

Facts & Trends



***Young
Adults***
stopping the exodus

MARCH/APRIL 2008

*News and information for ministry from
LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention*

 **LifeWay**
Biblical Solutions for Life

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Our purpose

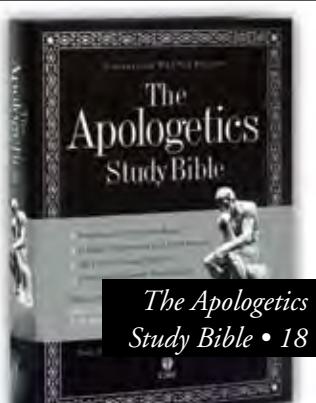
To support you in ministry by connecting you with LifeWay's "Biblical Solutions for Life." To help you carry out your calling more effectively as you read news and feature stories, information about trends that impact the church, ministry tips and an introduction to new LifeWay resources. Whether you're a pastor, church staff member or lay leader, you'll find ways to enhance your ministry.



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Facts & Trends Online

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See more photographs, hear more audio, watch more video and discover more details about our stories that highlight how LifeWay's resources, events and people are making a difference in the lives of people and churches.

Look for the FTO info boxes in our articles to learn what extras are waiting for you on FTO.

Our format

Facts & Trends is published six times a year by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. *Facts & Trends* is a free publication.

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From my perspective



Thom S. Rainer, president and CEO, LifeWay Christian Resources

Get a healthy dose of the *biblical* God

God is infinitely holy and supremely sovereign. Man's slightest sin is an infinite offense to God and spiritually separates man from Him and makes man God's enemy, deserving His wrath and eternal punishment.

But God, in love and mercy, put forth His Son, Jesus Christ, to be the object upon whom His just wrath would pour out so that those who believe in Christ will not perish but experience the joy of a restored relationship with God, through Christ, eternally.

The resurrection is validation that God's justice was satisfied with Jesus' perfect life and sacrifice.

This is good news. This is the Gospel.

And people need to hear it.

My heart breaks as I read the research that is reported in this issue of *Facts & Trends*. Our American culture is spiritually reeling with views of God that are literally created in the image of man. And some who claim the name of Christ too often relegate the most magnificent, transcendent, incomparable, supreme being in all existence to being our God on demand, seeing Him as the supplier of all our needs to our own riches and glory. The byproduct of our flimsy theology is that the lost in our culture see no distinction between the God we claim and the gods of this world.

This is in deep contrast to the God of the Bible and the Savior He puts forth, directing all human history through the cross toward the glorification of the Son. Scripture says it so much more eloquently than I ever could (emphases are mine):

"In *Him* we have redemption through *His* blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of *His* grace that *He* lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. *He* made known to us the mystery of *His* will, according to *His* good pleasure that *He* planned in *Him* for the administration of the days of fulfillment to bring everything together in the Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in *Him*" (Ephesians 1:7-10; HCSB).

"*He* is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. The *One* who is preeminent over all creation because by *Him*



everything was created, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through *Him* and for *Him*. *He* is before all things, and by *Him* all things hold together. *He* is also the head of the body, the church; *He* is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that *He* might come

to have first place in everything. For God was pleased [to have] all *His* fullness dwell in *Him*, and through *Him* to reconcile everything to *Himself* by making peace through the blood of *His* cross, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And

you were once alienated and hostile in mind because of your evil actions. But now *He* has reconciled you by His physical body through *His* death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before *Him* – if indeed you remain grounded and steadfast in the faith, and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard” (Colossians 1:15-23; HCSB).

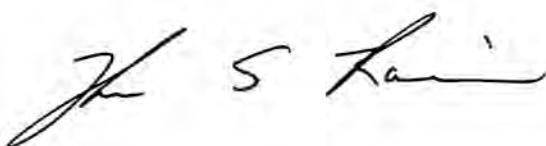
What is our role as Christ followers?

“We have received grace and apostleship through *Him* to bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations, on behalf of *His* name” (Romans 1:5; HCSB).

“Now everything is from God, who reconciled us to *Himself* through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to *Himself*, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed the message of reconciliation to us. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; certain that God is appealing through us, we plead on Christ’s behalf, ‘Be reconciled to God’” (2 Corinthians 5:18-21; HCSB).

The world desperately needs to know the God of the Bible. The church desperately needs to fulfill the ministry of reconciling sinners to God through Christ alone. May God lead Christians through humility to become whatever we need to become so that God will be “exalted among the nations; exalted on the earth” (Psalm 46:10; HCSB).

In His service,





Unchurched Americans **turned off by** **church, open** **to Christians,**

LifeWay study says

by Mark Kelly

A majority of unchurched Americans are turned off by the institutional church and don't have a biblical understanding about God and Jesus, yet they believe Jesus makes a positive difference in a person's life and would enjoy an honest discussion with a friend about spiritual matters.

Those are just a few of the findings from a new study of unchurched Americans conducted by LifeWay Research, in partnership with the North American Mission Board's Center for Missional Research.

The results of the study, which polled 1,402 adults who had not attended a religious service at a church, synagogue or mosque in the previous six months, are available at www.lifewayresearch.com.

The findings have important implications for Christian churches and individuals who want to effectively reach unchurched people with the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, said LifeWay Research Director Ed Stetzer.

"A full 72 percent of the people interviewed said they think the church 'is full of hypocrites,'" Stetzer said. "At the same time, however, 71 percent of the respondents said they believe Jesus 'makes a positive difference in a person's life' and 78 percent said they would 'be willing to listen' to someone who wanted to share what they believed about Christianity."

Lack of understanding

Many unchurched people don't have a biblical understanding about God and Jesus, the survey found.

"While 72 percent of those surveyed said they believe God – a higher or supreme being – actually exists, only 48 percent agree there is only one God as described in the Bible, and 61 percent believe 'the God of the Bible is no different from the gods or spiritual beings depicted by world religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.,'" said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research. "At the same time, 66 percent of adults ages 18-29 agree that Jesus died and came back to life, compared to 54 percent of adults 30 years and older."

It's not surprising that people who don't attend church don't understand what the Bible teaches, McConnell added.

"If you aren't going to church, you don't have an opportunity to be informed about what the Bible teaches or what other faiths teach," he said. "It's not surprising then that unchurched people



lump world religions all together and consider the gods described in them as being the same.”

The problem is compounded by a widespread notion of religious tolerance that says religious and spiritual truth is a matter of personal opinion, Stetzer said.

“We found a real openness to hearing about matters of faith, but the study also clearly documents what I call the Oprah-ization of American Christianity,” he said. “It’s very much a generic ‘big guy in the sky’ view of God and a ‘you believe what you believe, I believe what I believe’ viewpoint on theology. People say, ‘Who am I to judge?’

“We have seen this in the current political campaigns, in regard to Mormonism,” Stetzer added. “Recently a Christian leader was asked whether Mormons are Christians, and he replied that no, Mormons are outside the standard definition of what an orthodox Christian is. The host was shocked somebody would say that. How dare we say someone else is or is not a Christian?

“Christians begin with a faith system that teaches who God is, but the people in our culture not only don’t believe that, but often

consider us intolerant because we dare to believe it.”

‘Tripping over the church’

The negative perception for many people, however, seems to be the church, not Jesus Himself, according to the study.

While 64 percent of the respondents said they think “the Christian religion is a relevant and viable religion for today,” 79 percent indicated they think Christianity “is more about organized religion than about loving God and loving people.” Seventy-two percent said they think the church “is full of hypocrites, people who criticize others for doing the same things they do themselves,” and 86 percent believe they “can have a good relationship with God without being involved in church.”

The belief that church attendance isn’t necessary for spiritual well being is just as common among adults who grew up in church as it is among those who attended church less often as children, McConnell said.

“Unchurched people do not understand the connection between having a relationship with God and being with other believers in church,” he said. “In the Christian faith, these



For a link to more details about the survey, including an *Inside LifeWay* podcast with Ed Stetzer and Scott McConnell, visit www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends. In addition, Stetzer comments on the study on his blog at www.edstetzer.com.

Why Church?

A national survey of 1,402 adults ages 18 and older who have not attended a religious service, synagogue or mosque at any time in the past six months.

I believe I can have a good relationship with God without being involved in church

86% agree

The church is full of hypocrites, people who criticize others for doing the same things they do themselves

72% agree

Believing in Jesus makes a positive difference in a person's life

71% agree

Bars represent percentage who "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" with statement.

are inseparable. Jesus' last prayer before being arrested, as recorded in John 17, was that everyone who believes in Him would be unified and work together to let the world know that God loves them and sent Jesus.

"People on the outside see the church as candles, pews and flowers, rather than people living out their love for God by loving others," McConnell added. "Such skepticism can only be overcome by churches and believers who demonstrate the unity and love for which Jesus prayed."

Stetzer explained, "There will always be the stumbling block of the cross. Yet our study shows that many are tripping over the church before they hear the message of the cross."

Open to friends

Despite their negative opinions about the institutional church, most unchurched people are open to discussing spiritual matters with a friend. The research showed that:

- 78 percent of those surveyed said they would be willing to listen to someone who wanted to talk about their Christian beliefs. The number rose to 89 percent among adults 18-29 years of age.
- Only 28 percent of adults 30 years and older said they think Christians they know talk to them too much about their beliefs.
- 78 percent of adults 30 years and older said they would enjoy an honest conversation with a friend about religious and spiritual beliefs, even if they disagreed with the friend.

"Even though the unchurched have a confused view of God and a negative view of the church, they are overwhelmingly open to someone sharing about their Christian faith,"

"People on the outside see the church as candles, pews and flowers, rather than people living out their love for God by loving others."

— Scott McConnell

Who are Christians?

A national survey of 1,402 adults ages 18 and older who have not attended a religious service, synagogue or mosque at any time in the past six months

I think Christianity today is more about organized religion than about loving God and loving people

79% agree

I have at least one close friend who considers himself or herself a Christian

89% agree

If somebody wanted to tell me what she or he believed about Christianity, I would be willing to listen

78% agree

Bars represent percentage who "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" with statement.

Stetzer said. “We think religion is a topic that is off limits in polite conversation, but unchurched people say they would enjoy conversations about spiritual matters.”

Rebuke and challenge

Stetzer added that, “Increasingly, the God Americans believe in looks less like the God described in the Bible. They are a long way from where people were 100 years ago, when there was more of a consensus about who God is. That is a rebuke to us as Christians and, at the same time, a challenge. What is it about the faith we live that causes our culture to like Jesus but reject the church?”

One of the most important insights of the study is the vast majority of unchurched people are not only open to spiritual conversations but already know someone

who is a Christian, McConnell said.

“Eighty-nine percent of these unchurched people say they have close friends who are Christians,” he said. “We don’t have to search for the unchurched folks around us; we actually know them. It’s really a matter of starting conversations about spiritual matters with the unchurched people we know.”

“We think religion is a topic that is off limits in polite conversation, but unchurched people say they would enjoy conversations about spiritual matters.”

— Ed Stetzer

“Although we may not have the home field advantage we once did, people are open to spiritual conversations, open to hearing about a genuine faith, and God is still at work, using people and churches to share the Good News in an increasingly confused world,” McConnell said. “That should propel us to action and help us move beyond fear to share our faith.” ■

We recommend

- *The Apologetics Study Bible* from B&H Publishers
- *When Worldviews Collide* (member book) by Ergun Caner
- *Countering Culture: Arming Yourself to Confront Non-Biblical Worldviews* by Chuck Edwards and David Noebel

These and other resources are available through customer service at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772 and from LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123.

Young adult specialist sees a future for his generation

by Polly House

Young adults are not going to church. LifeWay Research showed evidence of this fact in its study, "LifeWay Research Uncovers Reasons 18 to 22 Year Olds Drop Out of Church," conducted in April and May of 2007.*

Armed with this research, LifeWay introduced *Threads*, a ministry initiative to intentionally engage young adults, which included the hiring of Jason Hayes in June 2007 as the young adult ministry specialist.

Big job, but he's up to it.

photo by Kent Harville

* See study in November/
December 2007 Facts & Trends
at www.lifeway/factsandtrends

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At age 30, Hayes is a young adult himself. He knows the world and the culture. He's also an experienced minister, having earned a master of divinity from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, served as minister of students at First Baptist Church Concord in Knoxville, Tenn., and served as a teaching pastor at Long Hollow Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Tenn., with the assignment of expanding churchwide spiritual growth along with the design of creative environments, resource development and worship planning.

Recently, Hayes sat down with *Facts & Trends* and answered some questions about young adult ministry, *Threads* and a few things about himself.

Facts & Trends: Why is ministry to young adults “the next new thing” now, as opposed to say, five years ago?

Jason Hayes: Sadly, it really should have been more important five or 10 years ago, but I am grateful that it is now. The reasons for its arrival at the forefront of discussion are probably because of the new research that identifies the need, our cultural climate towards Christ and the church, as well as the obvious absence of young adults in the church.

F&T: Why do you think churches aren't doing young adult ministry well?

JH: In the past, there traditionally has been a lack of urgency to specifically target this generation. This lack of urgency led to a lack of staffing and attention given to this generation. Then add to that the misguided perceptions about what young adults want and

need, and too many churches lost sight of an effective ministry approach toward this age group.

Young adults said they were bored with the lack of biblical depth and excellence in our churches. This led them to a perception that the church is irrelevant. They just didn't see passion and excellence. Unfortunately, they were probably right.

F&T: Churches say it is hard to plan an event for young adults because they won't commit to anything more than a few days in advance – something better might come up. Yet, the young adults say they want and will attend big, fun



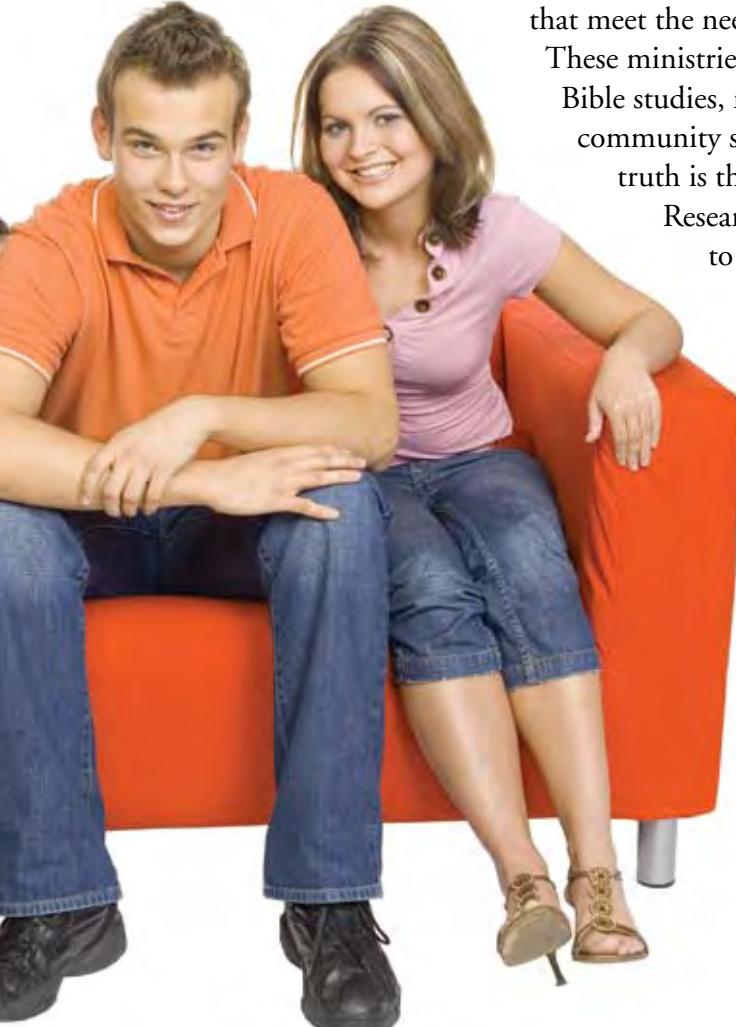
events. So, how can there be a working compromise?

JH: I don't believe that to be accurate. Just look at culture – they buy U2 tickets almost a year before the actual show. The key is perceived value. I think most people are hesitant to get on board with things they deem as not being valuable or beneficial.

F&T: What do young adults want that churches can immediately provide today – not in a year from now?

JH: What we heard young adults say is that they desire the following four things: community, depth, connection and social responsibility. Notice I didn't mention any prescriptive magic formula for what that necessarily looks like in your church. Each church is unique and these pillars may need to be applied differently to fit each one.

F&T: How can those of us past the young adult stage connect with young adults? We don't have their cell phone numbers or e-mail addresses unless they give them to us. How can we get on their radar?



JH: I think the key is that we establish ministries that meet the needs of the young adult generation. These ministries might include small group Bible studies, midweek worship gatherings and community service projects. In addition, the truth is that you already are on their radar. Research shows that young adults desire to learn from the experiences of older generations. Providing young adults an opportunity for this type of connection is a great start.

F&T: What is your goal for *Threads*?

JH: The goal of *Threads* is to direct the young adult generation toward a closer relationship with God and to reconnect the church with young adults.

F&T: How is LifeWay positioning itself to be a champion for young adult ministry? Historically, we haven't been known as a "young company."

JH: No, we certainly haven't been seen as a young company and there are some hurdles that we gradually are overcoming when it comes to those perceptions. But, the bottom

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Connect Conferences: Leading the church to reach young adults

Threads is passionate about making a difference. You will learn more about young adults, understand some of the many reasons they leave the church and stay away, network with other leaders in your area and walk away with some practical next steps and encouragement for your ministry.

Threads is limiting registration for each Connect Conference to 75 people, allowing organizers to customize the training to the questions on your heart that face your region, while offering you a more hands-on event experience. This intimate number also provides opportunities for you to engage in discussion with seasoned ministers and best-practice leaders in young adult ministry.

Dates and locations: Aug. 21-22, Austin, Texas; Aug. 25-26, Nashville, Tenn.; Sept. 4-5, Charlotte, N.C.; Sept. 11-12, Jackson, Miss.; Sept. 18-19, Orlando, Fla.; Sept. 25-26, Tulsa, Okla.

To learn more: www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.

you're working on now that we can look forward to?

JH: Really pushing the *Threads* message is a big challenge. We believe

line is that we are passionate about seeing the young adult generation know God and understand the magnitude of committing their lives to Him.

F&T: It's been a year now since the first *Threads* resources debuted. What kind of feedback are you getting from young adults about *Threads*?

JH: The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We're humbled and grateful for what we are hearing from people all around the world who are coming in contact with *Threads* through our print resources and through the ThreadsMedia.com Website. We really sense that God is doing something great here and something much bigger than any of us. But, it is neat and exciting to see how He works in bringing this generation back to Himself.

F&T: What are some exciting things that

that God is in this and we are excited about continuing to get the word out. I'm really excited about some new relationships that we are developing with future authors, ministry partners and event personalities.

We have some incredible Bible studies coming out this year – *Tough Sayings of Jesus 2, Feast, Life Matters* and others. We'll be hosting six regional Connect Conferences in '08 to help train ministry leaders connect with young adults.

F&T: You grew up in Knoxville, Tenn., and went to college at the University of Tennessee. What did you do there that helped prepare you for this new role a young adult ministry specialist?

JH: I majored in communications, focusing on debate and public speaking – valuable skills for ministry. Even then, I had a passion for innovative ministry. In addition to my studies, I dreamed, organized and taught at SHAKEN, a series of citywide worship services targeting collegiate students. I was fortunate to gain other valuable ministry experience in positions at Second Baptist Church, Griffin, Ga., and Youth Ministry Resources, Inc. before graduating from UT and going to seminary.

F&T: Do you mind getting emails and phone calls from churches that want to know more about *Threads*?

JH: Are you kidding? Anytime! E-mail me at Jason.Hayes@lifeway.com or call me at (615) 251-2275. ■

Looking for their Sam

by Jason Hayes

For years, I've enjoyed learning from the experiences of older men and have benefited from the opportunity to spend time with them. I've been blessed to have a handful of men in my life reach out and invest in me. Let me tell you about my friend, Sam.

Sam has certainly been one of the most influential people in my life. Sam isn't seminary trained nor does he have years of pastoral experience. As a matter of fact, Sam has sold insurance for as long as I've known him. His wife, Robyn, is one of the sweetest ladies you'll ever meet and their two kids are incredibly kind and cool.

I've had lighthearted football-watching visits at Sam and Robyn's house. And I've also had some gut wrenching, conversation-laden visits, too. Sam's always been available to chat. He's always been quick to listen and slow to speak when I've come to him in times of need.

Sam and I met soon after I committed my life to Christ at the age of 16. He met with me and a group of other high school guys every Saturday morning. Sam was committed to our group and he was adamant that we be committed to it as well. I remember a time when he came and picked me up in the snow just to make sure that I made it to our small group that morning. Sam taught us the Bible and would ask us tough questions about our walk with Christ. These meetings were foundational in my spiritual development.

Sam has gone out of his way to check in on me over the years. When we lived in the same city, it was rare for us not to have lunch together a couple times a month. He has partnered biblical advice with personal application, all while using humor to help keep things in perspective. Sam has taught me with his words and his actions.

Even since I moved to Nashville, Sam and I still keep in touch. Sometimes we're just catching up and sometimes I'm picking his brain for advice. Sam has taken initiative to pour his life into me.

I'm not sure Sam ever set out to be this person in my life. But he truly is a mentor to me. I doubt he would think of himself in that way, but he should. I've looked to him for spiritual advice and for practical advice as well. He helped me build a financial budget when preparing to ask Carrie's dad for permission to marry her. Just a few weeks ago I called Sam for advice about life insurance. It seems that we've covered everything else from work related questions, to parenting issues, to other random topics.

I'm grateful to God for Sam and our friendship. I'm thankful that Sam has chosen to take an interest in me. I'm not sure that he really knows how much our relationship means to me, but I will be impacted because of it forever.

As you read this, consider how many people around you are desperately looking for the Sam in their lives.

LifeWay Research has shown that young adults are looking for mentors and friends of all ages who have gone through the experiences in which they are about to engage. They are searching for truth that helps them live well on a daily basis. I challenge you to make a plan for pouring your life into the next generation. ■

"... young adults are looking for mentors and friends of all ages who have gone through the experiences in which they are about to engage. "

— Jason Hayes

New *Threads* study explores Jewish feasts observed by Jesus

by Jenny Rice

Many Christians know Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur only as preprinted words on a store-bought calendar. However, these Jewish feasts and others hold hidden truths for those in search of details about Christ, His life on earth and the prophecies He came to fulfill.

Threads, LifeWay's young adult community, has released a new study called *Feast: Finding Your Place at the Table of Tradition*, which details six feasts practiced by Jesus corresponding to His Jewish tradition.

Author Derek Leman, a rabbi at the Tikvat David (Hope of David) Messianic Synagogue in Atlanta, grew up an atheist but received Christ while attending college. While attending a Baptist church, Leman became intrigued with the Old Testament. This led to a passion for Jewish tradition and a belief that "Christianity without its Hebrew foundation is a tree without roots," he said.

"I believe that part of the Bible, our traditions, have been neglected," Leman said. "People have false notions about the Old Testament. Understanding the feasts might help people understand the Old Testament, Jesus and Judaism better."

The *Feast* study explores the origin and ancient vs. modern practice of five feasts from Leviticus 23 – Passover, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) and Feast of Tabernacles, as well as Hanukkah.



According to *Threads* editor in chief Valerie Hancock, *Feast* is the result of feedback from young adults desiring to explore the historical context of Scripture and Bible stories they read as kids.

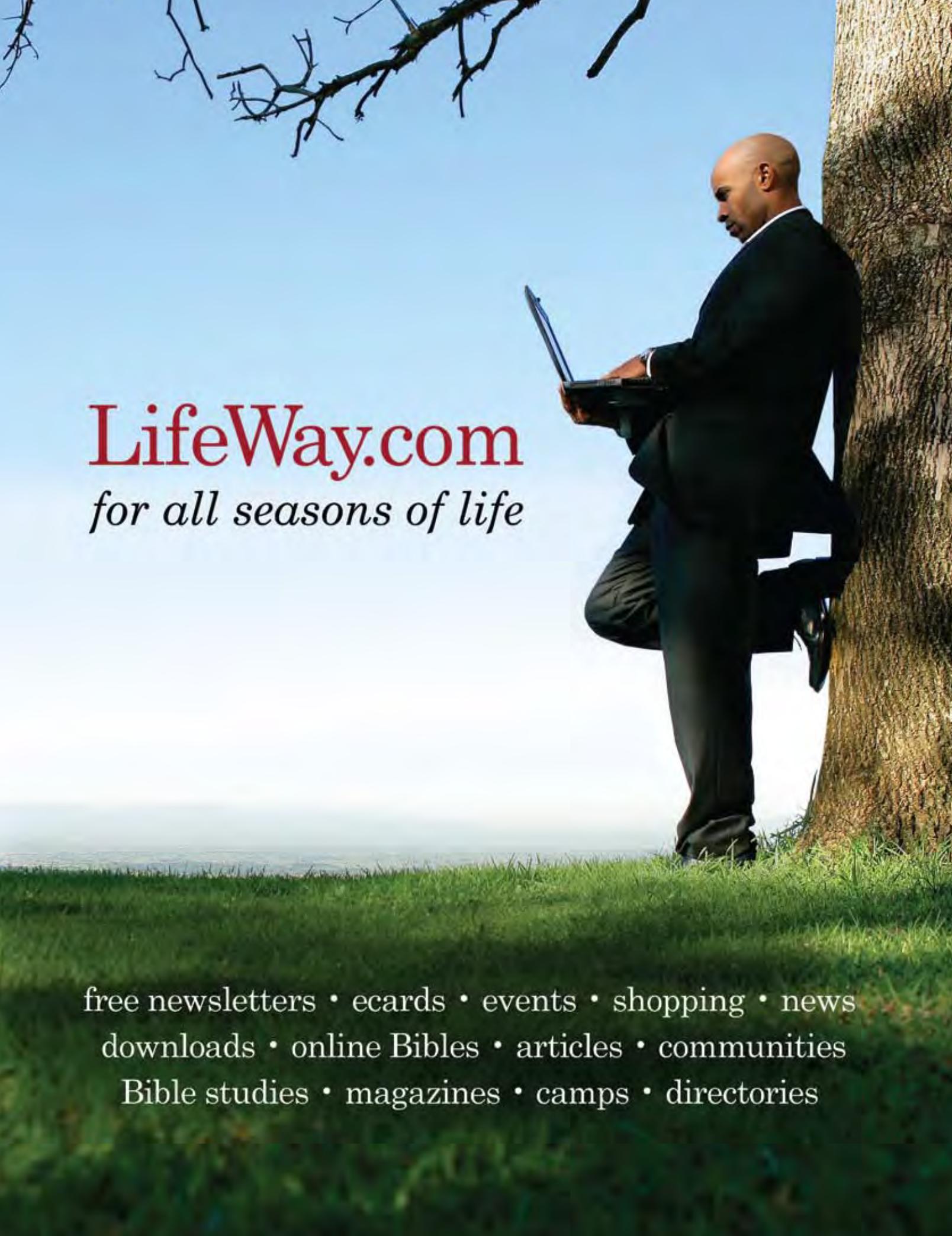
"This study is about feasts, but it is also about Jesus. Many people may not get that," Hancock said. "Every ritual in the Old Testament has application in the New Testament."

Multimedia features included with the study include song lists that support the *Feast* theme and a DVD featuring a traditional weekly Sabbath meal observed by Leman and his wife, a couple from Hope of David, and a couple who have never experienced a traditional Jewish feast.

"We included [on the DVD] a Sabbath meal because it's a weekly feast Jews practice – a time to completely rest and come together," Hancock said. "Symbolically, there are a lot of foreshadowings of Christ in the traditions of the meal as well. It's important for people to see that connection." ■

Facts & Trends Online

- A link to more information on *Feast* and other *Threads* studies is available at www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.



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The Apologetics Study Bible offers reasons to believe

by Kelly Shrout

Apologetics is the defense of the Christian faith, and *The Apologetics Study Bible*, recently released from B&H Publishing Group, teaches Christians how to present and proclaim their beliefs in an age of spiritual relativism.

The first apologetics study Bible of its kind, the resource includes articles from modern apologists such as Chuck Colson, Norm Geisler, Hank Hanegraaff, Josh McDowell, J.P. Moreland and Ravi Zacharias. Ted Cabal served as general editor.

Cabal, professor of Christian philosophy and applied apologetics at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., has lived on both sides of the spiritual belief spectrum and can relate to those who question Christianity.

Cabal, once an atheist, became a Christian at the age of 20 after reading the New Testament.

“My conversion is like that of all Christians,” he said. “The Holy Spirit impressed on my heart the Good News of Christ found in the Bible.”

Cabal said he would have greatly benefited from a resource like the *ASB* had it been available years ago.

“As a skeptic, my questions provided me an excuse to ignore Christianity,” he said. “If then I could have read something like the *ASB*, I would have found answers in the same volume containing God’s supernatural Word. After my conversion, I continued to have questions that took years for me to research and answer. The *ASB* contains the equivalent of many years of faithful, cutting-edge research from dozens

of scholars that is presented in a simple format. What I would have given for such a resource to help me back then!”

Apologetics valuable for spiritual growth and evangelism

There are several benefits to developing a proper apologetic, Cabal said.

“Basic help in apologetics like that provided in the *ASB* is essential for a Christian’s own spiritual health,” he said, adding that unbelievers and believers alike have sincere questions about spiritual matters.

Cabal mentioned that a solid apologetic also creates effective evangelists.

“Evangelism automatically entails apologetics,” he said. “Whenever someone provides reasons for rejecting our presentation of Christ, we must gently respond with truth revealing why their reasons are wrong and why they should reconsider the Bible’s claims. Sensitive use of apologetics is just that method of applying truth to the lies that keep people from accepting Christ.”

Tough questions that demand straight answers

Articles throughout the *ASB* include topics such as “Is the Old Testament Trustworthy?” “Can Biblical Chronology Be Trusted?” “What is the Relationship between Science and the Bible?” “Does the Bible Contain Errors?” “Does the Bible Teach Reincarnation?”

Steve Bond, editorial director for Bibles and Bible reference books at B&H Publishing Group, said he hopes the

resource provides Christians the tools to make a positive case for the truth of Christianity.

"Christians must be able to respond constructively and persuasively to critics of historic Christian faith," he said, mentioning that believers also must recognize the inadequacies of other worldviews.

"The marketplace of ideas is filled with many incompatible claims about what is true," Bond said. "God has built into each of us a sense that all of these conflicting claims can't be true. How do we test these claims for truth? Why should we embrace historic Christian faith rather than Islam or the claims of Latter Day Saints or of atheists?

"Knowing what we believe, and why, has been an important part of being a Christian since the first Christians confessed that Jesus is Lord," Bond said. "The apostles and the women who testified to Jesus' resurrection were the first apologists and the tradition has continued from that world-rocking event."

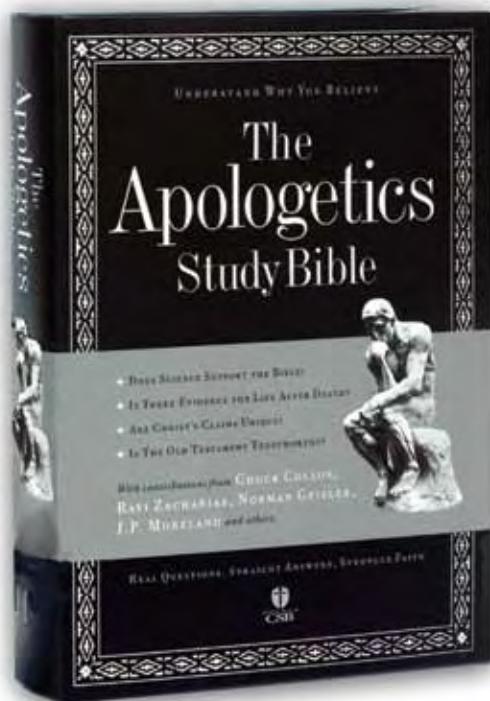
Ray Clendenen, head of B&H Academic, served as an associate editor and pointed out the annotated bibliography included at the back of the *ASB* features literature that helps Christians present the Gospel clearly to skeptics and prepares Christians to respond to faith objections.

"We encounter these objections from movies, TV, and other media, as well as from non-Christian or even Christian friends wrestling with life," he said. "Sometimes we come up with our own problems and need help in dealing with them. The intellectual cafeteria of ideas in this postmodern world is full of choices about what to believe – other philosophies, religions, cults, atheism and agnosticism.

"The challenge is that sadly perhaps the majority of Christians don't read many books that make us think, even those that help us deal with challenges to the faith," Clendenen said. "But all Christians can and must have a Bible. The idea of the *ASB* was to distill the best of the literature into bite-sized chunks that an average Christian can comprehend and use." ■

"Knowing what we believe, and why, has been an important part of being a Christian since the first Christians confessed that Jesus is Lord."

— Steve Bond



**Facts & Trends
Online**
To listen to an Inside LifeWay podcast with Ray Clendenen about *The Apologetics Study Bible*, go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link.

LifeWay mission volunteers lead more than 5,000 to Christ in '07

story and photography by Kelly Shroud

Chantéa Kirkwood daily represents LifeWay as a customer service employee. But for two weeks last October, Kirkwood traveled to Rwanda to represent LifeWay as a foreign missionary.

"I am defined by my love for Christ and how I represent Him before men," said Kirkwood, a first-time mission volunteer. "LifeWay provides both the financial means to allow me to share my faith in places that I could never afford to go on my own, as well as the time off from work," she said, mentioning that LifeWay pays half the cost for employees to participate in mission trips.



"To be able to go to another part of the world that you have only dreamed about is amazing in itself, but to go and have no worries about financial responsibilities while you're gone is an even greater testament to what LifeWay is all about," she said.

Kirkwood was one of 106 LifeWay volunteers who ministered internationally in 2007, bringing the total number of volunteers to 1,029 since the first mission trip a decade ago.

In 2007, LifeWay volunteers ministered in Chile, Uganda, Dominica, Portugal, Newfoundland, Brazil, Canada, Rwanda and New Orleans. The trips resulted in 5,392 professions of faith. The total number of professions of faith stands at 97,328 since 1997.

"One of the most exciting things I learned about LifeWay when I arrived two years ago was the passion our employees have for missions," said LifeWay President Thom Rainer. "I am thankful that this ministry was established, and I am looking forward to participating myself in the near future."

"The fact that LifeWay invests so much in mission trips is a sign of our Great Commission health," Rainer said. "I am grateful to our employees who participate and to LifeWay for making it possible."

Ernie McAninch, manager of ministry ventures, heads LifeWay's missions program and said active participation in the Great Commission glorifies God. It also is a testimony to the churches, state conventions and associations that LifeWay serves.

"LifeWay writes about evangelism. We teach it. But more importantly, we practice it," McAninch said. "Missions changes our perspective regarding our ministry within LifeWay," he said. "When the Holy Spirit uses us to spiritually transform a life, it has a definite impact on us. We cannot return to LifeWay without being changed. Our ministry at LifeWay takes on a different, maybe even more urgent, light."

Richard Barnes, LifeWay's director of publishing services, led a team to St. John's, Newfoundland, July 27-Aug. 5, and said one of the biggest benefits to participating in international missions is witnessing the lives that are transformed by the simple truth of John 3:16.

Barnes and his team worked with local missionaries and hosted block parties that resulted in 60 decisions for Christ.

"I especially am blessed when we hear reports after we return home that people are continuing in their newfound faith, which we have heard from St. John's," he said. "LifeWay mission trips remind me that our LifeWay vision to help people know Jesus and seek His Kingdom is a vision for everyday living wherever we are." ■



Above: James Jackson of LifeWay's student ministry area shares the Gospel in Rwanda. Facing page: A young boy peeks into a Rwandan church.

LifeWay wins top five ranking

by Kelly Shrout

LifeWay employees in Nashville, Tenn., say LifeWay is one of the best places to work. The *Nashville Business Journal* agrees.

In 2007 The *Nashville Business Journal* honored LifeWay as one of the best places to work in Nashville among large employers. LifeWay ranks in the top five among large employers for the second consecutive year.

"LifeWay has a proud heritage and a respected place in the community," said Steve Lawrence, director of human resources. "We are an organization with a ministry purpose supported by a great business model. We strive to be one of the best run businesses in America."

The award and publicity that goes with the honor reflect the stature that LifeWay has in the city and in the state, Lawrence said.

The process of being named one of Nashville's best places to work begins with a nomination by the *Journal's* editorial council. The council further reviews the organization and examines an independent employee opinion survey that measures how strongly employees feel about their company.

More than 750 home office employees participated in the independent survey and

gave LifeWay high marks in areas such as benefits, pay and work environment.

"When our employees are polled they have good things to say about their experience working at LifeWay, which means our own employees view LifeWay as a great place to work," Lawrence said. "This helps us have a high level of morale which translates into commitment, dedication, productivity, and reaching our corporate goals and vision."

Based on the overall score from the employee survey, Lawrence said LifeWay ranks very high among other companies when it comes to employee morale.

"These awards say that LifeWay is recognized as an employer of choice in the community and in the state," he said. "It is always good to know that we work at one of the best places in Nashville as recognized by an independent party. Many of us always have thought that, but it is encouraging to have the validation."

LifeWay was featured in the December 2007 *Nashville Business Journal*. LifeWay also has been named among Tennessee's best employers, an award given by *Business Tennessee Magazine*. LifeWay placed No. 4 in 2007 and in No. 5 in 2006. ■



Training & events updates

Correction:

Information about 2008 FAITH Evangelism training events and the FAITH Evangelism 2 resource listed in the January–February 2008 issue of *Facts & Trends* was incorrect. Please note this correction.

Four FAITH Evangelism Equiper Training (FEET) events will be held in 2008. These events are designed to equip state convention leaders, association leaders and FAITH churches to become trainers for churches desiring to implement FAITH Evangelism. Church, association and state convention leaders will be encouraged to develop a FAITH Evangelism training strategy for their state or region.

The FAITH Evangelism strategy was rewritten in 2007. The new FAITH Evangelism 1 resources are now available through LifeWay by phone at (800) 458-2772, online at www.lifeway.com, or at LifeWay Christian Stores. FAITH Evangelism 2 will focus on building FAITH team leaders and will be available in the summer of 2008.

For a list of the 2008 FAITH Evangelism Equiper Training event locations, go to www.lifeway.com/evangelism; phone LifeWay events registration at (800) 254-2022; or check with state conventions and associations. ■

Special Beth Moore simulcast event



LifeWay will host a national Living Proof Live simulcast from Louisville, Ky., Aug. 1-2. Even though the event is sold out, you can experience – via a live-feed satellite hook-up – every minute of Moore's powerful messages, along with incredible praise and worship led by Travis Cottrell and the praise team.

The simulcast is scheduled for Friday, Aug. 1, from 7:30-10 p.m. (ET), and Saturday, Aug. 2, from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (ET).

Gather with your friends and experience the Living Proof Live simulcast – a fun-filled Bible study, teaching, and worship experience to enrich your mind, soul, and spirit!

To find a church near you hosting the simulcast or to discover how to become a host church, go to www.lifeway.com/women and click on the events tab. ■



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LifeBoxes give our military heroes a positive sign that churches care

by Polly House

What if you never received mail or the only mail you received was for adult entertainment?

For some soldiers serving far away from home, mail time is one of the most anticipated times of day. For the ones who only get one of the thousands of magazines sent by adult-oriented publishers, it's a day to remember how lonely they really are. For the ones who get LifeBoxes from their home churches or associations, however, it's a day for praise and celebration and a continued commitment to their Christian values.



Michael Krause, U.S. Marine and recipient of a LifeBox, sits alongside Afghan children. Photo provided by Krause.

LifeBox project

In the fall of 2006, LifeWay's church resources division began working with Baptist associations to create LifeBox.

Sandy Bain, director of missions for the New River Baptist Association in Jacksonville, N.C., said, "I can't remember a time when the churches of the New River Baptist Association have been as excited as they have been with the LifeBox project. Many of our churches are having 'Packing Parties' with GAs, RAs, youth and adult Sunday school classes. Needless to say, there is an excitement in the air."

Twenty-two churches in the New River Baptist Association packed and mailed more than 800 LifeBoxes to deployed soldiers from their area for the 2007 Easter Sunday LifeBox mailing goal.

A LifeBox is packed with items such as a personal note to a service member, chewing gum, tube/crew socks, small candies, stationery supplies, homemade goodies and wet wipes, plus a LifeWay magazine. Christian music CDs and books also are appreciated.

"LifeBox is a way that LifeWay can work with local churches and Baptist associations to make a positive contribution to our Armed Forces personnel," said Rhonda Buescher, director of LifeWay's magazine advertising and circulation. "LifeBox is a simple way to offer a good alternative to secular magazines that are readily available. Christians serving in the Armed Forces have said that mail and Christian magazines are greatly appreciated, and now we have an opportunity to have a positive impact on their lives through LifeBox."

Buescher said congregations and associations are encouraged to send LifeBoxes to men and women connected to their local churches. "Almost every church has someone who is serving in the military or is connected to a church member. But for those churches who do not have a personal connection, some chaplains have requested to receive the boxes to

distribute to their units. What a tremendous ministry this is to those serving in the Armed Forces and to their families. What a tremendous opportunity this is for Sunday school classes, women's ministry groups, men's ministry groups, student ministries, church choirs, children's missions groups, VBS and college campus ministries."

How LifeBox works

Churches and interested community organizations donate money to their local Baptist association to pay for magazines and postage for flat rate mailers.

Associations order *HomeLife*, *Christian Single*, *Journey* or *Stand Firm* through LifeWay's network partnerships area at a special discount for this project.

Associations enlist churches to participate. Collection points are designated at associational offices or churches.

Churches and interested community organizations collect the LifeBox items and deliver them to one of these collection points. Addresses of individual military personnel or chaplains are collected from churches or from Web sites that house names of military personnel who wish to receive mail.

Personal notes are written and packed with other items in a flat-rate mailer.

Some additional LifeBox project options for churches, families, or ministry groups within churches, including providing Christian magazine gift subscriptions for family members of the deployed, are suggested in the FAQs located at www.lifeway.com/lifebox.

Churches and associations will need to mail their boxes about three weeks prior to targeted receipt date. Holidays are an especially meaningful time for military

"I can't remember a time when the churches of the New River Baptist Association have been as excited as they have been with the LifeBox project."

—Sandy Bain,
director of missions,
Jacksonville, N.C.

For more detailed information on LifeBox, along with the list of FAQs for churches and associations, go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends. Look for an article about LifeBox in the May issue of HomeLife magazine.

LifeBox is a voluntary ministry organized and promoted by Southern Baptist associations and LifeWay, with key input from Southern Baptists serving in our Armed Forces and from an advisory team made up of directors of missions. This ministry is voluntary and has no official connection with or approval by any of the United States Military Services.

personnel to receive packages, but the boxes are appreciated anytime.

Working together

"We are so pleased to be able to work with many of our Baptist associations to make LifeWay magazines available to our service men and women," Buescher said. "The mission of LifeBox is to fulfill the dream of a Southern Baptist Army officer.

A devoted husband and dad, he realized his responsibility as spiritual leader in his home included not reading certain secular publications easily available in deployment. Being accustomed to receiving LifeWay's distinctly Christian magazines, such as *HomeLife* and *Stand Firm*, at his church, he wanted to find a way to receive those magazines while deployed as a commitment to his family values." ■

Lonely Leatherneck loved his LifeWay LifeBox

He is the only American in a remote mountain outpost in Afghanistan. He may go without a shower for a month. He hikes and fights everyday. But a simple piece of mail – a LifeBox – lifted the tired warrior's spirit beyond measure.

Michael Krause, a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps, received a LifeBox from someone back home. Besides the candy, gum, wet wipes and other personal items, the LifeBox held copies of *HomeLife* magazine.

He wrote in an e-mail to LifeWay: "I want to express my sincere appreciation to *HomeLife* and LifeWay for printing such uplifting and inspiring material. Out here, we don't get to interact with many fellow followers of Christ, so a magazine or a letter really means a lot, especially during the holiday season.

"I'm a 26-year-old lieutenant in the Marine Corps currently fighting in Afghanistan as an embedded trainer for the Afghan National Army. This means I train and fight alongside the Islamic soldiers of the Afghan army against the Taliban and al Qaeda. What makes my time here difficult and to some, interesting, is that during college I was an overseas missionary in

To access a short video of Michael Krause talking about receiving his LifeBox, go to *Facts & Trends Online*.

China and Russia with Campus Crusade, and now I feel like I'm the missionary [to] Muslim warriors.

"As embedded trainers, we spend most of our time in remote outposts alone, hiking and fighting in the mountains with just

our Afghan soldiers. Needless to say, it's a tough place for a Christian to find himself. A lot of people back home say that my adventures here, given my background, inspire fellow believers in tough spiritual situations.

"Even those who do not know the joy of a personal relationship with Christ are amazed at the love and compassion of Christians back home. The men and women in uniform appreciate even the smallest gesture of support."

Krause grew up in Columbus, Ga., and graduated from Auburn University in 2004. While he has worked in Washington, D.C., and will be stationed back in Hawaii after his tour in Afghanistan ends, he said he still considers First Baptist of Opelika, Ala., his home church.

LifeWay has information on how your church or association can participate in lifting the spirit of our fighting men and women with a LifeBox. Go to www.lifeway.com/lifebox. ■

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LifeWay | Worship

10 tips to make your Mother's Day special

by Diana Davis

It happens every year in May, and pastors anticipate it expectantly. Mother's Day! May 11, 2008, promises a high energy, high attendance Sunday with a smiling, eager congregation. There'll be extra guests galore – sons, daughters and grandchildren attending worship services with their mothers. There will be regular moms, new moms, pregnant moms, substitute moms, stepmoms, foster moms, grandmoms. What an opportunity!

No pressure, pastor, but how will this year's Mother's Day celebration be different from last year's? How can your church esteem mothers, yet point the worship service toward God? It's time to get creative. Need a few fresh ideas?

1) Mom & me video – Ask your tech team to interview children and prepare a montage of testimony clips explaining why "My Mom's the Best!" Or invite the youth group to prepare a short video to honor mothers. Or gather dozens of photos of church members with their mothers for a slide show set to music. Use the video for

pre-service viewing or play it along with an appropriate music special.

2) Here's your daisy – If your church presents gifts on Mother's Day, it's a good idea to give one to each woman present. (Many childless women have been like a mother to other children.) Each year's gift can be unique and meaningful, such as a single flower, book, CD or pin. Other ideas include a multi-ribbon bookmarks for her Bible, a corsage made by children in your church or a laminated copy of an original Mother's Day poem. Recruit a different group of people (teen boys, deacons, fifth-grade girls, new members, elderly men or church staff) to present the gift each year,

3) Old women, please stand – Not to be a fuddy-duddy, but pointing out the oldest, youngest and most prolific mothers during worship is not always flattering. As an alternative, consider recognizing mothers with a new baby since last year, great-grandmothers, mothers of teenagers or mothers of active members of the military. Then include all mothers in a thanksgiving prayer.

4) I was born – One pastor announced a special prayer time for mothers, asking everyone in the congregation who had been born to a mother to stand. That's everyone!

5) Preschool parade – Prepare signs for all preschoolers, such as, "I thank God for my mom," "Honor your mother and father" or giant MOM letters. While worshippers sing a chorus, the joyful Mother's Day parade of preschoolers marches in one door and exits another. Delightful!



This column was adapted from Fresh Ideas: 1,000 Ways to Grow a Thriving & Energetic Church, published by B&H Publishers.

We recommend

• Mother's

Day-themed bulletins, bookmarks postcards and gifts

• *Traveling Light for Mothers* by Max LucadoThese and other resources are available from LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123.

6) Senior adult BYKTSS – If it fits your church, plan “Bring Your Kid to Sunday School” for senior adults. The oldest adult Bible classes invite their adult offspring to join them for class, arriving early for snacks and studying God’s Word together.

7) Moms brunch – Youth can pamper their moms by planning and serving a lovely brunch. Guys carry a towel draped across their arm and wear an eyebrow-pencil-drawn curly mustache. Plan a program of poetry readings, serenading and prayers.

8) No cooking – How about a catered picnic for a church-wide Mother’s Day lunch at the local park? The pastor and men of a Filipino church in New Jersey reserved an entire local restaurant for lunch and surprised their mothers and families with a special meal.

9) Sense and sensitivity – Scripture instructs us to honor our fathers and mothers, but use discretion in your service. Some in your congregation may dread Mother’s Day because of marital status, childlessness, death or problems with parents.

10) Worship Him, not her – Many unchurched family members will attend worship with their moms. Tell them how Jesus can change their lives. It’s a great day for a baptism, baby dedication or children’s choir song. Joyfully honor mom on Mother’s Day, but focus on the only One worthy of worship – our God. ■

Facts & Trends Online

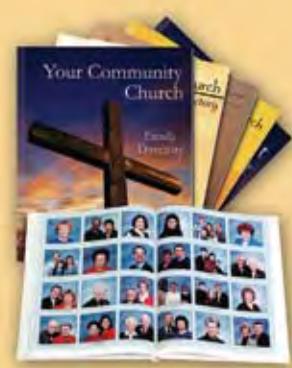
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LifeWay Music Service: serving the servant

by Jenny Rice

Sister Murphy has been a faithful member of your church for 50 years, volunteering in every capacity possible. Upon her passing, her final request was for a hymn from the 1700s to be performed, in Latin, at her funeral.

LifeWay Music Service stands ready to help.

LifeWay Music Service, a department of LifeWay Christian Stores, provides choral music, accompaniment tracks and orchestrations from more than 400 music publishers, including LifeWay Worship. Thousands of titles are available.

"As ministers of music, we don't get a second chance," Mike Wilkins, manager of LifeWay Music Service and part-time minister of music, said. "If you call LifeWay Music Service, we can find the song, overnight it and have it in your hands in time to be ready for the funeral service. If it is in print, we can get it from almost any publisher across the country."

Wilkins and his staff have extensive experience in church music. Some have worked for LifeWay Music Service for more than 20 years. Jokingly referred to as "music detectives," they thrive on helping people find the music they need.

The staff is familiar with many musical pieces and ready to help churches select the right musical performance for their choir size and experience, as well as production specifications.

"If a church calls and says, 'We are a choir of 20 people and we are not accomplished musicians, and we want something with narration,' we can help," Wilkins said.

"Sometimes people call in not knowing

the name of a song, so they sing it to us and we help them find it," he added.

According to Wilkins, through the LifeWay Music Service catalog music ministers can listen to sample tracks of performances online and find out the level of difficulty or length of a production.

"LifeWay Music Service is the one place to find everything you need for your music ministry," said Wilkins. In addition to the thousands of musical titles available, they also offer choir robes, hymnals, and even rhythm band instruments or hand bells.

"Our goal is to serve the servant so that the minister of music can do what he is called to do versus spending all of his time searching for music and resources."

LifeWay Music Service assists churches of all denominations and worship styles, from liturgical to traditional to contemporary worship services.

"Music crosses over all boundaries," Wilkins said. "For musicians, it's all about the music and the message. You don't have to look all over the place – we are the one source." ■

*"Music detective"
Heather
Burczynski is
a part of the
music services
team at
LifeWay
Music
Service.*



Photo by Kent Harville

National Black Sunday School Conference draws 380 participants to LifeWay

story by Polly House, photography by Kent Harville

In almost boot camp fashion, 380 Sunday school leaders and pastors from across the country attended the 2007 National Black Sunday School Conference and learned how to make their Sunday schools grow and meet the needs of members and guests.

LifeWay sponsored the Nov. 2-3 training event at its home office in Nashville, Tenn.

continued on page 32



Pastor Myron Taylor, New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, East St. Louis, Ill., speaks on Sunday school's life changing possibilities.

"You are among a growing group of leaders God is raising up to lead His people back to the Bible."

– Elgia “Jay” Wells (right)

Welcoming the group, Elgia “Jay” Wells, director of LifeWay’s ministry to black churches, said, “You are among a growing group of leaders God is raising up to lead His people back to the Bible,” Wells said. “As you are challenged these two days, we want you to see why our lives must be based on the strong foundation of God’s Word. We must provide opportunities for people to come to know Jesus Christ and engage them in leading others to faith in Him.”

Wells defined Sunday school as the foundational strategy in a local church for leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for building on-mission Christians through open Bible-study groups that engage people in evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry and worship.

IDC

Conference participants learned about IDC, the three-dimensional approach to growing their Sunday schools. IDC stands for invite, discover and connect.

For a link to free downloads on building successful Sunday schools and for information about upcoming training opportunities and guides to LifeWay Sunday school curriculum choices, go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.

“Did you know that 80-90 percent of people surveyed said that they first came to church because someone invited them?” asked Art Groomes, discipleship and evangelism specialist at LifeWay. “There is not a more powerful outreach tool than a personal invitation.”



Groomes cautioned, though, that most people do not come to church based on one invitation. “Statistics indicate it can take up to 20 touches before someone becomes open to visiting Sunday school or a worship service,” he said. “Sometimes you have to keep inviting them, letting them know what you have to offer.”

David Francis, director of LifeWay’s Sunday school area, said when a Sunday school celebrates its intentional focus on studying and applying God’s Word, every member discovers biblical truths through personal and group experiences. “That’s not just about teaching – that’s the teacher’s job. It’s about discovering biblical truth for themselves,” he said.

Treat guests well

By the time people have been invited, visited and have discovered what Sunday school has to offer, they are ready to make a connection with other people. The adage “first impressions are lasting ones” holds true. If guests are greeted warmly, asked their names, escorted to their Sunday school



Victor Lark, left, and Shirley Randle, right, from Douglas Avenue Missionary Baptist Church in El Dorado, Ark., celebrate completing an activity.

classes and introduced to the class members, they will feel welcome.

"Would you invite someone to your home, then ignore them when they got there?" Wells asked. "Of course not. Before they arrived, you would clean the house and prepare some food. When they arrived, you'd greet them at the door, invite them in and show them around. When they were ready to leave, you'd walk them to the door and wave goodbye. We need to do the same thing in our churches."

Breakout conferences

Conference attendees participated in more than 50 breakout classes, each facilitated by a leader with a particular expertise in the conference topic, covering topics of interest to those who work with children, youth and adults. Other classes were designed to help pastors connect with their Sunday schools, give ideas on reaching out to guests, choose appropriate curriculum and understand how to minister the unchurched.

Cathy Hill, Sunday school superintendent at First Baptist Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio, said the conference "Understanding Today's Adult," led by *LifeWay Lessons* editor Christina Crawley, reminded her to open her eyes to the cultural and societal influences that adults are bombarded with. "She told us to be able to successfully reach out, we had to understand how unchurched people think," she said.

The next National Black Sunday School Conference will be Oct. 24-25, 2008. ■

We recommend

- *Ten Best Practices to Make Your Sunday School Work* by Ken Hemphill and Bill Taylor

- *Webcourse: Discovering My Potential series*

- *Comeback Churches* by Ed Stetzer

These and other resources are available through customer service at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772 and from LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123.

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Send your church's college students 'love in a box' to remind them you care

As spring arrives on college campuses and final exams loom, students may find themselves in need of a little encouragement. Consider asking some key groups or individuals in your church to adopt a college student this spring and send a little encouragement in a box.

Movie Madness – Include a large, round popcorn tub filled with microwave popcorn, a recently released DVD and movie-size boxes of candy. Challenge the student to share the movie and treats with another student who needs encouragement or needs to know Christ.

Spectacular Spa Soothers – (for the girls) Load up a colorful plastic container with bubbly bath gel, bath sponge, lotion, shampoo and nail polish. Include a note reminding her that in the busyness of the day to take time to energize her spirits, not only with some self-pampering, but with a focus on God.

Sports Mania – Ship an assortment of outdoor sports equipment. Send a football, soccer ball, Frisbee, plastic baseball set, kites and other outdoor sports equipment that could be used by groups of students who gather outdoors. Include a note telling the student that you will be praying that he or she will have opportunities to build relationships with students through recreational sports.

Chocolate Safety Net – Tie an assortment of chocolate candies in a net. Include a pair of scissors with a note that says: "In case of emergency, cut into net and begin eating." Include a chocolate-colored T-shirt in the care package. Add a note reminding the student that Jesus is even better than chocolate in times of stress!

Party in a Package – Send a gift box with party supplies such as streamers, balloons, confetti, party horns, napkins, plates and utensils. Include a note challenging the student

to plan a prayer party for a group of friends. Add a gift card to a local superstore so he or she can purchase food and additional items needed to put the plan into action.

Book and Beverage Break – Send gift cards to a local bookstore and coffee shop so the student can buy a "real" book, not a textbook, and relax with some reading and a hot cup of coffee or chai. ■

This was adapted from a LifeWay.com article written by Joy Emory.



We recommend

- *A Life of Influence: Exploring Your Identity, Sharpening Your Focus*
- *Intentional Influence: Investing Your Life Through Mentoring*
- *Leveraging Your Influence: Impacting College Students for Christ*

These and other resources by Tim Elmore are available through customer service at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772 and from LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123.

Facts & Trends Online

Projects such as this can go a long way in keeping your church's college students connected to your church. To see why maintaining this connection is so important, go to Facts & Trends Online to read a LifeWay Research report on the startling dropout rate of young adults.

Leaders sharpen effort to reach continent

by Mike Ebert

More than 700 leaders from 41 state conventions, LifeWay and the North American Mission Board met Dec. 3-6 in Nashville, Tenn., with the goal of finding more effective ways to partner in the effort to reach North America for Christ.

Leaders from both the state conventions and SBC entities acknowledged the urgency Southern Baptists face as North America drifts toward a more secular mindset and becomes more spiritually diverse.

"This is not your father's North America," NAMB President Geoff Hammond told attendees at the 2007 SBC State Conventions' Summit. "What used to be a melting pot has become a mixing pot. Cities like New York have 500 people groups represented. As Southern Baptists, having engaged only 35 of those groups is not enough."



Bill Northcott, left, church-minister relations at the Tennessee Baptist Convention, visits with Wayne Oakes, senior consultant, pastoral ministries, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Hammond called the meeting "historic," saying Southern Baptist forefathers would have expected today's Baptists to work together, even in the midst of different ministry responsibilities.

"Every partnership has some walls," he said. "My prayer is that we'll lower the walls a little bit."

Hammond reiterated NAMB's primary focuses of sharing Christ, starting churches and sending missionaries, and he called on Southern Baptists to give added priority to the vast number of people groups now represented across North America as well as the ever-growing trend toward urbanization.

"We need more worldview studies, not just to do research, but to understand how these people think and how we can more effectively cross cultures," Hammond said.

LifeWay President Thom Rainer pledged his entity's support to the Great Commission task as well as serving Southern Baptists by producing resources that have biblical depth and relevancy. "Relevancy presumes we are operating from a biblical foundation," he said. "We will not compromise the Bible in order to be relevant."

In multiple breakout sessions throughout the three days, missionaries, state staff and those from the two national entities gathered in small groups to discuss challenges and brainstorm new ideas for how Southern Baptists can be more effective in evangelism, church planting, church health and leadership development.

Ed Stetzer, LifeWay's director of research, shared insights into North America's unchurched population. He painted a picture of a culture ready to discuss spiritual topics and tolerant of Christians who want to share their faith. While people are leery of organized religion, Stetzer said most are open to conversations about God and even agree with many of Christianity's fundamental doctrines.

Other topics at the meeting included reaching Muslims, sports evangelism, cross-cultural ministry, speaking and thinking missionally, and utilizing social media such as Facebook and MySpace for evangelism efforts.

"This may be the beginning of a Great Commission resurgence among Southern Baptists," said Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. "Wouldn't that be an awesome thing? It is time."

Dennis Dawson, associate executive director overseeing missions for the Illinois Baptist State Association, said the week was "a really serious effort to do something we've wanted to do for a long time – have our NAMB folks, LifeWay folks and all of our state conventions working together for a common purpose. I'm taking back a new resolve to work better together in our state, with no silos and no barriers."

Rainer, in addressing the group, listed several “Megatrends in Church Health,” including:

- The disappearance of the 18-24-year-old in church. Rainer said LifeWay Research has well documented the dropout trends of this age group, and while the church has always seen a drop as young people transition from school to the workforce, “there are solutions emerging.”
- The growth in the multi-venue and multi-campus church.
- The desire for deeper biblical doctrinal studies. “Those in our churches are asking for preaching with biblical depth in addition to life application,” Rainer said.
- The slowdown in the growth rate of mega-churches. “Not a decrease in the number of mega-churches,” Rainer clarified, “but a slowing in the rate of growth.”
- The shortage of pastors. Seminary graduates “don’t see themselves in rural, white collar or traditional churches,” Rainer noted. “Some states are already seeing a crisis” among traditional churches.
- The increasing demand for processes.

“Churches are asking for help to put resources together,” Rainer noted. “Churches are saying: ‘Don’t just give us products; show me how I disciple this young believer.’” ■

Mike Ebert is senior director of the communications division for the North American Mission Board.

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Ridgecrest conference tells attendees that 'SomeOne Cares'

by Brooklyn Noel

Carmen Leal spent 12 years watching her husband die. Three years into their marriage, Leal's husband, David, was diagnosed with Huntington's Disease, a familial disease that causes uncontrolled movements, loss of intellectual faculties and emotional disturbance.

Throughout his illness, Leal served as her husband's caregiver. After his death, she felt called to support other caregivers through her experiences and firsthand understanding, so she established the

SomeOne Cares Christian Caregiving ministry.

"Ultimately, the goal of SomeOne Cares is to train us to care, but [also] to focus on the One who cares,"

Leal said during a special edition of *Inside LifeWay*, LifeWay's official news podcast.

That goal was pursued Oct. 25-28 as LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center welcomed about 150 church and lay leaders, volunteer and professional caregivers to the first SomeOne Cares conference.

Two conferences, one ministry

The inaugural SomeOne Cares event consisted of two overlapping conferences.

"A Casserole Does Not a Ministry Make," which took place Oct. 25-26, focused on providing tips, resources and support for churches currently engaged in or looking to start ministries to caregivers.

Dick Peterson, a caregiver for his wife, Elizabeth, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis about 10 years ago, said that he came to the conference hoping to learn about beginning an organized caregiver ministry at his church, Crossroads Community Church, Summerville, S.C.

"My wife is very active and so she's visible to the church," Peterson explained, adding that his wife runs an MS support group in their hometown and teaches a women's Bible study class. "I think there is a huge danger that the less visible fall through the cracks. It's easy for that to happen when it [caregiver ministry] isn't officially organized."

Conference speaker Betsy Ritzman agreed and taught a breakout session on establishing a care team



Photo from bigstockphoto.com

Next SomeOne Cares

Carmen Leal acknowledged that there are many caregiver events, but SomeOne Cares is the only one with a Christian foundation. Ridgecrest will host another SomeOne Cares event Sept. 16-19, 2008. For a link to more information, go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.

ministry, which consists of an organized group of people offering focused care to needy members of the church.

"What did Jesus do?" Ritzman asked. "His attention was repeatedly drawn to people who needed some kind of care. There is no division between spiritual, emotional or physical wounds and healing."

One-time caregiver Marilyn Britton said that her local hospice group offered support during her husband's illness and death, but her church fell short. Her experience compelled her to approach her pastor about founding an official grief and support ministry at her church in Marysville, Ohio.

"When someone is really ill, your friends and family make a difference," Britton said. "My church has loving hearts, but no one had given them the idea."

During the *Inside LifeWay* podcast, Leal said caregiving covers a "huge spectrum" of situations, and said she wanted the SomeOne Cares conference to address that diversity of needs. The conference's topics, therefore, ranged from beginning care team ministries to creating opportunities for elderly members of the congregation to serve.

The caregiver ministry section conference ended with a special concert by Scott Krippayne, co-writer of the winning song in the 2007 "American Idol" song contest. Many of the caregiver ministry conference attendees, however, stayed for the remainder of the weekend and took part in "Learning to Ask, Thankful to Receive: A Conference for Christian Caregivers."

A season of need

The caregivers arrived Friday afternoon and joined the caregiver ministry attendees for a general session with Robertson McQuilkin, author, speaker and longtime caregiver for his late wife.

Throughout the 16 years he spent caring for his wife, Muriel, McQuilkin, former president of Columbia International University in Columbia, S.C., said he never felt the need to ask, "Why?"

"If God took away adversity from everyone who trusted Jesus, the whole world would be Christians," McQuilkin said. "But what kind of Christians would they be?

"If you're in God's place, doing what God has for you, caring for that loved one, He looks on it and He says, 'That's good, that's real good. I like it.'"

McQuilkin added that while he didn't need to ask "Why," other caregivers might. He has learned that in caregiving everyone's circumstances are different.

Leal was one of the people who did ask, "Why?"

"It's important that people understand it's OK to say, 'I hate my life right now' and ask 'God, why is this happening to me?'" Leal said, admitting that she experienced these dejected moments while caring for her husband. "It's not OK to stay that way. I chose to take my lemons and make lemonade."

For Leal, the lemonade she chose to make now comes in the form of SomeOne Cares Christian Caregiving.

"It [the conference title] says 'SomeOne Cares,'" said Bob Willis, keynote speaker and sculptor. "Well, we know Who that someone is." ■

Remember the children in the midst of caregiving

by Brooklyn Noel

We recommend

- *Complete Guide to Caring for Aging Loved Ones* by Robert Riekse and Henry Holstege
 - *Compassionate Caregiving: Practical Help and Spiritual Encouragement for Caregivers* by Lois Knutson
 - *The Art of Caregiving* by Michael Barry
- These and other resources are available through customer service at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772 and from LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123.

When Suzanne Toth's husband was diagnosed with ocular melanoma, they had two young sons. When their father died two-and-a-half years ago, the both boys were under 10 years old.

Toth not only cared for her husband through his illness, she also walked their sons through the experience. For her, honesty was the best policy.

"When you're open and honest with your kids, to their age level, about what's happening, they're better able to accept it," Toth said.

SomeOne Cares conference speaker Staci Ruth Stoelting taught breakout sessions focused on helping children cope with caregiving or grief in the family.

"It's incredibly important that we reach out to children who are dealing with the chronic illness of someone they love," Stoelting said. "If you influence one child,

you influence the world for Christ."

She offered some tips for ensuring that children aren't left behind during a season of caregiving:

- Reach out. Don't forget to say "I love you" or neglect to hug your child.
- Listen hard. Ask open-ended questions that require more than a yes or no answer.
- Remember to laugh. Try age-appropriate movies or a joke box.
- Avoid transforming your child into a counselor by unloading your emotional baggage on him or her.
- Ask someone close to objectively observe your child and assess what kind of impact the situation may be having.
- Maintain normalcy when possible. When accommodating the sick loved one's care, try to minimize changes to your child's life and schedule. ■

Ask for help



Carmen Leal

Carmen Leal, founder of SomeOne Cares Christian Caregiving, often stresses to caregivers that they cannot be afraid or ashamed to ask for the help they need.

"Caregiving is a foreign country," Leal said during a breakout session at the SomeOne Cares Conference. "You are going to have to ask for help. You're going to have to ask for directions."

Current and former caregivers offered the following thoughts they believe church families should know about caregivers and caregiving ministry:

"I wanted to know they [church members] were really praying for me, my husband and my family – praying that we would have the strength to get through this." – Marilyn Britton, conference attendee and late husband's caregiver

"Caregivers need support. They need people who say, 'It's OK to laugh. It's OK to cry.'" – Bob Willis, hospice chaplain, conference keynote speaker and retired Southern Baptist pastor

"I want the church to understand the importance of doing this [ministering to caregivers] in an organized way." – Dick Peterson, conference attendee and wife's current caregiver

Women's ministry leaders learn how to develop and expand their ministries

More than 800 local church women's ministry leaders attending the Women's Ministry National Leadership Forum Nov. 13-15 at LifeWay left ready to go back to their churches to reach women who are hurting, hungry and even those who are doing just fine.

Forum participants heard from some of the country's top women's ministry practitioners and Bible study teachers such as Kay Arthur, Priscilla Shirer, Shaunti Feldhahn and Rhonda Kelley.

Jennifer Hamner, director of women's ministry at First Baptist Church, Hot Springs, Ark., brought eight women from her church to get new ideas.

"Already, after the first day, we had new excitement and so many new ideas," she said. "I know what we have learned will help us connect with not only the women in our church, but also the women in Hot Springs."

The next Women's Ministry National Leadership Forum will be Nov. 11-13 at LifeWay. For more information, go to Facts & Trends Online. ■



Above: Women join Travis Cottrell during a time of praise and worship.

Left: A panel discusses ministry to younger women.

Facts & Trends Online

For a slideshow on the forum and a more detailed story, go to Facts & Trends Online.

10 excuses' to start new classes

by David Francis



David Francis is LifeWay's director of Sunday school. Contact him at sundayschool@lifeway.com.

Need an excuse to start a new Sunday school? How about reaching 10 groups of people that maybe aren't being reached right now?

1. A life stage class

How about a class for nearlyweds & newlyweds? Parents of preschoolers? Parents of children? Parents of teens? Empty nesters?

LifeWay's *Bible Studies for Life* (*BSFL*) series includes resources aimed specifically at such classes: *LifeMatters* for young adults; *Life Truths* for parents; and *Life Values* for empty nesters. LifeWay magazines *BabyLife*, *ParentLife* and *Living with Teenagers* are perfect supplements for parent-aged classes too.

2. A "couples without kids" class

One of the responses we have received about the life-stage approach with the *BSFL* series is that median aged adults who don't have children feel left out of classes designated for parents or empty nesters. That's a good excuse to start a new class specifically for such folks. They could even study the same scripture passages as other classes using *BSFL* by using *Life Lessons* or *Life Words*. Both of these editions are designed for adults of all ages and life stages.

3. A KJV class

Some people have a strong preference for the King James Version of the Bible. The *Life Words* title mentioned above uses the KJV exclusively. It's a complete family of resources including learner guides, leader guides, leader packs and even audio CDs.

4. A "through the Bible" class

LifeWay's *Explore the Bible* series is perfect for such a class, covering all 66 books of the Bible from fall 2007 through summer 2015. The series balances studies from the Old and New Testaments and provides a balanced approach to the various types of biblical literature in each two-year "mini-cycle."

5. An affinity group class

Such classes might include such groups as teachers, medical professionals, peace officers, bikers ... use your imagination! Just about any curriculum choice would work.

6. A "no teacher" class

What? How would you do that? By using a curriculum resource like LifeWay's *MasterWork*. This Bible study series, based on books by popular Christian authors, includes only one book for both

learners and leaders. Class members can take turns leading using the discussion-based leadership plan found at the end of each weekly lesson. In such a class, it would be wise to designate one person as the class “shepherd,” guiding the study plan and helping leaders as necessary.

7. A college class

Recently while talking with a group of pastors in Princeton, Ky., one pastor shared that he had started a college class. In a small town. In a church with an attendance of about 70. I said, in jest, “You can’t start a college class in that kind of setting.” But he did! And he has 10 to 12 young adults attending each week. LifeWay’s *Collegiate* Bible study materials are perfect for starting such a class.

8. A special needs class

Churches are rediscovering the joy of serving the needs of adults and children with physical and developmental challenges. For many years, LifeWay has published *Access*, a Bible study resource for teaching adults with special needs. Now we also publish a resource for children with special needs in grades 1 through 6, *Special Buddies*. Leaders and parents also benefit from the LifeWay magazine, *SET (Special Education Today)*. Beginning this year, LifeWay’s VBS materials include materials for kids with special needs: *Outrigger Island: Special Friends*. One of the big surprises reported by churches who begin such a ministry is how many people are willing to help. They may not want to teach a big class, but they are eager to help out in a special needs setting.

9. A “transition year” class

Kindergarten and sixth grade are two of the toughest years for kids to navigate. Even churches struggle with where to place these students. In some churches kindergarten is in the preschool

division; in others it is in the children’s division. In some churches, especially in communities where the schools operate middle schools, sixth graders are in the youth division and often grouped with 7th and 8th graders. In other churches they are in the children’s division, and often grouped with 4th and/or 5th graders. What to do? Start a class just for them. LifeWay has curriculum choices specifically for both of these transition years: *Bible Teaching for Kids: Kindergarten* and *Everything You Need to Know to Be a Teenager*.

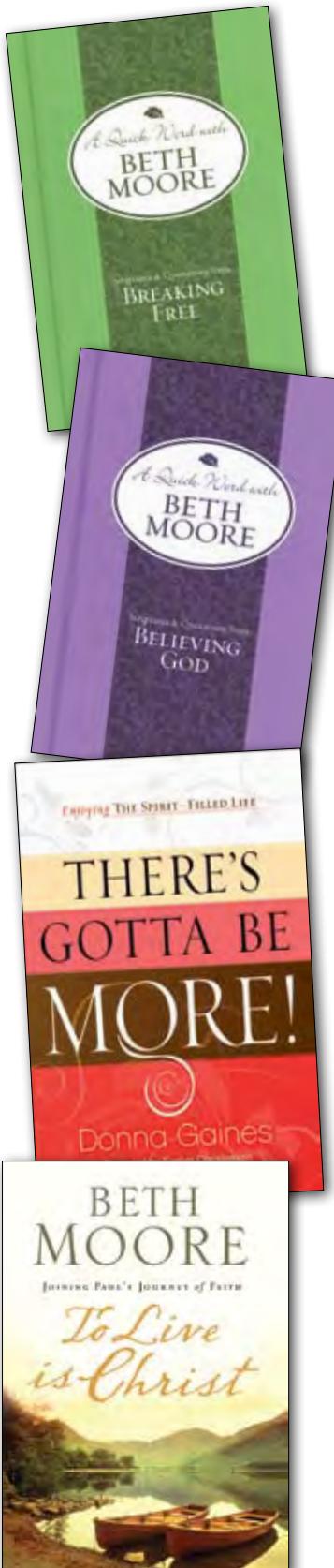
10. An off-campus, not-on-Sunday class

You mean you can have a Sunday school class that doesn’t meet on Sunday? Of course you can! Funny thing is, the term Sunday school has such a strong “brand identity,” you can even call it a Sunday school class. Clyde Kakiuchi, Sunday school director at the Hawaii-Pacific Baptist Convention, knows a pastor in Saipan who holds Bible study classes every night for different groups of factory workers after they end their nighttime shifts. Bruce Raley, who leads LifeWay’s work with Christian educators, knows about a nurse who started a class that met at 10p.m. each Saturday night, an hour before the 11-7 shift. Thirty people participated!

Maybe you can think of some more “excuses” for starting new classes. Would you share your idea? Email it to me at sundayschool@lifeway.com. ■

Resources

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Broadman & Holman

■ *A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations from Breaking Free* by Beth Moore

A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations from Breaking Free offers a unique reading experience that will appeal to every type of Beth Moore fan. Now the essence of her classic best seller about overcoming spiritual strongholds is encapsulated into a beautiful 192-page pocket book of memorable author quotes and Scripture-based inspirations. This richly designed cloth hardcover volume makes it exceptionally easy to re-experience Moore's teaching time and again in an affordable, relatable format. Releases March 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-3279-5. Hardcover. \$9.99

■ *To Live Is Christ: Joining Paul's Journey of Faith* by Beth Moore

In *To Live Is Christ*, best-selling author Beth Moore travels on a spiritual odyssey through the life of one of Christianity's most fervent journeymen, the apostle Paul, tracing his story from childhood to martyrdom.

Proclaiming his faith as a benchmark in New Testament Scripture, Moore writes, "I have accepted many of Paul's words as a personal challenge. 'I want to know Christ' has become my plea. 'To live is Christ and to die is gain' has become my hope. And to borrow his words once more, 'Not that I have already obtained all this ... but I press on.'" Paul's undying passion for Christ continues to inspire and challenge those with a spiritual hunger for the things of God. Readers will be greatly refreshed by the obvious mercy of God that causes those who have failed him to repent and serve him wholeheartedly and effectively. Releases March 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-4561-7. Hardcover. \$19.99

■ *A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations from Believing God*

by Beth Moore

A Quick Word with Beth Moore: Scriptures and Quotations from Believing God offers a unique reading experience that will appeal to every type of Beth Moore fan. Now the essence of her 2004 faith-fortifying best seller is encapsulated into a 192-page pocket book of memorable author quotes and Scripture-based inspirations. This richly designed cloth hardcover volume makes it exceptionally easy to re-experience Moore's teaching time and again – or pass it along to others not yet familiar with *Believing God*. Releases March 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-3278-7. Hardcover. \$9.99

■ *There's Gotta Be More! Enjoying the Spirit-Filled Life*

by Donna Gaines, foreword by Evelyn Christenson

In this material age of more, more, more, it seems more women are actually feeling less fulfilled than ever before. Basing their sense of worth upon fleeting fashion and society magazine headlines, many believe they will never be more than second rate. In her first book about what constitutes a truly abundant life, Bible study leader Donna Gaines writes, "I want to tell you ladies, that is a lie straight out of the pit of hell. There is a way to find the satisfaction we are all seeking, and we find it in relationship with Jesus Christ." Step by step, Gaines uses Scripture and personal stories to remind women they were created for more than this world offers, saved for more than what the world values, and destined for more in their Christianity, marriage, motherhood and friendships. Releases April 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-4440-8. Paperback. \$12.99

■ *The Duchess and the Dragon*

by Jamie Carie

Rising romance novelist Jamie Carie's second book, *The Duchess and the Dragon*, tells the epic story of two unlikely soul mates who live worlds apart but soon meet and turn each other's worlds upside down. Drake Weston, duke of Northumberland, is accustomed to a life of royalty until a tragic mistake, followed by murderous rage, results in his darkening character and sudden flight from England. With a hoard of money on which to survive, Weston hops a ship of indentured servants to America, but is duly robbed and taken ill by the merciless sea voyage. In Pennsylvania, Serena Winter is a humble, devoted Quaker on a mission of mercy, ready to tend the sick people aboard the ship that has just arrived from England. Taken by Weston's air of dark mystery after he begins to serve as an apprentice to her silversmith father, Serena falls in love, but is excommunicated by her fellow believers when she accepts a non-Quaker's marriage proposal. Not knowing Weston's history, Serena later is shocked to discover her new status as a duchess. What follows are hard truths, softening hearts, romance triangles, webs of deceit, and ultimately, the power of grace, love and passion.

Releases April 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-4535-8. Paperback. \$14.99

■ *Crimson Cross Series: Pedro de Torreros and the Voyage of Destiny*

by Peter Marshall and David Manuel with Anna Fishel

The *Crimson Cross Series* is inspired by a mysterious silver and ruby cross, a precious relic of the Holy Land, originally given to Christopher Columbus before his epic voyage of discovery. In each volume the cross is passed on to a young hero or heroine who has proven to be worthy of it. As they play a crucial role in dramatic moments of America's history, each of

the characters face difficult choices and challenges. In this volume, we meet Pedro de Torreros, who for most of his 15 years, has dreamed of going to sea. In a twist of fate at the Spanish monastery where he has lived since he was orphaned, this dream comes true. Soon, Pedro finds himself aboard the Santa Maria under the command of Columbus and headed across unexplored oceans toward the fabled Spice Islands of the Indies. Facing danger and exhilaration with every wave, Pedro dares to discover his destiny. Releases March 1. ISBN: 0-8054-4396-7. Paperback. \$9.99

■ *When God Prayed*

by Don Wilton

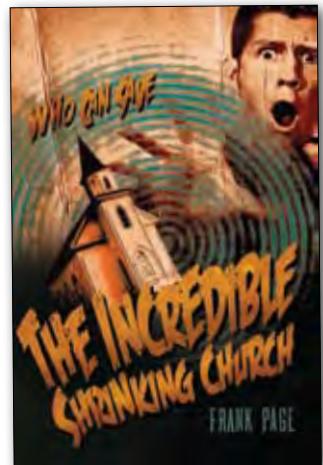
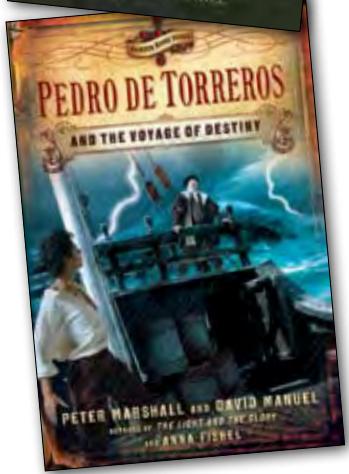
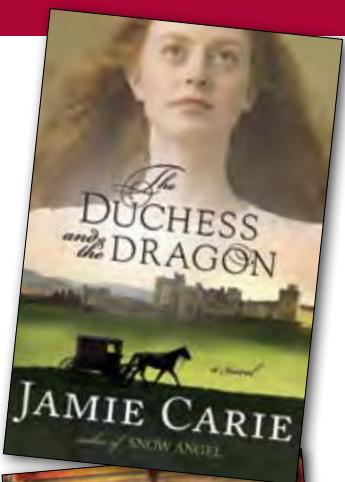
When God Prayed is based on a popular seminar that pastor and longtime Billy Graham associate Don Wilton first gave at The Cove, Graham's training center. It looks with intense depth at the words of Jesus in John 17 as He prayed for Himself, His disciples, and for all believers when He knew that death on the cross was near. The longest prayer spoken by Jesus in the Gospels reveals so much about God's heart for His people, the utter sacrifice and tension of the crucifixion, and the ways in which God continues His work in us today. Wilton writes, "I would pray that this book would simply stir your soul and move your heart to a fresh realization of the wonderful work of our Lord and Savior as he came in obedience to the Father unto death. I pray you will discover just how much we have not discovered and just how far reaching the mind of Christ really is. I pray we will all be driven to our knees in gratitude to God." Releases March 1.

ISBN: 0-8054-4554-4. Paperback. \$16.99

■ *The Incredible Shrinking Church*

by Frank Page with John Perry

Who can save the incredible shrinking church? Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president Frank Page enters the



Resources

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booming church growth book market from a fresh angle, writing from his own experience in leadership positions at several houses of worship that soon experienced a turnaround from what had looked like a path of irreversible decline. Page's insights are refreshingly simple. He urges pastors to address their shrinking churches with a spirit of faith rather than fear, instructing them to put on the whole armor of God to slay whatever giants have threatened attendance numbers, ministry impact and the worship experience. In step with those initiatives are practical reminders to embrace the inevitability of change in various church programs, build the right team of leaders, learn from other turnaround churches, and reach out from comfort zones into the surrounding community. Releases March 1. ISBN: 0-8054-4661-3. Paperback. \$14.99

LifeWay Church Resources

■ *Can We Talk? Soul-stirring Conversations with God*

by Priscilla Shirer

This new resource invites women to open the doors wider when communicating with God by learning how to listen for God's voice through prayer and knowing God's purpose for their lives through the study of Scripture. Author and Bible teacher Priscilla Shirer's desire is to see women not only know the uncompromising truths of Scripture intellectually, but to experience those truths practically by the power of the Holy Spirit. Member book includes an introduction, followed by six weeks of study, five days a week. The first day of each week opens with a prayer starter, followed by a parable-style message that focuses on topics such as the power of words, complacency, hidden idols or living a God-fashioned life. The four remaining days guide the reader to dig deeply into the Scripture, using Shirer's own four-part method: Pore and Paraphrase; Pull

Out; Pose; and Plan and Pin. At the end of each week, women are invited to summarize their thoughts in a journaling exercise. The introductory video segment explains how to get the most from this four-point Bible study method. Regular session messages are about 10-15 minutes each, featuring Shirer sharing poignant stories in her warm, conversational tone. Each session also may be used as a stand alone for women who are interested in connecting with others seeking guidance on common issues. Releases in April. Leader kit, LifeWay product #0-0512-5845, \$149.95; Member book, LifeWay product #0-0514-6922, \$10.95

■ *LXVI: Volume 8, Psalms and Daniel*

An in-depth Bible study of the books of Psalms and Daniel, this new volume challenges students to take Bible study to the next level. This open-group Bible study series may be used with small groups, in master teaching settings, in an open-group format or a discipleship group. It is completely contained on a CD-ROM that includes three different teaching plans, commentary, handouts, multi-media presentations, and other teaching options. All LXVI study and preparation can be done conveniently at the computer. Discussion boards allow leaders to discuss passages and teaching ideas with other youth leaders. (13 sessions) Releases in March.

LifeWay product #0-0130-3892, \$59.95

■ *Feast*

by Derek Leman

Author and Rabbi Derek Leman debuts his first study for *Threads* by LifeWay that focuses on the major feasts of the Jewish calendar and the celebratory design of God's plan. Integrating Jewish and Christian perspectives, this study addresses the present-day church culture that is driven by work and less on celebration. Participants prepare in advance by answering discussion questions

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LifeWay | Kids

Resources for you from LifeWay

that drive the sessions. At the end of each session, a section will point participants to articles, blogs and Websites to help them move beyond the scope of the session. A leader kit includes rich sources of multimedia, such as video shorts; sharable audio files; promotional tools; biblical, cultural and historical commentary. These tools are designed to enhance the flexible format of the study. (6 sessions) Releases in March.

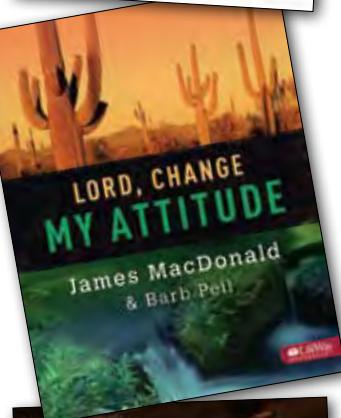
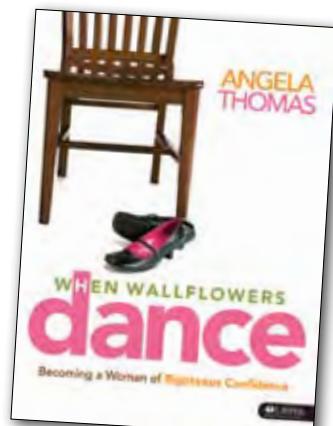
Member book, LifeWay product #0-0513-7100, \$7.95; Leader kit, LifeWay product #0-0503-5537, \$69.95

■ *When Wallflowers Dance*

by Angela Thomas

This study about growing up in the faith is adapted from the popular trade book of the same title. Video messages correspond to the six-week member book study and enhance the daily personal study and reflection. Angela Thomas' conversational, sharing style of writing and speaking draws women to see Bible truths in a new light and makes them real and applicable to their own lives. Drawing from her own life lessons that include both disappointments and triumphs, she uses dancing as a metaphor for spiritual maturity – a way to live life to the fullest. The leader kit contains a DVD with session messages and a member book with leader helps. The member book includes daily personal study. Thomas' desire is that "un-women, living un-lives," will truly begin to fully engage in life and gain hope as they become energized through the gifts God has given them, first through salvation and then as they learn how to live out faith day by day. The resource includes instructions for use in weekend retreat or weekly study settings. (7 sessions) Releases in March.

Leader kit, LifeWay product #0-0509-4538, \$149.95; Member book, LifeWay product #0-0513-9422, \$10.95



■ *Lord, Change My Attitude*

by James MacDonald

What does God think about attitudes? This study offers some strong opinions on the subject using examples from the Israelites' journey out of Egypt to how attitudes can affect whether someone stays in the wilderness or enjoys the blessings of the Promised Land. There is hope for the attitudinally challenged, however. The leader kit contains 11 video sessions on five DVDs, a member book, and the trade book on which the study is based. An interactive member book is a powerful combination of in-depth Bible study and real life application. It includes information from the trade book, plus case studies, prayers, and examples of good and bad attitudes from both Testaments and how those apply to today's world. (11 sessions) Releases in April.

Leader kit, LifeWay product #0-0509-7385, \$149.95; Member book, LifeWay product #0-0503-5039, \$14.95

■ *Growing Disciples: Witness to the World*

Andrew met Jesus and then instinctively introduced his brother to Him. Though we know little more about Andrew, his brother, Peter, became a great leader of the early church and authored two New Testament books. In the New Testament church, the Gospel always moved outward. It began in Jerusalem, then spread to Judea, on to Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth. It is based on the classic book *Concentric Circles of Concern* by W. Oscar Thompson and focuses on lifestyle evangelism by asking participants to identify the importance of their relationships. Participants are challenged to recognize their ever growing concentric circle and, moving outward, share their faith with immediate family, relatives, friends, neighbors, acquaintances and even strangers. Leader helps are included

in the workbook format study. (6 sessions)
 Released in February.

LifeWay product #0-0508-5767, \$9.95

■ **Tough Sayings of Jesus 2**

by Michael Kelley

You can't be slaves to both God and money. Ever wrestled with what this really means? Imagine, then, how many young adults – who, by definition, are in a season of many transitions – must struggle with these words. In this follow-up study, young adults encounter this undomesticated Jesus in four more prickly situations. Participants tackle shrewdness, anger, grief and grace in situations with Jesus. The leader kit includes one copy of the four-session member book; one DVD containing six video segments; an enhanced CD containing music that connects thematically to the study; sharable audio files to send to group members as they go through the study in their personal devotional time; an insightful leader guide for each session; biblical commentary; a customizable poster to invite people to the study and more. Like all *Threads* studies, additional nuggets are available free of charge for participants and leaders at ThreadsMedia.com to add value to your meaningful group experience. (4 sessions)

Released in February.

Leader kit, LifeWay product #0-0503-5535, \$69.95; Member book, LifeWay product #0-0513-6924, \$7.95

LifeWay Worship

■ **God Bless America Again**

created by Mike Harland, arranged and orchestrated by Richard Kingsmore, narrations by Mike Harland

SATB/Medium/53 minutes

God Bless America Again is a call out to God from His people. It's an opportunity for churches and communities to gather for worship and prayer. Mike Harland, creator of *America, We Must Not Forget*, felt this burden for prayer and has expressed

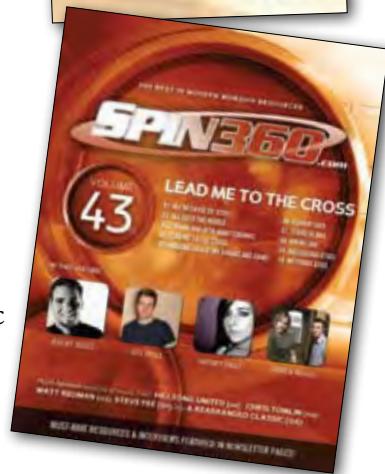
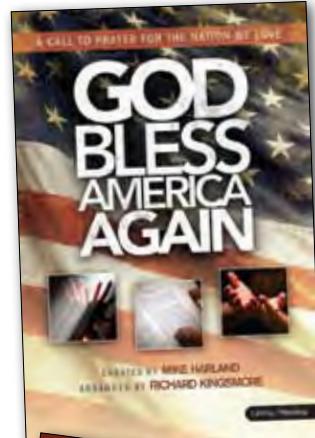
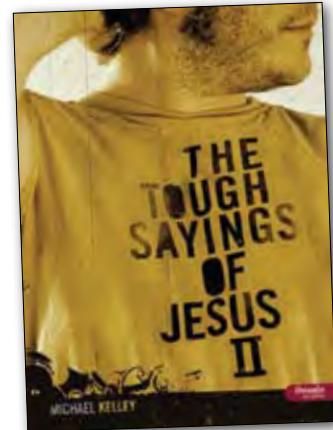
it beautifully in this musical filled with a stirring mix of original songs, new arrangements of worship anthems and optional narration that invites people from every background to fall on their knees before God. Pullouts are usable for worship any time of the year, and a step-by-step rehearsal guide and Bible study by Harland are available at www.lifeway.com/worship. Titles include "Pray for America" (prologue), "God of the Nations," "The Cost of Freedom" (underscore), "God Bless America Again" with "My Country 'Tis of Thee," "You Are God Alone," "If You Are God," "Spirit of the Living God" (underscore), and "Ancient Words," "The Lord's Prayer," "Shine on Us." The finale includes "Let Your Holy Rain Fall Down" and "God Bless America Again" (reprise).

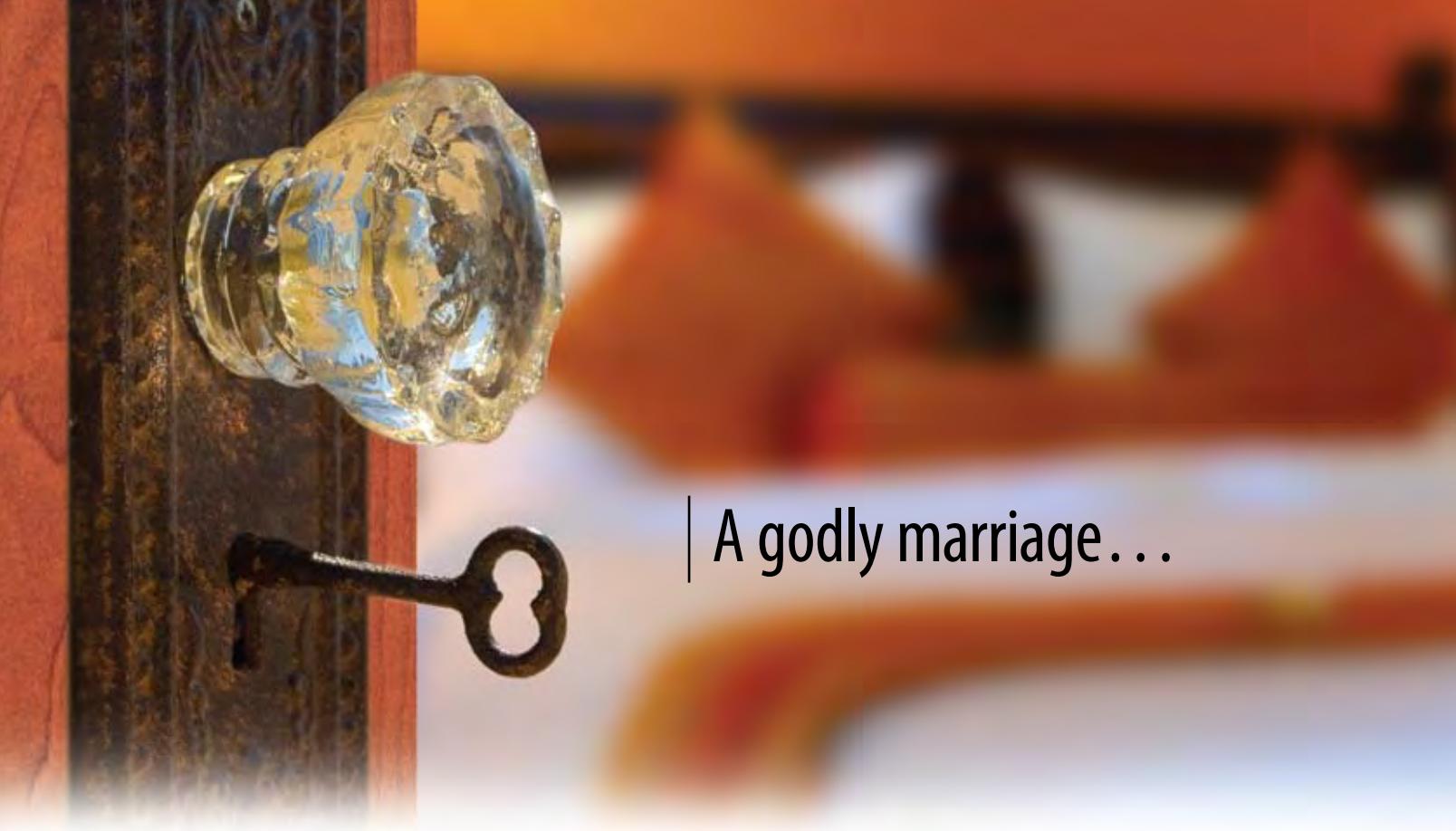
SATB choral book, Product #0-0510-2686, \$8.95; Listening CD, Product #0-0510-2212, \$16.98; Accompaniment CD (split track), Product #0-0510-2213, \$90; Rehearsal tracks, Product #0-0510-2218, \$60; CD-ROM orchestration (pdf), Product #0-0510-2214, \$350; Accompaniment DVD (split & click), Product #0-0510-2219, \$199; CD promo pak, Product #0-0510-2215, \$12

■ **SPIN 360, Vol. 43**

Developed with the worship leader and team in mind, *SPIN 360* provides the best, current worship songs, along with the tools needed to perform them – whether you have a complete worship band, a handful of skillful players or no musicians at all. With each volume of *SPIN 360* you receive a song book and a double CD. The song book contains lyrics, sheet music, chord charts and a newsletter filled with great information for musicians.

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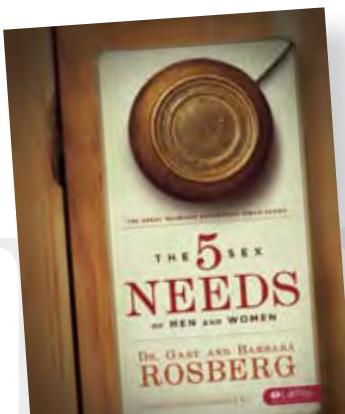


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LifeWay | Adults

Engle and Monk & Neagle, plus *SPIN 360* versions of music from Hillsong United, Chris Tomlin, Matt Redman and Steve Fee. Titles include "All Because of Jesus," "All Over the World," "Crown Him with Many Crowns," "Lead Me to the Cross," "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)," "O Great God," "Stand in Awe," "Overflow," "Hallelujah Jesus" and "No Other Gods." Back issues are also available. Call (800) 436-3869 or visit www.lifeway.com/worship for more information.

SPIN 360, Vol. 43, Product #0-0513-2808, \$34.95

Anthems

■ "Good Thing"

words and music by Rebecca J. Peck and Twila LaBar, arranged by Dave Williamson
 Highlight a soulful soloist in this up tempo song of praise from *Joy in the House*.
 SATB anthem w/solo, Product #0-0509-7728, \$1.50; CD anthem tracks, Product #0-0509-7740, \$24.95; CD-ROM orchestration (pdf), Product #0-0509-8608, \$59.95

■ "Because of Your Love"

words and music by Paul Baloche and Brenton Brown, arranged by Cliff Duren
 Engage your choir and orchestra with this

unique anthem from *You Changed My Name*. SATB anthem, Product #0-0509-7731, \$1.50; CD anthem tracks, Product #0-0509-7743, Product #9-7814-1585-9995, Product #6343-3700-0237, \$24.95; CD-ROM orchestration (pdf), Product #0-0509-8764, \$59.95

■ "Holy is Your Name"

words and music by Tim Sheppard, arranged by Keith Wilbanks

Here's a new song with simple message from veteran writer that is ideal for any time of worship.

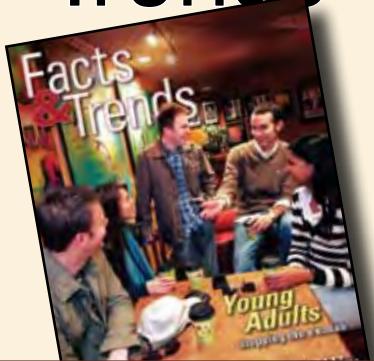
SATB anthem w/solo and optional praise team, Product #0-0509-7725, \$1.50; CD anthem tracks, Product #0-0509-7737, \$24.95; CD-ROM orchestration (pdf), Product #0-0509-8605, \$59.95

■ "Come, Worship the Lord"

words and music by Shannon J. Wexelberg, arranged by J. Daniel Smith

A poetic style and steady 6/8 beat invites all to feast in the Lord's presence.
 SATB anthem, Product #0-0509-7724, \$1.50; CD anthem tracks, Product #0-0509-7736, \$24.95; CD-ROM orchestration (pdf), Product #0-0509-7748, \$59.95

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