

Facts & Trends



VBS ***Outrigger Island***

***Waves of success in reaching
people for Christ***

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2008

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

 **LifeWay**
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Our format

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Our people

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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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- Deeper Still in Atlanta with Kay Arthur, Beth Moore and Priscilla Shirer
- LifeWay Research studies on pertinent SBC issues
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- New blogs offered through LifeWay.com



Cover photo:

Could there be a better way to get to VBS on Outrigger Island than in a real outrigger canoe?

Photo by Kent Harville.

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From my perspective

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

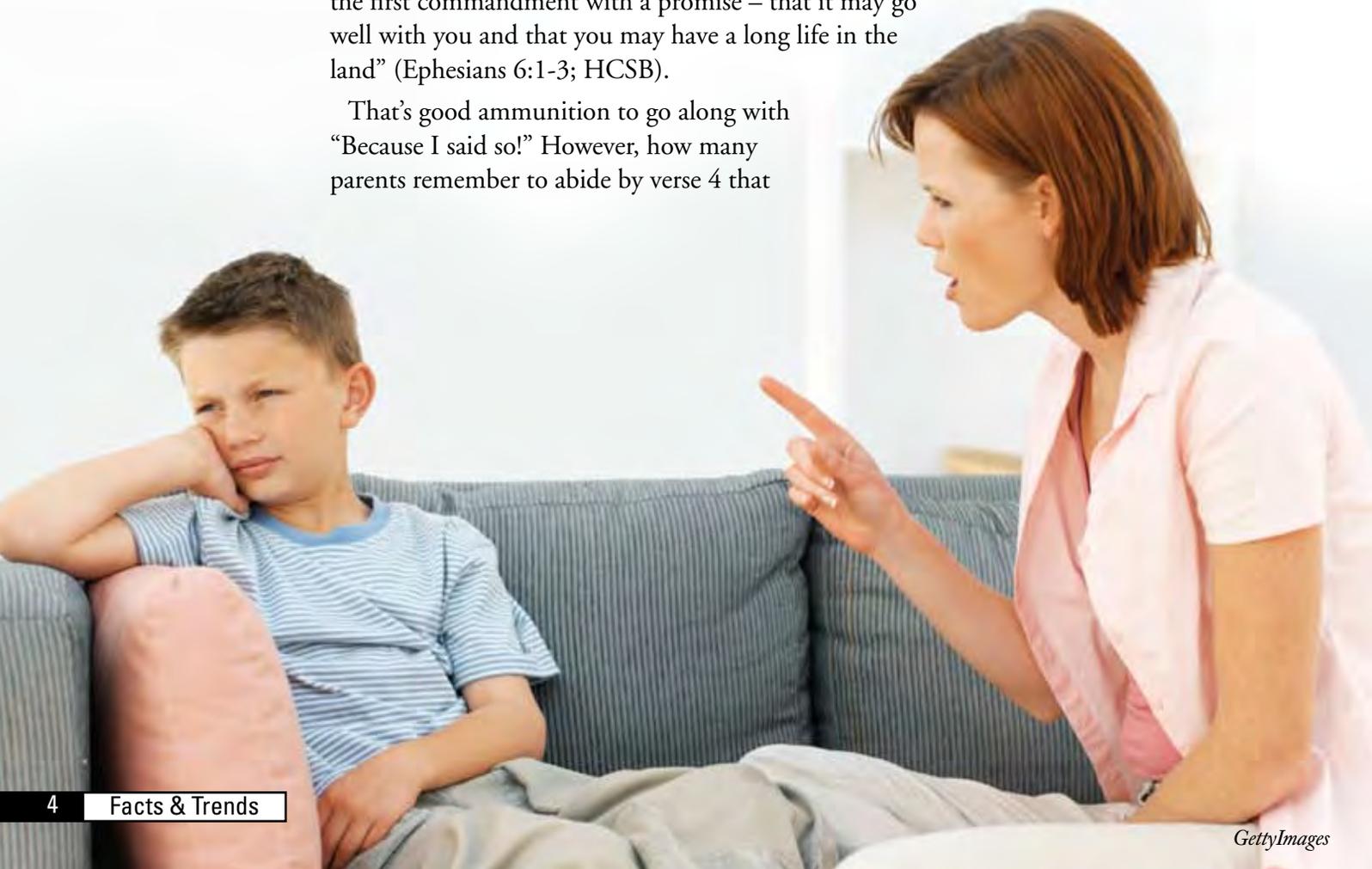
Loving, because He said so

My three sons are grown and starting families of their own. I know that in the not-so-distant future, by God's grace each one of my sons will be sitting with his wife talking about baby names for my grandchildren. I doubt any of them will pick "Thom." Who would want to give a child such an oddly-spelled name?

My boys often talk about their years growing up. These are usually enjoyable times of reflection, but sometimes I get embarrassed at the attitude and stance I chose to take in dealing with issues. If you're a parent, I'm sure you can relate to the feeling of being backed into a corner with no logical answer or explanation to the barrage of contradictory statements or challenging attitudes coming from your children – none of which are that serious in the first place. There's the rise in heart rate followed by the most profound statement a parent can utter: "Because I said so!"

Parents often familiarize themselves with key Scripture passages, such as "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. Honor your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land" (Ephesians 6:1-3; HCSB).

That's good ammunition to go along with "Because I said so!" However, how many parents remember to abide by verse 4 that



follows: “And fathers, don’t stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord”?

As I remember my own successes and failures as a parent, I often think how exasperated our heavenly Father must get with the attitudes exhibited by those called to be the bride of Christ. The church stands at a chasm that unfortunately is getting wider in many places. The gulf is that we are not relating to people without Christ in a manner that would compel them to trust in Christ. Too often the church is perceived as condescending, judgmental and self-righteous. We act like that parent who demands conformity and obedience “because I said so,” without looking deeper to the root of the problem, without ministering to the profound needs and pain.

In the following pages of *Facts & Trends* is research that reveals a part of the chasm. The course our culture is taking is toward greater acceptance of homosexuality. While the majority of evangelical believers understand that homosexuality is a sin, the American

“Too often the church is perceived as condescending, judgmental and self-righteous. We act like that parent who demands conformity and obedience ‘because I said so ...’”

— Thom S. Rainer

public is evenly split on the issue, and many would not come to a church that preached homosexuality as a sin.

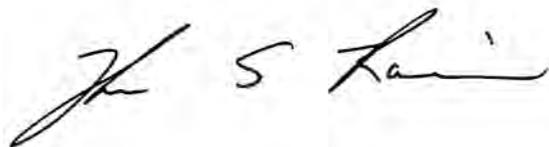
Yes, there are absolutes. We must ask ourselves, however, what our response should be. Will we defiantly stamp our foot and angrily proclaim judgment “because God said so”? Or will we learn to love as Christ loves us, giving ourselves sacrificially to those in need without a

Savior? The church must learn that redemptive love is much more effective than statements of judgment, which in turn produces disdain from the unbeliever. In other words, the “training and instruction of the Lord” will come much easier without provocation to anger.

I know that when my boys become fathers they will commit to parent their children in a Christlike manner. I hope the positive lessons – and even the admonitions – they received from me will strengthen them in the way they love their own children. I know that is what God desires.

“Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children” (Ephesians 5:1).

In His service,



We recommend

- *Parenting from Your Strengths* by Rodney Cox and Eric Tooker
- *The Same Sex Controversy* by Jeffery Niell and James White

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.

Attitudes about homosexuality pose barrier to ministry

by Mark Kelly

In a society deeply divided over whether homosexual behavior is sinful, Southern Baptist churches face tremendous challenges in helping people experience the life-changing power of God's love – challenges for which most congregations simply are not prepared.

A recent study conducted by LifeWay Research revealed that 91 percent of young adults view the church as “anti-homosexual” and Americans in general are split almost evenly over whether homosexual behavior is sinful. Those opinions and perceptions pose a significant obstacle to connecting those people with the ministry of a Bible-believing church, said Bob Stith, the Southern Baptist Convention's national strategist for gender issues, during the SBC's annual convention in Indianapolis.

Calling homosexuality a defining issue for the church in the 21st century, Stith challenged churches to be proactive and redemptive in reaching out to people who struggle with unwanted same-sex attractions.

“This issue isn't going away,” said Stith, who began his work with the convention's Ministry to Homosexuals Task Force in June 2007 after 37 years as pastor of Carroll Baptist Church in Southlake, Texas. “People are dying for a lack of knowledge. We have to do better.”

Stith noted that only 26 percent of SBC pastors – and only 9 percent of church staff and laity – said they had received training to reach out to homosexuals with the love of Christ. When the church doesn't know how to reach out to homosexuals – and unchurched people see the church as anti-homosexual – there is little chance some lost souls will ever come to Christ.

“We must become known as a people of redemption, as people who hold out hope,” Stith said. “We need to communicate to people how they can come alongside those who are struggling,”



“People are dying for a lack of knowledge. We have to do better.”

— Bob Stith, SBC national strategist for gender issues

he said. Otherwise, “our silence will be a death sentence to many people.”

The need for churches to extend redemptive love to people struggling with homosexuality is compounded by the confusion in American society – even in churches – about what God’s Word says about homosexual behavior, said LifeWay Research Director Ed Stetzer.

A telephone survey of 1,201 American adults, conducted by LifeWay Research in April 2008, revealed that 48 percent of all Americans believe homosexual behavior is sinful, while 45 percent believe it is not sinful, almost a statistical tie when considering the margin of error.

The percentage believing such behavior is not sinful rose slightly to 49 percent when the respondent indicated he or she knows someone with same-sex attraction. Even among people who have a religious affiliation, the percentages were surprisingly high: 55 percent of Catholics and 31 percent of Protestants said they do not believe homosexual behavior is sinful. That number dropped to 17 percent among born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants.

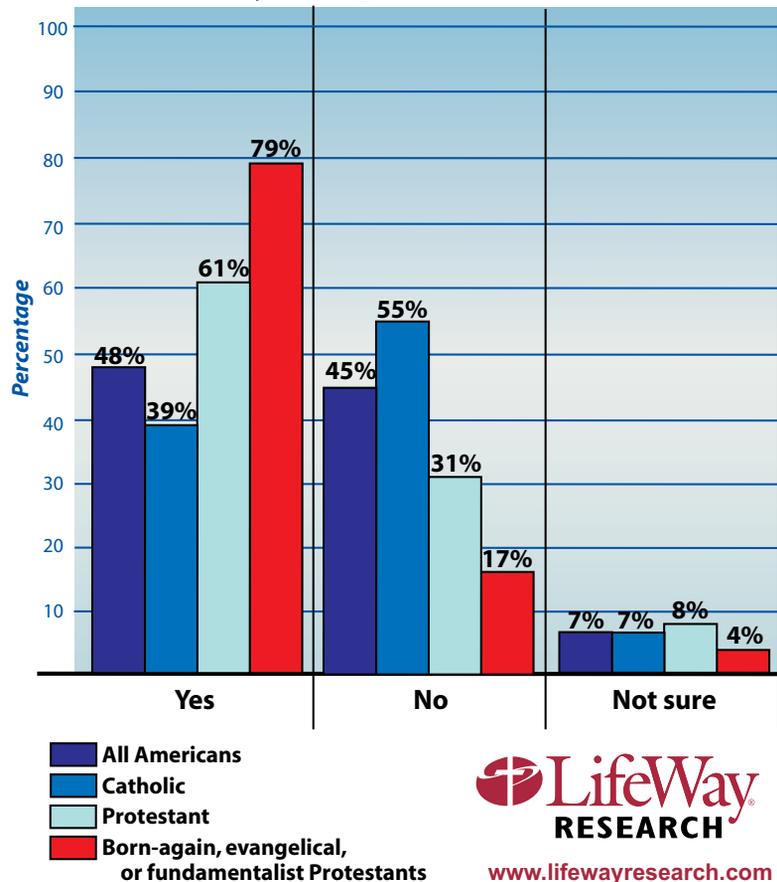
On the other hand, 39 percent of Catholics, 61 percent of Protestants and 79 percent of born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants said they do believe homosexual behavior is sinful. Among the sample of all Americans, 48 percent said they believe homosexual behavior is a sin.

Those statistics should give church leaders pause and lead them to strike an important but delicate balance between demonstrating Christ’s love for all people while still presenting a biblical teaching about homosexual behavior, Stetzer said.

“It’s surprising to see how many Catholics disagree with the clear teaching of their church or, for that matter, the percentage of Protestants who consider themselves born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist, who do not believe homosexuality is a sin,” Stetzer said. “Seventeen percent in that latter category may seem low compared to the others, but considering these people consider

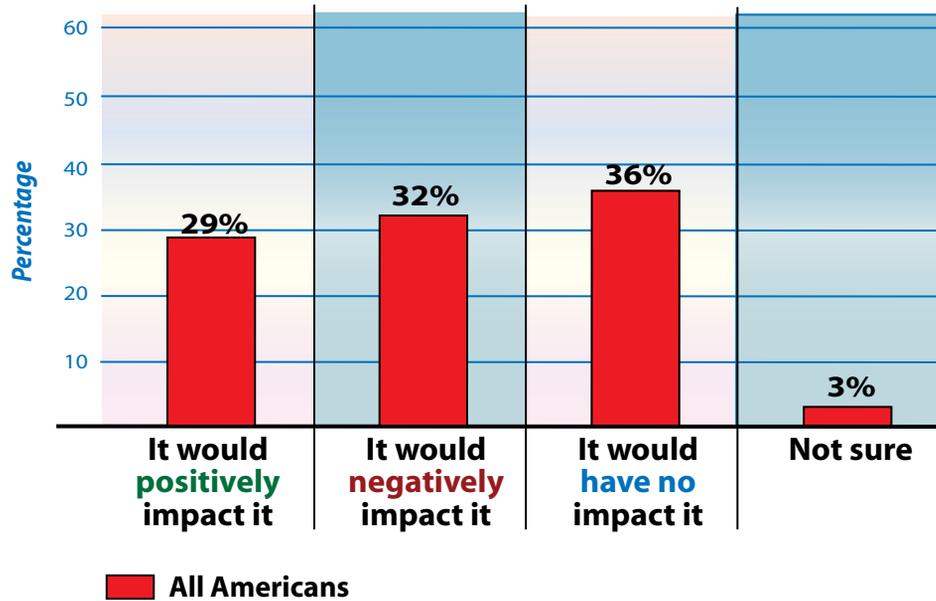
Do you believe homosexual behavior is a sin?

Beliefs by religious affiliation



If you were considering visiting or joining a church, would knowing that church taught that homosexual behavior was sinful impact your decision?

Among all Americans



themselves born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist, it reminds us of the need for clear biblical teaching on the issue in our community.”

Twenty-nine percent of Americans said their decision to visit or join a church would be positively affected if that congregation taught homosexual behavior is a sin. Among Catholics, that number dropped to 23 percent. Thirty-eight percent of Protestants and 50 percent of born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants said they would be more likely to visit or join a church if it taught homosexual behavior is sinful.

Thirty-two percent of Americans – almost one in three – said their decision to visit or join a church would be negatively affected if that congregation taught homosexual behavior is sinful. Among Catholics and Protestants, that number is 27 percent. It dropped further to 21 percent among born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants. Among those who never attend any place of worship, 49 percent said this teaching would negatively

affect their decision to visit or join a church.

The trajectory in Western culture is toward greater acceptance of homosexuality, Stetzer noted, but evangelical Christians cannot base their convictions about homosexuality on what polls say or the values portrayed in the media.

“We did not develop our views of sexuality because we flipped a coin or took a poll,” he said. “The teaching of Scripture is clear that monogamous, heterosexual marriage is God’s best for people, culture and society.”

Stetzer also pointed to the challenge in the data. “Almost a third of Americans and almost half of those who do not attend a place of worship – the people we are trying to reach – say our view of sexual morality would negatively impact their decision to visit our churches,” Stetzer said. “It’s clear we have a challenging but essential task. We need to strive to show the love of Christ, while upholding the standard of Scripture, to those who struggle with same-sex attraction.”

The survey also asked participants which factors they thought contributed to same-sex attraction and gave them six options: choice, determined at birth (inevitable), influenced at birth (but not inevitable), childhood abuse, lack of bonding with parent and lack of same-sex parent role modeling.

Across all categories of Americans – religious or not – the largest percentages selected “choice” as a contributing factor. Among the sample of all Americans, 51 percent selected choice. Fifty-three percent of Catholics and Protestants and 60 percent of born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants picked that option.

Among the sample of all Americans, 38 percent said same-sex attraction was determined at birth, while 47 percent of Catholics, 33 percent of Protestants and 25 percent of born-again, evangelical or fundamentalist Protestants selected that option. About one-quarter of adult Americans indicated that childhood abuse, lack of same-sex parent role modeling, lack of bonding with parent and influence at birth were contributing factors to same-sex attraction.

According to the survey, 66 percent of Americans are personally acquainted with someone who is attracted to people of the same sex. That percentage held among Protestants and 68 percent of Catholics answered in the affirmative.

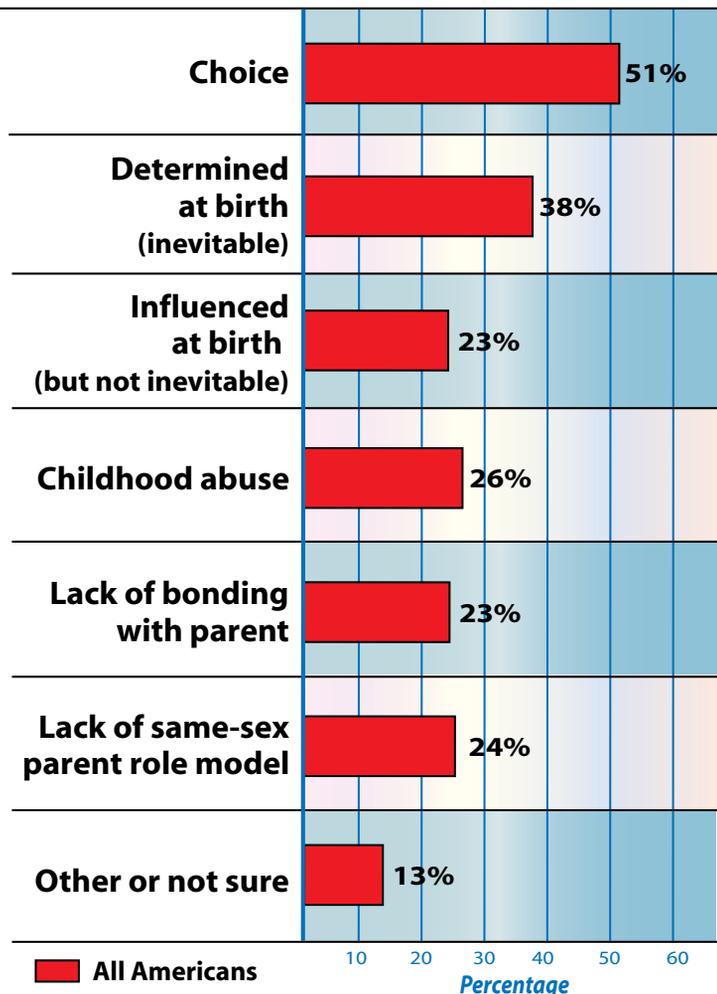
The size of the survey sample provided a 95 percent confidence that the sampling error did not exceed 2.9 percent for questions asked of the entire sample. ■

Online

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link to information about equipping your congregation to minister to homosexuals. In addition, you will find more detailed breakdowns of the data, responses to questions not included in this report and a PowerPoint presentation.

What factors do you believe contribute to same-sex attraction?

Among all Americans



Hawaiian kids claim Outrigger Island as their own

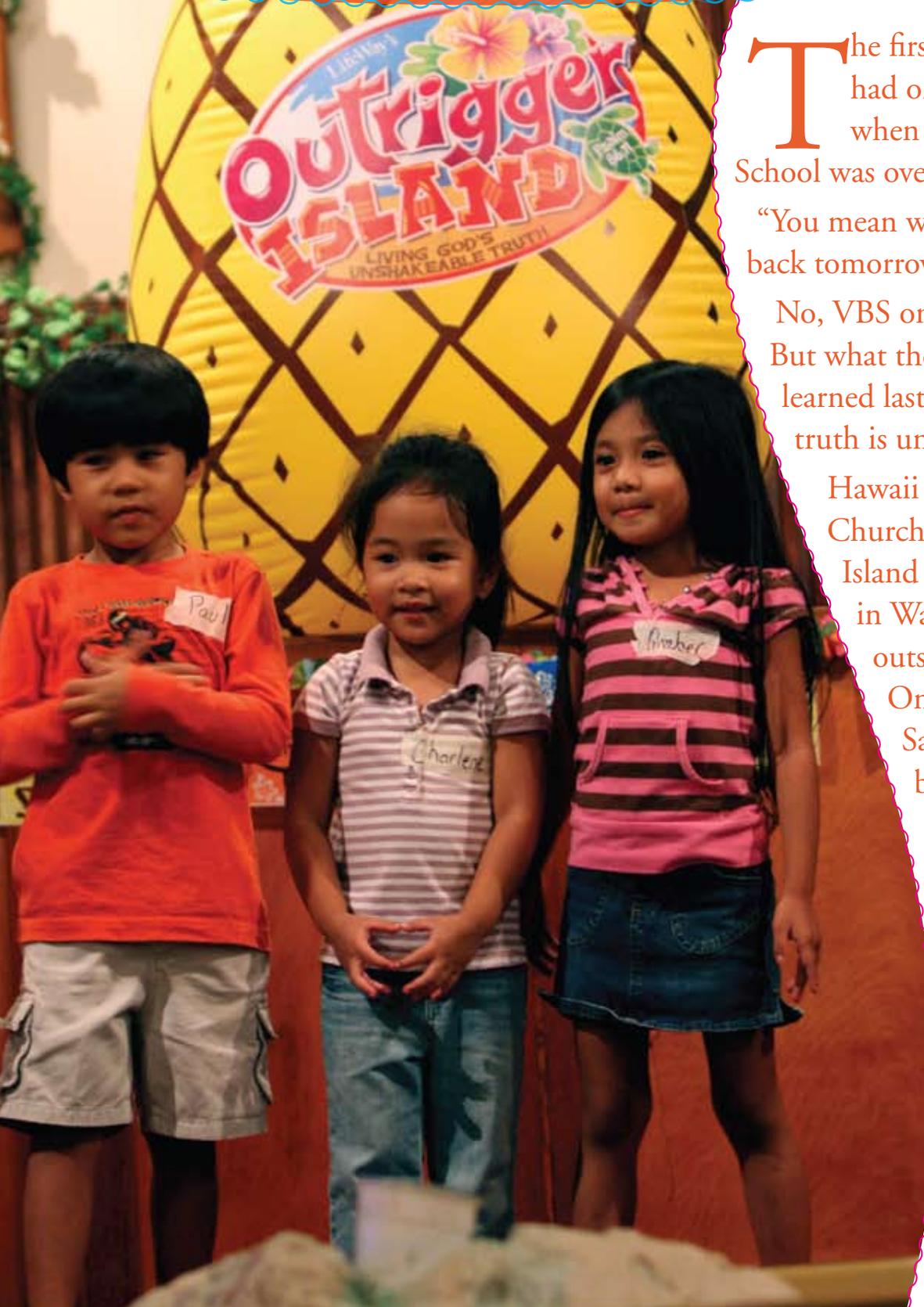
story by Polly House, photography by Kent Harville

The first-grader just had one question when Vacation Bible School was over.

“You mean we don’t come back tomorrow?”

No, VBS only lasts a week. But what the children learned lasts forever: God’s truth is unshakable.

Hawaii Christian Baptist Church hosted Outrigger Island VBS June 16-21 in Waipahu, just outside Honolulu. Only Monday-Saturday night. Too bad. The children loved it and wanted more.



Preschoolers Paul, Charlene and Amber get ready to do their VBS cheer.

Even though Outrigger Island is a fictional place, the children at Hawaii Christian Baptist Church claimed it as their own. They learned that they can know the truth, speak the truth and live the truth.

Outrigger Island was the theme for the main line of Vacation Bible School offered to churches by LifeWay.

“I think this has been the best theme LifeWay’s ever done,” said Hawaii Christian volunteer Mari Lou Baniaga. “The kids really liked it. The music has been great.”

Good volunteers

Danny Catlin, Hawaii Christian’s VBS director, deflected credit for making the week’s VBS such a success with the children.

“The volunteers have made this all work,” Catlin said. “They have done the snacks, activities, decorations and everything. A group of the young ladies have worked for weeks on learning all the songs and motions so they can teach the little ones. I appreciate all their hard work.”

Lydia Gomintong, wife of Hawaii Christian’s pastor, Rudy Gomintong, said while she had taught “just about everything” in VBS through the years, the past two years she has used her organizational skills to take charge of registration, getting all the children and adults signed in and accounted for. “It is a big job, but we want to get all the information on everyone. It’s important to know how many come every night, but it’s just as important to get accurate contact information so we can follow up.”

Sharing space

To say that Hawaii is beautiful is an understatement, but the beauty belies the difficulties of living and ministering there.

“People here work two or three jobs sometimes, so it can be hard to find time to be in church,” said Hawaii Christian member Gemma Jugueta. “It’s very expensive to live here too, so money is tight for most people.”

Hawaii Christian volunteers picked up and delivered home most of the children attending VBS. Few parents were available to take their children for the 5 p.m. starting time. The church offered VBS snacks, as



Top: Abelle prepares to blow his conch shell to signal the start of the evening’s VBS activities.

Above: Hawaii Christian’s teens, like J.R., not only participated in their own VBS, but helped with the younger kids too.



Delia Sabalberino helps the younger children assemble crafts.

well as more substantial fare like sandwiches and hot dogs. “The kids are hungry when they get here and play,” Jugueta said.

Hawaii Christian has been a church for six years, but doesn’t own land or a building. That’s fairly common for churches in Hawaii. A quick Google real estate search listed a quarter-acre lot available for \$699,000.

“We meet at Waikele Community Park Recreation Center on Sunday mornings,” said Hawaii Christian member Esther Bacani. “It’s small, but it is a good location.”

Since the recreation center was unavailable on weekday evenings, Hawaii Christian needed another location. For the past two years, Hawaii Christian has used the facilities of Waipahu Community Christian Church, a sister Southern Baptist congregation, for their VBS.

“[Waipahu Community Christian Church] has been so very gracious to allow us to use their building for Vacation Bible School,” said Pastor Gomintong.

Mainland volunteers

A group of volunteers from Millers Creek Baptist Church in Millers Creek, N.C., came to help with VBS. Pastor Jerry White and Children/Discipleship Pastor Shannon

Critcher led a group who helped volunteers from Hawaii Christian Church teach and do crafts.

“I was glad to see that Hawaii Christian took the lead in their VBS,” Critcher said. “I’ve been on mission trips before when our visiting team did it all, but the Hawaii Christian members have absolutely taken responsibility and ownership. We just helped.”

The past few years, Hawaii Christian did VBS during the day, but this year they had it in the evening. Like more and more churches, they reasoned that an evening VBS made sense for them.

“We hope having Bible School at night will let us have more children come,” said Baniaga. “There are transportation issues for the children and having it at night will make it possible for working parents to bring some of their kids and for our volunteers to go pick up others.”

Missionary visitor

As part of the VBS program, participants were exposed to missions videos each night, which focused on various island locations around the globe. For this particular group in Hawaii, a special guest made the experience even more personal.

The third night, Joy Turner, a North American Mission Board missionary serving as director of international ministries in Honolulu, visited the children. Turner, the featured missionary on the video, told them about her work with international students attending the University of Hawaii. In a review time after Turner talked, Catlin asked the students what she did. One child answered honestly when she said, “She meets college kids at the airport and then loves them and is their friend so they won’t be lonely.”

The fourth night’s video, which spotlighted

the Philippines, was meaningful, as many of the people attending Hawaii Christian Church, including Pastor Gomintong, came from the Philippines or have parents or grandparents who immigrated to Hawaii.

Adults and teenagers

In addition to the children, adults and teenagers had their own VBS tracks. Pastor Gomintong led the adults' Bible study group attended by members of Hawaii Christian Church and some of the North Carolina volunteers.

When they weren't in their own classes, the teenagers pitched in and helped with the younger children in recreation and crafts.

Numbers count

Hawaii Christian averaged 88 people per night at VBS, which pleased the organizers and volunteers. But greater than the attendance was the fact several

children made professions of faith, receiving Christ as Savior.

"We talked with each of the children who said they prayed to receive Christ or just wanted to talk with someone," Critcher said. "As you would expect, some of the younger ones really weren't clear about salvation, but we were glad to talk with them. God planted seeds that we feel sure will develop as they mature. But there were some of the other children who understood what salvation meant, so we were thrilled to pray with them as they became new Christians."

Catlin said, "VBS is a lot of work, and it's fun. But seeing these kids open up to hear God and learn about serving Him is what is important. Several of them prayed to receive Christ. That's the whole point of Bible School." ■

Below: College student Maria Tejada leads the 3rd and 4th grade children in learning the VBS music and motions.

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsand Trends to view a slide show and a video from VBS at Hawaii Christian Baptist Church featuring music from Outrigger Island.



Outrigger Island not far for North Carolina church

A mission team from Millers Creek (N.C.) Baptist Church decided to go to Hawaii to help with Vacation Bible School and to work at Hawaii Baptists' Pu'u Kahea Conference Center.

They heard things like, "Oh, a mission trip to Hawaii ... yeah, right."

But, as they would do on any mission trip, the group provided much needed and much appreciated ministry. They just did it in a really pretty place.

Pastor Jerry White and 21 others made the nine-hour flight from Atlanta to Honolulu full of anticipation. During the day they did construction and maintenance at the conference center, then 10 of them cleaned up and went to Hawaii Christian Baptist Church's VBS each evening.

"We took some ribbing for coming here to serve," White said. "But this seemed like a good match since our North Carolina convention and the Hawaii-Pacific convention have a partnership. There are a lot of mission opportunities here. We haven't had much free time; but we came to work and to serve."

Millers Creek's Children/Discipleship Pastor Shannon Critcher coordinated the trip for all the volunteers. He also took the lead in working with Danny Catlin, Hawaii Christian's VBS director.

The North Carolina volunteers pitched in and co-taught classes and crafts with the Hawaii Christian volunteers and helped with recreation. Critcher led the teaching time. They also loved on the kids a lot.

"These are the sweetest and smartest children," said North Carolina volunteer Ovie Hamby, who said she has done crafts in VBS for 54 years. "I just love seeing the children have a good time and learn about Jesus."

White obviously enjoyed the week at VBS. He is a strong VBS supporter, and with good reason. "When I was 7 years old, I was saved at Vacation Bible School," said the North Carolina pastor.

There's no better endorsement than that. ■

Above: North Carolina volunteer Debbie Reeves helped during crafts and teaching time.

Left: Recreation time was a highlight for the children.



VBS partnership is creative solution

What does a church do when it can't host its own Vacation Bible School? It gets creative.

At Hawaii Christian Baptist Church, Vacation Bible School is a key strategy for reaching their neighbors. Born six years ago and constituted as a church just last year, the congregation meets in the Waikele Community Park Recreation Center. The building is a small but easily accessible site surrounded by lush playing fields and trees in the booming suburbs west of Honolulu.

"The reason our church wanted to have Vacation Bible School is that we believe it is one of the best ways to reach out to the community for Jesus Christ," said Hawaii Christian Pastor Rudy Gomintong.

Plans to hold VBS last year nearly derailed because regular park programming made the facilities unavailable to the church. Undaunted, Gomintong went to a sister congregation, Waipahu Community Christian Church, and found their solution. Hawaii Christian would provide the staff and Waipahu would host VBS for both neighborhoods.

The experience was a good one, and this year the partnership continued. VBS director Danny Catlin said, "Many adults work during the day and many children are in year-round school systems, so it's very difficult to reach them any time but in the evening."

Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS specialist said he was glad to see Hawaii Christian have a successful VBS at an off-site location. "I hear some churches tell me they can't do VBS because they don't have a place. Hawaii Christian debunks that. Share space with another church."

Gomintong and many in his congregation are of Filipino descent, one of the largest ethnic groups in the

state. Unlike other areas of the United States, there is no racial/ethnic majority in Hawaii. Those of Asian ancestry account for 41 percent; white, 27 percent; two or more races, 20 percent; native Hawaiian, 9 percent, and others, 3 percent.

The diversity of Hawaii's population actually provides a big plus for their summer outreach efforts.

"All the children in different ethnic groups are very willing to come out to VBS," he said. "We also wanted to reach out to their parents, and make the most of this opportunity to develop relationships and reach out for Jesus Christ. We find Vacation Bible School is stepping stone to getting to share the Gospel. It's our hearts' desire to reach out." ■

Top: Pastor Rudy Gomintong

Middle: Hawaii Christian VBS director Danny Catlin greets the kids.

Bottom: Catlin gets the children ready for the pledges.



VBS 2009 themes announced

by Polly House

Next year churches can take their pick – take kids on a train adventure through Australia or set up a personalized archaeological dig. Either way, Jesus will be the ultimate destination.

The theme of the main VBS line is Boomerang Express: It All Comes Back to Jesus. The Club VBS theme is Truth Trek: Digging for God's Treasures. Both options give churches the opportunity to connect VBS participants with the truth of the one true God and His only Son Jesus.

Boomerang Express

“VBS leaders have been requesting an Australia-related theme for years,” said LifeWay’s VBS specialist Jerry Wooley. “We have thought about it for several years, but only this year did all the pieces come together. All five Bible studies involve a relationship with Jesus Christ through snapshots of the life of Peter. It is the first time we have created a VBS curriculum that allows for a character study of one person. Through the life of Peter we see that truly it all comes back to Jesus.”



Check out the best!

Facts & Trends Online invited churches and individuals to submit photos for the 2008 VBS Photo Contest. All the photos are in and the weekly winners have been selected. Now, it's up to you to pick the winning photo!

During the first week of September, *Facts & Trends*

Online will feature the winning photo from each week's contest. Your votes during that week will decide the grand prize winner! The winning shot will be featured in the November-December issue of *Facts & Trends* magazine, and the winning church also will receive a free Super Sampler for VBS 2009.

Club VBS: Truth Trek

LifeWay's 2009 Club VBS: Truth Trek invites kids to participate in an exciting archaeological dig to discover the treasures of God's truths. Trekkers will learn to obey the Ten Commandments and understand that Jesus is the power by which we live.

“Whether you choose Boomerang Express or Club VBS: Truth Trek, the key is to emphasize the evangelistic aspect of VBS,” Wooley said, pointing out that 26 percent of Southern Baptist baptisms in 2007 came as a direct result of VBS. “What else would you do next summer that will have as much evangelistic potential as Vacation Bible School?”

The complete 2009 VBS curricula will go on sale Dec. 1. Selected Boomerang Express promotional materials will be available Oct. 1. ■

VBS 2007: Good numbers, big impact

The numbers are in for 2007 Vacation Bible School, and once again they show that VBS is the most effective evangelistic strategy for most churches.

Game Day Central: Where Heroes Are Made and Club VBS: Jungle Jaunt were the 2007 themes, embraced by churches and enjoyed by children.

LifeWay's VBS area released the 2007 statistics based on information provided by churches submitting a Vacation Bible School report and/or Annual Church Profile.

- Number of congregations reporting VBS: 25,574
- Total VBS enrollment: 2,876,877
- Decisions to receive Christ: 88,097
- Decisions for church-related activities: 2,380
- Total Sunday school prospects discovered: 267,771
- Prospects enrolled in Sunday school: 37,888
- Prospects added to Sunday school prospect file: 198,774
- Percentage of SBC baptisms resulting from VBS: 26 percent

"The whole point of Vacation Bible School is to lead the children, youth and adults who attend to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Bottom line. That's it," said Jerry Wooley, VBS specialist at LifeWay. ■



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Neo-Nazi finds freedom in prison

story by Russ Rankin, photography by Guy Lyons

Seventeen years of prison and a lifetime of hate, violence and racism is mapped on Steven Neill's body.

Druids, swastikas, skulls and symbols of the occult circle and mesh darkly up his arms and disappear into his shirt; the letters "skinhead" are tattooed across the knuckles of both fists. German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's famous phrase – "God is dead" – stands defiantly in black, inked into his wrist.

But God is very much alive to Neill, pastor of Northside Baptist Church in Mineral Wells, Texas, and his markings weave a visible testimony of a life transformed.

"These are the road map of my life story," he said unashamedly, running a rough hand up his arm. The tattoos are an easy way to share Jesus, just like *Share Jesus Without Fear* – the witnessing method that stopped Neill in his tracks and led to his salvation.

The hate and resentment came at a young age for Neill, festered in a broken, abusive home and reinforced in Houston's dangerous 4th Ward district. After



Pastor Steven Neill sits on his motorcycle outside Northside Baptist Church in Mineral Wells, Texas.

a violent conflict with Hispanic gangs, a 13-year-old Neill found brotherhood with a group of American neo-Nazis. The abuse and neglect crystallized into hate as Neill studied the teachings of radical supremacists.

“We were extremely violent and militant,” he said. “We wanted to wage the racial holy war that Nietzsche spoke about.” Needing paramilitary training to advance in leadership, Neill joined the Army. The white supremacist attachments weakened in the discipline of the military until another altercation changed Neill’s life forever.

The fight started as an argument, but “I stabbed him,” Neill said. “Punctured a lung, severed the small intestine. He died four hours later. Aggravated murder with a deadly weapon gave me a 40-year sentence.”

Going to prison catapulted Neill back into his past. “It was a fight for survival,” he said. “I fully embraced my past and became violently racist.”

Following the teachings of Nietzsche, who blamed Christianity and Christians as the cause of all ills, “I was going to do anything I could do to eradicate Christianity,” Neill said. “In prison, society is organized into predators and prey. I was a predator. I could sense without a doubt who was prey.”

Neill said religious lines in prison were also obvious. Groups would organize based upon what particular ministries had come in and won converts. Converts were weak prey-types, he said. Some would become embolden and share their faith, an exercise Neill relished.

“If I couldn’t verbally convince them their faith was wrong, I’d beat them up,” he said. “But I didn’t have to do that very much because I knew every bit of anti-Christian philosophy – and I enjoyed a good argument – so I would utterly crush them.”

Facing the Truth

Against his will, Neill was signed up to attend a prison ministry weekend. Knowing his attendance was now mandatory, Neill decided to be as offensive as possible.

“I’m rude, belligerent and I go off on how hypocritical everyone is at this thing,” Neill said. “I cussed everyone out and stormed off the stage. Then this guy jumps up into the aisle and jabs a finger in my chest.”

“We locked horns that first night. We were both determined to win.”

– Paul Harris



Up until that moment, Paul Harris had begrudgingly endured the prison outreach. “My pastor made me come” to the prison, he said. Harris only recently had recommitted his life to God after years of charting his own course. But sitting in the prison yard listening to man after man speak about how much they loved God, feelings of condemnation and hypocrisy overwhelmed him.

“And all of a sudden I’m hearing this guy on stage calling us all hypocrites, and I’m agreeing with him,” Harris said. “As he’s stomping out, I jump out of my seat and stick my finger right in his chest and say, ‘You’re the reason I’m here.’”

“As a former atheist, I had dabbled in everything he’d been in,” Harris said. “We

locked horns that first night. We were both determined to win.”

Neill knew he was in a place of heavy discontent. “I came in unhappy, knowing I needed to change. But I went in with a combative attitude and Paul met me on that ground.

“It was intense,” Neill grinned. “Everything he threw at me I had an argument for.”

After an entire day of arguing, Randy Wilson, Harris’ pastor, stepped in and changed the game plan. “I hadn’t read all those books,” Wilson said. “Steven and Paul

are both so intelligent. They sat there arguing and contradicting each other with humanistic philosophy. I told Paul it was time to present the Word.”

Wilson is a longtime fan of *Share Jesus Without Fear*, a LifeWay-produced evangelism resource which offers three simple steps for sharing the Gospel: five questions to determine where God is working, seven verses to let the Bible speak for itself – which the unbeliever reads for himself – and five questions that lead to the point of discussion.

“What’s so appealing is that it’s not about memorizing a thousand verses and quoting them all,” said Wilson, pastor of Carey Baptist Church, located outside Childress, Texas. “It’s easy. You ask five simple questions; the last is a ‘yes’ or ‘no.’

“Steven Neill could argue all day against [the Bible], but he’d never read it,” Wilson said. “And so we walked him through this simple process – with him reading the Scripture for himself. At the end, it’s a simple question: according to what you’ve read, are you a sinner?”

That night back in lockdown, Neill said his life came into view. “I saw my life as it really was. But I saw everything as God would see it. I saw that I had gloried in active rebellion against God.

“There was no relief that night,” he said. “There was no hope. If I was prone to suicide, I would have done it that night.”

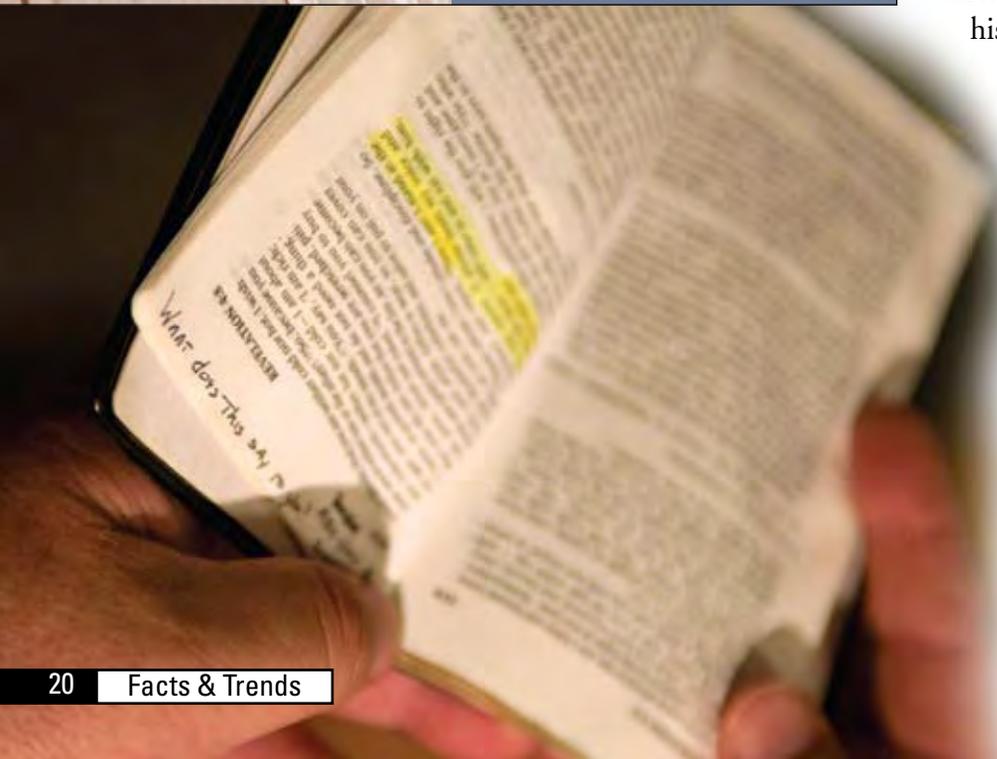
Freedom

Neill said he walked back into the meeting the next morning a broken man. Harris and Wilson could only stare at his physical transformation. “The darkness was dropping from his face,” Wilson said.



“...with him reading the Scripture for himself. At the end, it’s a simple question: according to what you’ve read, are you a sinner?”

– Randy Wilson



LifeWay releases updated *Share Jesus Without Fear*

“Randy pulled out his *Share Jesus Without Fear* Bible and had me read the Scriptures,” Neill said. “By the end, I was bawling like a baby.”

“We didn’t lead Steven to the Lord. We just witnessed to him,” Harris said. “That’s what is so good about *Share Jesus Without Fear*. It triggered something in me – it wasn’t about me or what I knew anymore. It was up to the Lord, His Word and the Holy Spirit.”

Neill knows it was the Holy Spirit that opened his eyes that day, but “I think the [SJWF] method is the only way I would’ve gotten there,” he said. “Instead of arguing, I was sitting there reading the Scripture. I’m honest enough with myself to reach for the truth.”

Unable to counter the Truth, Neill gave his life to Christ and immediately began a journey of growth. After beginning a Bible study with two other prisoners, the group grew to 26 as lives changed and people began to come to Neill for spiritual matters.

“God wanted something more from me than just going to church. He was calling me to something bigger. I was studying Scripture 14-16 hours a day and some amazing things happened. I would dream Scripture passages rolling through my head. I would wake up refreshed, often praying even as I woke up.”

Neill earned a Diploma of Pastoral Ministry through Seminary Extension and a Diploma in Biblical Studies through Amherst College. Upon earning release after 17 years in prison, Neill submitted to further discipleship

Just like Carey Baptist Church, thousands of churches have successfully used *Share Jesus Without Fear* in the past 10 years, making it LifeWay’s best selling evangelism resource.

It offers three simple steps for sharing the Gospel:

1. Five questions to determine where God is working.
2. Seven verses to let the Bible speak for itself.
3. Five questions that lead to the point of discussion.

The revised 4-session edition presents a simple and relational approach to witnessing that underscores the dependence of God’s power for the results. SJWF came out of the radical life transformation of its author Bill Fay. The SJWF method teaches believers how to navigate a witnessing conversation in everyday situations.

The revised and updated version will make it even easier to teach and implement, with:

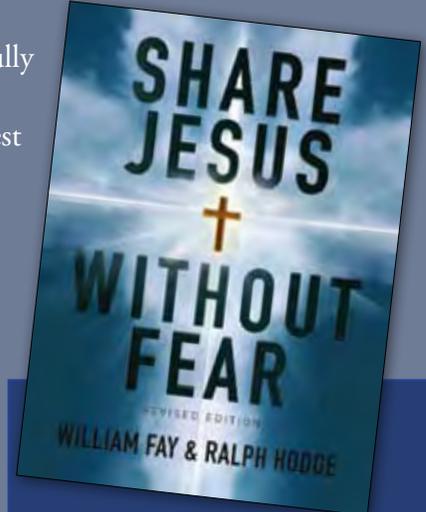
- new DVD format
- new video introductions with Fay
- a word to pastors and helps for churches implementing *Share Jesus Without Fear* into their evangelism strategy
- leader helps on CD-ROM (in DVD leader kit)
- revised member book that includes 36 responses to objections

Share Jesus Without Fear is available in 10 languages, including a basic English and a simplified Chinese version.

“*Share Jesus Without Fear* is a tool to help people overcome the sin of silence,” said Jay Johnston, director of LifeWay’s Discipleship and Evangelism area.

“It is a tool that God is using to equip people to share their faith in Jesus Christ with family members, friends, co-workers, classmates, neighbors and people they meet throughout the day,” he said.

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link to more information about available *Share Jesus Without Fear* resources.



Share Jesus Without Fear 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.

under Wilson before being ordained into the ministry.

“I want to see this church walk in freedom,” he said, speaking of Northside Baptist, the small West Texas congregation that accepted him with open arms. “I want them to know they can walk with the vilest of sinners because they have in them He who is stronger than the world. Then, lives will change.”

On June 29, 2008, Neill, along with Wilson, ordained Harris as associate pastor of Northside to serve alongside the former prisoner he introduced to the Lord. The foundation of the two men’s ministry is

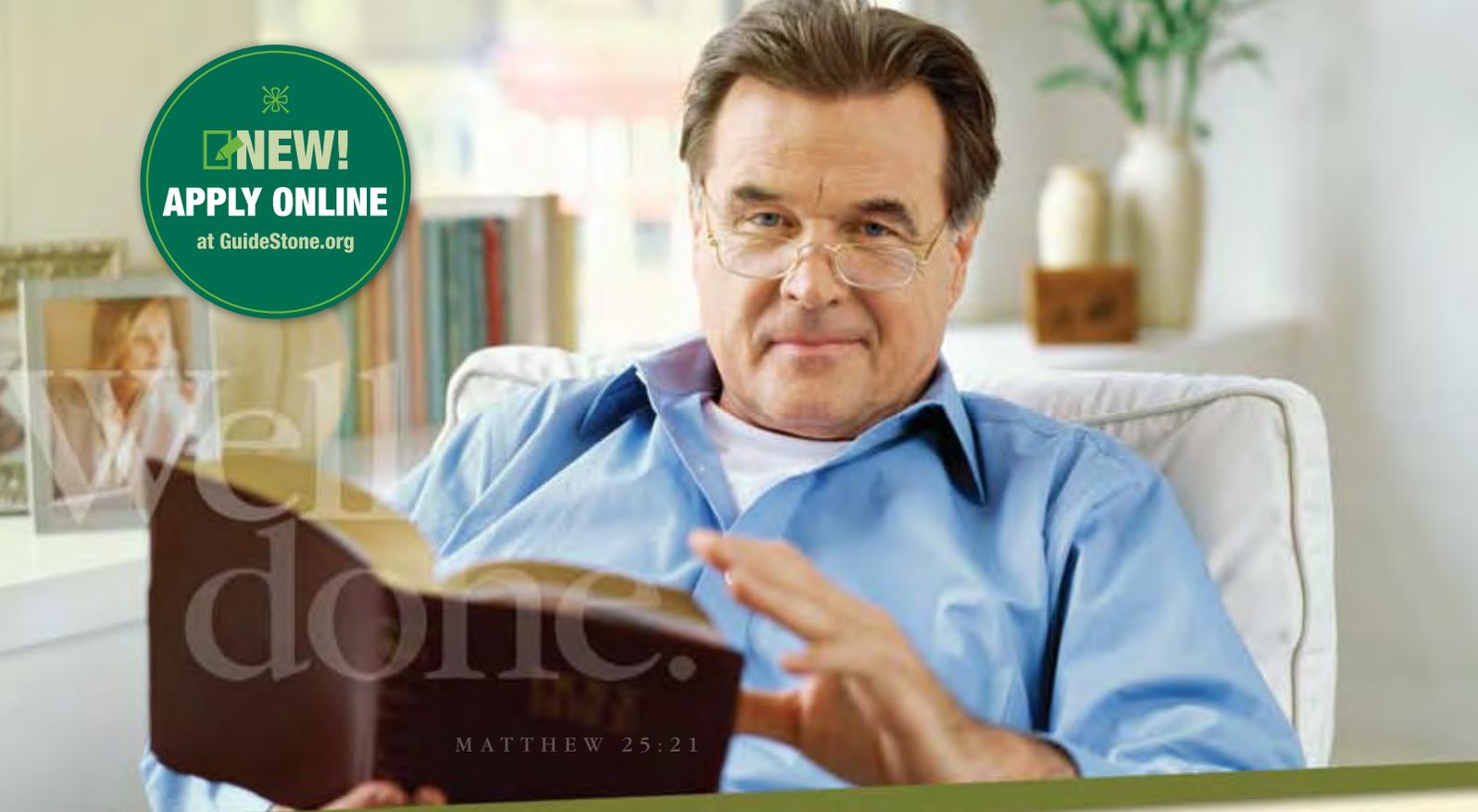
grounded in their mandate to share Jesus with boldness and confidence.

“Bill Fay (the writer of SJWF) truly had a great vision,” Harris said. “I believe it’s probably the best way for witnessing. And *Share Jesus Without Fear* has affected the mindset of our entire church. I believe it’s going to be a catalyst as we look outward.

“The radical power of God to transform lives is what amazes me,” Harris added. “Jesus was a radical man. And that’s why I love to share the Gospel.” ■



Pastor Steven Neill at the pulpit.



well
done.

MATTHEW 25:21

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Spike in motorcycle sales creates spike in opportunity

story by Mark Kelly, photography by James Yates

Motorcycle sales, like gas prices, are soaring – and in the process churches and believers are discovering exciting opportunities to reach out in witness and ministry.

With gasoline prices hovering around \$4 per gallon, motorcycle dealers say sales have leaped as well – anywhere from 20 percent at a Triumph motorcycle dealership in Anchorage, Alaska, to 27 percent at a Harley-Davidson shop in East Hartford, Conn. Motorcycle enthusiasts today include not only Hells Angels and wheelie-popping sport bikers but also middle-aged recreational riders and businessmen who ride motorcycles to work.

At the same time, chapters of the F.A.I.T.H. Riders motorcycle ministry are popping up all over the country.

“It’s incredible the number of motorcycles you see on the road this year, and God has just been phenomenal in the way He is orchestrating the growth of F.A.I.T.H. Riders,” said Danny Moats, national chaplain for the ministry based out of First Baptist Church at the Mall in Lakeland, Fla.

“Oklahoma has just blown wide open. We’ll

A procession of more than 300 motorcycles drives through Black Mountain, N.C., to attend a Memorial Day service.

probably have 14 chapters there before the end of the summer.”

Excitement about motorcycle ministries was reflected in this year’s Rally to Ridgecrest motorcycle rally, which drew 319 participants – a 50 percent jump over the inaugural rally just 18 months earlier. Under the banner “Eternal Vigilance,” bikers from 14 states gathered over Memorial Day weekend at the LifeWay conference center in North Carolina for worship, workshops and exhilarating rides through the Blue Ridge Mountains.

A F.A.I.T.H. Riders chapter gives congregations an excellent opportunity to involve more people in witness and ministry and, at the same time, engage lost men and women with the Gospel, noted Ron Pratt, national event planner for LifeWay Conference Centers.

“There are a lot of people who enjoy riding motorcycles and a lot of churches have connected that passion to local church motorcycle riding groups, as well as many state conventions that have motorcycle ministries that seek to reach both believers and unbelievers,” Pratt said.

“An event like Rally to Ridgecrest affords a believer an opportunity to bring someone with them, to laugh, to ride, to hear the Gospel and encounter other believers who also love to ride,” he said. “So there is an affinity through which people are encouraged in their faith and can learn ways to share their faith with unbelievers.”

The sudden increase in the popularity of motorcycle ministries reflects a broader realization by church leaders that men are more interested in church when the church is more interested in doing things men enjoy, according to Gene Williams, men’s ministry consultant for the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

“A lot of churches are figuring out that if they



want men to come to church, they have to do man things,” Williams said. “If you wrap a Kingdom agenda around things men want to do, men will come to church.

“Evangelism is more than sharing the plan of salvation,” Williams explained. “It’s building relationships that earn you the right to share the plan of salvation.”

Relationships like that bore fruit Saturday evening, May 24, as Dave Burton, evangelism director for the Florida Baptist Convention, challenged rally participants to lead lives of significance by letting Jesus take charge. Men and women crowded to the front of the auditorium – seven of them receiving Christ into their hearts. One of them was there with a friend who purchased his motorcycle five years ago for the express purpose of sharing Christ with this individual.

Riding a motorcycle opens doors for witness in ways almost impossible to believe, explained

Worship band Second Chance leads worship during the celebration time at the Motorcycle Rally.



Christain riders often adorn helmets and jackets with Christian messages and images.

Robert Warren, a lifelong motorcycle enthusiast from Epps, La.

“You get opportunities to meet people and talk to people you wouldn’t have any other way,” Warren said. “We can stop somewhere and get gas and someone in a car will pull up and say, ‘Hey, you ride a bike,’ and you get to talking about motorcycles. It is a wonderful tool. You just strike up a conversation and one thing leads to another.”

Sammy Gilbreath, evangelism director for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, recalled standing outside a biker bar in Madison County that had an unsavory reputation as a center of drug and illegal alcohol sales. Because Gilbreath rode in on a motorcycle, he had an opportunity to engage the bar owner in conversation – and lead him to Christ. Then, as they stood outside the bar,

a car pulled up. The driver needed directions and was obviously frightened by the sight of Gilbreath standing there by his bike, clad in leather from head to toe.

“After I told him where to find Country Club Drive, I said, ‘You see this Harley? I’m getting ready to ride from here to Montgomery, Ala., and I could get killed before I get there,’” Gilbreath recounted. “I said, ‘If you get killed before you get back home, do you know where you are going to spend eternity?’ He said ‘No sir. I’ve never been to church before,’ so I shared the Gospel with him and he knelt on that blacktop parking lot and invited Christ into his heart.

“That came about because of that motorcycle and it happens over and over and over.” ■

Next year’s Rally to Ridgecrest will be May 22-25. Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link to more information and to watch a video from the event. In addition, read about how the F.A.I.T.H. Riders chapters are spreading across the country.

LifeWay Español resources growing empowered believers, healthy churches

by Ralph Tone

Spanish speakers in the United States and abroad are embracing LifeWay resources, especially family Bible studies, transforming discipleship materials and the evangelistically effective Vacation Bible Schools.

Good news like this was shared at the May 11-12 International Seminar of Hispanic Consultants in Miami. The conference was sponsored by LifeWay Español and attracted 43 participants representing Spain, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Chile and the United States.

The conference theme, *Correr la Carrera con Paciencia* (Run the Race with Patience), based on Hebrews 12:1, seemed especially relevant when conversation turned to VBS in Mexico.

“We’ve been promoting VBS in Mexico for five years,” said Cesar Badillo, LifeWay Español’s resident consultant in Mexico. “In the beginning we had to do all the leg work, but now LifeWay Español’s VBS has become so well known that many of our churches buy the material before they ever attend a training event.”

Churches don’t just buy the resources, Badillo continued, but are committed to VBS training. “We have planned VBS training events expecting 40 people to show up, and more than 120 come,” he said.

The tremendous growth in LifeWay’s VBS material is exciting enough to stand on its own, but there is an added benefit, according to Badillo.

“This success with VBS materials in Mexico is making all of LifeWay Español’s resources better known,” resulting in increased sales of other LifeWay discipleship materials, leading to healthier churches and empowered believers.

LifeWay Español director Luís López said LifeWay Español resources are making a

difference in churches throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Jorge Figueroa, pastor and volunteer consultant for the western region of the United States, said the small group ministry in his church will soon introduce the Spanish language version of *MasterLife*. “They have begun with some basic discipleship and have come to me asking for a more in-depth discipleship study,” he says.

This year several new LifeWay resources in Spanish were unveiled at the conference including: *Peregrinando* (*Stepping Up* by Beth Moore), *Discernamos la Voz de Dios* (*Discerning the Voice of God* by Priscilla Shirer), *3:16 Los Números de la Esperanza* (*3:16 The Church Experience* workbook by Max Lucado), *Cautivado por la Grandeza de Dios* (*Gripped by the Greatness of God* by James MacDonald) and *Escuela Bíblica de Vacaciones Isla Canoa* (VBS Outrigger Island).

“We want to help Hispanic churches fulfill the Great Commission by providing culturally relevant resources that will transform individuals into Great Commission Christians,” López said. “Our strategy is simple yet challenging: to know churches, to help churches and to help people through churches.” ■

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsand trends for a link to more information about LifeWay Español.

Balanced worship celebrated at LifeWay Worship Conference

story by Jenny Rice, photography by James Yates

After years of conflict over worship styles, music ministers, worship leaders and lay musicians desire a more balanced, theologically focused worship services.

The unified tone for the LifeWay Worship Leadership Conference held June 2-6 at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina, was set with the first worship service that incorporated traditional hymns, contemporary worship songs and gospel music, all from the new 2008 Baptist Hymnal unveiled at the conference.



The Jubal Chorus from the Georgia Baptist Convention was one of the many artists and groups that led worship.

Each song included in the hymnal survived a rigorous evaluation process to ensure theological soundness and lasting endurance throughout generations to come.

Modern hymn writer Keith Getty, who helped pen the worship song “In Christ Alone,” summed up the criteria for a good hymn with two points: “We have to write songs that teach great truths of the Bible and that every generation can sing together.”

Focusing on right theology was the critical factor for seeking harmony on style and song content.

“We are taking the Word of God and putting it in the hands of people and a word of praise in their mouths,” said Mike Harland, director of LifeWay Worship.

“We are going to take this ground back, folks – this division of new songs and old choruses,” Harland said. “When we get past style and making decisions based only on that, we can have unity.”

Three tools

The LifeWay Worship Project produced three main tools for the local church: a Baptist Hymnal, a Worship Hymnal, and digital resources offered through LifeWayWorship.com.

Additional print resources included the large print hymnal editions, pulpit editions, piano and organ editions, the singers edition unbound, and the resource and planning edition that contains lyrics for all of the nearly 1,000 titles in the LifeWay Worship Project. Web-based planning tools are also offered through LifeWayWorship.com.

Patrick Watts from LifeWay Worship, who introduced the Worship Project to conference attendees, explained how the tools were created

for “paper and pen planners, too.” From printed hymnals and worship charts to digital downloads and PowerPoint backgrounds, the hymnal meets the needs of every type of church music ministry.

“Every ministry is unique and every ministry is going to need a unique mix of these resources,” he said.

Jonathan Riggs of LifeWay Worship introduced the videos and the basic and advanced worship media provided through the Worship Project, including worship charts and lead sheets available on CD-ROM.

“Having lead sheets and worship charts on CD-ROM gives churches a choice of whether they want to have the print or PDF edition,” Riggs said. “We wanted to provide solutions for churches no matter where they are on the spectrum of technology.”

LifeWay Worship also provided accompaniment tracks for all songs included in the hymnal and additional songs are provided online at LifeWayWorship.com.

“The number one complaint we heard from worship leaders is that they don’t have enough musicians,” Riggs said. “So we created accompaniment tracks for all 975 titles. This is helpful for small churches or even missionaries serving overseas.”

Conference seminars provided technical training for orchestra musicians; keyboard, organ and piano players; drummers and praise team vocalists; audio and visual teams; and children and youth worship leaders.

Acquisition will integrate into larger worship project

In early July, LifeWay acquired WorshipWebsite.net, a Website launched in 2006 to “help churches spend more time in worship and less time in the details.”

The software, which represents the first acquisition for the LifeWay Business Development Group, will be redesigned and integrated into LifeWay’s Worship Project.

Mark Brodsky created WorshipWebsite.net as a solution to the frustrations he witnessed first-hand as the drummer in the worship band at Crossroads Community Church, Summerville, S.C.

“I wanted to help the most visible ministry in church spend more time in worship and less time in all the minutia,” Brodsky said. “It’s not the focus of the worship ministry to plan the service, but to do the actual worship.”

LifeWay Worship Director Mike Harland said he was excited to find that Brodsky’s vision for his Website matched LifeWay’s vision for the Worship Project.

“There are, of course, some changes that need to happen before WorshipWebsite.net can integrate seamlessly into the Worship Project,” Harland said. “But this software is new and robust and has incredible potential.”

LifeWay’s Worship Project is scheduled to launch Oct. 1. Full integration of WorshipWebsite.net into the project will not occur until early 2009. Harland said current WorshipWebsite.net customers will continue to receive service throughout the transitional period.

“We’re excited about this,” said Tim Vineyard, vice president of LifeWay’s technology division. “We’re excited for the vision of this project and what will be done with it.” ■

“It’s not the focus of the worship ministry to plan the service, but to do the actual worship.”

— Mark Brodsky

Worship as lifestyle

Wayne Barber, pastor of Hoffmantown Church in Albuquerque, N.M., led seminars on worship and God’s love, its conflict with the world, and its relation to God’s Word. He also taught during the daily worship services about worship as a lifestyle, not an event.

“If there is no walk, there is no worship,” Barber said. “If there is no obedience, there is no worship. The more you are with the Lord, the more you want to worship.”

Younger worship leader Dan Odle from Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., spoke about leading balanced worship services with a blend of traditional and contemporary elements. His seminar “What’s Re-CHOIRed” focused on the relevance of a church choir in today’s culture.

“The culture’s changing and it will be more challenging to grow a choir,” he said. “But there is value to having a large group leading worship.”

Conference attendees also participated in corporate worship each day and every evening ended with a performance featuring a multitude of acts with traditional and non-traditional elements.

Appropriately, the concluding night featured a unified choir composed of worship leaders and music ministers all seeking to glorify God through song. ■



Attendees worshipped in many musical styles in both a casual and formal settings.

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link to more information about the Worship Project.

Centri-Kid

made for relationships

story by Brooklyn Noel, photography by Blake Noel



If you've ever sent your child to LifeWay's Centri-Kid camp, or even attended yourself as a chaperone, you're likely aware that "fun" is a common theme.

But showing kids a great time certainly isn't the only goal.

"As God cultivates our faith, we blend our gifts as a team to impact culture through life-changing camps and events, believing such ministry takes place best in the context of relationships."

Centri-Kid Director Trent Creason shared this Fuge vision statement with parent volunteers and church leaders on the opening night of Centri-Kid at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center June 20-24.

The "fun" parts of Centri-Kid only enhance a camp experience; the larger purpose is to impact campers' lives.

"With kids, you have to take the truth and put it in a form that can get into their hearts," said Ryan "Coat" Coatney, Centri-Kid camp pastor. "I hope they have fun, but I also hope they see Jesus in a different way and that they learn something."

Centri-Kid is a camp designed specifically for students who have completed third through sixth grade. It is part of LifeWay's larger Fuge camp system.

Recreation time charges up campers for the day.

Hollywood theme

This year's Centri-Kid camps, scheduled throughout the country during June and July, featured a Hollywood theme that encouraged campers to understand the Bible as a script outlining the role God created each person to play.

"Know your script, know your script, know your script," Coatney urged 450 campers during evening worship. "It's the story of us sinning, and it's the story of doing things our way instead of God's way, and it's the story of God bringing Christ into the world for us."

Camper Lee Gunter, a rising sixth grader from Brookwood Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C., said he enjoyed the fun parts of camp, but he came to "learn about God and why God is here."

"Some kids here, not many but some, don't believe in God and they [Centri-Kid staff] help you find Him," Gunter said, speaking of the invitations offered after evening worship to which numerous campers responded.

The idea of seeing the Bible as a script didn't fall on deaf ears. Even after days full of fast-paced activities, high-energy free time and a rowdy morning session led by camp worship leader Jeff Slaughter, campers still responded to and absorbed the message of the camp.

Worship is fun, free

Slaughter, who led worship before Coatney offered a lesson each evening, said his job was to impact the way campers view worship.

"I want to create an environment where the Holy Spirit can move upon them," he said. "I want there to be a sense of the Lord moving in them and pulling them closer and giving them a hunger for more."

Centri-Kid may seem serious and intense, and at moments it is, but the idea of "fun" was present even for Slaughter as he led singing for the campers. "I love to teach them about freedom in worship and freedom in expression.

"Worship can be fun, and I want these

kids to see the full range of relationship that is possible with the Lord," Slaughter said.

Maximizing the teaching time

Evening worship and Bible study time certainly provided opportunities to help the kids better understand the "script" and God's role as director, but Centri-Kid counselors never missed an opportunity to teach biblical truths.



Centri-Kid camp director Amy Childers speaks with a camper as she responds to the invitation offered during evening worship.



Centri-Kid staffer Jared Folks directs campers through a team-building game.

Each day, campers hiked to the recreation field at Ridgecrest's campus under banners bearing Hollywood-themed team names such as "Cuecards," "Stuntmen," "Cameos" and "Sequels." Once there, the campers played creative relay games, mastered team-building activities and even bounced a ball on a colorful nylon parachute. As groups rotated through each station, however, counselors

often found a way to relate the activity to biblical lessons such as supporting one another or working together.

"I like the way they do camp here," said Cindy Bailey, children's minister at St. Mark's Church in Burlington, N.C. "It's fun, but the kids learn something. It gets them interested in the Bible and interested in Christ and makes them want to come back."

At least one of Bailey's students, Jacqueline Faith, accepted Christ after the evening service Saturday night.

"I feel wonderful," Faith said after speaking with one of the Centri-Kid counselors and making her decision for Christ. "I gave my life to God and when I die I get to go to heaven."

It's moments such as this that keep Slaughter coming back to lead worship for children. "I don't want to be the aloof worship leader who shows up on stage and sings. With kids, it's about relationships."

For Coatney, those relationships should lead to authentic changes in kids' lives that then benefit the churches they attend.

"Camp is good because it helps the churches," Coatney said. "Kids are real believers. The real Holy Spirit is living in their hearts. They can do real ministry and they can serve their churches in real ways." ■

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a link to more information about Centri-Kid and other LifeWay Fuge camps. In addition you can read:

- a blog entry by Brooklyn Noel on interviewing children about Centri-Kid
- a story about the Centri-Kid camp director's journey of faith
- an article that helps parents know if their child is ready for camp



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LifeWay women's author invites feedback for new study

by Brooklyn Noel

Who hasn't sat in a Bible study group slightly distracted and pondering, "I wonder what John Q. Author was *really* thinking when he wrote *that*?" Or, "If I'd written this study ..." How about: "I wish there was more explanation about that."

LifeWay is responding to those musings by thinking outside the typical box of the publishing world. In late June, LifeWay's church resources division launched the Open Access project, an online opportunity that invites users to "go behind the scenes and see

the entire process of publishing a LifeWay study."

The study that will serve as the pilot for this program is an as-yet-unnamed 2009 Bible study by Priscilla Shirer, a veteran author, popular speaker and co-founder of Going Beyond Ministries.

"Priscilla latched onto the technology of the project," said Dale McCleskey, editor in chief in LifeWay's leadership and adult publishing area. "She quickly saw the advantage it would give to have feedback from the community.

More than simply observing the process, the Open Access project invites and relies upon customer response. McCleskey hopes creative customers will offer ideas for the study's title, cover art and other integral elements.

Customers who purchase the unfinished manuscript of Shirer's study have access to a members-only message board where they can offer their feedback, comments and suggestions. Shirer will occasionally post her own thoughts and comments there as well.

In addition, community members receive a link to a private e-mail address where they can submit personal illustrations, stories, comments and questions related to the study. Then, when the study releases in fall 2009, individuals who purchased the manuscript will receive finished copies of the book.

Open Access is a pilot endeavor that McCleskey said was born largely out of the self-publishing trend fostered by the Internet.

"It's a new avenue that the technology makes possible," he said.

Aaron Linne is a digital media producer in LifeWay's church resources division. In addition to "moving people more deeply and getting them more involved" in the study,



Priscilla Shirer

Linne wants Open Access to give individuals a glimpse into the publishing world.

“My hope is that people get to see some of the personalities of the people here at LifeWay and that they will realize the depth of work that goes into producing a great resource,” Linne said.

Besides the working manuscript, members' community and e-mail opportunities, the Open Access project features a public blog area where anyone can stay up-to-date on the study's progress through the blog posts of

LifeWay employees working on the resource.

In fact, long before the manuscript became available for purchase, publishing team members were charting the project's progress on the Open Access blog and through Twitter, a micro-blogging site that provides daily glimpses into the project.

The project will continue at least through December. Shirer is scheduled to film the digital segments of the study in December 2009. ■

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for more information about the Open Access project.

Does It Matter Whether Your Bible Translation Is All New?

If you're a serious Bible reader, it matters plenty.

Most of today's popular translations are actually revisions of earlier versions. This means that—while the creators of these Bibles may reference the biblical texts during development—their efforts are constrained by the time-worn translation philosophy and language structure of their predecessors.

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Church Web usage expanding; includes electronic offering plate

by Jenny Rice

Traditionally, church members give tithes and offerings to the church by placing cash or a paper check into a brass plate passed during Sunday worship.

In today's anytime, anywhere culture, more and more church members are giving tithes with the click of a mouse or automatic draft from online bank accounts.

"The trend in e-giving is a cultural move as fewer people of the younger generations carry cash," said Ben Stroup, coordinator of LifeWay Christian Stores' offering envelope services. "We live in a plastic, online banking world where growing numbers of people prefer to exchange funds electronically rather than carry a checkbook or cash."

Statistics show growth in the use of the Internet for financial transactions. In December 2007, Pew Internet and the American Life Project reported that 53

percent of American adults participate in online banking and more than 35 percent pay their bills online.

Church members are not the only ones becoming more tech-savvy. According to the April 2008 Barna Update, Web usage by churches is also growing.

"Back in 2000, just one-third of Protestant churches (34 percent) had a church Website," stated the report. "That exploded to 57 percent in 2005, and has inched upward since then to 62 percent."

Church Websites now feature podcasts of sermons, online member directories, blogs written by ministers, and tools that allow church members to give their tithes online.

"Churches are exploring the theory that people who give electronically may tend to give more consistently because giving occurs even when the church member is not



present at church on Sunday,” said Stroup. “The most popular types of e-giving are credit/debit cards, recurring electronic funds transfer from an established checking or savings account, or private booths set up in the church foyer for members to give before or after the worship service.”

The “private booths” Stroup refers to are ATM-like kiosks available in churches that allow members to tithe using a debit or credit card.

For many churches, though, giving tithes online is the first step towards catching up with today’s online bill-paying culture.

Hebron Baptist Church in Dacula, Ga., with 11,000 members, began offering e-giving solutions through its Website to church members last year.

“People are so used to doing everything online so it was a natural progression,” said David Baker, administrative pastor at Hebron.

Through the church Website, members may sign up for automatic draft of their tithes from their checking accounts, or make a one-time payment through the online payment system. Paying online allows for more consistent tithes and offerings, said Baker.

“People are more mobile now; they travel more or are on the road working,” he said. “This allows them to tithe online instantly.”

Baker disregards arguments against online giving on the basis of it being more of a habit with automatic draft versus an act of worship during the Sunday morning service.

“The most important thing is the attitude of your heart whenever you give,” he said. “Online giving is just a different method of supporting the church through tithes and offerings.”

Bill Gruenewald, minister of business administration at First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, Tenn., wanted to give online

tithers the option of participating in the offering time of Sunday worship.

“We wanted to offer online giving for people already using online banking and the Internet for bookkeeping to make it easier for them,” said Gruenewald.

“Our only reservation was that for some people, giving during the service is an act of worship. Those using automatic withdrawal can still participate in the offering time by placing an envelope in the offering plate that is marked that they contributed online.”

LifeWay Christian Stores now offers an e-giving solution for churches participating in its offering envelope service. Included with the e-giving service is an online event manager that allows church members to register and pay for events at the same time. Increasing stewardship and giving options for our churches is key, according to Stroup.

“What makes our e-giving solution unique,” he said, “is that we do not charge setup or monthly service fees for our existing customers. Dealing with one vendor for offering envelope and e-giving solutions simplifies the giving process for both the church member and church leader.” ■

Craig Webb, editor of LifeWay’s *Pastors Today* free online newsletter, queried his readers in a Quick Poll (non-scientific) about E-giving.

What’s your position on online giving?

It’s good and our church does it.

9%

It’s good but our church doesn’t do it.

43%

It’s not a good thing.

14%

I’m not sure about it.

33%

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandrends for a link to more information about LifeWay’s envelope service.

God said to make disciples; LifeWay week helps with

HOW

story by Polly House, photography by Gibbs Frazier



Daniel Akin



Henry Blackaby



Thom Rainer

God does not make suggestions.
He gives commands.

Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God*, and its accompanying line of discipleship resources, told attendees of discipleship and evangelism week that every time God speaks, “it is life or death, blessing or cursing. When God has something to say to you, He assigns the Holy Spirit to make certain you understand.”

Blackaby spoke at the 2008 LifeWay sponsored National Discipleship and Evangelism Conference. About 500 people attended the June 30-July 4 conference held at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C.

Joining Blackaby as keynote speakers were LifeWay President Thom Rainer and Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Rainer and Akin are the writers of *Vibrant Church*, LifeWay’s 2009 doctrine study.

“Any word God has for you in Scripture will not be too mysterious for you to understand,” Blackaby said. “With the Holy Spirit, you have been given eyes to see and ears to hear.

“Every time you are face-to-face with the Scripture, you are face-to-face with its author,” Blackaby said. “You can harden your heart so that God speaking to you, using the Holy Spirit, will make no impact whatsoever.”

A disciple’s life, he said, isn’t just a matter of practicing religion and living rightly. “It is a life intensely and intimately in fellowship with God.”

Love is ...

Akin, using 1 Corinthians 13 as the text for one of his addresses, said the love described in the chapter ranges from essential love (verses 1-3), expressive love (verses 4-7) and enduring love (verses 8-13).

He suggested as an exercise to substitute the name “Jesus” in place of the word “love” in chapter 13: “If I speak the languages of men and of angels, but have not Jesus, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal.”

He also suggested attendees substitute their own names, as he did his, in verses 4-7: “Danny Akin is patient; Danny Akin is kind. Danny Akin does not envy.”

Finally, he suggested going a step further and substituting “Jesus in me” in place of “love” in the passage: “Jesus in me is patient; Jesus in me is kind. Jesus in me does not envy.”

Akin told the group that studying Scripture is important in a Christian’s life and path. “You do not honor God by being ignorant,” but included the caution, “neither do you honor Him by being pompous.”

Three questions for the church

Rainer said three questions need to be asked when talking about discipleship in the church:

1. Just what is the church anyway?

- The church is the people of God and the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, he said.

“If we are the people of God we will act in a way that honors God,” he said. “If we are the body of Christ we recognize that we have gifts that are to be used in ministry, but we don’t all have the same gifts and we are dependent on others. If we are the temple of the Holy Spirit we are a worshipping community. The presence of God is with us.”

2. What should the church act like?

- The church should have regenerate members who are Christians.

“A church should have high expectations of its members,” Rainer said. “In many of

our churches we are bringing people in with not only low expectations, but no expectations.”

- The church has two ordinances: baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
- The church practices discipline.

“Do you know the purpose of discipline?” Rainer asked. “It is not to harm, but to restore. The ultimate goal is to bring [the one being disciplined] to be a fully restored person who is actively contributing to the body of Christ.”

- It is a Word-based ministry.
- It has as its offices pastor and deacon.
- Missions and evangelism is at its heart.

“There is sound theology; there is true depth of God’s Word,” he said.

3. How does the church carry out its main purposes?

“If we are biblically obedient, if we do church according to what the Word says, we will see discipleship take place in the church like we never would have conceived otherwise,” Rainer said. “We will see sinners become saints. We will see a unity of the body that defies most congregations today. We will see church members asking ‘What can I do to serve my Lord sacrificially through my church.’”

More than 100 conference options were offered covering ministries to preschoolers and children, students, young adults, senior adults, deacons, deacons’ wives, ministers’ wives, family, men and women. In addition, conferences addressed small groups, prayer, evangelism, sports and recreation. ■

Upcoming

Next year’s National Discipleship and Evangelism Conferences will be July 13-17 at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center and July 27-31 at LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center near Santa Fe, N.M.

Web resources

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for more information about LifeWay discipleship. Read what Danny Singleton, missions pastor at First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga., had to say about men’s ministry.



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Rainer receives M.E. Dodd Award from Union University

LifeWay President Thom Rainer received Union University's M.E. Dodd Denominational Service Award during a June 10 reception at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

The Dodd Award is the highest denominational service award Union gives. Dodd was a Union alumnus who served as president of the SBC and was the father of today's Cooperative Program.

The award is given annually to a leader within the Southern Baptist Convention who displays excellence and leadership in Southern Baptist life, as well as friendship and commitment to Union University. Past recipients include Jimmy Draper (2004), Adrian Rogers (2005), Morris Chapman (2006) and Frank Page (2007).

"Thom Rainer is a gift from God to the Southern Baptist Convention," Union

University President David Dockery said. "I have known Thom for well over 20 years and have watched his remarkable leadership on display in the context of local church pastor, as a seminary dean and now as president of LifeWay Christian Resources."

Dockery said Rainer's abilities as a leader, thinker, writer and preacher of the Gospel are well known, and that his insights into such areas as church health, church growth, evangelism and missions are at the forefront of Southern Baptist life.

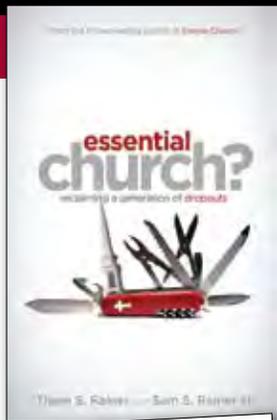
Dockery also pointed to Rainer's leadership in February, when LifeWay was the first Baptist entity to respond following the tornado that massively damaged the Union campus. LifeWay contributed \$350,000 to Union's disaster relief efforts. ■



LifeWay President Thom Rainer with David Dockery, president of Union University. Photo by James Yates

Resources

for you from LifeWay



B&H Publishers

■ *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts*

by Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer

Why do so many young adults (18-22) leave the church, and what will it take to bring them back? This important question is examined and duly answered in *Essential Church?* This follow-up to Thom Rainer's best-selling *Simple Church* is co-written this time with his son, research expert Sam Rainer.

The book is based on a study of 1,000 so-called "church dropouts" who were interviewed about why they left. Releases Sept. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4392-4. \$19.99

■ *Believing God Day by Day: Growing Your Faith All Year Long*

by Beth Moore

Among Beth Moore's best-selling books to date is *Believing God*, a powerful study of Isaiah 43 and Hebrew 11 that centers on one simple, yet bold, question: Do you believe God or merely believe in Him? And now the enduring favorite is available in a convenient day-by-day reading format, reminding us time and again that God is bigger than we can imagine and faithful to be who He says He is, do what He says He can do, and help us be who He says we are. Releases Oct. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4798-9. \$14.99

■ *Identity: Who You Are in Christ*

Satan is always trying to undo the faith of believers by twisting the reality of who they are as followers of Christ. *Identity* by young pastor Eric Geiger (coauthor of the multi-awarded national bestseller *Simple Church*) helps Christians clearly understand who they really are as defined by various Scriptures and unpacks the practical response that goes along

with each wonderfully dramatic truth. Releases Sept. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4689-3. \$16.99

■ *Innovatechurch: 8 Innovative Ways to Lead and Grow the Church*

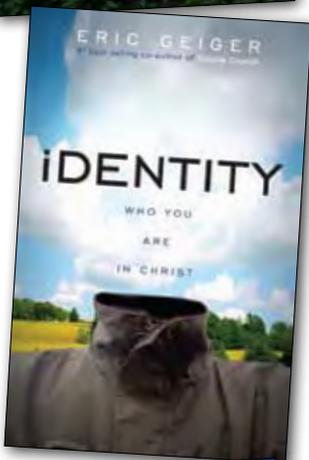
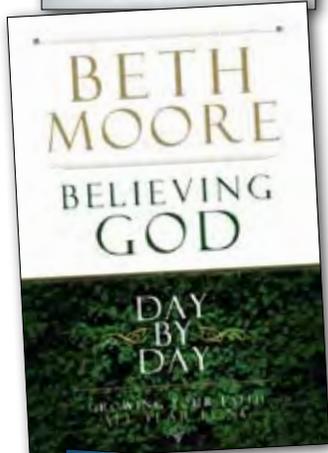
edited by Jonathan Falwell

Based on a new ministry conference and Web initiative of the same name, *Innovatechurch* gathers expert advice the next generation church leaders determined to uphold never-changing truth in an ever-changing world. Twelve esteemed contributors provide readers with fresh methods. They include Jonathan Falwell (leadership), Charles Billingsley (worship), Daniel Henderson (prayer), Rod Dempsey (discipleship), Matthew D. Staver (culture), David Earley (church planting), David Wheeler (outreach), Ergun Caner (apologetics), along with Elmer Towns, J.M. Smith, Ed Hindsom, Matt Willmington and Doug Randlett. Pastors, church leaders, professors and seminary students will learn from and frequently reference these innovative, insightful presentations. Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4826-8. \$14.99

■ *John: 90 Days with the Beloved Disciple*

by Beth Moore

The Personal Reflections series continues to reintroduce Moore's most beloved character-driven books, expanding them into 90-day experiences that include text from her original work, plus questions and journal space. *John* is the new presentation of Moore's enduring favorite, *The Beloved Disciple*. Just as Christ led John into the depths of His love, that same journey is here for us, His beloved. Releases Sept. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4812-8. \$24.99



■ **Lookin' Back Texas**

by Leanna Ellis

In this new novel, Betty Lynne Davidson is planning her husband's funeral while overlooking one thing: he's not dead. When Suzanne Mullins, 42, gets the call from her father to come back home to Texas because her mother has gone off the deep end, she knows it will mean having to look at the foundations of their marriage as well as her own. Suzanne hopes that trusting in God's love and mercy will set all of the craziness straight – even if it does mean having to watch her father give the eulogy at his own funeral.

Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4697-4. \$14.99

■ **Mustard Seeds: Thoughts on the Nature of God and Faith**

by Lynn Coulter

C.S Lewis likened hard times to "God's megaphone," a season when the Creator's ways are made clear and proven merciful. *Mustard Seeds* author Lynn Coulter agrees, writing here across 15 essays about the natural graces and "God signs" that emerged during a three-year period of hardship and sustain her faith today. Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4678-8. \$14.99

■ **Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples**

by Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger

Now in paperback after selling more than 100,000 copies in hardcover, national bestseller *Simple Church* guides Christians back to the simple gospel-sharing methods of Jesus. Based on case studies of 400 American churches, Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger prove the disciple-making process is often too complex. Simple churches thrive by taking four ideas to heart: clarity, movement, alignment and focus.

Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4799-9. \$14.99

■ **The Queen of Sleepy Eye**
by Patti Hill

En route to college in the summer of 1975, sensible 17-year-old Amy gets stuck in small town Colorado when the 1958 Pontiac Bonneville driven by her insufferable mom, Francie, former queen of the Sleepy Eye, Minn., Corn Festival, surrenders to a mortally wounded transmission. Amy's life ends up very different than she planned. Both mother and daughter get the chance to do some real growing up. Later in life, the road to healing still has many miles to go when Amy and Francie travel back to Sleepy Eye in that old '58 coupe.

Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4750-4. \$14.99

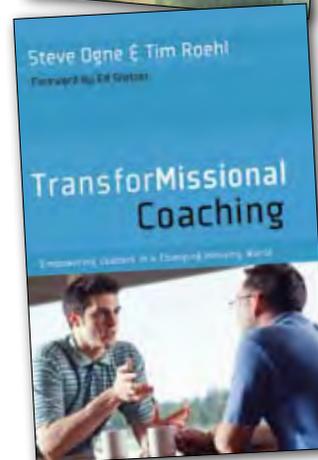
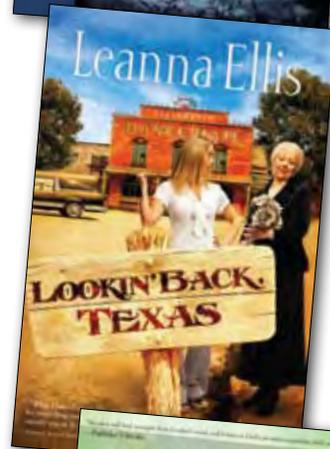
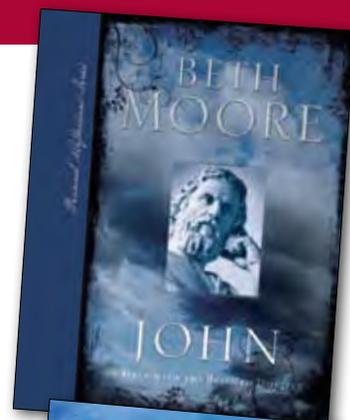
■ **The Frazzled Female: 30 Days to Finding God's Peace in your Daily Chaos with Devotional Journal**
by Cindi Wood

The Frazzled Female Devotional Journal is a delightful reformat of the previous book based on one of today's most popular Bible studies for women. Designed to guide every busy lady toward sanity, peace and a deeper, more vibrant relationship with God, the content is now presented as a 30-day reader divided into six working-week sections. Releases Sept. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4743-1. \$14.99

■ **TransforMissional Coaching: Empowering Leaders in a Changing Ministry World**

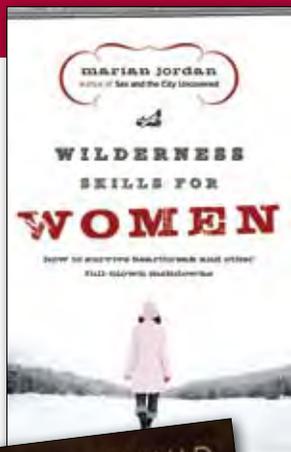
by Steve Ogne and Tim Roehl, foreword by Ed Stetzer

Even leaders need leading. In the context of this greatly changing world, ministry experts Steve Ogne and Tim Roehl have coined the phrase "transforMissional" to define the unique



Resources

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type of inspired coaching they offer. “The path that the Lord of the Harvest has designed sometimes takes us beyond our comfort zone and off the map of our experience,” they write. “We’ll help you understand how coaching helps leaders get traction and make progress in personal growth and ministry productivity.” Releases Sept. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4781-1. \$19.99

■ ***Wilderness Skills for Women: How to Survive Heartbreak And Other Full-Blown Meltdowns***

By Marian Jordan

So many heroes of the Bible had to endure some type of wilderness season in their life, a time of testing that was painful to endure but ultimately brought glory to God. In *Wilderness Skills for Women*, author Marian Jordan sees the same thing happening today as she and her friends still find themselves going through periods of isolation, temptation, sorrow and waiting. Jordan turns readers to God’s Word as the ultimate wilderness survival guide. Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4670-2. \$12.99

■ ***Forsaken***

by James David Jordan

When Simon Mason, the world’s best-known televangelist, receives threats from Muslim terrorists, he hires former Secret Service agent Taylor Pasbury to take charge of his security. When the terrorists strike, Taylor draws on all of her hard-knock toughness and training as she fights to save Simon and his daughter. Along the way, she discovers that she is not the only one who has done things she would like to forget. Releases Oct. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4749-0. \$14.99

■ ***Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God, Revised and Expanded***

By Henry Blackaby, Richard Blackaby and Claude King

The *Experiencing God* book has been revised and expanded with more than 70 percent of its material newly written. *Experiencing God* is based on seven Scriptural realities that teach us how to develop a true relationship with the Creator. Releases Sept. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4753-9. \$14.99

■ ***My All in All: Daily Assurance of God’s Grace***

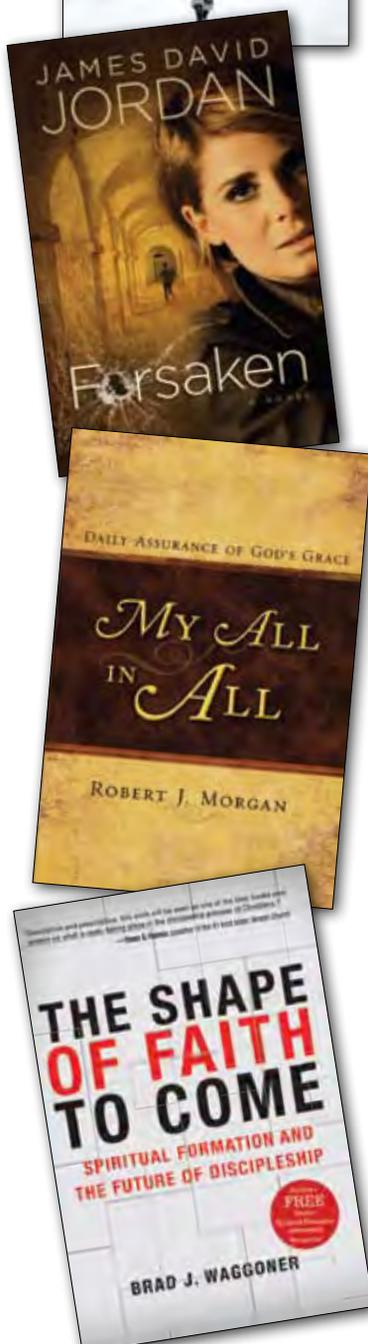
by Robert J. Morgan

Despite years of preaching, a few years ago that best-selling author Robert J. Morgan (*Then Sings My Soul*) began to note the frequent use of the word “all” in the Bible. Upon closer inspection, it appears to amplify many of God’s greatest truths, commands and promises nearly 6,000 times. *My All in All* is a 365-day devotional that assures readers of God’s purposes, power and grace. Releases Oct. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4663-X. \$19.99

■ ***The Shape of Faith to Come: Spiritual Formation and the Future of Discipleship***

by Brad J. Waggoner

Can we determine if our churches are producing Christians who look, think and act like true followers of Jesus Christ? In *The Shape of Faith to Come*, research expert Brad Waggoner and his team measure the beliefs and actions of 2,500 active Protestant churchgoers from across the country against seven key standards of biblical spiritual formation. The findings reveal the current state and potential forecast of spiritual formation in the U.S. Releases Oct. 15. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4750-4825-1. \$19.99





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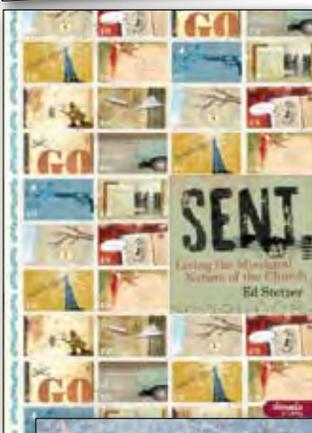
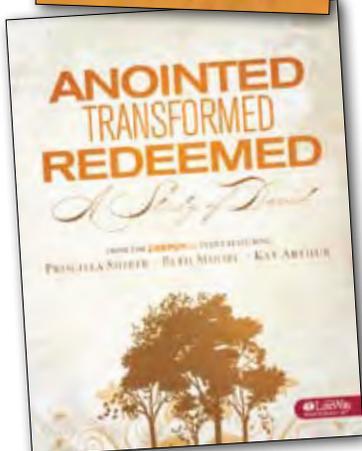
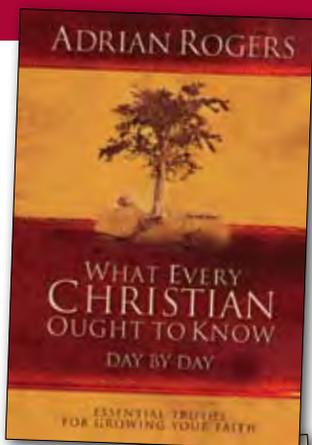
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■ *Shade*

by John B. Olson

A monstrous walking nightmare is pursuing graduate student Hailey Maniates across San Francisco to Golden Gate Park, where she is rescued by a towering homeless man. She seems able to read her rescuer's mind, but is it just a delusion? Many questions remain around Hailey and the man who saved her. What if he is a fantasy? What if he is the monster? Releases Oct. 1. Paperback. ISBN 0-8054-4734-2. \$14.99

■ *The Christmas Story*

by Rhona Davies, illustrations by Tommaso d'Incalci

The Christmas Story is a picture book retelling of Christ's birth in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago that is sure to catch the eyes and imagination of children throughout Advent season. The classic account is divided into 12 two-page readings that combine the interpretive brushstrokes of Italian painter Tommaso d'Incalci with the direct storyteller phrasing of English author Rhona Davies. A verse from the Holman Christian Standard Bible is also featured with each writing. Releases Oct. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4777-6. \$14.99

■ *What Every Christian Ought to Know Day by Day: Essential Truths for Growing Your Faith*

by Adrian Rogers

The internationally revered teaching of the late Adrian Rogers lives on in this day-by-day adaptation of his acclaimed final book, *What Every Christian Ought to Know*. Just as plants need essentials to grow – light, water and fertile soil – so do Christians who want to develop strong spiritual roots and bear good fruit. Releases Oct. 1. Hardcover. ISBN 0-8054-4800-4. \$14.99

Church Resources

■ *Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed: A Study of David*

from the Deeper Still event featuring Priscilla Shirer, Beth Moore and Kay Arthur

Three acclaimed Bible teachers explore their lives and the life of David, sharing compelling messages that connect with women. Divided into three segments of two lessons each. Priscilla talks about David as a young man, Beth teaches about David as a middle-aged man, and Kay discusses David as he faced later years. It's versatile for use in a retreat, women's Bible study or individual study settings. Releases in September. Member book, Product #0-0515-9143, \$12.95; DVD leader kit, Product #0-0508-9463, \$149.95; Audio CD set, Product #0-0515-9144, \$39.95

■ *Sent: Living the Missional Nature of the Church*

by Ed Stetzer

The Great Commission is about taking action; Christ wants us to always be seeking, serving and going. Stetzer explains what "being sent" looks like in the church today. (6 sessions) Releases in September. Member book, Product #0-0516-5166, \$7.95; Leader kit, Product #0-0512-6272, \$69.95

■ *YOU: Connect, Grow, Serve, Go!*

Culturally relevant Bible studies help believers connect, grow, serve and go to ultimately impact the world. It could be a great fit for your goal of developing believers. It's flexible enough for use in Sunday school or mid-week Bible study. Free online helps are available (including PowerPoint slides). Finally ... YOU. Quarterly. Releases in September. Product #0-0503-0553 \$3.50

■ **KNOWN**

This is a new comprehensive Sunday school and midweek resource. Magazine-format, this student guide presents relevant content and biblical teaching in three monthly issues per quarter. It's available in print or online with free online extras: insights and optional teaching ideas. For grades 7-12. Leader guide, Product #0-0512-1099, \$6.50; Student guide, Product #0-0515-9803, \$4.50; e-leader guide, midweek event, e-student devotionals and quarterly bundle are also available.

■ **BabyLife (2008-10 edition)**

A special issue from *ParentLife* celebrates the first two years of a baby's life. Parents will find information on key growth phases of their baby's development and care, practical advice and spiritual encouragement. It's a great resource for family ministries and as a gift for new parents. Releases biannually. Releases in September. Product #0-0508-5081, \$2.35 per copy

■ **Floor Puzzles**

These puzzles offer a great way to teach Bible stories to tactical learners. Our floor puzzles are also offered in money-saving sets. Releases in September. Holy Lands Map floor puzzle (K-3rd Grade), Product #0-0515-9905, \$15.99; The Nativity floor puzzle (K-3rd Grade), Product #0-0516-0680, \$15.99

LifeWay Worship

■ **Collections: *I Still Believe – Songs of Faith, Hope, & Redemption* arranged and orchestrated by Cliff Duren, SATB/Moderate**

This energetic collection from *Today's Southern Gospel* features 12 songs of this genre's leading vocal groups. Your choir and congregation will experience inspiring songs of worship from Austins Bridge, The Crabb Family, Gaither

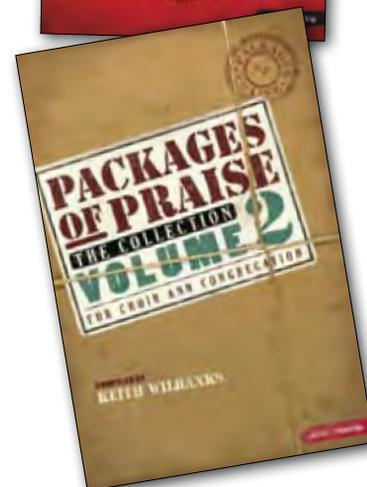
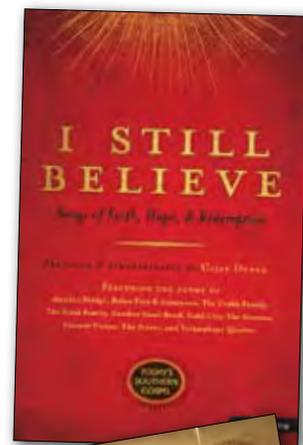
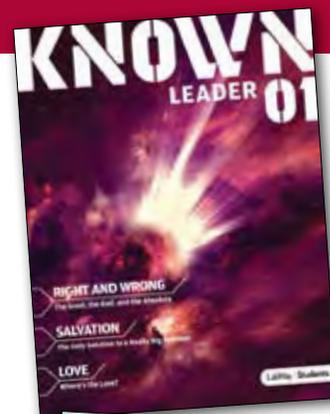
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compiled by Keith Wilbanks

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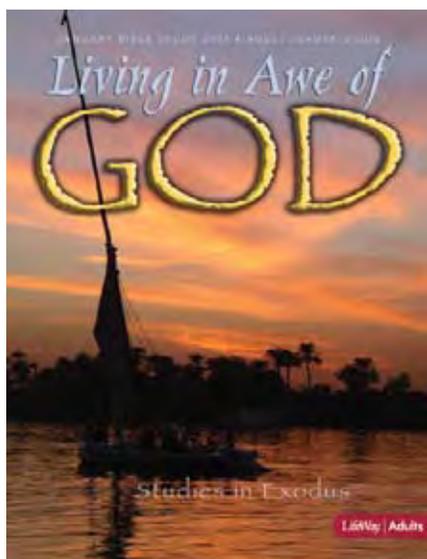
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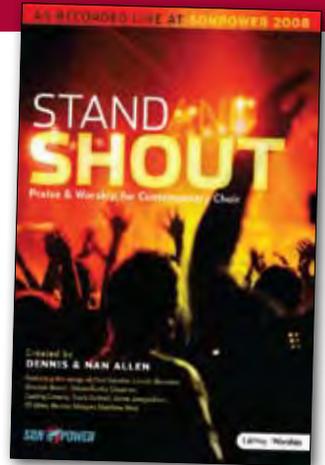
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Student and contemporary choirs alike will have plenty of reasons to stand and shout about the blessings of our Savior, Jesus Christ, with this collection of 13 praise and worship songs. New songs from LifeWay Worship songwriters and popular titles from artists such as Casting Crowns, Matthew West, 33 Miles and others are effectively blended together with sketches and Scripture resources so that worshipers have ample opportunities to thank God for His blessings. Optional cued notes in arrangements, an a cappella section, production notes and studio rhythm charts for praise bands are all included. SAT(B) choral book, Product #0-0511-0729, \$8.95; Listening CD, Product #0-0511-0815, \$16.98; Accompaniment CD, Product #0-0511-0816, \$90; Studio rhythm charts, Product #0-0511-0818, \$25;

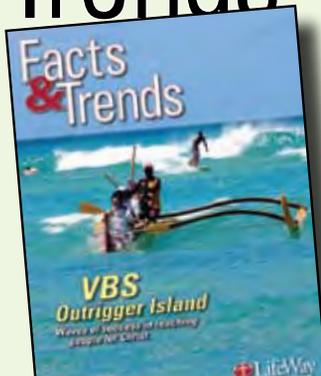
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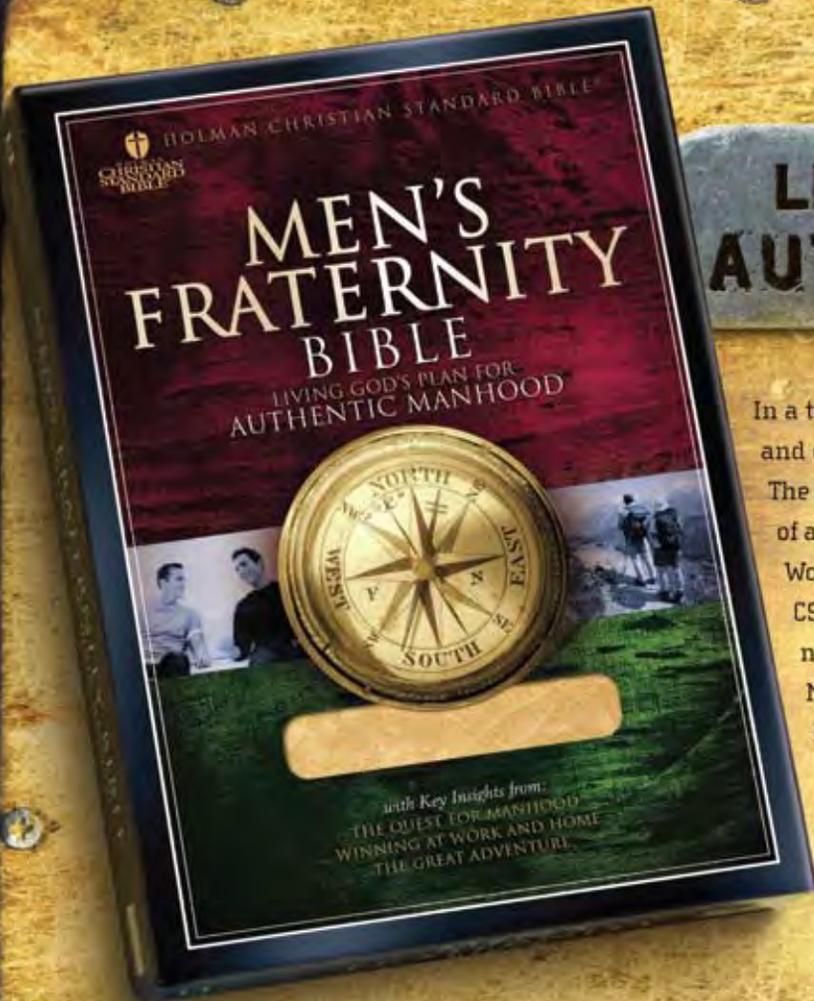
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