidating thing. One of the major obstacles to people joining this ministry is fear.”

It’s both a better and worse experience than most people expect, according to King. It’s not as dangerous as some fear, but abortion becomes a vivid reality when a volunteer watches young girls walk

but this ministry is for someone — someone who is not on that sidewalk right now, someone in the local church who is embracing comfort over taking up their cross and following Jesus to the doorsteps of an abortion clinic.”

On this Saturday, the woman who ran away from the EMW Women’s Surgical Center — mouth over her hand, retching compulsively, escorts sprinting after her, urging her to return — no more than 15 minutes later emerges from a white car hastily pulled up beside the curb, presumably to shorten the gauntlet through the mass of protesters. King would later learn the woman was hesitant, but her boyfriend — who stayed in the car while she walked to the clinic — was pushing her to have the abortion.

King uses the few seconds he has before she reaches the door to give his last pitch. The protesters, holding their graphic signs higher in the air, shout in an indistinctive, cacophonous rattle; the Catholics chant with their prayer beads dangling; the escorts stiff-arm protesters away and try to distract the woman; yet King’s pleas sound more like whispers.

“This is a human being, this is a human being.” ➤

Andrew J.W. Smith is a news writer for Southern Seminary and a Master of Divinity student. For more information on Speak for the Unborn, visit speakfortheunborn.com or email Andrew King at aking@sbts.edu.

A prophetic voice in the Short North

NICK NYE CALLS COLUMBUS TO IDENTITY IN CHRIST

By S. Craig Sanders



“I feel like I just connect well with those who are far away from God, and I really want to listen and learn from them, and God always used those people to influence and shape me.”

When his lesbian college professor, a well-known Jonathan Edwards scholar, handed him a copy of “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” Nick Nye says “devouring” the classic Puritan sermon helped awaken a love for Scripture and renewed his understanding of God’s grace.

His professor’s recommendation of other Puritan writings and Augustine’s *Confessions* was a catalyst for shaping his theological views. It seems fitting, 15 years later, that a lesbian, agnostic Edwards scholar’s guidance set him on a trajectory toward studying at Southern Seminary and planting a Southern Baptist church in a “gayborhood” of Ohio’s largest city.

“I feel like I just connect well with those who are far away from God, and I really want to listen and learn from them, and God always used those people to influence and shape me,” said Nye, the 35-year-old founding pastor of Veritas Community Church in the Short North district of Columbus, Ohio.

Connecting with people of diverse social backgrounds is a trait Nye’s parents instilled in him from an early age. His mother, an avid feminist and Catholic social worker, would buy food and Christmas presents for her children’s needy classmates, take Nye and his brother to their homes, and leave the gifts on the porch. He also made a habit of defending his adopted biracial brother from physical attacks and verbal slurs in a racially charged suburb of Columbus, where they would often tear up Confederate flags.

During the public outrage over the Catholic sex abuse scandal in the late 1990s, Nye’s family left the Roman Catholic Church and began attending Spring Hills Baptist Church in Granville, Ohio. Nick later transferred to the church’s Granville Christian Academy when the school opened prior to his senior year. It was through the ministry of this Baptist church that Nye and his parents professed faith in Christ and were baptized, as he understood that Christianity revolved not around religion and church attendance but a relationship with Jesus.

At Wright State University, Nye began to share the gospel with his classmates and established a Campus Crusade movement. Ironically, Nye credits his lesbian professor’s promotion of Reformed theology in the classroom with strengthening his own theology and ministry, which resulted in Campus Crusade becoming Wright State’s largest student organization. It also set his mind on seminary,

and after he graduated from college Nye and his wife, Brittany, moved to Louisville so he could pursue his Master of Divinity at Southern Seminary.

Nye says he struggled to fit in at Southern Seminary because he had never before experienced a Christian culture — one where professors would pray at the start of class — and partly because he's not a Southerner. At one point, Nye sought the advice of Russell Moore, then-dean of the School of the Theology, who convinced the Ohio native to stay because Southern Baptists need his unique voice and perspective.

"It was really inspiring for me," Nye recalls. "I'd never had anything like that, no one had ever spoken of me like that."

Moore, who is now president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, said even in those conversations with his former student he could sense a "gospel gravity." After preaching a June 14 sermon on racial reconciliation at Veritas, Moore said "the years have proven that intuition to be true, even more than I knew."

"Preaching at Nick's church in Columbus was a shot in the arm of energy," Moore told *Southern Seminary Magazine*. "There I met many who had come to faith in Christ recently. I met those who were free from all sorts of burdens from their past. And I met those who weren't believers yet, but were there to hear and to consider. Nick Nye is one of the most evangelistic and theologically robust pastors I know. He loves the city and has come into it as a shepherd, there to seek after that which was lost. I pray that more and more Nick Nyes go into our cities as he did, with clear conviction and with compassion for the weary and heavy-laden."

Nye moved to Columbus in 2007 to plant Veritas Community

"They're all super curious because they don't have categories for us — like saying we're conservative bigots or right-wing nuts, nor do they have that we're open, affirming, liberal, whatever goes. ... We're all about Jesus."

Church after graduating with his M.Div. from the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry. He received support from Louisville's Sojourn Community Church, where he served under lead pastor and Southern alumnus Daniel Montgomery, and the North American Mission Board's Nehemiah Project. Nye said he chose the Short North district because he believed it was the "best place to influence the whole city," which according to NAMB research has only one SBC church for every 16,686 people. More than 63 percent of Columbus residents are not affiliated with any religious group.





“As his former professor and one who labored alongside him at Sojourn Community Church, I rejoice in the ministry of Nick Nye. Nick is a godly and loving individual — skilled in teaching the Scriptures and gifted in leading others. Columbus is a changed city because of the presence of Veritas Community Church.”

— Robert L. Plummer, professor of New Testament interpretation

“Nick is a consummate pastor, strategist, and leader. When I hang out with the people on his staff and in his church, they all speak a fruit-bearing, multiplying, and discipling language and they know how to engage their city.”

— Brian Frye, Southern Seminary alumnus; national collegiate strategist for NAMB and collegiate evangelism strategist for the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio

‘WE CAN’T AFFORD TO BE A ONE-ISSUE CHURCH’

Where Nick Nye resides in the Short North illustrates the neighborhood’s diversity: on one side a lesbian couple ordained as mainline Protestant pastors, on another a wealthy dentist, and yet lower-income housing is a block away.

Behind his home is Stonewall Columbus, one of the largest LGBT advocacy groups of its kind in the United States and the sponsor of the annual Pride festivities in Columbus. Nye says 93 percent of the children in his neighborhood are fatherless and the high rate of prostitution prompted him to form an anti-human trafficking ministry, She Has A Name. In response to escalating rates of abortion and infant mortality far above the national average, Nye reached out to the ERLC to have a sonogram machine donated to the local Baptist association’s Stowe Mission Center, for which he serves on the board.

“There are some things we want to speak against in our culture that we don’t like in our neighborhood,” Nye said. “We’re calling our neighborhood to a deeper identity of who Christ is and who they are in Christ.”

One of the core values of Nye’s ministry at Veritas is to be a prophetic voice against the moral confusion plaguing his community. Faced with homosexuality and transgenderism, poverty and racial tension, abortion and human trafficking, Nye says Veritas “can’t afford to be a one-issue church” and instead must build relationships to speak the whole truth instead of “soundbite answers.”

In less than eight years, Veritas has multiplied into four congregations across the metro Columbus area with a weekly attendance of 1,200 and membership of 450. While each congregation faces a unique set of cultural issues, Nye says the pastors prepare their sermons together and focus on how to apply the text to their congregation’s needs.

“We’ve managed to navigate the whole process of learning how to speak against the culture in a way that’s winsome and honest,” Nye said. “I’m very compassionate toward people who need compassion, but I feel like I can be very prophetic toward the people who need a word. I think of Isaiah 9, where

[the prophet is] calling the Lord’s destruction upon [Israel] but then at the end of the chapter, he says it’s not too late for them because God is still extending his arm. I’ve had to do some of that in our neighborhood, particularly in issues of injustice from those who claim to be the most tolerant.”

In addition to speaking out against the problems in his neighborhood, Nye also seeks to provide gospel solutions with a robust mercy ministry. Taking a cue from his friend and Southern Seminary alumnus Bryce Butler (featured on p. 42), Nye has led Veritas to provide asset-based responses to poverty. Veritas provides small business loans and aids victims of human trafficking with employment through She Has A Name’s cleaning service. Veritas has responded to racial tension by raising up two African-American pastors from within the congregation.

While Nye has grown accustomed to cultural opposition for holding to biblical views of sexuality, he notes that many in the LGBT community will attend Veritas out of curiosity because of friends who have invited them to church.

“They’re all super curious because they don’t have categories for us — like saying we’re conservative bigots or right-wing nuts, nor do they have that we’re open, affirming, liberal, whatever goes,” Nye said. “We’re all about the Lord; we’re all about Jesus; we’re all about the Bible. And we preach it every week and call to identity, call to Jesus, call to repentance.”

Nye insists the issues of sexuality, abortion, poverty, and racial reconciliation are “all connected” because the gospel is “bigger than one issue” and requires believers to shed sinful behavior and deny identities based on natural impulse.

“We have to say, ‘That was me, and these are the things that keep me from knowing God.’ We want to rid ourselves of those things to make God greater,” Nye said. “Are you willing to see God as greater and pick up your cross and follow him?” ➤

S. Craig Sanders is the managing editor of *Southern Seminary Magazine* and a Master of Divinity student. For more information on Veritas Community Church, visit veritascolumbus.com.



Preventing 'dead air'

JERRY JOHNSON
CHAMPIONS
CHRISTIAN
COMMUNICATORS'
RIGHT TO SPEAK

By James A. Smith Sr.

In radio, silence is not golden. Indeed, “dead air” — a period of unintended silence during a live program — is a broadcaster’s nightmare.

Jerry Johnson’s mission in leading the National Religious Broadcasters is to protect his fellow communicators’ right to exist and prevent the worst kind of dead air — the censorship of evangelical voices on radio, television, the Internet, and social media.

Johnson, a 2003 Ph.D. graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, assumed the presidency of NRB in November 2013 with a mission to transform the historic evangelical organization for the modern world of media and prepare its members for the growing opposition they face in the federal government, the commercial world, and broader society.

Johnson was the ideal selection as NRB president because of his experience in radio ministry and his passion to defend evangelical voices in the culture.

“We believe Dr. Jerry Johnson was called by God to direct the National Religious Broadcasters for ‘such a time as this,’” said Bill Blount, chairman of the NRB Board of Directors and president of Blount Communications Group, a Christian radio network of seven stations throughout New England he and his wife, Debbie, founded 36 years ago.

“With the onslaught of moral and ethical changes taking place in our country, and internationally, the NRB is uniquely positioned to speak to the issues of our day though the various media platforms represented by our membership,” Blount told *Southern Seminary Magazine*.

National Religious Broadcasters began with 150 radio broadcasters in 1944 in response to industry censorship when the Federal Council of Churches (now known as National Council of Churches) successfully lobbied all three national



“In every role, Jerry has shown himself to be an incisive Christian thinker, a courageous Christian leader, and a gifted apologist. His doctoral work in Christian ethics puts him in very rare company.”

— R. Albert Mohler Jr.



radio networks to adopt regulations targeting very popular evangelical programs for removal in favor of programming by mainline denominations. By 1949, the ABC Radio Network reversed the regulations, with other networks later following.

"Today, we've come full circle," said Johnson, citing recent examples of commercial and industry censorship: the forced removal of Mozilla CEO Brendan Eich for a donation in support of traditional marriage and the firing of sports broadcaster Craig James for views he expressed while running unsuccessfully for public office.

While industry censorship is a real threat, Johnson said even greater is his concern about the growing prospect of government censorship.

"NRB is going to have to stand up for the First Amendment — the freedom to believe and the freedom of speech in America," he said.

The first three parts of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution — religious freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press — protects NRB members' ministries, Johnson noted, and NRB must be the front-line defenders of those rights.

"I think we'll be the leading advocate for evangelical communicators, protecting their First Amendment rights," he said.

From the sexual revolution to the advancement of Islam, Johnson said the challenges Christian communicators face today require the existence of an organization like NRB to defend their rights.

While NRB began in the 1940s as an association of radio ministries, today the network of 1,144 members with a weekly cumulative listenership/readership of 60 million covers the full range of communications platforms evangelicals are engaging to proclaim the gospel, said Johnson. Radio remains a key part of the organization, but members today are also on television, as well as media delivery platforms made possible by the Internet: podcasts, YouTube videos, blogging, social media — and whatever the next advancement in technology will bring.

Further, Johnson believes NRB today is ideally situated to assist and defend local churches, throngs of which are engaged in a wide range of media ministries.

A former pastor in Texas and Colorado, Johnson went to NRB with a vast background in Southern Baptist leadership: as dean of Boyce College, president of Criswell College, seminary administrator, and trustee of Southern Seminary. Johnson's commitment to helping pastors and local congregations can be traced to his own experiences in churches and denominational leadership.

As a trustee of Southern Seminary in the 1980s and early 1990s, Johnson played a key role in reversing the institution's slide to liberalism. The election of R. Albert Mohler Jr. as the ninth president was only possible because of the efforts of Johnson and other conservative trustees.

"It's one of the great experiences of my life to see what Dr. Mohler has done, to see him lead this school to renewal and

“I feel it’s absolutely essential for the American church to have equal access to radio, television, and the Internet. NRB champions this cause.”

doctrinal commitment, as well as to excellence,” he said.

Johnson, who would go on to serve as chairman of the seminary’s Board of Trustees, later became a doctoral student at Southern. His studies at Southern, which included work at Oxford University, gave him the analytical skills he is using today to lead NRB, Johnson said.

“I didn’t study under Dr. Mohler in a formal way, but I was studying under him in a ministry kind of way, as well as in a leadership kind of way,” he said, noting Mohler’s role as a cultural communicator for evangelicals.

When Johnson was installed as NRB president in February 2014, he asked Mohler to offer the keynote address at the ceremony.

“I wanted to send a signal about the kind of leaders we want to be, the kind of leaders we want to follow, and the kind of leaders we want to include in NRB,” Johnson said of his invitation to Mohler.

Calling him a “dear friend,” Mohler said Johnson “played a

vital role on Southern Seminary’s Board of Trustees at a most important moment in its history.”

Noting Johnson’s other positions at the seminary and elsewhere, Mohler said, “In every role, Jerry has shown himself to be an incisive Christian thinker, a courageous Christian leader, and a gifted apologist. His doctoral work in Christian ethics puts him in very rare company.”

As NRB president, “Jerry is one of the most important evangelical leaders of our time,” Mohler said, noting NRB is now an “even more effective and faithful voice” on the “front lines of defending and extending the gospel of Christ.”

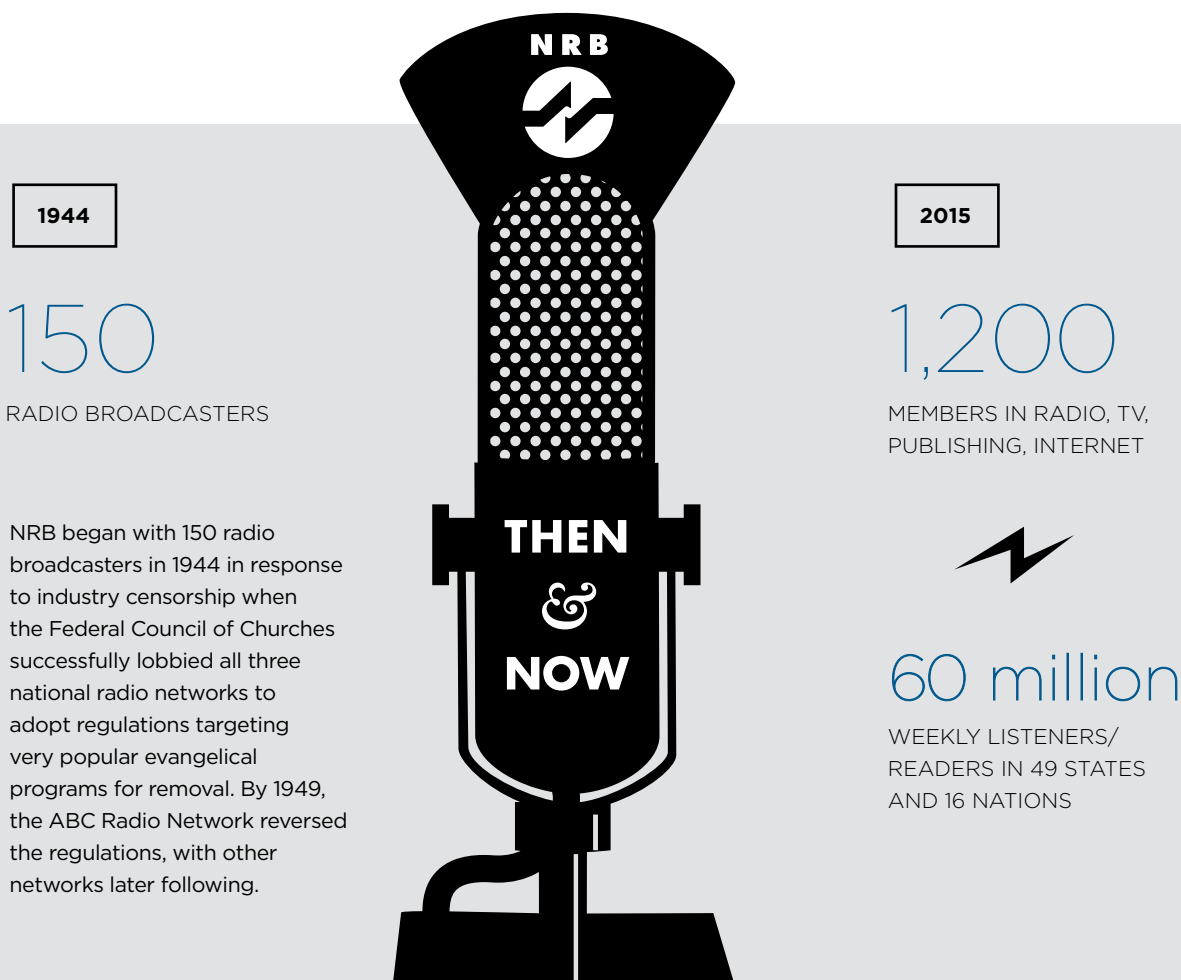
Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd echoed Mohler’s assessment of Johnson’s importance to the evangelical world.

Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas and longtime NRB member, said Johnson will have “tremendous influence on the future of evangelical Christianity nationally and globally.” He added, “It is a joy to know that we have a great Southern Baptist leader like him in one of the most strategic roles in Christianity today.”

Johnson’s strategic role requires him to contend for biblical truth in a culture increasingly hostile to that message — opposition that may lead to the worst kind of “dead air.”

“We see many forces aligning for censorship against conservative Christianity,” he said. “I feel it’s absolutely essential for the American church to have equal access to radio, television, and the Internet. NRB champions this cause.” ➤

James A. Smith Sr. is executive editor and chief spokesman of Southern Seminary.





Mercy entrepreneur

BRYCE BUTLER MOTIVATES LOCAL MINISTRY EFFORTS WITH BUSINESS AS MISSION

By Annie Corser

While serving as a U.S. Army officer in South Korea, Bryce Butler witnessed a depth of darkness and isolation, from human trafficking to poverty, awakening a concern for the broken and hard to reach. A decade later, Butler has combined a heart for missions and mind for business into an outpouring of mercy through his entrepreneurial roles in Louisville.

"I would never, ever, ever, have chosen to go to Korea, but the Lord opted to send me there, and it was awesome," Butler said in an interview with *Southern Seminary Magazine*. "My wife Bethany and I adopted from Asia because of my experience in Korea."

Butler said the Lord transformed his life in college, and he felt a call to ministry. Growing up in the Methodist church, Butler thought his only ministerial option was as a pastor. But he would soon learn how the business acumen he developed in the military could open an avenue to missions.

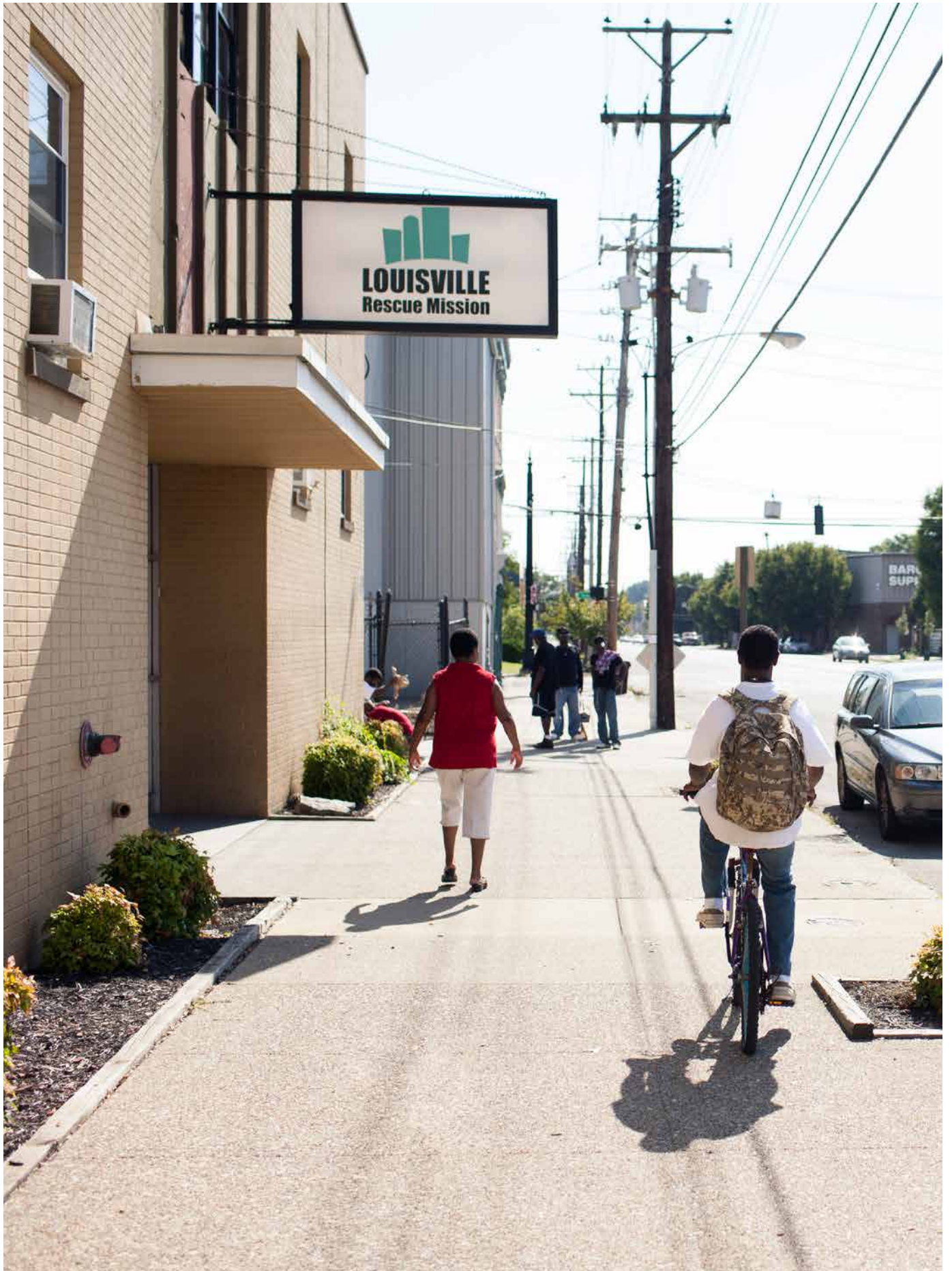
After two years of service in South Korea, he was transferred in 2007 to Fort Knox, Kentucky. While living in Louisville

and commuting to Fort Knox, Butler began attending Sojourn Community Church. By November 2007, he entered into a full-time role as executive pastor at Sojourn. After graduating from Southern in 2011 with a Master of Arts in Theological Studies, Butler founded Access Ventures in 2012.

Butler says his "growing team" at Access Ventures "strategically invests in businesses and initiatives that create community value and human flourishing." In addition to private equity investments and small business loans, the organization also commissions community art projects, all in an effort to rebuild relationships in neighborhoods like Louisville's Shelby Park.

In 2011, a member at Sojourn asked Butler to join the Louisville Rescue Mission's (LRM) board during a time of financial crisis. One of the oldest rescue missions in the nation, LRM serves an average of 140 different people each day.

"When I first came on in March 2011, the mission had no



money in the bank and was in the red as far as bills that its owed,” Butler explained. “It can’t keep the lights on, it has no money, and that’s my first board meeting.”

Over the course of the next six months, the board did all they could to keep the doors open. At the end of six months, LRM had \$500,000 in the bank. While it wasn’t completely out of the woods, he said the mission had enough room to breathe.

Because of Butler’s efforts in saving the rescue mission, LRM board members honored Butler with an inaugural award celebrating his gift of mercy at the 2015 Mercy Banquet.

“In God’s kind providence, someone joined our board that not only had a love for this ministry, but possesses some of the rarest gifts I’ve ever seen,” said fellow board member and Auburndale Baptist Church pastor Brian Croft in his presentation of the award to Butler. “He joined the board, once he regained his composure over the shambles he saw that our ministry was in after his first board meeting, he rolled up his sleeves and said he wanted to help. I do not believe it is an overstatement to say this ministry may not have survived without the unique service this man provided at this pivotal time.”

The Holcombe Mercy Ministry Award — named for Louisville Rescue Mission founder Steve Holcombe — will be given annually to an individual in the community who best exemplifies Holcombe’s vision of helping Louisville’s hurting and homeless. Butler was presented with a commemorative picture to serve as a symbol of Holcombe’s own ministry

“This ministry may not have survived without the unique service this man provided at this pivotal time.”

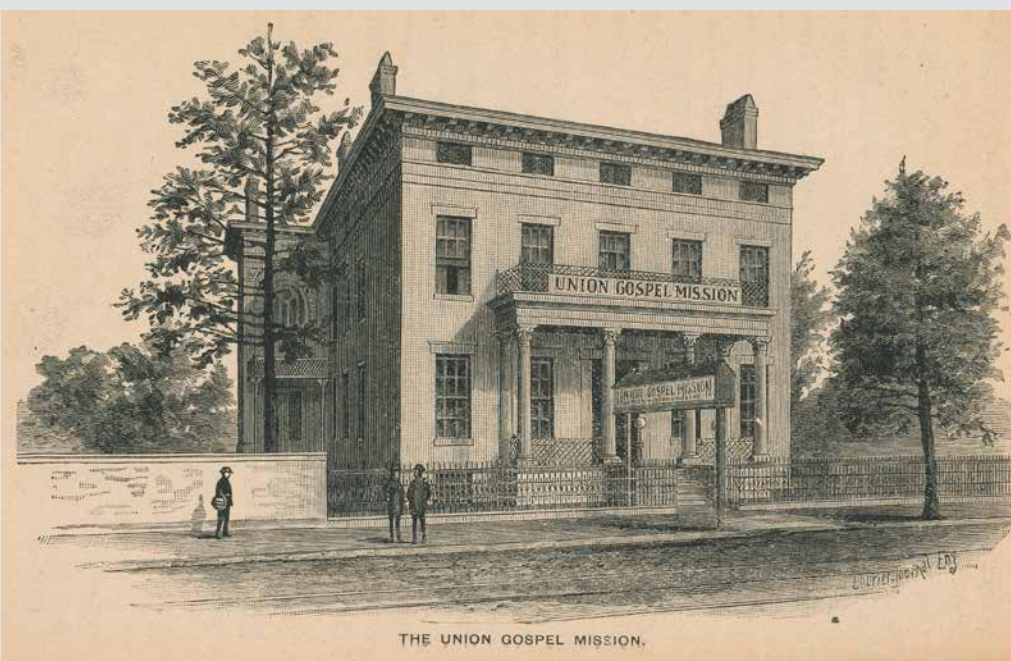
aboard riverboats that followed his dramatic conversion from a gambler and murderer.

LRM hired Southern student Cory Bledsoe, who is pursuing his M.A. in Theological Studies, as the new executive director in January 2015.

“By God’s grace, Bryce serves well and wants to honor the Lord, and loves the ministry of the LRM,” Bledsoe explained. “His contributions are not only going to impact now, but his contribution will have an impact for decades.”

Current board president Jeff Dalrymple, Southern Seminary’s vice president of hospitality services, said many building renovations took place because of Butler’s dedication and networking. Since 2013, renovations have been made to the laundry rooms, showers, restrooms, a brand new commercial kitchen, and a new security system. *Continued on page 47.*





Southern Seminary and the Louisville Rescue Mission

By Adam Winters

The Louisville Rescue Mission has a heritage dating back nearly 135 years, founded in 1881 as a Methodist church mission for evangelizing and aiding destitute men toward spiritual and moral reformation. The mission would neither have existed nor endured without the involvement of converted gambler Steve P. Holcombe (1835–1916), who became a powerful living testimony of the gospel’s power to transform the most hardened of sinners. Within a few years after Holcombe’s conversion, his Methodist-supported mission became incorporated as the Union Gospel Mission, a non-denominational Christian rescue ministry supported by all the evangelical churches in Louisville.

As a born-again believer in Christ, Holcombe benefited from the friendship and support of Southern Seminary co-founder John Broadus. Though Holcombe never matriculated into the seminary, he did attend some of Broadus’ lectures. Holcombe frequently called upon Broadus to preach to the visitors of the mission. Broadus marveled at God’s work of grace in Holcombe and once said, “Much may be learned from Mr. Holcombe’s recorded methods and discourses, and from the testimonies of his converts, as to the best means of carrying on religious work of many kinds.”

The Great Depression almost bankrupted the mission by the end of

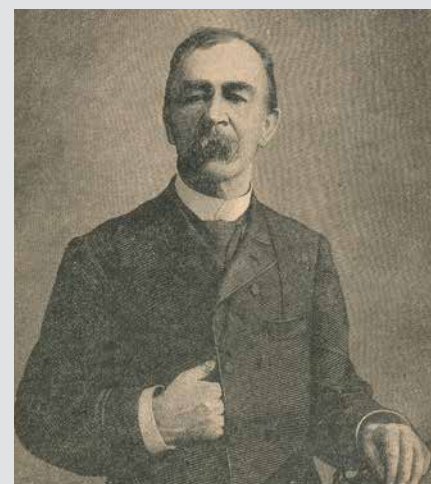
the 1930s, but the Long Run Baptist Association came to its rescue in 1940. The Southern Baptist association took ownership of the mission and became responsible for its financial and personnel support. Under Baptist sponsorship, the mission moved in 1964 to its current location in downtown Louisville at 733 East Jefferson Street and has since operated under a variety of names; it was known as the Jefferson Street Baptist Center before adopting its current moniker in 2014.

Early in the mission’s history, Southern Seminary students, staff, and graduates became a vital pool of resources in offering their time and leadership skill. Decades before the partnership with Long Run, Southern Seminary students delivered sermons and served as chapel pastors. Seminary professors also provided administrative guidance, as professors W. O. Carver and H. C. Goerner served upon the Union Gospel Mission’s board of directors as representatives of the denomination. Maude Abner, the mission’s superintendent from 1933–1940, was an alumnus of the Woman’s Missionary Union Training School — once located on the seminary campus — and played a leading role in arranging the transfer of the mission’s governance to the Baptists.

Many Southern Seminary students and graduates have served as directors, staff, and volunteers of the Louisville Rescue

Mission throughout its 75-year history as part of the Long Run Baptist Association. Today, the seminary’s Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization regularly schedules volunteer preachers to lead morning worship services at the mission’s day shelter. And after former board president Bryce Butler orchestrated a recovery of the organization’s vision and financial resources, the Louisville Rescue Mission appears to have a bright future with the continued support of the Southern Seminary community.

Those interested in the history of the Louisville Rescue Mission can consult the official records of the Union Gospel Mission (1885–1944), which are publicly available for research at the Archives & Special Collections of the James P. Boyce Centennial Library.





Southern Seminary helps a bakery provide hope

By Annie Corser

Several female students and student wives represent Southern Seminary through their volunteering efforts with Scarlet Hope. The ministry began in 2008 as a nonprofit organization founded by Rachelle Starr with the mission of “sharing the hope and love of Jesus Christ to women in the adult entertainment industry.”

Scarlet Hope is opening Scarlet's Bakery in the fall of 2015 as a social enterprise of the ministry. According to its website, the bakery is “devoted to teaching transferable job skills that help exploited women overcome adversity and achieve financial freedom through offering delectable, homemade baked goods via our retail location, online store, and catering service.”

Southern Seminary has also assisted Scarlet's Bakery. Throughout the planning process, Southern served as a liaison between Scarlet's Bakery and Pioneer Campus Caterers, the company which provides catering services to the seminary. Seminary staff set up several different training sessions with the bakery and a couple of tours to demonstrate how the seminary's kitchen is set up and how the facilities are run.

In the spring of 2015, Kari Payton, Southern's general manager of Legacy Hotel and the director of dining services, and Jeff Dalrymple, Southern's vice president of hospitality services, sat in on a tasting presentation from Scarlet's Bakery that included a PowerPoint presentation, their packaging, and a sample

of each of their products.

In April, a team from Southern volunteered their time during the 1937 Project to help transform Scarlet's Bakery. Through renovation of an old building, students removed debris, worked to expose the original brick wall interior, and removed a few interior walls.

Dalrymple says Southern plans to support Scarlet's Bakery by selling its products at the seminary's Founders' Cafe. At the Sept. 11 Fall Festival, Scarlet's Bakery had its own tent station, providing information about the ministry and samples of the bakery's signature cookie.

After Scarlet's Bakery is up and running, Dalrymple says Southern hopes to partner with them for additional catering services and special events.



“It’s just classic Bryce Butler. He is a catalyst to make it all happen.”

“He could envision the old, tired, dilapidated building and take it and turn it around,” Dalrymple said. “And then he uses the relationships to bring people together to help make it happen. But not just to turn the building around, but to make a difference in the community for the gospel. That’s what I love about Bryce.”

Dalrymple credits Butler with rescuing the mission’s vision in addition to its finances. Once Butler helped stabilize the mission’s finances, he provided a path for the board to overhaul the mission’s constitution and governing documents to make them distinctly Christian and gospel-focused.

Butler rotated off the board in April 2015 after three and half years of serving LRM in order to focus on another local nonprofit, Scarlet Hope. Exposed to human trafficking while in South Korea, Butler said his service there is partly why he is passionate about ministries like Scarlet Hope.

The nonprofit organization was founded by Rachele Starr in 2008 with the mission of “sharing the hope and love of Jesus Christ to women in the adult entertainment industry.” The ministry estimates about 2,500 people in Louisville, Kentucky, work in the sex industry.

Butler joined Scarlet Hope’s board as chair two years ago when the ministry created a new board to develop a strategic plan. Butler oversees budget structure and community partnerships, working with Starr to help execute her goals.

One of those goals has been for Scarlet Hope to offer women in the adult entertainment industry employment with a safe

environment as well as transferable job skills. This is becoming a reality with Butler’s help in establishing Scarlet’s Bakery, not only by helping develop a business plan but also through a partnership with Access Ventures. Scarlet’s Bakery plans to open this fall at 741 E. Oak St. in the Shelby Park neighborhood of Louisville.

“Bryce is wearing two different hats,” Dalrymple said. “He is the board chairman, which means he is interested in seeing the ministry succeed, but I think his hat is more in the Access Venture category where he is helping bring this all together.”

“It’s just classic Bryce Butler. He is a catalyst to make it all happen. He has brought in the funding, he brings in the contract workers to renovate the space, he bought the property through his company, and he wants to see it succeed.”

With a passion for business as missions, Butler desires to impact the kingdom of God for the glory of God. And with a burden for spreading the gospel, Butler challenges Southern students to impact their community.

“The Great Commission is a call to the nations and it’s a call to mission,” Butler said, noting how he hopes more Southern and Boyce students will “get plugged in” at the Louisville Rescue Mission or Scarlet Hope.

“I think they are amazing ministries of the gospel here in our city and always in need of people to come and help. It doesn’t have to be money, it can just be where you come and be present and talk to people who just desperately need a friend to listen. I can’t think of any other ministries in Louisville that at their core have the gospel and take it to the people we desperately want to welcome as brothers and sisters.” ➤

Annie Corser is a writer for Southern Seminary and a Master of Arts student. For more information about LRM or Scarlet’s Bakery visit their websites, louisvillerescuemission.org and scarletsbakery.org. Catering orders can be placed by visiting <https://scarletsbakery.org/catering/>.



The Bible and the blogosphere

DENNY BURK CONTENDS FOR BIBLICAL SEXUALITY
WITH ONLINE CHRISTIAN WITNESS

By Andrew J.W. Smith

When the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage on June 26, evangelical leaders moved swiftly to respond. Before the day was out, Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. released a special edition of “The Briefing” podcast and Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission President Russell Moore recorded a YouTube video urging believers not to panic and to prepare to “receive the refugees from the sexual revolution.” The evangelical world at large was not taken off-guard by the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision and went online to make its voice heard.

Denny Burk, professor of biblical studies at Boyce College, is no stranger to the Internet world. He has curated a popular blog, dennyburk.com, for 10 years, offering an evangelical perspective on cultural issues. It was recently featured at No. 18 in Newsmax’s September list of the top 75 religion bloggers. In recent years, Burk’s blogging attention has often settled on gender and sexuality topics, as those issues have moved to the forefront of American culture. In the 48 hours after the SCOTUS ruling, Burk wrote eight posts on the decision, offering his prophetic clarion call for Christians to ready themselves for a new normal in cultural discourse.

“Issues of sexuality and gender are just the tip of the spear in terms of Christianity’s conflict with the culture,” Burk said weeks later in an interview with *Southern Seminary Magazine*. “What we believe about marriage and sexuality are going to be

the issues that divide the sheep from the goats. Our loyalty to Christ is going to be tested in ways it isn’t tested on other issues. People will either show themselves true to Christ’s word, or not.

“I want to keep putting before Christians the responsibility they have to bear witness for Christ in the midst of this. We can’t move. It’s okay to believe things and to stay faithful to Scripture even when it’s unpopular. I hope I’m encouraging people to do that.”

The idea for a blog germinated in 2005, when Burk would watch television with his wife and comment on issues he observed. He gradually realized that he had a valuable biblical perspective to offer, even if cultural commentary was technically outside his discipline of New Testament studies.

Burk was initially sending brief commentaries to friends over email when his students at Criswell College, where he taught at the time, suggested he try a free blog hosting site. A handful of content management systems later — from Xanga to Blogspot to Wordpress — Burk had built a foundation for a unique online presence, even if his focus had not fully developed.

“If you go back 10 years ago and look at what’s on the blog, you’d see a lot of stuff about war — especially the Iraq War — you’d see a lot of things,” Burk said. “It’s been a potpourri, because sometimes I talk about sports, sometimes it’s funny stuff. For me, honestly, it’s just what I’m interested in.”

Today, Burk’s posts usually speak to biblical marriage, the sanctity of life, and religious liberty. Recent issues, like the Cait-

lyn Jenner story and the *Obergefell* ruling, have brought gender and sexuality to the forefront of Burk's mind — and the top of his blog feed, where he hopes to counter secular, liberal orthodoxy with the biblical sort.

"The world as God has made it is a fact. There are eternal realities that can't be avoided," Burk said. "The latest fads in sexuality will have a consequence that will be harmful to people and will undermine human flourishing. None of the promises of the sexual revolution have paid off, and the same-sex marriage revolution is not going to pay off either."

Many of the ideas in his forthcoming book *Transforming Homosexuality*, which Burk co-authored with Boyce College biblical counseling professor Heath Lambert, were baked in the oven of Burk's regular blogging. He says the genre has improved his writing by forcing him to communicate, as well as giving him an outlet for his reflections.

"Jonathan Edwards had his 'Miscellanies.' In some ways, a blog can be for a scholar a 'Miscellanies,'" he said. "There's a difference between academic writing and more popular writing, but for me there's been a connection, because sometimes the

"We don't need to back down from the truth, but we do need to remember that the gospel is for sinners. If we're really going to be the church of the Lord Jesus, we're not going to be out-graced by anybody."



popular writing turns into academic writing, or vice-versa."

Much of the impetus for the blog is Burk's growing concern for the millennial generation's particular vulnerability to the prevailing unbiblical worldview of the time, and his desire to see millennials reform.

"Christian millennials have been so ill-prepared for this," Burk said. "Their understanding of Scripture seems to be very thin when it comes to issues of sexuality, and many of them are prone to emotional arguments. The left edge of evangelicalism just peels off, and it's unfortunate. I think the average person just wants to be nice, and wants people to know they aren't mean or bigoted, so it's hard to withstand those criticisms. The great temptation is going to be to surrender the truth so they don't have to accept those reproaches, but no amount of social justice advocacy is going to exempt them from the

reproaches of Christ."

Beyond theological and cultural arguments, Burk hopes his approach is steeped in as much Christ-like compassion as Christ-exalting truth.

"In a decade of writing about this, the thing that has been impressed on me is how deeply personal and painful it is for the average person struggling with same-sex desires," he said. "We don't need to back down from the truth, but we do need to remember that the gospel is for sinners. If we're really going to be the church of the Lord Jesus, we're not going to be out-graced by anybody. We're going to be generous and gracious and have our arms wide open to sinners of all stripes." ➤

Andrew J.W. Smith is a news writer for Southern Seminary and a Master of Divinity student.



A shepherd in cowboy country

Cowboys roam in middle-of-nowhere West Texas. Not the city-slicking “rhinestone” kind in Dallas, but cowboys riding on horseback and corralling cattle into a pen. In these small towns, community life is a picture of a bygone era in American culture, where pastors are well-respected and everyone’s life is on public display.

When he left Southern Seminary in 2012 to become the pastor of First Baptist Church, Hamlin, Texas, John Powell tried to corral his congregation like a cowboy into a pen of spiritual and theological maturity. But a period of despair fell upon Powell when he realized the loneliness of the pastoral calling and the reality that, in the breakneck pace of church ministry, “God didn’t call us cow-

boys; he called us shepherds.”

“Shepherds don’t push from behind, they lead from the front,” Powell said in a video interview with Southern Seminary. “I came just wanting to ride a horse fast and have that bandanna blow in the wind, but what I realized is I need to foster a tenderness and gentleness and leadership in a way that cowboys don’t.”

Powell, who is from Kansas City, Missouri, said studying at Southern Seminary for a Master of Divinity reaffirmed the call to ministry he first sensed at the age of 14. Although he spent most of his life as a “suburban kid,” Powell said his family’s deep roots in West Texas agrarian society attracted him to the pleasures of rural life when he made summer visits to his grandfather’s farm.

He freely admits he is not a true cowboy like many of his church members, but Powell enjoys outdoor excursions like the solitude of riding a horse and often wears a cowboy hat and boots. Powell certainly looks the part of a small-town pastor, but he said it took him nearly two years before he embraced the harsh realities of rural ministry.

Before moving to Hamlin, a town of 2,100 people, Powell said he could roam freely in Louisville without running into people he knew. But in a small town, a pastor’s life is on public display, and Powell said he soon recognized his pastoral responsibility even when he went to the grocery store or relaxed in his own home.

“There’s an accountability mechanism in a small town where everybody

knows everyone, but there's also a great opportunity for the gospel to be proclaimed through just the simple everyday life of a man living in a small town," Powell said. "I've always got to be on my game."

Powell has since become an advocate for pastors not only to serve rural communities but to dedicate their lives to these areas. He said young pastors often marginalize rural churches by using them merely as a stepping stone for future ministry opportunities. While Powell recognizes the priority to reach the urban centers of the world, he insists shrinking rural communities also are the



become sanctified," Powell said. "I had to realize success was not more people, it may mean less people. Success was not more money, it may mean less money. ... Success is faithfulness, even when it's hard, even when you want to give up."

A key to perseverance in rural ministry, Powell notes, is finding like-minded pastors in the area for mutual encouragement and friendship during times of loneliness. He said Southern Seminary has provided him with a network of alumni in rural parts of Texas with whom he can identify and share in the labors of ministry.

"I'm a product of Southern. It's part of my DNA now," Powell said. "The school has helped to craft me into the man that I am. I would not be the pastor that I am without the education that I received and the people I befriended."

Powell is married to Katherine and they have three children: Gunner, Bennett, and Ada Kate. In addition to his role at FBC Hamlin, Powell serves on the leadership council for the SBC's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

Southern Seminary's mini-documentary on Powell is available online at youtube.com/SouthernSeminary.

— S. CRAIG SANDERS

“

"I had to realize success was not more people, it may mean less people. Success was not more money, it may mean less money. ... Success is faithfulness, even when it's hard, even when you want to give up."

"ends of the earth" and need Great Commission faithfulness from ministers.

"Rural church ministry involves being with people when they are at their places of worth," Powell said, describing how he often spends time with church members at their farms, hunting trips, or businesses rather than the privacy of his church office. "Rural church ministry is a ministry of presence."

After nearly two years in Hamlin, Powell said he contemplated leaving the ministry. Despite his efforts in evangelism and expository preaching, Powell said he felt discouraged when his membership declined and no new converts joined the church. At that time, several close friends at Southern Seminary, including Provost Randy Stinson and former admissions director Ben Dockery, intervened and encouraged Powell. Stinson recommended Powell read Paul David Tripp's *Dangerous Calling*, which Powell credits with exposing the pride that "infiltrated" his ministry at FBC Hamlin.

Contrary to some church growth strategies, Powell said his understanding of a successful ministry could not rely on instant results, increased membership, and an expanded budget. Part of the rea-

son he now encourages young pastors to commit their lives to rural church ministry is because it may take "10 years to see people catching on" to spiritual truths and exhortations.

"My paradigm for success has had to



**GRANT CASTLEBERRY**

M.Div., Theology (2015); Ph.D.,
Church History (2020)

Grant Castleberry, a Southern Seminary Ph.D. student in Church History, serves as the executive director for the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW). His role includes directing the day-to-day operations of CBMW. Grant also speaks at churches on the topics of marriage, sexuality, manhood, and womanhood.

Castleberry is also the pastor of evangelism and outreach at Buck Run Baptist Church, Frankfort, Kentucky, alongside his work with CBMW. In five years, Grant would love to be able to say that he had been faithful and by God's grace had been diligent in all these areas for the kingdom of God. He also wants to be the best husband and father that he can be. He and his wife, GraceAnna, have three children, and he views every day as a gift not to be taken for granted.

Castleberry sees his calling as a "pastor theologian," hoping to serve the local church as a pastor, preaching the Word of God, writing as much as he can, and training men for ministry.

**KRISTI NOAH**

M.Div., Great Commission
Studies (2017)

What brought you to Southern?

I came here after doing the Hands On program in East Asia through the IMB. I was there for six months, but I wanted to receive training to figure out how to do ministry well, so I came to Southern.

What were you doing in China?

I actually did the exact same thing that Scarlet Hope does. Scarlet Hope is a Louisville-based ministry sharing the gospel with women in the adult entertainment industry. I worked with a missionary in East Asia who offers women in the industry a job in her bakery and a place to live. So my job when I got there was actually mapping the city and helping start the bakery, creating recipes and baking hundreds of cupcakes.

How do you want to use your degree? I want to continue working with women in the sex industry, whether that is working in brothels or strip clubs. These women are everywhere. They're often overlooked in their community and in their culture. My passion is to see them come to know Christ and to come to be women who want to go back into the clubs and minister to other women and bring them out of the club.

**ALBERT OH**

M.Div., Great Commission
Studies (2018)

Albert Oh and his wife, Sara, moved to Louisville from Queens, New York, to study at Southern Seminary in preparation for overseas missions. Because of the move, Oh said he thought he would have to give up his work as a freelance cinematographer. He looked for different jobs in Louisville, but then he found an opportunity to work as the cinematographer for Southern Productions and use his gifts to tell the Southern story.

"It's such a powerful medium, and the more Christians can be using that for God's kingdom, God can really do great things through that," he said. "For me this isn't just a job. Seeing the vision for Southern Productions and how they want to use video for building up Southern and God's kingdom, that made me realize that this is really where I need to be."

Oh started at the Southern Seminary extension in Manhattan to kick-start his education, but he said the theological consistency and graciousness of his professors drew him to on-campus education at the seminary.

"I really didn't see why I would go anywhere else," he said.

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Nick Moore to revitalize theological education in Zimbabwe

Nick Moore, his wife, Kyndra, and the couple's seven children are moving to Zimbabwe.

Their announcement at the International Mission Board's May 13 commissioning service at Highview Baptist East in Louisville garnered a collective gasp throughout the auditorium.

"We're trying to show that when God calls you and makes it clear that you are called, he will provide the way for that to happen," said Moore, 30, a two-time alumnus of Southern Seminary. "Don't limit God's ability to make a way where it seems there might not be a way."

The IMB is sending Moore to help revitalize the Baptist Theological Seminary of Zimbabwe, which has struggled since national Baptist leaders forced out a liberal principal in 2011 for refusing to adhere to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message.

Moore said his goal as a professor at the seminary is to become part of a conservative resurgence in Zimbabwe by grooming national leadership for the institution, strengthening academic offerings, and mobilizing national church planters. But

he will also face many practical challenges such as restoring electricity to the seminary because it is currently in debt to the power company.

When he made his first trip to Africa in 2009, he realized the "need for theological education overseas" and used 2 Timothy 2:2 as an inspiration to go to the nations and train leaders. With the IMB's refocused efforts toward theological education, Moore saw an opportunity for full-time ministry in Zimbabwe.

While some may marvel at the sacrifices Moore and his family are making, he says he has grown accustomed to handling challenges. Moore married Kyndra at the end of his first semester at Boyce College in 2003 and worked a handful of jobs to support his growing family while continuing his education.

After graduating from Boyce (2007) and earning his M.Div. from Southern (2010), Moore led the launch of Redemption Hill Baptist Church in Fisherville, Kentucky, in 2012. He served as the lead pastor while working on his Ph.D. in Old Testament Theol-

ogy. Recently finding new leadership to replace him at Redemption Hill was the "final peg" in Moore's decision before he accepted the call earlier this year to move his family of nine to Zimbabwe.

Moore, whose seven children range in age from 10 to 1, hopes his family's obedience to the Great Commission will serve as an example and encouragement for other families, no matter their size.

"Trust God to open the doors as you step forward in faith," Moore said. "If God calls you to do something, don't use the family size as an excuse not to be obedient."

Moore says Zimbabwe is a "great place to raise a family" and his large family will actually be an asset in ministering to the culture. He plans to remain in Zimbabwe for three to four years before returning stateside to finish his Ph.D. at Southern and then going back to the mission field.

For information on the Moore family and to receive updates on their service with the IMB, email pastornick130@gmail.com. — S. CRAIG SANDERS

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Josh and Jessica Bordas encouraged by Southern's family focus

Josh Bordas grew up in Louisville surrounded by families connected to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. When his parents, Rick and Lori Bordas, became Southern Seminary Foundation Board members, Josh remembers attending events and fundraisers with them. After marrying his wife, Jessica, he continued to join his parents in Destin, Florida, for the Foundation Board retreat.

Josh and Jessica became more interested in the seminary as they heard more from Josh's parents and the seminary's focus on missions.

"My dad's involvement and his love for the seminary allowed me to meet people through him," Josh said. "It was a great way for us to get involved and see how it impacted him."

Josh and Jessica Bordas have served on the Foundation Board for three years. After the passing of Rick Bordas in 2013, Josh and Jessica were encouraged by the seminary's response and the sense of belonging as family.

"Even people I might have never met, but had known him, and all the employees, sent us cards," Josh said. "Everyone showed us God's grace and comfort in that time. The family atmosphere of the board really means a lot to our family and is something that we will treasure forever and love the seminary forever."

Jessica said they also received support and encouragement throughout their marriage, including the birth of their daughter, Harper.

"We had tried for a long time to get pregnant, so when we did

have our baby, Harper, we got flowers from the seminary," Jessica said. "It is the little things that are neat to know they took the time to think about us. It made us feel very loved and showed us their hearts for the Lord, loving on people and shepherding us through the highs and lows of our marriage."

The Bordas family sees the emphasis on family ministry and missions from the Southern alumni, staff, and professors.

"One thing I love about Southern is Dr. Mohler's leadership and focus on the advancements of the gospel to unreached people groups," Josh said. "Taking God's Word to the nations is our main goal, and it seems like the main goal of Southern."

Jessica has witnessed the maturity and strong training for both men and women at Southern.

"I love that Southern is raising up and training up men who are strong in the Word and have a passion for preaching from the Bible," Jessica said. "But it is important to me that Southern realizes that it is not just sending out the men, but sending out the family."

"I think it was neat and encouraging for me to hear from Mrs. Mohler about all the things that they do for the wives of the students through Southern's Seminary Wives Institute. Equipping the wives to be able to be in the ministry is something that I think is an awesome aspect of Southern," she said.

Josh and Jessica Bordas say they understand their involvement with Southern not only encourages the students at Southern but also their family as they raise up the next generation. — ANNIE CORSER



From the Foundation



Craig Parker is the vice president for institutional advancement and executive director of the Southern Seminary Foundation.



Hope in the midst of a declining culture

There are few Christians who would say that the world is becoming a better, more Christlike place. Yet, in the midst of this moral revolution, I see Southern Seminary taking a firm stance on the unchanging truth of God.

If I think about the decline of culture, I come away with hopelessness. But if I think about how God is working to bring about not only the rise of our enrollment but also the rise of the number of friends who are supporting, I am left with hope and wonder.

Southern students have a strong sense of calling, paying a price to come to Southern for theological training only to pay a higher price as they head off to what we would call new and challenging ministries.

Just as the new generation of students gives me hope for the future, I look at friends of the seminary who share that same commitment. Even though the media would have us believe that the culture has completely turned, that's just not accurate. Friends like Josh and Jessica Bordas have answered the call to

support Southern's dedicated and driven students. Being missionally minded, Josh and Jessica represent a rising generation that is sharing the commitment by helping Southern financially and also by living out Southern's mission in their own lives.

is getting to know the students. I think God does that to keep me going. The more I get to know the students, the more impressed I am with that sense of calling and commitment regardless of the price. Because of that, I tell our supporters

There are few Christians who would say that the world is becoming a better, more Christlike place. Yet, in the midst of this moral revolution, I see Southern Seminary taking a firm stance on the unchanging truth of God.

Friends of Southern are answering a different call and paying a price of their own to live in obedience to God.

As I sit here and I look at the enrollment numbers, and the number of supporters and the amount they are giving, I realize that God is working both ends of it. Where he provides the students, he also provides financial resources that enable us to keep tuition as affordable as possible.

The most enjoyable part of what I do

they are making a great investment. I don't know where you would go to find a greater student body with a strong calling and sense of commitment.

I want to invite you to be a part of what God is doing here at Southern. Get to know the students and see why they are worth the investment. Be encouraged and find hope knowing that these students are serving God with all they have to give.

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Vivid Impact Corporation

AMO Appraisals

Edgar's Emporium

Davis & Davis Plumbing, Inc.

OPC Pest Control

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of KY, Axxis, Inc.

Northwind Canada Inc.

Impact Pyro, Inc.

Commercial Floor Tech, Inc.

Highland Roofing Company Inc.



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