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Cover: Chinese characters that spell "China."

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FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

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

The unspoken power of pastoral priorities

In 1984 I was serving in my first pastorate in a rural church in southern Indiana, a dying church that had no recorded baptisms for the previous 26 years.

I took that statistical reality and began hammering members from the pulpit each Sunday, moving quickly from a prophetic voice (if I ever were one) to a voice of condescension and legalism. Then God began to deal with me.

He confronted me with my own hypocrisy, and He confronted me as a poor example for the people I was sent to love.

I quickly and painfully learned that leading as a pastor is far more than exegeting Scripture. It begins with a love for the people I serve. And then it follows with my own example of walking the Christian walk. On the last two matters, I barely had a passing grade.

In God's power, I determined to change. I would not merely speak of evangelism; I would live an evangelistic life. The Great Commission would not be some biblical theory; it would be a priority in my life.

The change began to take place. I no longer worried how many members were sharing Christ. I had to be an example of evangelism for the people to follow. Then I would have the credibility to be an exhorter to the members.

How well I remember the first person God allowed me to lead to Christ in that rural community – a “hopeless woman” who met the Savior. In a borrowed baptistry on a Sunday afternoon, I baptized her before the largest crowd anyone could remember in the church.

The next day I met with Steve, who had attended the service and was convicted by the Spirit. He accepted Christ, and then introduced me to his wife and friends. Before the week was over, three more people became followers of Christ.

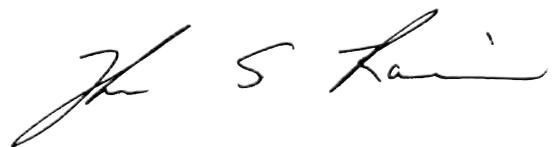
The little church of only seven members became a vibrant church of 70 in attendance in just one year.

I saw clearly the power of God shifting my pastoral priorities.

In this issue of *Facts and Trends*, LifeWay Research shares results of its latest study on pastoral priorities. The underlying theme of the research goes beyond what pastors think is important. It speaks to what is important to all Christians.

May this study remind us to examine what really matters. Let us first be a people who love God. Let us be a people who love others. And let us be a people who are passionately evangelistic, who “are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20, HCSB).

In His service,



Go to *Facts & Trends Online* to hear Thom Rainer speak about this church during last year's Discipleship Week.

Spring 2009

‘Critical ministries’ study reveals pastoral priorities, leadership challenges

by Mark Kelly

A new survey from LifeWay Research has uncovered some fascinating insights about pastors’ priorities in ministry and the challenges they face in finding effective leadership for key ministries.

The online study, titled “Critical Ministries and Their Leadership,” asked 801 Southern Baptist pastors about what they consider to be critical ministries in their churches, whether those ministries have effective leadership in place and how they relate to those ministry leaders.

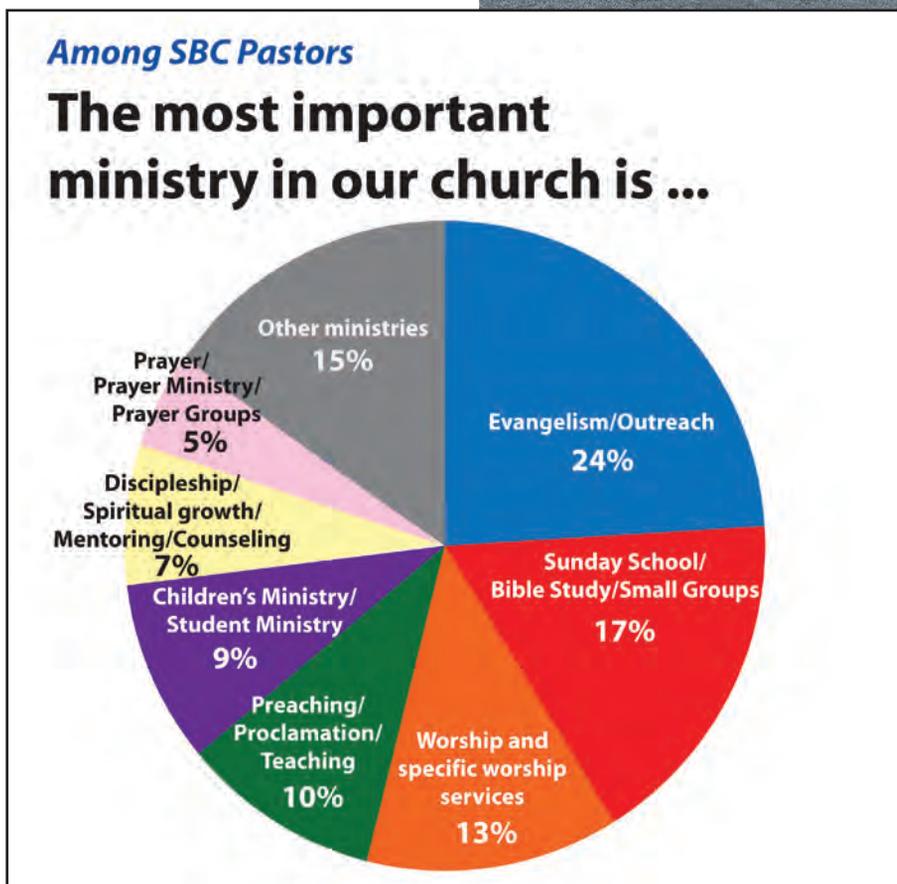
When pastors were asked to list up to five ministries in their order of importance, the largest group (24 percent) identified evangelism/outreach as the most important. The next six ministries identified as most important were Sunday school/Bible study/small groups (17 percent); worship/specific worship services (13 percent); preaching/proclamation/teaching (10 percent); children/students (9 percent); discipleship/spiritual growth/mentoring/counseling (7 percent); and prayer/prayer ministry/prayer groups (5 percent).

When a list of the five ministries mentioned most often was compiled, however, children/students moved to the top, identified as one of the five most important ministries by 85 percent of the respondents. The other four most-mentioned ministries were evangelism/outreach (68 percent); Sunday school/Bible study/small groups (53 percent); discipleship/spiritual growth/mentoring/counseling (37 percent); and worship/specific worship services (33 percent).

The next five ministries mentioned most often were missions (24 percent); community ministry/service/benevolence/recovery (22 percent); preaching/proclamation/teaching (20 percent); prayer/prayer ministry/prayer groups (13 percent); and music/choir (11 percent).

Which ministries a pastor considered most important varied significantly in churches of different sizes, said LifeWay Research Associate Director Scott McConnell.

“Evangelism is more likely to be considered a critical ministry among smaller churches,” McConnell said.



“Congregations with fewer than 100 in worship attendance are significantly more likely to list evangelism/outreach as an important ministry (72 percent) than churches with 250 or more in attendance (60 percent). On the other hand, midsize churches (worship attendance between 100 and 249) are significantly more likely to list children’s or student ministry as critical (90 percent) than churches that are smaller (83 percent) or larger (81 percent).”

Larger churches (worship attendance of 250 or more) are more likely to include worship or worship services as a critical ministry (46 percent) compared to small (30 percent) or midsize churches (33 percent), McConnell noted. Smaller churches (worship attendance under 100) are

significantly less likely to include missions or Sunday school/Bible study/small groups among their most important ministries.

Effective leadership

Pastors then were asked to indicate whether they had “an effective leader in place” for each of the critical ministries they had listed.

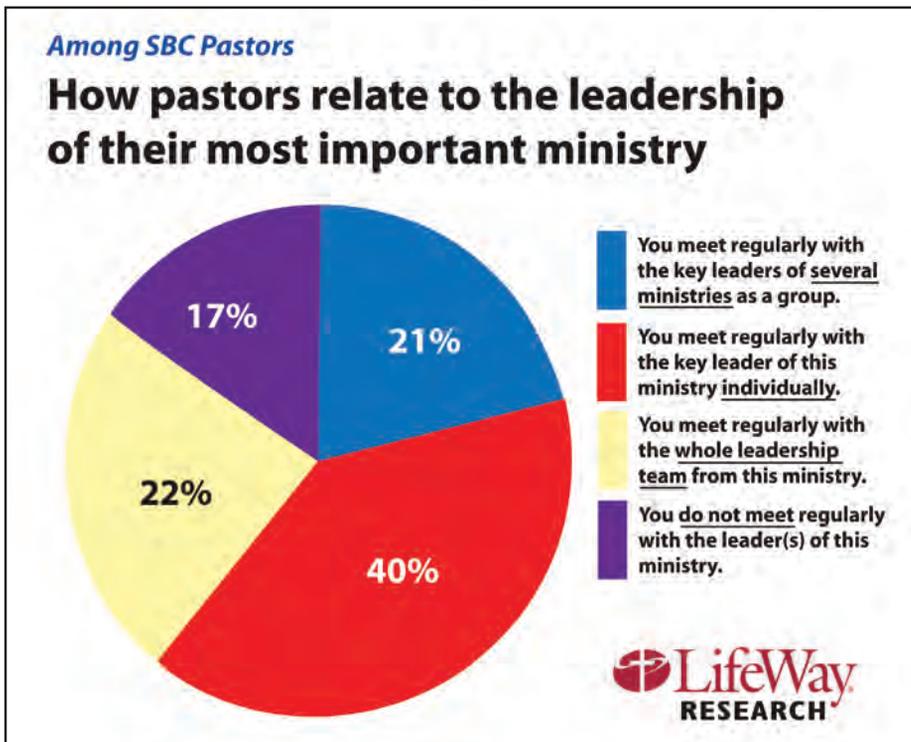
Taken as a group, more than three-fourths of pastors (78 percent) said they had an effective leader in place for the ministry they considered most important. For the next four ministries, however, pastors had an effective leader in place about two-thirds of the time, ranging from 69 percent for the second most important ministry to 64 percent for the fifth.

Again, the responses provided additional insight when grouped by church size, McConnell noted.

“Although smaller churches have fewer members from which to raise new leaders, three out of four smaller churches have an effective leader in place for their most important ministry,” he said. “For all five of the most important ministries, at least 60 percent of small churches have effective leaders in place.

“Larger churches have even more success getting leaders in place, with 84 percent having an effective leader in place for their most important ministry,” McConnell said. “Even for their fifth most important ministry, 72 percent of larger churches have an effective leader in place.”

Some ministries are more likely to have effective leaders in place, McConnell added. Among the five ministries mentioned most often, leaders are most likely to be in place for worship (82 percent) and children’s and/or student ministry (70 percent). The least likely ministry to have an effective leader in place is evangelism/outreach (56 percent).



Relating to leaders

The pastors also were asked how they personally related to leaders of their critical ministries. The options they were given: “You meet regularly with the key leaders of several ministries as a group;” “You meet regularly with the key leader of this ministry individually;” “You meet regularly with the whole leadership team from this ministry;” and “You do not meet regularly with the leader(s) from this ministry.”

Taken as a group, 40 percent of pastors indicated they met individually with the key leader of the ministry they considered most important. Twenty-two percent said they met with the entire leadership team for the most important ministry, while 21 percent said they met regularly with the key leaders of several ministries as a group. Only 17 percent said they did not meet regularly with the leader(s) of their most important ministry.

“Pastors of larger churches are more likely to meet regularly with leaders from the most important ministry in some way,” McConnell said. Only 8 percent do not meet regularly with the leader(s) of this ministry. Yet pastors of larger church are also more likely to meet regularly with the key leaders of several ministries as a group (31 percent).

The type of ministry also affects how pastors relate to ministry leaders, according to the data. Among the seven ministries most often mentioned, pastors are most likely to meet individually with worship leaders. The discipleship or spiritual growth leaders are most likely to miss out on regular meetings with the pastor (31 percent).

Implications

The survey has mixed implications for the church’s mission of making disciples, McConnell observed.

“The ministries that pastors find most critical to their church’s work reflect the functions of the church,” he said. “Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with those currently outside the church is and should be a top priority as pastors look to the future.

“While Southern Baptist pastors are quick to name evangelism as a priority, they indicated in their responses that they may struggle to get an effective leader in place to make it happen,” he added. “Almost half the pastors who list evangelism and outreach among their five most important ministries do not have an effective leader in place for this ministry.” ■

Methodology: Responses to the survey were weighted based on church size to minimize response bias. The sample provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed +3.4 percent for the total sample. The PowerPoint report, “Critical Ministries and Their Leadership,” is available at www.lifewayresearch.com.

WE RECOMMEND

- *Building Your Leadership Résumé* by Johnny M. Hunt and John C. Maxwell
- *Tools for an Essential Church – Church Manual* by Thom S. Rainer, Sam S. Rainer III and Dan Garland
- *Church Administration Handbook – Third Edition* by Bruce P. Powers

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.

Chinese New Testament is answer to LifeWay prayer

story by Polly House, photography by Kent Harville



Tim Jordan, executive editor with B&H Publishing Group, holds up a copy of the Chinese Standard Bible New Testament

An answered prayer for LifeWay is about to become a dream come true for potentially millions of Chinese Christians: a modern translation of the New Testament in their own language.

LifeWay's Holman Bible Publishers has printed 20,000 Chinese Standard Bible New Testaments, and copies are now available for sale in the United States, Canada and Brazil. It's being touted as the first direct Chinese translation by scholars from the original Greek.

"Having the opportunity to get the New Testament into the hands of Chinese-speaking people is a precious honor to us."

— Phill Burgess

“Our goal is that Chinese Christians would read this translation and find it useful,” said Phill Burgess, executive director of LifeWay’s Holman Bible Outreach International. “The translation that Chinese Christians have been using up to now, the Chinese Union Version, was translated into Chinese from an English copy in the 1920s. The language in that translation is archaic. This one is easier to understand since it relates to the modern Chinese language.”

LifeWay approached

In 2004, the Asia Bible Society approached LifeWay seeking a New Testament translated from the original Greek. LifeWay grabbed the opportunity to make this happen.

“This request was an answer to prayer,” Burgess said. “Having the opportunity to get the New Testament into the hands of Chinese-speaking people is a precious honor for us.”

Editing and designing the Bibles in China would be a difficult, time-consuming and expensive process, according to Tim Jordan, an executive editor with LifeWay’s B&H Publishing Group, which houses Holman Bible Publishers.

“In the future, LifeWay hopes to get legal approval from the Chinese government to distribute Bibles in China,” Jordan said. “Until then our primary focus will stay in the U.S., Canada and Brazil.

So, while the Bibles aren’t published in China, they are printed in Shenzhen, China, and transported back to LifeWay’s distribution center in Lebanon, Tenn.

Having a current readable Bible in Chinese is important, if based on nothing but the numbers. Worldwide, there are 1.17 billion native speakers of Chinese, compared with 350 million native English speakers.* While spoken Chinese varies from region to region, the written language is common to most readers.

“This new translation is an investment,” Jordan said. “We’ll watch and see what the demand for the new Bible is. As long as we feel like God is telling us ... we’re going to keep going.” ■

*Wikipedia figures

WHAT IS HBOI?

Holman Bible Outreach International is a LifeWay sponsored Bible society.

HBOI’s mission statement says it recognizes its individual and corporate responsibility to invite a searching world to find timeless truth within God’s Word. HBOI is designed to partner with churches, missions organizations and other outreach ministries by providing quality evangelistic and discipleship Bible products at prices low enough to maximize any ministry’s budget.

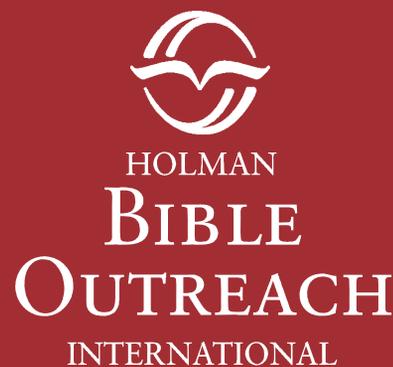
HBOI Bibles are packed with helpful tools including the Roman Road, daily devotionals and other resources to guide the readers into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and help disciple them in their faith walk.

All of HBOI’s Bibles are offered at low prices in order to help extend a group’s evangelism efforts.

HBOI is committed to and passionate about sharing the Gospel and welcomes the opportunity to partner with churches and ministries in reaching people for Christ

All of the HBOI New Testaments, Bibles and foreign translations are available for order online or by telephone or for purchase at LifeWay Christian Stores.

For more information on Holman Bible Outreach International, go to www.holmanbibleoutreach.org.



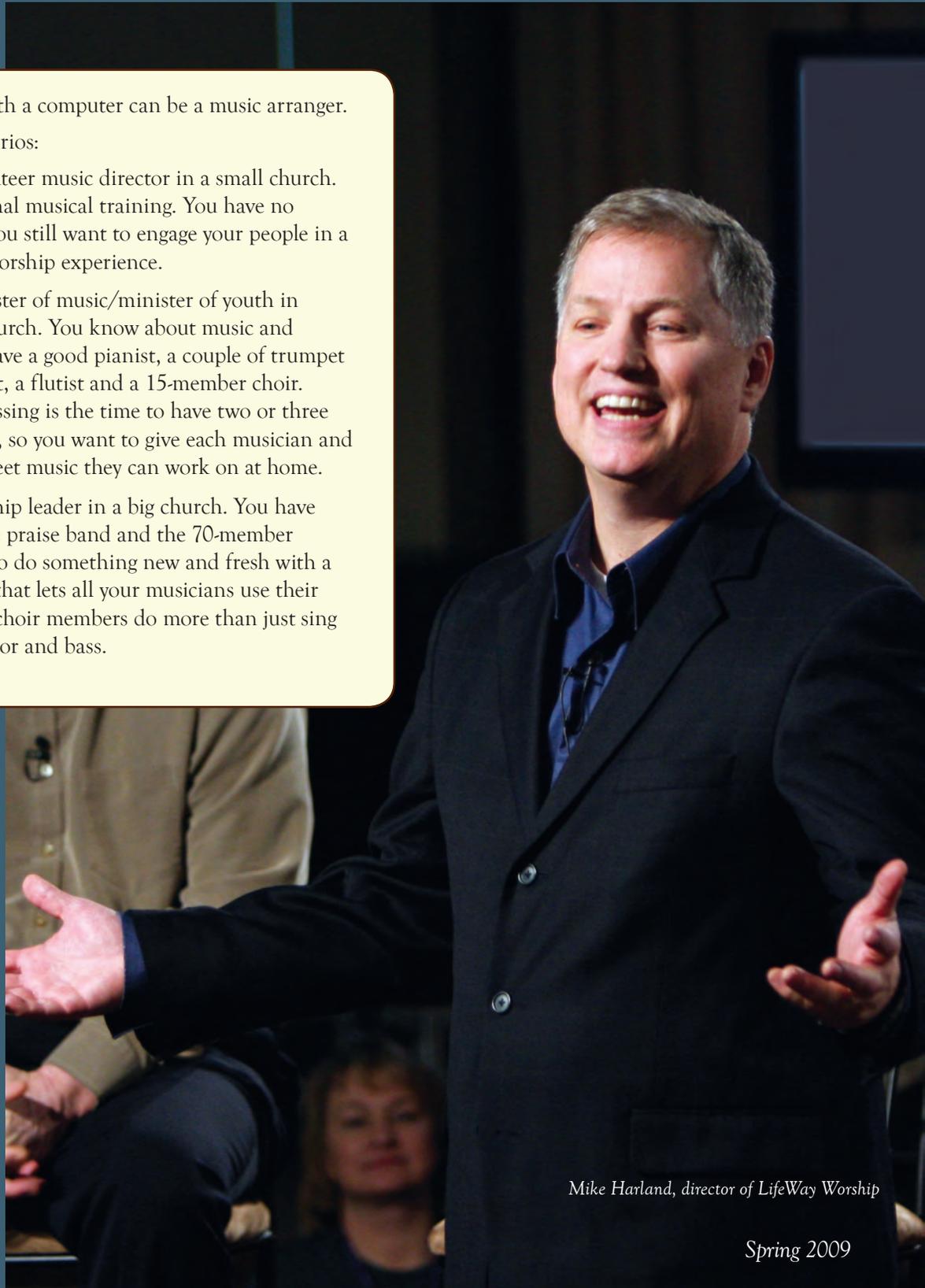
Arrange it yourself

LifeWay offers SongMap, the next generation in digital music

story by Rob Phillips and Polly House, photography by Kent Harville

Now anyone with a computer can be a music arranger. Three scenarios:

- 1) You are the volunteer music director in a small church. You have no formal musical training. You have no musicians. But, you still want to engage your people in a quality musical worship experience.
- 2) You are the minister of music/minister of youth in a medium-size church. You know about music and arranging. You have a good pianist, a couple of trumpet players, a violinist, a flutist and a 15-member choir. What you are missing is the time to have two or three rehearsals a week, so you want to give each musician and choir member sheet music they can work on at home.
- 3) You are the worship leader in a big church. You have the orchestra, the praise band and the 70-member choir. You want to do something new and fresh with a well-loved hymn that lets all your musicians use their talents and your choir members do more than just sing soprano, alto, tenor and bass.



Mike Harland, director of LifeWay Worship

With SongMap, you can

SongMap is the first Web-based technology that enables users to choose specific sections of songs – such as verses, choruses and transitions – in the keys they prefer and then download sheet music and audio files of the custom arrangements. The technology was developed to meet the needs of worship leaders who want more ease and flexibility arranging songs for church services.

LifeWay Worship unveiled the next generation in digital music at a ceremony in February at LifeWay's home office in Nashville, Tenn., introducing SongMap to Christian and mainstream music industry executives, worship and music ministers, and government and civic leaders.

SongMap is the culmination of three years of work involving hundreds of specialists ranging from theologians to software engineers, 150 studio musicians, and the recording of more than 900 of the most loved church songs in just 10 months – the largest known recording project in Nashville history. The result is a Web-based application that enables anyone to customize music and download the sheet music and audio files for as little as \$1.49. The selection of songs ranges from traditional hymns to contemporary worship songs, as well as such standards as “America the Beautiful.”

“SongMap is the first technology that gives users the ability to change songs on the Internet to create the perfect moment in their worship service,” said Mike Harland, director of LifeWay Worship. “Some churches need sheet music for a full rock band each week, while others rely solely on accompaniment tracks. We set out to find a way to help these churches create music that suits their congregations. In doing so, we created a new music technology that does what no other technology has done before.”

SongMap is the signature resource of the LifeWay Worship Project, a groundbreaking set of new products that includes *Baptist Hymnal* and *The Worship Hymnal*, released in 2008, along with PowerPoint presentations, video and audio files and sheet music.

SongMap was designed for use by anyone with an Internet browser, said Harland, and can be used with a Mac or PC.



LifeWay Worship's Stan Loyd, left, helps a guest put together a song using SongMap.

WHY NOT LIFEWAY?

LifeWay is recognized as one of the world's largest publishers of resources for churches, but as a leader in the marriage of music and technology?

Why not, said LifeWay Worship Director Mike Harland.

“If you look at the history of technology, the church has been there,” he said. “The printing press was invented to make the Bible available to people. The arts have glorified the Creator and adorned churches, with painters and sculptors using their newest tools. It's no surprise that this new technology – SongMap – has as its goal to enhance worship in our churches and bring praise to God.”



Mike Harland, right, responds to a question during a panel Q&A session. From left are Jeff Mikres, advanced systems engineer; Sonya Douglas, project manager for LifeWay Worship Project; and Patrick Watts, manager of marketing, events and Internet development for LifeWay Worship

Users simply register free of charge at www.lifewayworship.com. The cost to “map” a song – choose segments to create customized print music and accompaniment tracks – ranges from \$1.49 to \$1.99 per track (keyboard, guitar, etc.). Once a song is purchased, the user has immediate access to the corresponding MP3 file and sheet music, and the custom file is stored in the user’s online media library for future use. ■

FREE DOWNLOAD

LifeWay Worship wants you to see for yourself how simple SongMap is! Go to LifeWayWorship.com and set up an account. Create your own arrangement of your favorite song. At the checkout, use the promo code **LIFEWAYSONGMAP**. This promotion is only valid between now and July 5.* Users can receive two free downloads, maximum value \$2 each.

If you want to expand your download with more resources, you can pay using your church’s LifeWay account or a credit card.

*Code valid for registered LifeWayWorship.com users only and is non-transferable. Redeemable only at www.lifewayworship.com. One redemption per user.



Make your VBS more economical

10 tips on saving time, money and volunteers

A church on a tight budget can host a tremendous Vacation Bible School. All it takes is good planning and creativity.

Rhonda Vancleave, an editor in LifeWay's childhood ministry publishing area, offered tips on saving time, money and volunteers during LifeWay's VBS Preview event in January.

- 1. Co-op with other churches in your area.** Share decorations and supplies. Remember to coordinate your VBS dates so there's no overlap.
- 2. Take advantage of free VBS teacher/leader training from your local Baptist association.** Training is one thing that sets LifeWay's VBS apart. Last year LifeWay trained 700 state workers, who trained 8,000 associational workers, who went on to train 80,000 church workers.
- 3. Ask church members to buy or donate a specific item.** One church did an "Angel Tree"-type request. They put notes on a tree, asking for items like a VBS banner, name tags, etc. The key to this success is to offer a variety of prices so everyone has the opportunity to donate. Let them know your needs. You never know what someone may have stored away in the attic that could be shared for free.
- 4. Ask local businesses to sponsor some part of your VBS in exchange for publicity.** One church had a local dairy donate ice cream for all the children. Another church got coupons for a free kid's meal.
- 5. Use co-directors so you can spread out the responsibility.** Have a pre-planning director, a VBS week director and a follow-up director. Spread it around so no one has to be overwhelmed.

2009 VBS

LifeWay offers two Vacation Bible School options for 2009. The main line is *Boomerang Express: It All Comes Back to Jesus*, set in the Australian Outback. The second line is *Club VBS: Truth Trek*, set at an archaeological dig. For more ideas and information on both lines, go to www.lifeway.com/vbs. In addition, check out LifeWay VBS on Facebook.

Children from Brentwood (Tenn.) Baptist Church sing the worship songs during a VBS Preview event at LifeWay.



Ken Hindman, Brentwood (Tenn.) Baptist Church; and Phyllis Nicholson and Peggy Lewis, New Union Baptist Church, Dayton, Tenn., visit and sample VBS snacks.

FTO: MORE ON VBS

Go to Facts & Trends Online to see articles on successful follow-up for your VBS and how LifeWay's VBS enrolls about 1 in 16 American children.

BABY KANGAROO

You can't go wrong with cute furry animals. Baby kangaroo Arana was a special guest at LifeWay's VBS Preview and drew quite an impressive crowd. While not everyone is lucky enough to work with Kentucky Down Under and get a baby kangaroo, anyone can try something unexpected and over the top. The benefits of a good publicity stunt may surprise you.



6. Look at what you realistically can do. If most of your volunteers have 9-5 jobs, plan an evening VBS when these people can help. If you don't have someone who can do the themed snacks every night, just do them one night as a special treat.

7. Involve all age groups from the church. Enlist the senior adult men to be parking lot security and hall monitors. Enlist senior adult ladies as VBS prayer partners by providing them with the names of each of the teachers and students. Ask them to pray by name for everyone. You just may find them to be your most ardent supporters. Enlist your teenagers to help teach and lead recreation.

8. If you are in an area with year-round school, make adjustments to when you offer VBS. Have it at night or during spring or fall break. You could even spread it out over five Saturdays.

9. Lengthen the VBS day. If most of the parents in your church have jobs and can't manage transportation for their children for a three-hour morning VBS, and you prefer not to do an evening VBS, extend the day. Offer a light lunch, followed by sports, crafts, rest time, field trips or even a scavenger hunt. This can be a great time to work on the VBS musical, too.

10. Do the missions portion of VBS. Sometimes churches cut out the missions part if they have less than three hours. But you can use it during snack time, during a Wednesday night service, or at another time. Don't just

leave it out. Vancleave said she knows of many churches that don't do GAs, RAs or other missions groups anymore, so VBS might be the best opportunity to share missions information with the children. ■

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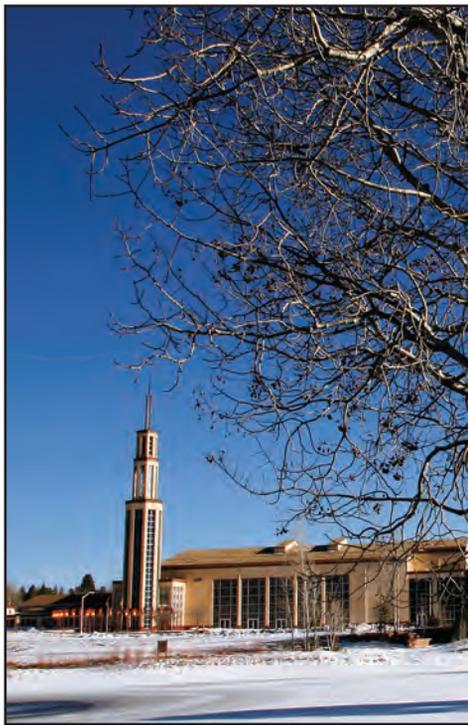
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Glorieta to launch new operational model



“Our goal in launching a new operational model is to ensure the long-term ministry impact of Glorieta, even in economic downturns.”

— Byron Hill

owing to remain a viable ministry in a tough economy, LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center will implement a new operational model Oct. 1. The conference center, located near Santa Fe, N.M., has served Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians for more than half a century.

Under the new model, Glorieta will continue to offer the same facilities and level of service from mid-May through September. From October through mid-May, only New Mexico Hall and Hall of States will be in operation with a focus on more effectively serving smaller off-season groups. The only planned exception to the smaller groups

will be Fuge Winter Camps, which will continue to be offered four times during the winter months.

“We are adjusting operations to better fit demand,” said Byron Hill, LifeWay’s executive director of conference centers. “With a focus on smaller off-season events such as ministry staff and board retreats, our new operations plan will provide a more efficient model throughout the year.”

New Mexico Hall encompasses guest registration, the Chuck Wagon restaurant, Holy Grounds Coffee Shop, a bookstore, offices and meeting rooms. Hall of States, the newest upgrade at Glorieta, is a modern 60-room hotel built in 2006.

“Our goal in launching a new operational model is to ensure the long-term ministry impact of Glorieta, even in economic downturns,” said Hill, adding the new

operational model will help ensure the continued year-round operation of the Glorieta ministry in a challenging economic environment.

Glorieta director Hal Hill sees the new plan enabling a stronger off-season focus on ministry. “We believe Glorieta is a place in fall and winter where smaller groups – ministry teams, executive leaders and so on – will find excellent lodging, dining and meeting space, all in the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountains.”

He added that the plan will not impact the center’s newly launched summer camps, Camp Glorieta for Boys and Camp Glorieta for Girls. In fact, in 2010 Glorieta will expand its camp offerings with the introduction of family camps.

The move to a new operational model will result in the reduction of full-time staffing by roughly one-half (from 44 to 21) by Oct. 1. Severance packages will be offered to employees whose positions are being eliminated. A number of impacted employees will be able to retire while other employees may have opportunities to continue as temporary employees.

“In the short time that I have been at LifeWay, I have witnessed first-hand significant improvements in facilities, the growth of our camp ministry, and sold-out events for youth and adults. Our hope is that these ministries will only grow stronger in the days ahead,” said LifeWay President Thom Rainer.

Glorieta has undergone major capital improvements in recent years. In addition to the newly built Hall of States, there has been renovation to Holcomb Auditorium and its adjacent meeting rooms, to all youth dormitories, and to the Chaparral, Texas and Oklahoma hotels. ■



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LifeWay | Adults

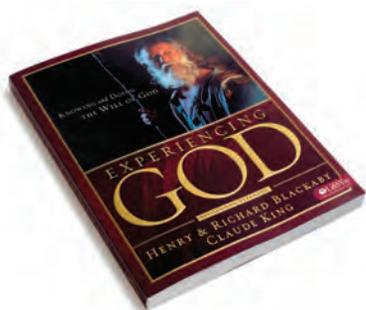
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Study it again or for the first time.

For nearly two decades God has used this Bible study to invite people to join Him in what He is doing. While many people simply ask God to bless their plans, this study teaches believers to pray to and hear from God and to join God in accomplishing what He purposes to do. The classic study is now revised and offers many new features, such as new DVD messages from authors Henry and Richard Blackaby and a new unit 12 with lessons on experiencing God in your marriage, with your children, and in your marketplace. There are also new applications and stories—from Angola Prison inmates earning seminary degrees to the spiritual and economic rebirth of a poor Appalachian community.

God has even more work to do. Won't your church join Him?



Experiencing God, Revised Member Book

by Henry and Richard Blackaby and Claude King

Guides learners to experience the kind of relationship with God through which they come to know and do His will. Through examination of biblical and contemporary illustrations, participants will understand and apply seven realities of experiencing God. Your church will better function as the body of Christ as members understand how to experience God as a church. *Member Book* also available in Spanish. (13 sessions)

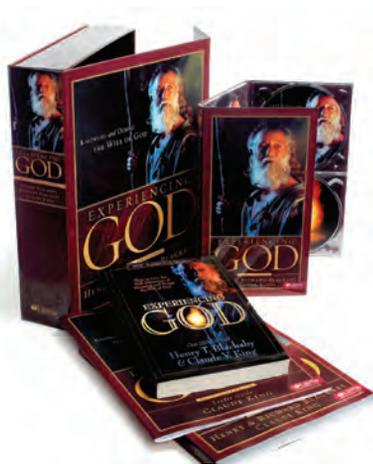
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Experiencing God, Revised Leader Guide

by Claude King

Contains administrative helps to facilitate a study of *Experiencing God, Revised* using the *Member Book* and tools in the *Leader Kit*. It includes step-by-step guidance for an introductory session and 12 small-group sessions that correspond to the units in the *Member Book*. Each session's plans also include insights that will help leaders respond to questions that may arise.

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Experiencing God, Revised DVD Leader Kit

Includes one *Member Book*, one *Leader Guide*, one B&H Group paperback book, five DVDs with twelve 30-minute messages and bonus features, and one CD-ROM for leaders with additional leader helps for promoting the study and conducting an *Experiencing God* Weekend or a churchwide spiritual-growth emphasis.

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by Henry and Richard Blackaby

Six CDs with twelve 30-minute audio messages taken from the DVDs.

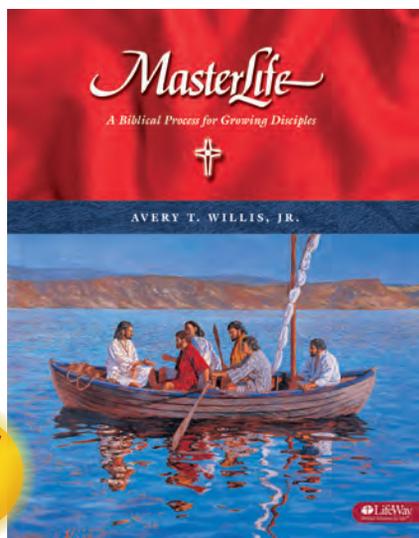
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on
DVD!



MasterLife

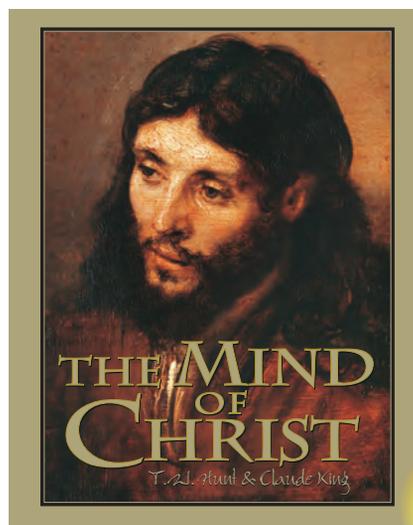
by Avery T. Willis Jr.

Guides new and experienced believers to develop a lifelong, obedient relationship with Jesus Christ using a systematic approach. Participants will be encouraged to master living in the Word, prayer, personal purity, witnessing, and other key disciplines of faith. The *Book Set* contains all four *Member Books* at a savings. *Leader Kit* includes the 224-page *Leader Guide* and three DVDs. DVD 1 helps train leaders. DVDs 2 and 3 provide six presentations and other leader helps for use during the small-group sessions. (4 books, 6 sessions each)

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Leader Guide	001116288	\$15.95
Leader Kit	005157084	\$74.95
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Member Books are also available separately:

MasterLife 1: The Disciple's Cross	001116284	\$9.95
MasterLife 2: The Disciple's Personality	001116285	\$9.95
MasterLife 3: The Disciple's Victory	001116286	\$9.95
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Now
on
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The Mind of Christ Member Book

by T.W. Hunt and Claude King

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5) is the basis of this study. Imagine the difference in your members' lives when they learn how Jesus' mind worked and how the Holy Spirit can transform them into the image of Christ by teaching them to think and act as He did. Also available in Spanish.

(13 sessions)

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The Mind of Christ Leader Kit

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2. **DVD Conference.** Four DVDs featuring author T.W. Hunt and a *Viewer Guide* provide the tools needed to lead an eight-session conference.

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Jesus didn't command us to make decisions or members, but disciples. These foundational resources help new and growing believers understand and begin developing six disciplines for following Christ in their daily lives.

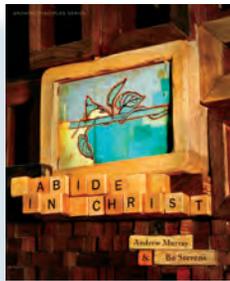


The Call to Follow Christ Six Disciplines for New and Growing Believers

by Claude King

Ground new believers in habits that will last a lifetime. Suggestions for small-group sessions and one-to-one mentoring are included. Includes a music CD by Damaris Carbaugh with seven songs corresponding to the weekly topics. Daily, interactive devotionals average 10 to 15 minutes. (7 sessions)

Member Book 001303666 \$9.95

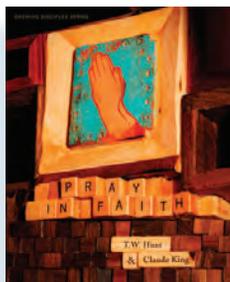


Abide in Christ

by Andrew Murray and Bo Stevens

Based on Andrew Murray's *The True Vine* and delivered in a contemporary, interactive format. Offers practical lessons from the parable in John 15 to help Christians experience love and friendship in relationship with Christ. Leader guide included. (6 sessions)

Member Book 001316387 \$9.95



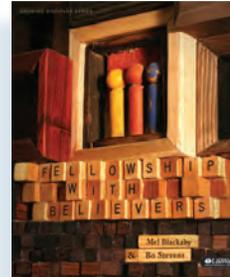
Pray in Faith

by T.W. Hunt and Claude King

Revised edition of *In God's Presence*. Participants learn to hear from God in prayer; respond to God through confession, praise, worship, and thanksgiving; and join God's work through petition and intercession.

Leader guide included. (6 sessions)

Member Book 005035525 \$9.95

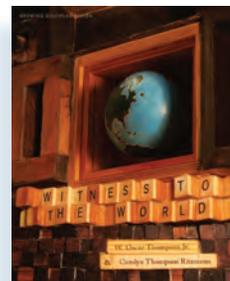


Fellowship with Believers

by Mel Blackaby and Bo Stevens

Helps believers understand the nature of the church as a whole and how it functions as the body of Christ. Guides them to develop healthy relationships, spend time with other believers, help one another grow strong in the Lord, and serve together to accomplish His kingdom purposes in the world. Leader guide included. (6 sessions)

Member Book 005085766 \$9.95

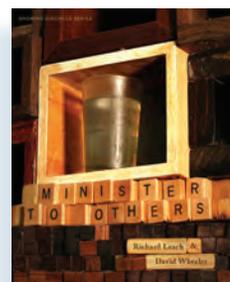


Witness to the World

by W. Oscar Thompson with Carolyn Thompson Ritzmann

Based on the classic book *Concentric Circles of Concern* by the same authors, this study focuses on relational evangelism. Disciples are challenged to recognize their ever-growing concentric circle and to share their faith with family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and even strangers. Leader guide included. (6 sessions)

Member Book 005085767 \$9.95



Minister to Others

by Richard Leach and David Wheeler

Helps new and growing believers and churches respond to Christ's call to a life of service. Reveals how God draws lost people to faith in His Son through acts of service and ministry evangelism. Takes believers on a journey of developing a servant lifestyle. Includes leader guide as well as practical ideas for ministry to others. (6 sessions)

Member Book 005085769 \$9.95

Look for the final volume, **Live in the Word**, releasing in June 2009.

For a free online webinar, visit www.lifeway.com/growingdisciples.

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LifeWay makes a 'birth to heaven' promise

by Brooklyn Noel Lowery



Every Sunday morning churches throughout the country open their doors to an extraordinary range of individuals. From newborns to octogenarians and beyond, decades of individual life experience arrive at churches seeking, among other things, meaningful worship, fellowship and discipleship.

Recent studies by LifeWay Research indicate that, in particular, more effective discipleship is increasingly an area of focus for many church leaders and members.

But there is work to be done.

Later this year, LifeWay's church resources area will introduce LifeSpan, a new strategy intended to better meet the need for effective disciple-making. LifeSpan is a strategy designed to streamline curriculum throughout all the age groups, so that the full biblical canon is communicated.

"LifeSpan is nothing more than a promise to churches that

“If parents come to the church and ask, ‘What will our child be learning?’ I want to have something to show them.”

— *Pastor B.J. Bennett*

LifeWay can take care of your spiritual needs from birth to heaven,” said Bret Robbe, LifeWay’s director of leadership and adult publishing.

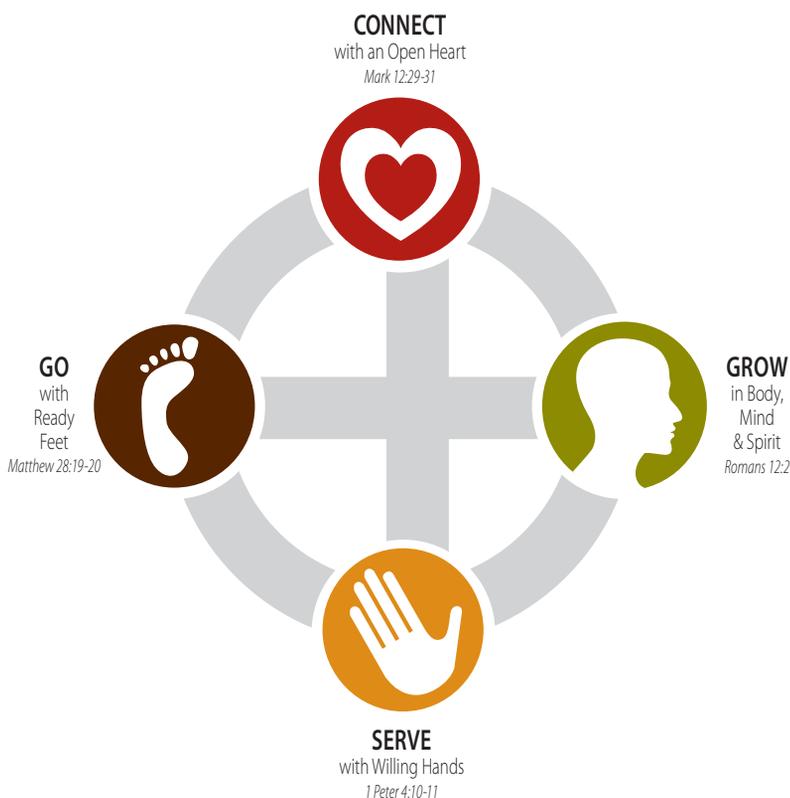
According to Robbe, traditional discipleship in many churches has unfortunately been conducted through a “potpourri approach.” The term, he explained, characterizes the way Sunday school classes often bounce from one curriculum to another, or from one hot topic to the next, without considering how those topics connect or whether students are receiving a complete biblical education.

“If you’re doing a potpourri approach to God, you cannot promise people they’re going to get even the basic Bible stories,” Robbe said. “Most churches don’t have a strategy when it comes to [Sunday school curriculum], and they cannot guarantee their people are getting the biblical foundations they need.”

Robbe explained that LifeSpan is not a new curriculum, but is rather an initiative around which all LifeWay curriculums are based. Children’s curriculums are built upon LifeWay’s Levels of Biblical Learning ministry tool with a theme of “Hear, Know, Do;” student curriculums are built upon the Known strategy that leads students to deepen their faith through the “Know, Own, Known” theme; and adult curriculums focus on creating fully mature Christians using the theme “Connect, Grow, Serve, Go.”

In the field

Tom Crocker is a veteran church consultant who works primarily in Mississippi. His job is to “come alongside churches and support them in their ministry ... and be an advocate for their ministry needs back to LifeWay.”





Crocker said many church leaders simply are looking for the next step in the ministry, and he expects LifeSpan to help meet that need.

“LifeSpan is a tool to help churches understand the big picture,” Crocker said. “It will really help make sense out of where they’re trying to go and give them a framework for different age groups to have conversations.”

Veteran senior pastor B.J. Bennett said he can see the potential benefits of the LifeSpan promise. His church, First Baptist Church of Ridgeland, Miss., welcomes about 200 people each week to worship.

“My concern has always been what are children going to look like by the time they get through sixth grade,” Bennett said. “How will they study their Bible? What will their understanding be?”

“And after that, where will they be spiritually after high school or after college? If parents come to the church and ask, ‘What will our child be learning?’ I want to have something to show them.”

Planned strategy

Robbe said LifeWay plans to begin a pilot implementation of the LifeSpan strategy in 12 churches this fall, but he knows that redirecting the current Sunday school trends could take several years.

Still, he said that church leaders already have expressed excitement about LifeSpan.

“Churches want to know for sure, ‘Is the Bible being taught?’” Robbe said. “Pastors have an obligation to teach the Bible not just from the pulpit, but in classrooms as well.

“This is a planned strategy of spiritual development from birth to heaven.” ■

“Pastors have an obligation to teach the Bible not just from the pulpit, but in the classrooms as well.”

– Bret Robbe

MORE ONLINE

For more information about adult curriculum and a short audio Webcourse about LifeSpan, visit LifeWay.com/adultstrategy. For more information about the other age-level curriculums, visit LifeWay.com/kidspromise and LifeWay.com/studentstrategy.

LifeWay socializes

story by Kelly Shrout

John Cade, Internet producer in LifeWay's student ministry area, has a lot of friends – more than 700 of them, to be exact.

Just visit Facebook and search the word “LifeWay” and Cade’s profile is the first to pop up. He’s known as “John at LifeWay” in his online profile and uses his network of global contacts to strategically connect with student leaders for ministry purposes.

With more than 175 million Facebook and 2.2 million Twitter users worldwide, LifeWay is harnessing the power of online networking to better serve customers.

“When we connect with people online, they see that we are not a corporation with closed walls,” said Cade, whose main job is to create an online presence for the student ministry team. “Social networking helps to break down the barriers between us and our customers. Student pastors see that I am a legit person who cares deeply about them. I am available to answer their questions all the time. Social networking also allows me to have a two-way conversation with people who use our resources.”

Social networking is often called micromarketing, the new trend that designs marketing strategies for the benefit of a select group.

Cade targets student ministers and Facebook provides an instant exchange of ideas detailing latest trends and resources for student workers.

“Our goal in student ministry is to help student ministers do their job better,” Cade said. “Social networking is one way we can support ministers. Through Facebook and Twitter, we are able to respond directly to questions, concerns and even negative feedback when appropriate.”

Skeptics may question the ability to develop customer relationships over the Internet, but Cade said he believes “you can lay the groundwork for an authentic relationship through social networking sites.” He adds that student conference attendees often recognize him from his Facebook and Twitter profiles and are quick to begin a conversation with him.



At the top: John Cade's facebook home page.

From Facebook to Ning

Dwayne McCrary, from LifeWay's church resources division, is expanding his Facebook audience to Ning.com with the goal of growing better Sunday school teachers.

Ning is an online tool that allows users to create their own social Websites and social networks.

McCrary works on *Extra!*, the companion piece for dated Sunday school lessons, and expects to create an online environment where Sunday school teachers share tips and best practices, ultimately to develop better teachers.

Forums, real-time dialogues, videos and additional resources for teachers will enhance Sunday school lessons, growing better disciples of Christ.

McCrary is so confident social networking will help promote spiritual change that he has placed his stamp of approval – an icon of his face – on the social Website.

“My face is on this Website and it helps churches know we at LifeWay are people,” he said. “They see our faces on these sites and know that we’re not a building or an institution. We are people they can trust. And when people trust us, they continue to use our resources.”

Promoting prayer

Janell Fadler in LifeWay's leadership training and events traveled to Rwanda four months ago with a LifeWay mission team and used social networking to organize prayer support.

Fadler, who was once skeptical of social networking sites, distributed prayer requests and updated real-time information while in Rwanda through

the group she set up on Facebook.

She also learned how fast social networking groups could grow once information posted.

“There were four other team members who had accounts on Facebook and they sent a note to all their Facebook friends to join in and pray for us,” she said, mentioning that more than 80 people joined the online prayer team.

“By posting the group online we even made a brief connection with a relief worker from Rwanda.”

The benefit of real-time updates was invaluable, she added, especially when immediate prayers were needed.

“A few of us got pretty sick while we were on the trip and we were able to inform our team how to pray specifically,” she said. “The next time I go on a mission trip, I will create another prayer group on Facebook for sure.”

A thumb click away to a network of millions

No social Website does real-time updates better than Twitter, the far-reaching microblogging trend.

Pam Case, director of LifeWay Women, reluctantly stumbled into the world of Twitter when her church planter husband encouraged her to give it a try as a way to stay connected with other pastors'



Photo from the Rwanda missions page on Facebook.

FEEDBACK

Let us know how your church is using social media. Send a post to the LifeWay News Facebook page or shoot us an e-mail at factsandtrends@lifeway.com.

ONLINE Facebook

Among the LifeWay-related Facebook pages and groups are:

- LifeWay News
- LifeWay VBS
- GloriRidge
- Love Dare Bible Study by LifeWay
- Threads
- LifeWay Worship Project
- LifeWay Student Ministry
- LifeWay Marriage & Family
- Pure Enjoyment (B&H Fiction)
- LifeWay Christian Store
- LifeWay Adult Extra!

ONLINE

Twitter

Among the LifeWay-related Twitter pages are:

- Thom Rainer
- edstetzer
- StudentMinistry
- Sunday_School
- LifeWayWomen
- destinationcomm (Serendipity by LifeWay)
- RobPhil (LifeWay News)
- Threadsmedia
- FUGECamps
- LifeWayDigital
- domoremistry (stewardship/envelope services)

Ning

Among the LifeWay-related groups on Ning are:

- LifeWay nExtra
- LifeWay VBS

wives. She soon discovered that Twittering does what social networking is designed to do – connect individuals who share common interests.

Case saw the business value of connecting with so many like-minded individuals who care deeply about women’s ministry that she added an additional Twitter page for LifeWay Women.

With notice spread mostly by word of mouth, LifeWay Women’s Twitter page has more than 225 followers. Case said updating messages on both her own Twitter page and LifeWay Women’s page is essential to the success of the site.

“In order for this type of social networking to be beneficial, you have to be engaged,” said Case, who “tweets” to more than 330 followers throughout the day at www.twitter.com/pamcase. “Twittering is a great way to stay connected 24/7 with co-workers and with churches.”

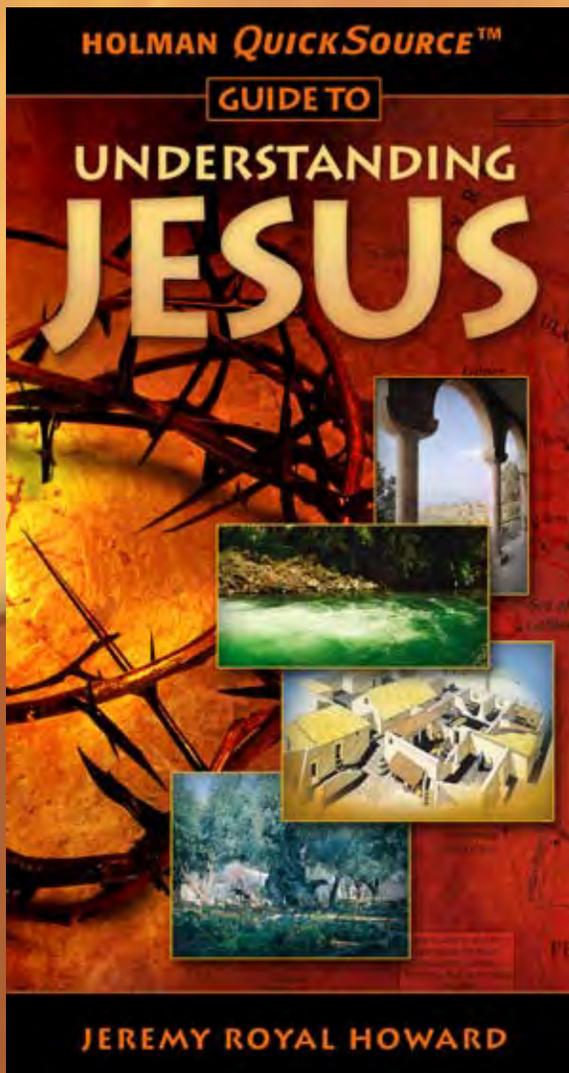
Specifically, Case can keep her finger on the pulse of women’s ministry around the globe. It is a way for her to communicate with other leaders about the issues that impact women’s ministry.

“Twitter is breaking down the walls and reinforcing the idea that we are all real people doing real work for the purpose of making Christ’s name known,” she added. “It is a way to let the churches know that we at LifeWay are real people who love Jesus like crazy.” ■

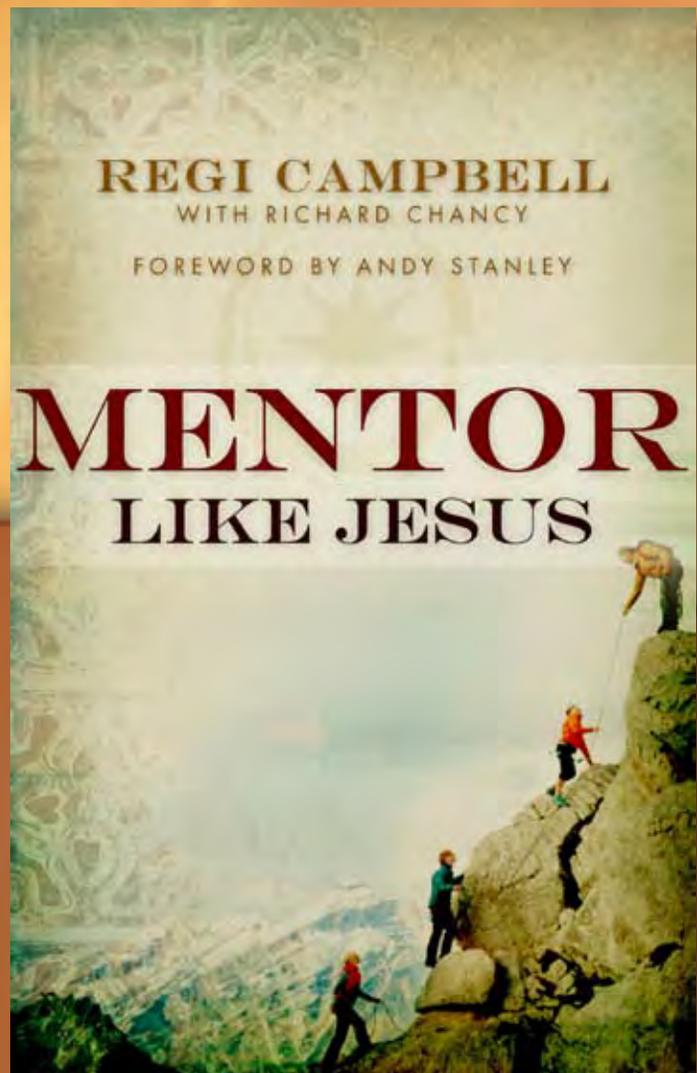


Pam Case’s profile picture on Twitter

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Rec Lab focuses on ministry combining physical, spiritual

story by Brooklyn Noel Lowery, photography by Kent Harville

Playtime could save your life. At least that's what leaders at LifeWay's Rec Lab training event wanted conference attendees to understand about sports and recreation ministry.

"The activity is secondary," said John Garner, longtime Rec Lab speaker and conference host. "Sharing the Gospel in an intentional way is the primary purpose. If you're just there to play games, you can do that at the city park. Life is too short, and the Gospel is too important."

About 200 people from as far away as Albany, N.Y., gathered in San Antonio in January for Rec Lab, a conference LifeWay has been hosting annually since the mid-1960s. Rec Lab is a training event designed to offer

tips, trends and networking opportunities to individuals who work in sports and recreation ministry. This area of ministry encompasses everything from church softball leagues and sports camps to family festivals and father-son game nights.

Because the ministry is so diverse, Rec Lab attendees arrived with a variety of needs and hopes for the conference.

"The face of my church is older," said Stacey Smith, a first-time Rec Lab attendee and minister of recreation at First Baptist Church, Madison, Miss. "I'm really looking for activities that I could offer to senior adults."

Before he had even attended the "Senior adult 65+" breakout session, Smith learned

The "Running Man" game was a hit among the participants at Rec Lab 2009.



about In His Grip, a golf ministry program founded by Rec Lab speaker Scott Lehman. After listening to Lehman's presentation during the "In His Grip" breakout session, Smith said the program sounded promising since golf was an activity he could use as both a fellowship and an outreach opportunity at his church.

"I realize recreation ministry is probably one of the biggest front doors we have," Smith said. "The nature of the ministry means we can provide things the music minister can't. We're able to get out of the building and onto the field."

Like recreation ministry, the conference offered a wide range of seminars and topics. Organized into various tracks, including sports, outdoor and adventure recreation, men's ministry, and many others, attendees chose to follow a particular subject throughout the 10 track times or learned a little something about everything.

Eddie Robertson is the minister of recreation at First Baptist Church, Spartanburg, S.C. He has lost count of how many Rec Lab events he has attended - he said it was "eight or so" - and the conferences have made a positive impact on his ministry.

"When I first came to Rec Lab, I felt kind of isolated, like I was out there on my own trying to make recreation ministry happen," Robertson said. "But I came and found other people who were turning sports into ministry. It was encouraging."

Robertson represented a significant group of Rec Lab veterans, but first-timers showed up as well. In fact, Garner said that first-time attendees make up a growing percentage of the total Rec Lab attendance each year.

"We live in a leisure-driven culture," Garner said, "and pastors are looking for a way to tap into that mentality. They see other churches having success with a recreation ministry and they send people [to Rec Lab] and tell them, 'Go find out what this is all about.'"

What it's about

During his breakout session "What is this work and how do I get started?" Garner told attendees that recreation ministry requires leaders who can work with anyone from preschoolers to senior adults.

More than that, it requires leaders who recognize the possibilities and potential importance of what they do.

"People may not know the church, and they may not know Jesus, but everyone knows sports."

– John Garner



Scott Lehman, founder and president of In His Grip Golf Association, shows the proper club position to Warren Gorman, director of recreational outreach at Byne Memorial Baptist Church, Albany, Ga.

WE RECOMMEND

- *Recreation and Sports Ministry* by John Garner
- *Operating Manual for Recreation/Sports Ministry Centers* (downloadable)
- *Sports Ministry for Churches* by Tommy Yessick (downloadable)

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.



Breakout group leader Bobby Shows of Holt's Summit, Mo. (in red shirt) introduces himself to (left to right) Mark Neal of Jacksonville, Fla., Carl Scroggs of New Orleans and Andy Beal of Memphis, Tenn.

"Recreation ministry provides a natural, non-threatening way to introduce God's Word to the community," he said. "People may not know the church, and they may not know Jesus, but everyone knows sports. There's nothing religious about a basketball; it's what you do with it that matters."

But sometimes it's a place, and not a piece of sports equipment, that opens the door.

Derrick Blaylock came to Rec Lab in preparation for organizing and running a recreation ministry at a park that Fallbrook Church in Houston is building on donated land.

Blaylock is new to the world of recreation ministry, but Rec Lab offered

him encouragement and ideas.

"Coming here has helped me a lot," he said. "Just taking on the responsibility is overwhelming, and it's good to learn from others who have done this work."

And learn they did. The conference featured information on everything from juggling and games with children to starting sports leagues and hosting wild game suppers for men.

Robertson said that having a diversified recreation ministry was important because it broadened the ministry opportunities.

"We can be the ball player, the teacher or the guy on the golf course," Robertson said. "Recreation ministry asks us to become all things to all people with the intention of sharing Christ with them."

As one Rec Lab speaker put it, "[Recreation ministry] is about putting the physical and spiritual together." ■

REC LAB

Next year's Rec Lab is scheduled for April 25-29 at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center.

Children and the games they play

It wasn't all just seminars and lectures during LifeWay's Rec Lab event. John Thompson, a representative with Sports Supply Group, made sure the adults at the conference got to see recreation ministry from a kid's point of view.

His breakout sessions, "Games, games, games" and "More games, games, games," had conference attendees juggling foam penguins and cooperating to carry balls between their foreheads.

As participants attempted each activity, Thompson offered tips for using the games with groups of kids.

- Use cooperative activities, such as partnering to carry a ball between two people's hips, to encourage athletic children to slow down and help the less athletic members of the group.

- "The stopwatch is the great equalizer," he said. Rather than setting a number goal for games that require repetitious movement, set a time limit and encourage individuals or teams to complete as many repetitions as possible during that time.

- Don't forget the lessons the games can teach. For example, remember to stress that success is dependent on communication during partner activities.

Thompson also encouraged attendees to overcome the fear of trying new activities.

"See, juggling isn't that bad," he said as tentative attendees tossed brightly colored handkerchiefs in the air. "And it teaches kids perseverance. This really makes your kids think, 'I can get past this.'" ■

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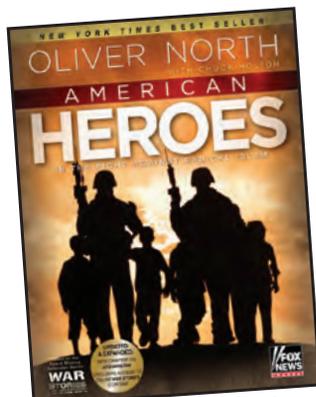


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American Heroes: In the Fight Against Radical Islam

by Oliver North

Oliver North offers a first-hand account of the Americans defending us against terror. This new release is updated and expanded with a new chapter on events in Afghanistan and an exclusive access code linking to three online episodes of *War Stories*. North and his award-winning *War Stories* documentary team have made extended trips covering the stories for FOX News. *American Heroes* offers a close-up of patriots who have gone into harm's way for their country.

Releases June 1.
 ISBN: 9780805449532.
 Hardback. \$24.99

Building Your Leadership Résumé: Developing the Legacy that Will Outlast You

by Johnny M. Hunt

Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny M. Hunt often shares his unique Christian testimony: a shy, rebellious kid whose alcoholic father left a wife with six children to fend for themselves.

Building Your Leadership Résumé is Hunt's wisdom-focused lesson that will enhance any business or ministry. Each entry guides the reader toward becoming

a selfless leader whose impact can be eternally significant.

Releases June 1.
 ISBN: 9780805449648.
 Paperback. \$14.99

Deacon Wives: Fresh Ideas to Encourage Your Husband and the Church

by Diana Davis

In describing the qualities of a church deacon, the Bible also emphasizes the traits of his companion: "Wives, too must be worthy of respect, not slanderers, self-controlled, faithful in everything" (1 Tim. 3:11).

This new book from "Fresh Ideas" syndicated columnist Diana Davis shares stories and insights for deacon wives.

Releases June 1.
 ISBN: 9780805448238.
 Paperback. \$12.99

Mentor Like Jesus

by Regi Campbell with Richard Chancy

More time spent with fewer people equals greater Kingdom impact.

Desiring to see God widely embraced, Regi Campbell began a successful mentoring program that is one of his greatest joys.

Mentor Like Jesus

is Campbell's revelation of an exponentially rewarding process that is resulting in "lives changed, marriages saved and children dealt with in a more loving way."

Releases May 1.
 ISBN: 9780805448115.
 Hardback. \$16.99

Simple Student Ministry: A Clear Process for Strategic Youth Discipleship

by Eric Geiger and Jeff Borton

Simple Student Ministry fine tunes the proven methods of No.1 best seller *Simple Church* for the unique field of youth discipleship. The key ideas of clarity, movement, alignment and focus will transform any over-stimulated youth program into a simpler, more results-oriented

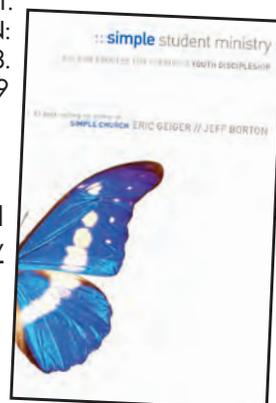
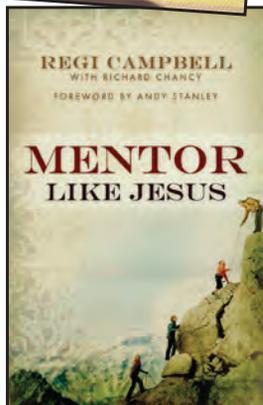
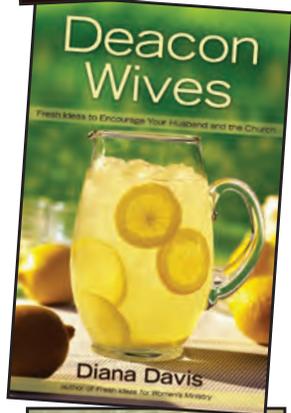
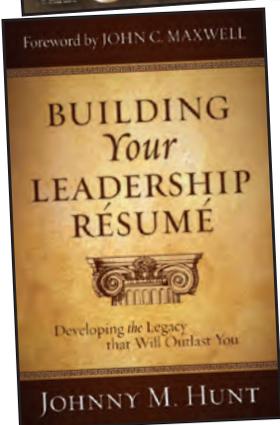
spiritual development process.

Releases June 1.
 ISBN: 9780805447941.
 Paperback. \$16.99

Sunday School in HD: Sharpening the Focus on What Makes Your Church Healthy

by Allan Taylor

Ministry professional Allan Taylor writes to all church leaders about the crucial role that Sunday school



must play in producing healthy Christians who in turn produce healthy churches. He emphasizes the value of the Sunday school model for its ability to nurture relationships.

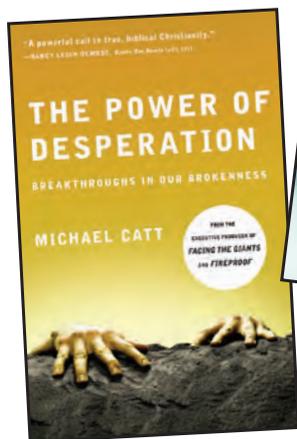
Taylor says all Sunday school programs are either imploding (through directionless ineffectiveness) or exploding (thanks to visionary leadership and practicing some fundamental disciplines).

Releases June 1.
ISBN: 9780805449730.
Paperback. \$14.99

The Power of Desperation: Breakthroughs in Our Brokenness

by Michael Catt

What could be good about being broken? Michael Catt, senior pastor of Sherwood Baptist Church and executive producer of *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*, finds treasure at rock bottom in *The Power of Desperation*, a book for anyone who has



ever cried out for God's strength in life's moments of absolute weakness.

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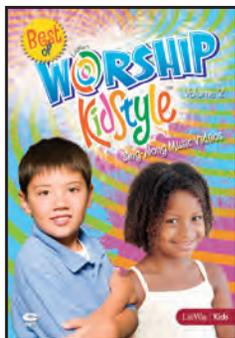
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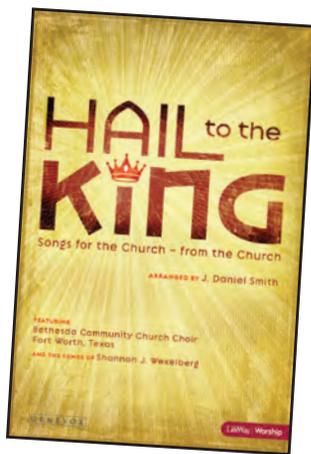
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