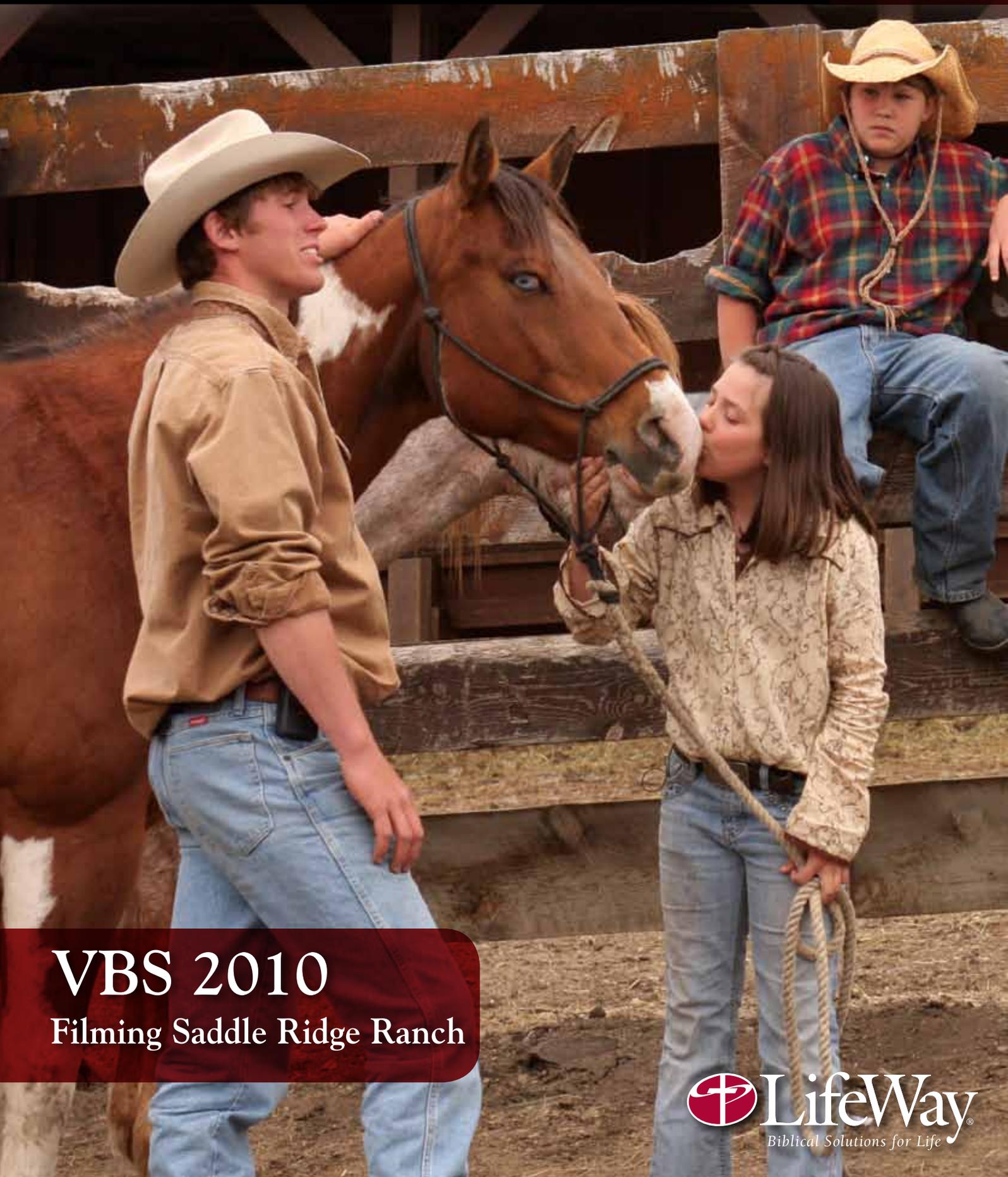


FACTS & TRENDS

Summer 2009



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Cover photo: Colorado serves as the backdrop for Saddle Ridge Ranch for VBS 2010. Here, head wrangler "Jed" with children "Joni" and "Max" work on a scene in the corral for the VBS video.

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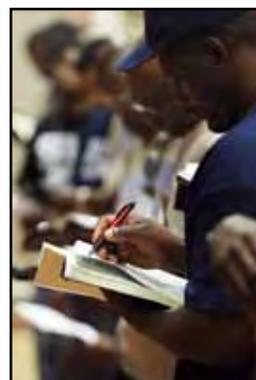
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FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

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

Finding Simplicity

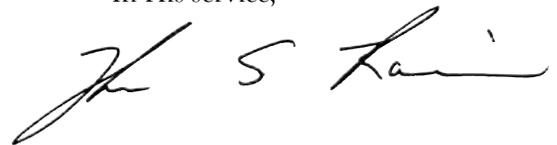
I'm convinced things were just simpler 40 years ago. I remember staying outside some days playing sandlot football games with my buddies until after dark and I'm sure my folks never worried about the many things that challenge today's parents. With three network stations and no "reality" television to keep us occupied, there was more time for family interaction. My pastor and my football coach both had my spiritual interests at heart, and that didn't cause a conflict with the school system or the government.

Times have changed and a complicated world presents unending challenges for parents and families. The following pages of this issue of *Facts & Trends* present some of the latest findings from LifeWay Research on American families. The information is interesting and some of it telling. For example, only 52 percent of parents feel they have enough income to support their family's lifestyle and 69 percent say they never seem to get ahead financially.

How can we carve out simplicity in the midst of the complexity of today's world? I believe Scripture offers insight. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness ..." (Matt. 6:33, HCSB). Of course there is more to this verse than that, but a period could easily have punctuated that statement. All our need of provisions, our adequacy, our identity, our salvation - everything - is found in the righteousness of Christ. It is through the gospel that we receive atonement for our sin and receive His righteousness that sustains us through the complexities of this life.

And I'm convinced now more than ever that the simplicity of the gospel trumps the complexities of this world every time.

In His service,



Rainer launches Web site

If you follow him on Twitter, you now have access to more than the truncated 140-character "tweets" from LifeWay President Thom Rainer.

ThomRainer.com, launched in May, offers twice-weekly postings of columns by Rainer, offering his insights into the local church and drawing from years of experience as a father, pastor, researcher, seminary dean and LifeWay president.

"In recent months a number of colleagues with their own Web sites have encouraged me to join the online conversation about issues relating to the local church and Christian life," said Rainer. "While I won't dodge tough issues, I plan to focus primarily on sharing positive views about and developments within the evangelical Christian community."

Visitors to ThomRainer.com can sign up to automatically receive the twice-weekly columns, as well as follow him on Twitter and link to some of his favorite blogs and Web sites.



American parents: Enough God, not enough money

by Mark Kelly

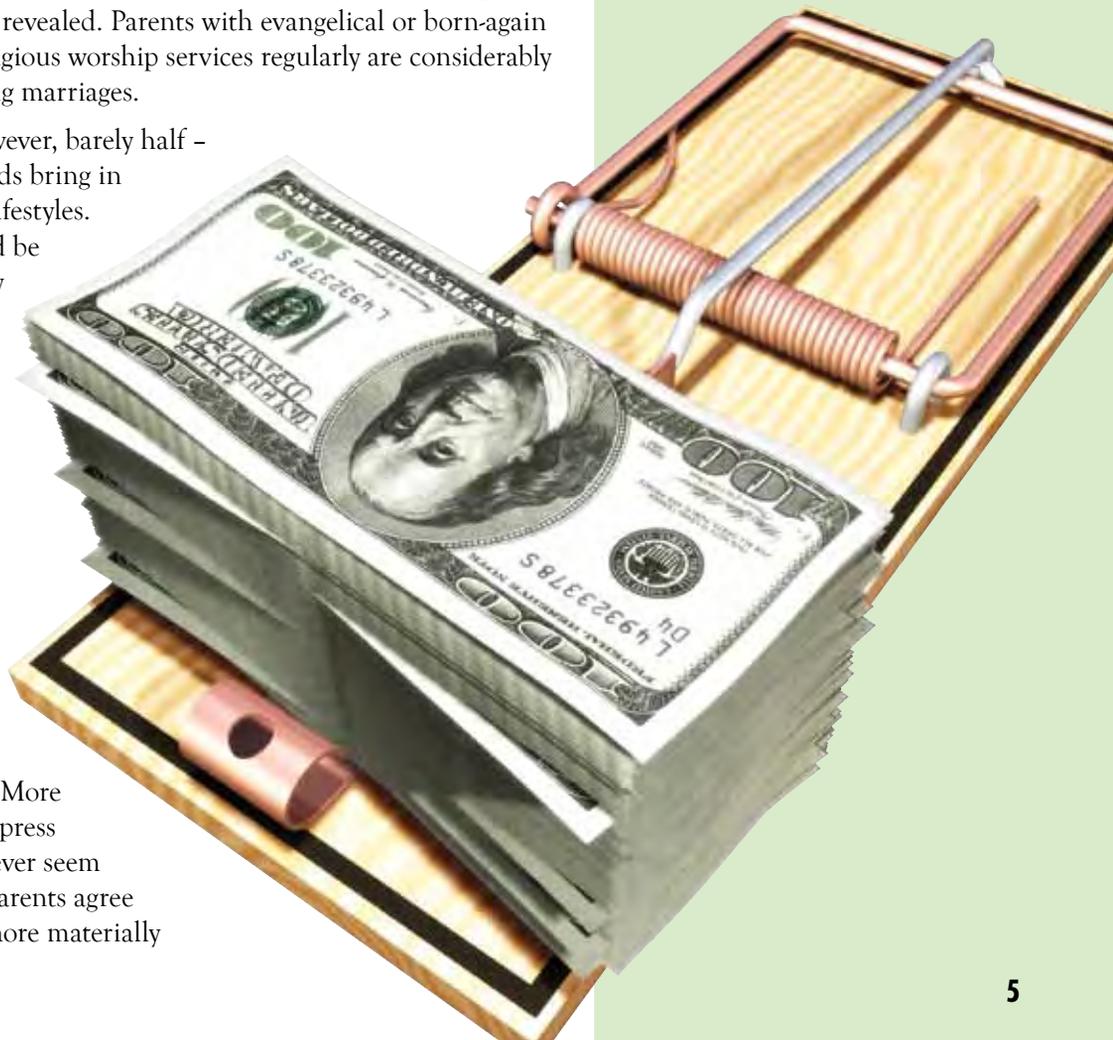
Most American parents believe things are going well with their families – except when it comes to finances. And a large majority highly values their children having a relationship with God – except when it comes to taking them to worship.

A nationwide LifeWay Research survey of 1,077 American adults with children under 18 living at home found 87 percent feel they have strong marriages. A full 74 percent strongly believe they will remain married for life, and 64 percent strongly agree that if they had it to do over again, they would still marry their spouses. As parents, 76 percent agree they give enough of their time to their children, but only 56 percent agree their families enjoy enough relaxing times together.

Blacks, women and born-again Christians believe most strongly that they give their kids enough time, the study revealed. Parents with evangelical or born-again beliefs and people who attend religious worship services regularly are considerably more likely to report having strong marriages.

When it comes to finances, however, barely half – 52 percent – agree their households bring in enough income to support their lifestyles. Asked what level of income would be needed to make them “financially comfortable” (not wealthy), 14 percent say they would need \$10,000 more a year, and 47 percent say they need at least another \$20,000. Only a tiny fraction – 4 percent – say they could be financially comfortable on an income lower than what they now make.

Saving money regularly is a crucial element to financial security, but only 28 percent of parents agree their families puts enough into savings each month. More than two-thirds – 69 percent – express concern that their families can never seem to get ahead financially. Half of parents agree they want to give their children more materially



What household income would you need in order to feel financially comfortable?

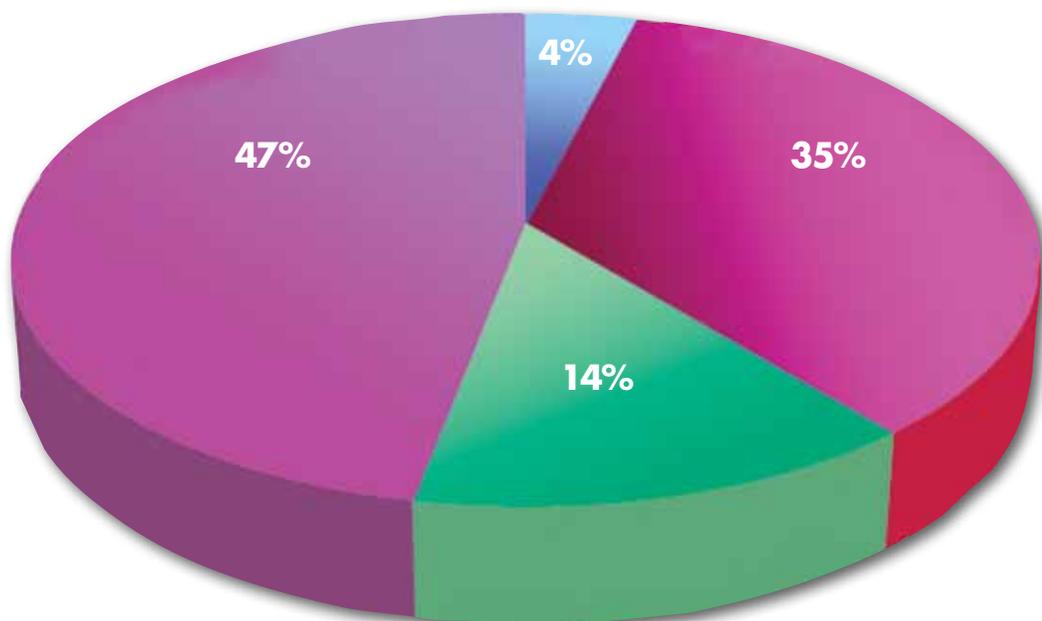
(Not wealthy, but financially comfortable)

4% - Less than we earn now.

35% - What we earn now.

14% - \$10k more than what we earn now.

47% - \$20k+ more than what we earn now.



than they already have, and almost three-fourths – 72 percent – want their children to have more than they themselves had growing up.

The desire to give their children more than they had growing up was strongest among Hispanic and younger parents who, ironically, came of age during one of America’s wealthiest eras.

“Parents have great aspirations for their kids. Yet one in three parents is not planning ahead to help their child achieve specific goals.”

– Scott McConnell

Although a large number of parents are dissatisfied with their financial situations, many of them don’t have a plan to improve things, the research revealed. While 64 percent say they have clear goals for what they want to accomplish as parents, only 7 percent have put that plan in writing and only 50 percent agree their families have a financial plan for the future.

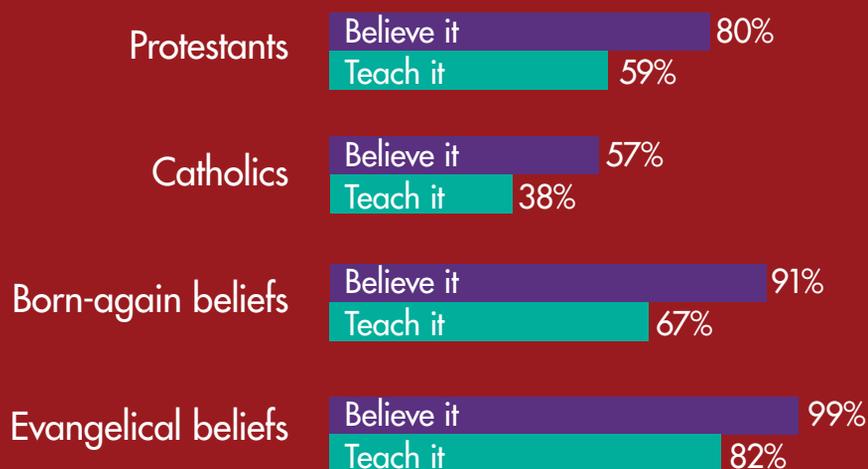
Research conducted in 2007 for *The Parent Adventure: Preparing Your Children For a Lifetime With God* indicated that 67 percent of parents have a parenting plan. “Parents have great aspirations for their kids,” said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research and co-author of *The Parent Adventure*. “Yet one in three parents is not planning ahead to help their child achieve specific goals.”

While most American parents have a desire for more financial security and material comfort, the large majority also say they place a high priority on their children having a relationship with God.

A full 87 percent of parents believe it is important to teach their children how to have a relationship with God, including 57 percent who strongly agree. Almost as many – 79 percent – agree they do that, but just 39 percent agree strongly. When the respondents were broken out by

Do parents teach what they believe?

Many parents say that a relationship with God is important, but how many actually teach it to their children?



religious affiliation, however, significant disparities appeared between believing it is important and actually doing it.

Only 55 percent of parents agree they try to take their children to worship services on a regular basis, while 47 percent agree they do not want to influence their children too much about religion, saying, “It’s important they find their own way.” Seventeen percent of weekly churchgoers, 41 percent of born-again Christians and 24 percent of evangelicals do not strongly agree that they need to take their children to services regularly.

“Most parents not only want their children to have a belief in God but also a relationship with God, yet many parents are failing to make the introduction,” McConnell said. “Churches must prove they are ready to help parents make this connection or they will continue to only see those parents who feel most strongly about teaching their children to know God.” ■

Methodology: The survey, conducted in June 2008, used a demographically balanced online panel to interview a representative sample of American adults who were primary caregivers for children under 18 years old in their households. Agreement questions were asked using a four-point scale: agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or disagree strongly. Except where noted, agree strongly and agree somewhat have been combined for reporting in this article. The national sample size provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed ±3 percent.

WE RECOMMEND

- *The Family God Uses* by Tom and Kim Blackaby
- *The Parent Adventure* by Rodney and Selma Wilson, Scott McConnell
- *Indelible Parenting* by Bobb Bunn
- *Parenting: From Surviving to Thriving* by Charles R. Swindoll

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.

Your church needs a crisis communications plan

by Rob Phillips

When Illinois pastor Fred Winters was gunned down while preaching to his congregation March 8, church leaders across the country rightly began asking tough questions about security.

What they may have overlooked, however, were questions about how to communicate in a crisis: Who should speak? What should they say? Why should they talk to the news media? How soon, how often and with whom should they communicate? Basically, how can a church be prepared to handle communications when the unthinkable occurs?

Most large organizations, from multinational corporations to universities, have crisis communications plans, and so should churches, no matter their size. Whether yours is a megachurch with scores of staff members or a small congregation with a bivocational pastor, it's vital to have a plan. And it begins by addressing some simple questions.

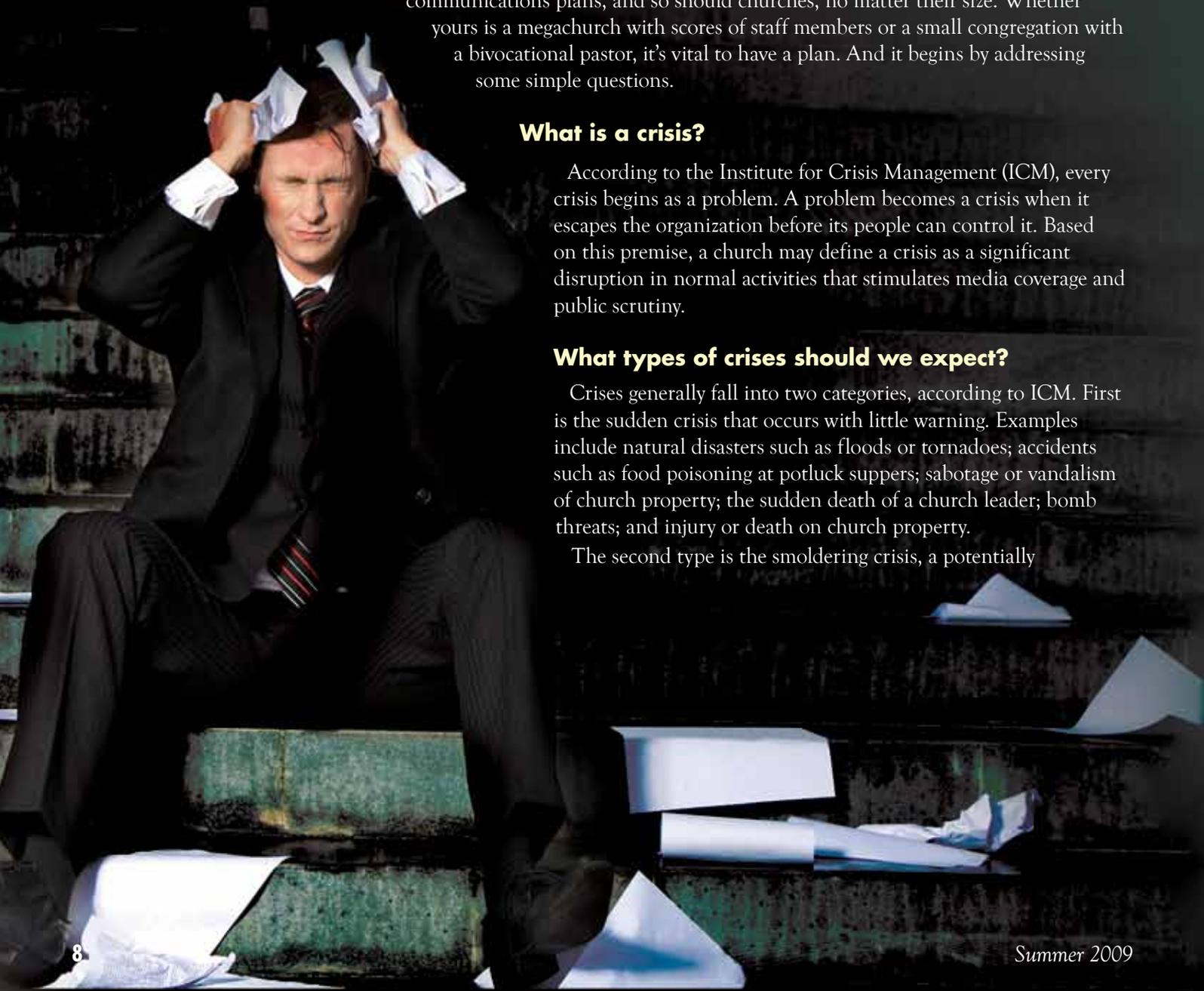
What is a crisis?

According to the Institute for Crisis Management (ICM), every crisis begins as a problem. A problem becomes a crisis when it escapes the organization before its people can control it. Based on this premise, a church may define a crisis as a significant disruption in normal activities that stimulates media coverage and public scrutiny.

What types of crises should we expect?

Crises generally fall into two categories, according to ICM. First is the sudden crisis that occurs with little warning. Examples include natural disasters such as floods or tornadoes; accidents such as food poisoning at potluck suppers; sabotage or vandalism of church property; the sudden death of a church leader; bomb threats; and injury or death on church property.

The second type is the smoldering crisis, a potentially



damaging condition that is known to one or more people. According to ICM research, 77 percent of crises are of the “smoldering” type. Examples include scandals such as embezzlement of church funds; immorality or ethical breaches; picketing of church facilities; blogging campaigns against the church or church members; even theological issues that divide congregations and expose the church to public ridicule.

How do we plan for a crisis?

First, keep in mind that a crisis communications plan is distinct from an operational plan designed to deal with church security, evacuation procedures and other emergencies, yet it should complement any church’s operational plan. Here are tips for getting started:

Define your crisis. State clearly in writing the types of sudden and smoldering crises most likely to disrupt your church’s activities and stimulate media and public scrutiny.

Recruit a crisis communications team. Identify members who can serve in key roles during a crisis. Consider appointing a director of communications who manages the team (a trusted leader in the church who is a good organizer); a spokesperson (someone comfortable addressing the news media and other external audiences); a congregational liaison who ensures church members receive communication early and often; an administrator who handles calls to the church and manages office support; and a writer who works with the team to draft clear and consistent messages.

Other team members may be necessary such as logistics specialists to set up a news conference, secure office supplies and arrange for meals and other necessities; graphic designers; photographers; telephone operators, etc. Keep the team fairly small and identify backups for each position. Publish cell phone numbers for each team member and backup.

Know your audiences. List the key people with whom you must communicate in a crisis. This list might include church members, neighbors, the general public and the associational and/or state convention office. Once you’ve identified whom you need to reach, determine how you’ll

reach them. Consider using your church Web site, e-mail lists, e-newsletters, telephone calls, a public address system, written or spoken statements to the news media and news conferences. Assign the best delivery system for each audience; for example, church members may be reached most quickly via e-mail, Web site or telephone, depending on church size and organization.

Know your mission. What’s the mission of your church? Make sure it comes through clearly in your communications. Think about how a crisis impacts your mission, what you must do to address the crisis and how you must stay focused on your mission in a crisis.

Involve your congregation. Put together a simple step-by-step response plan that your crisis communications team will carry out and make sure each member of that team, as well as your church staff, has a copy. Be sure your congregation knows you have a plan and how to alert church leaders in the event of a potential crisis. Also, make sure everyone has access to public statements during a crisis. This will enable and empower them to talk to their families, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Your members are perhaps the most effective spokespersons for the church – if they are informed, equipped and empowered. Finally, make sure they know that only designated spokespersons should speak with the news media.

Be specific. Here is a simple step-by-step plan:

- Step 1 – Any church member should notify the crisis communications director immediately upon hearing of a situation or problem that may become a crisis. The director will seek to verify the information and evaluate the situation to determine whether it truly is a crisis or potential crisis.
- Step 2 – The director activates the crisis communications team, calling or texting each member immediately.
- Step 3 – The team meets within 30 minutes, in person or via phone, to assess the situation, prepare a short statement, develop key messages and put the right people in place.

Q&A:

Step 4 – The congregational liaison (internal) and spokesperson (external) deliver an initial statement within one hour of being notified of the crisis. Church members should have access to all information being made public and, if possible, receive that information before or at the same time it is being released to the public. Use the most appropriate delivery systems – news conference, Web posting, e-mail, etc.

Step 5 – The team develops and delivers additional statements as more information becomes available. These are provided to church members as they are released to the public.

Step 6 – If the crisis is a sustained one, the team calls upon additional resources to organize shifts, arrange for catering of food or anything else that is needed.

Step 7 – The team shuts down when it is determined the situation is no longer of media interest or public scrutiny. Other arrangements related to the church’s operational plan may still be needed – an alternative worship site if the church building has been destroyed, for example, in which case the crisis communications team may need to help transition to normal communications channels.

Step 8 – Debrief. What worked well and what didn’t? How should the crisis communications plan be improved for future preparations?

Practice. No plan is perfect, but practice will help improve your church’s plan. Assemble your crisis communications team once or twice a year for drills. Role play. Involve church members. Hold mock news conferences. Work the plan and adjust it.

Finally, consider media training for your crisis communications team. While there are many good consultants, one that has worked successfully with LifeWay is Crucial Communications (www.crucialcommunicationsgroup.com). LifeWay offers “Speak for Yourself,” a proprietary media training course for employees. ■

Rob Phillips is LifeWay’s director of communications. Previously, he served on crisis communications teams for multinational corporations.

Even under normal circumstances, a call from the news media to your church office can be so nerve wracking that it makes you think about tearing your clothes and putting on sackcloth. But it doesn’t have to be that way. Consider the answers Rob Phillips, LifeWay’s communications director, provides to these commonly asked questions about working with the news media.

1. Why talk to reporters?

It’s our responsibility. Whether working for an SBC entity or serving in a local church, our ministries impact the public and we have a duty to speak openly and honestly with people. Besides, the news media are conduits for reaching our audiences with important messages, especially in times of crisis. In this day of 24/7 news, blogs, Twitter and cell phone videos, someone is going to tell our story. Shouldn’t we do it ourselves?

2. Who decides what news is?

The news media do. We can influence the news by suggesting angles, pitching stories and helping shape the reporting of events, but ultimately news directors and editors decide what gets played. However, the emergence of social media is diminishing the control of news and information once held by newspapers, radio and TV stations. In many ways, this is a positive development, but not without its risks since the social media are largely unedited.

3. Aren’t reporters out to get us?

Generally speaking, reporters are out to get the story. There are clear cases of bias in the media, but even the most slanted reporters almost always give the other side a chance to speak. Keep in mind the difference between a news story, analysis and commentary.

4. Which reporters should we talk to?

All of them, but in a crisis you may need to prioritize according to ministry and business needs. Even if you don’t like some reporters, remember never to pick a fight with people who buy paper by the ton and ink by the barrel.

Working with the news media

5. Who should talk to reporters?

Use designated spokespersons from your church or organization. If possible, they should be media trained. This will prepare them to share key messages in addition to answering the questions.

6. If I'm the spokesperson, what should I say?

Stick with what you know – your area of expertise. Don't speculate. Don't discuss confidential or privileged information, such as employee records. Say "I don't know" when you don't know. Most importantly, when you've answered the question and bridged to a message, stop talking.

7. Why did they use that?

You gave the reporter 30 minutes, and she used only one quote. Reporters tend to look for sound bites, not monologues. Also, editors can be merciless on reporters' copy, and other pressing news items may have reduced the "news hole" for the day. It's good to have two or three key messages when you agree to an interview. Keep repeating the messages as you answer the reporter's questions.

8. Why can't I see the story before it's printed?

Frankly, it's offensive to a journalist to be asked that question. Reporters talk to lots of people, work on tight deadlines and submit their stories to editors. Good writers will call you to check facts before filing a story. As a safeguard, you may want to record your interview. It might encourage the reporter to quote you accurately, and you can always post the interview on your blog or Web site if you think you were treated unfairly.

9. When should I say "no comment?"

Never. These two words imply that you're guilty or hiding something. However, when you don't have anything to say; when you're not the designated spokesperson; when you're not prepared; or when the information is privileged (like personnel files), proprietary (competitive data, for example) or in litigation, it's perfectly appropriate to say, "I'm sorry, I can't discuss this because" In other words, it's OK to decline comment when you have

a good reason, but you should share that reason with the reporter rather than say "no comment."

10. Is it OK to speak "off the record?"

Generally, no. A good rule of thumb is that any time you're in the presence of a reporter – even at a social function or in church – consider yourself on the record. An exception is the background interview during which you provide non-attributable information to a journalist to help shape a story or increase the reporter's understanding. Trust must be established between you and the reporter for such an interview to be granted.

11. How do I fix it if the reporter gets it wrong?

First, assess the damage. Is a misspelled name or a minor factual error worth your outrage? If the story is negative to begin with, do you want to risk a second negative story? If the errors are substantial, however, begin by contacting the reporter who may print a correction or even a retraction. If you reach an impasse, contact the editor for that section of the paper, write a letter to the editor or post a comment on the newspaper's Web site, as allowed by many online newspaper editions. Keep your church Web site, and perhaps your blog, in mind as potential places to get "equal time."

12. What should I do if a reporter calls me?

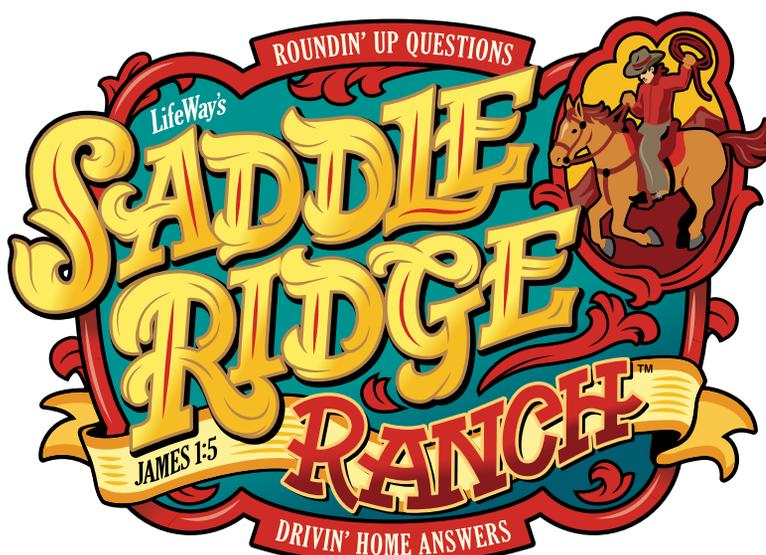
Get the reporter's name, number, deadline, subject and other specifics. Promise a call back – and keep your promise. Then work through your organization's media response procedure to provide an appropriate response. You are never obligated to provide an on-the-spot interview just because a reporter asked. ■





Saddle Up for VBS 2010: Head to Saddle Ridge Ranch

story by Polly House, photography by Kent Harville



Kids will head out West for VBS 2010. Saddle Ridge Ranch will be the Vacation Bible School destination where they will be roundin' up questions and drivin' home answers. Set among snow capped peaks and wide open spaces, the Bible study focus will be on questions real kids ask: "Who am I? Does God care about me? What is God's plan for me? How can I be like Jesus? What do I do now?"

The video for LifeWay's VBS 2010 will follow the adventures of four young cowboys and cowgirls and their wrangler friend, Jed, as they discover that the best adventure is more than riding horses or looking for rattlers, but is about discovering Jesus who wants to be the Lord of their lives.

Musical message

Jeff Slaughter has written the music for VBS for the past 14 years and performed in the music videos for all 12 that have been produced.

The music segments of VBS 2010 happen in fields, by lakes and near snow-capped mountains. Slaughter uses these segments to teach not only the music and lyrics, but the motions too.

“I love doing the instructional musical videos,” Slaughter said. “The kids get so much out of them. Some are fun and silly and others are more serious and thoughtful. Sometimes I mess up and we just leave in those bloopers. The kids seem to think it’s fun when I make mistakes. I just laugh about it, too.”

Slaughter is a prolific writer and composer. He creates music primarily for children’s ministries, and one way he keeps fresh is by working at LifeWay’s Centri-Kid camps in the summer.

“Centri-Kid and the other events I do help me keep in touch with what kids are looking for,” Slaughter said. “I’m always looking to keep current with what they like and what will appeal most to them.”

Ranch location

The CLazyU, a real working 9,000-acre guest ranch near Granby, Colo., serves as the backdrop for the VBS video.

Lynne Norris, LifeWay’s producer for the VBS video, said the ranch location offered the opportunity to have the video come alive for the children.

“Watching almost 200 horses run down the street of the ranch is a beautiful sight,” she said. “The run – the jingle – happens twice a day on the ranch as the horses are moved from the corral during the day to the pasture at night, and we had the opportunity to use that as part of our story.”

Method matters

The whole point of VBS is teaching preschoolers, children, youth and adults about Jesus. While that message never will change, the method for teaching the message changes with each generation, according to Bill Cox, VBS video director. The video does so much more than just entertain.

“The video we do for VBS is important,” he said. “Children today know their world through media so they respond to what they see and hear on screen. They connect with visual stories. This story, the video message, teaches them a valuable lesson on sharing and caring like Jesus.”

Real wrangler

Paul Klees, who plays Jed the wrangler in the video, really is a wrangler at the



Jeff Slaughter

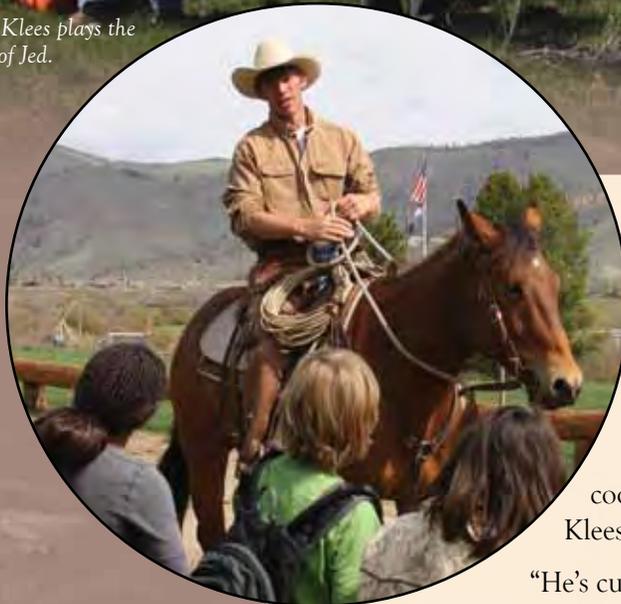
MORE VBS

For more information about VBS 2010, go to www.lifeway.com/vbs.



Paul Klees plays the part of Jed.

The film crew shoots on location in Colorado as Jeff Slaughter works on the musical instructional part of the video.



CLazyU Ranch. Klees, who graduated from college last year with a degree in economics and management, also serves as project manager at the ranch.

“I grew up loving horses and love working with them on the ranch,” Klees said, “so even when I graduated from college, I didn’t want to give that up.”

Taryn Gardner, comfort and amenities coordinator at the ranch, coordinated the local casting auditions in Granby and encouraged Klees to try out.

“He’s cute and has a great personality,” Gardner said. “I’ve seen how he really plays to the audience at our talent show nights here at the ranch.”

Klees said he was hesitant, but auditioned anyway. He got the part, and after the filming was complete, said he’d had a great time.

“It was really fun, but I think I’ll keep my day job,” he said.

Part of a package

While churches shouldn’t only show the video for the week of VBS, it is an important part of the total VBS experience.

“It is important to remember that VBS is not just one thing, but a combination of many parts,” Norris said. “It’s five days of Bible study, missions, recreation, evangelism, crafts, music, the video and so much more. No part of our VBS program is ‘fluff.’ Everything ties together. We want churches and the children to get everything possible out of VBS.”

She added, “As we shoot the video I can’t help but think about the millions of kids who will be touched for Christ by the music and the storyline. It is really my prayer that every song, every motion and every word will be a blessing.” ■

CLUB VBS TAKES KIDS CROSS COUNTRY ON ROUTE 254

Churches who use Club VBS for 2010 will go on a wild cross country adventure from our nation’s capital to Southern California.

They’ll find their destination isn’t determined by miles traveled but is found in a relationship with Jesus.



VBS 2008 numbers strong, but programming changes raise concerns

by Polly House

As has been the case for many years, the number of professions of faith in Southern Baptists' Vacation Bible School 2008 is equal to 25 percent of the convention's baptisms, but the shortening of the VBS week by some churches is raising concerns.

LifeWay Christian Resources' VBS is recognized as "the most successful outreach tool Southern Baptists have to positively affect children in making a decision to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior," Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS specialist, said.

While Wooley doesn't dispute the evangelistic value of VBS, he said he sees a trend that does concern him.

The number of churches shortening VBS to fewer than five days is on the rise. Wooley said that means these churches aren't putting a strong emphasis on the relational part of VBS.

"Our information from churches that submitted a Vacation Bible School report and/or gave information on their Annual Church Profile tells us that 76 percent had VBS that lasted

five days, 7 percent lasted more than five days and 17 percent shortened their VBS to fewer than five days," Wooley said.

"VBS is carefully organized to create a total experience with Bible study, missions, recreation, evangelism, crafts, music and the video," he said. "When any part of this is abbreviated or left out, the children are losing out on something of spiritual value."

He added that he hopes churches will do whatever it takes to offer an entire five days of VBS to their children.

Statistics for VBS 2008 show that of the nearly 2.9 million children, youth and adults who participated, almost 87,000 made decisions to receive Christ.

"That is tremendous news," Wooley said.

Another trend is the rise in the number of churches hosting VBS in the evening - 69 percent in 2008.

"Staffing issues seem to be the primary reasons churches are hosting more evening VBS programs," Wooley

said. "With more parents employed and more children involved in day camps and other child care, along with schools that are now doing year-round schedules, it just seems to make a lot of sense. It's also more convenient for the churches who offer teenagers and adults their own VBS."

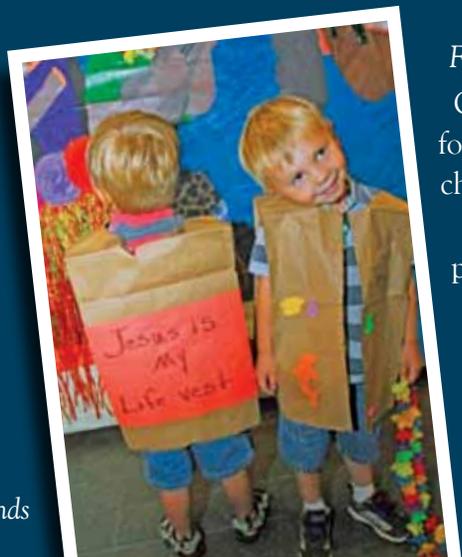
More than 25,000 churches offered VBS in 2008. Most met at their local church locations, but VBS also happened in parks, backyards and at other sites.

"The bottom line," Wooley said, "is that we know VBS makes a huge difference in the lives of everyone who participates, from the ones who attend, to the ones who teach and work on recreation, decorations, snacks and follow up. Our prayer is for everyone to have the best and most spiritually fulfilling week possible." ■

VBS STATS

See the complete chart of VBS 2008 statistics at www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.

VBS 2009 Photo Contest is in full swing



Facts & Trends' 2009 VBS Photo Contest is underway!

Go to *Facts & Trends Online* (www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends) for more information and instructions on submitting your church's VBS photos.

The deadline for submitting your photos is Aug. 3. The grand prize winner will be announced Aug. 24.

The winning photo will be featured in the Fall 2009 issue of *Facts & Trends* magazine and the church will receive a free 2010 VBS Super Sampler Kit, compliments of LifeWay's VBS area.



JOHNSON SPRING *opens at Ridgecrest*

story by Chris Turner, photography by Kent Harville

LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center unveiled its latest addition in May with the ribbon-cutting of Johnson Spring Convention Center, completing a five-year development plan that has significantly upgraded the facility located near Asheville, N.C.

“It’s been like a new beginning for Ridgecrest,” said Bill Bowman, director of Ridgecrest. “We feel this re-energizes the vision Dr. B.W. Spilman laid out 102 years ago for a Baptist camp and retreat area. The mission has never changed, which is to have a place set aside and dedicated to the Lord where people can come and encounter Him. Johnson Spring will help us continue accomplishing that mission.”

Johnson Spring is a 46,250-square-foot facility with meeting space that can be divided to create from five - 24 meeting rooms and can accommodate between 25 and 800 guests. It is named in remembrance of William Johnson, the 10-year-old boy who discovered a freshwater spring at the location in the early 1920s. A small pond still exists adjacent to the building.



The completion of Johnson Spring is the capstone of a Ridgecrest revitalization process that began in 2000 with LifeWay trustee approval. Renovation of several classroom areas began in 2001. The first new construction began in 2002 and included the completion of the Rutland Prayer Chapel and the 120-guestroom Mountain Laurel Inn. In 2004, LifeWay trustees agreed to a construction plan to significantly upgrade Ridgecrest's facilities with the addition of the auditorium recreation center (2006), Mountain Laurel West (2007) and Johnson Spring Convention Center. In the past 10 years, 18 old buildings have been torn down and several others renovated.

Bowman said it is the commitment to the original vision of having a place to encounter God that he believes is the reason Ridgecrest continues to have a vital ministry.

"We receive letters all the time telling us about someone who came to faith in Jesus Christ here," he said. "Or someone who was called into ministry, or a marriage that was saved at one of our marriage retreats. Whatever the case may be, we believe God uses this place to His glory. ■"



Above: (Left to right) Tom Hellams, Byron Hill, Randy Bagamary, Bill Bowman, Thom Rainer and Jerry Rhyne participate in the ribbon-cutting during the grand opening of Johnson Spring Convention Center at LifeWay Ridgecrest.



Top left: Bill Bowman, Ridgecrest director, makes introductions and shares the history of Ridgecrest with those attending the grand opening celebration luncheon.



Bottom left: Guests greet each other as they enter Johnson Spring's Azalea Room for the grand opening celebration luncheon prior to the ribbon-cutting.

Visit www.lifeway.com/ridgecrest for more information on Ridgecrest and upcoming events.

Texan is selected 2008 Store Manager of the Year

by Russ Rankin

Texas native William McGregor returned home to Hurst, Texas, in 2006 to assume leadership of the LifeWay Christian Store. In early 2009 the retail chain honored McGregor by naming him the national 2008 Store Manager of the Year.

LifeWay Christian Stores annually selects a recipient for the Store Manager of the Year award based on criteria including financial performance, customer service feedback, leadership and operational efficiency.

McGregor joined the LifeWay Christian Stores management team in 2004, already with a decade of experience in Christian retail. His leadership was immediately put to the test at his first LifeWay store on the campus of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary during Hurricane Katrina.

The next year, McGregor moved to serve as manager of the newly opened LifeWay Store in Texarkana, Texas, before moving back to Hurst.

“Being from the Dallas-Fort Worth area, this was like coming home,” McGregor said.

McGregor said his approach to serving the community is complemented by his background as a pastor.

“The reason we exist is to provide ministry solutions that impact lives,” he said. “But the day-to-day ministry opportunities – touching the lives of the people who come in our store – cannot be overlooked. As a store manager,

I’ve done immensely more ministry in the bookstore than I ever did as a pastor.”

David Pigg, western region director for LifeWay Christian Stores, said McGregor has strong leadership skills and an “incredible drive for excellence with the desire that God receive glory in everything he does.”

“This drive filters down to his staff, and together they provide strong customer service,” Pigg continued. “He is proactive in his management, anticipating needs and addressing problems in order to provide the best experience possible for each customer.”

McGregor said a major part of the Hurst store’s success can be attributed to the high standards of service and ministry by which the entire staff operates.

“This [Dallas-Fort Worth] market demands excellence in customer service and sales initiative,” he said. “But more than anything, we are successful because we know our products change lives, and we stand behind not only the product, but also the people who come in the stores. We know that our ministry continues when they leave.”

McGregor said receiving the Store Manager of the Year award is “confirmation of a job well done. It’s gratifying to know my peers and my leadership are pleased with my performance, but more than that, knowing that the Lord is pleased.” ■



William McGregor (front right) and his staff.

CrossBooks combines the best of traditional and self publishing

by Rob Phillips

James T. Draper Jr. published more than 25 books throughout a distinguished career as pastor, Southern Baptist leader and president of LifeWay. Now retired, Draper continues to write and his latest book puts him in the company of 20 fellow veterans and first-time authors who share one thing in common: They have just released books with CrossBooks Publishing, an innovative new concept that blends the best attributes of traditional and self publishing.

Launched this spring by LifeWay as an “alliance publishing” venture, CrossBooks is seeking out new and veteran authors to produce Christian books that run the gamut from Bible commentaries to children’s fiction.

“The book publishing business is going through a challenging period in which creative new relationships between authors and publishers are gaining favor,” said LifeWay President Thom Rainer. “CrossBooks gives authors greater influence in the content, design and marketing of their works while at the same time reducing the publisher’s costs and speeding production time. We’re finding there are many gifted Christian authors whose stories need to be told but who may not have a traditional publisher or who may not want to self-publish. CrossBooks, as a new genre of publishing, is a ground-breaking solution.”

How it works:

- An author submits a manuscript at CrossBooks.com and selects a print-on-demand solution, ranging from a basic package to a comprehensive package that includes marketing and other features.
- CrossBooks editors provide theological and editorial reviews and work with the author to complete the manuscript, design a cover, lay out the book’s interior and propose marketing opportunities – all of which the author approves.
- Within 60 days the book is completed and available for purchase on CrossBooks.com, from other online retailers and at Christian bookstores.
- Because CrossBooks operates under a print-on-demand model, inventories are kept to a minimum, authors receive a significant royalty, and the books never go out of print.
- Depending on the package chosen and other variables, authors generally recoup their full investments after sales of 500-1,000 copies.

Among CrossBooks’ first offerings are *Difficult Times, Encouraging Words* by Draper; *Living Between the Ditches*, an inspirational work by Betty Hassler; *Amos* (the first in a Minor Prophet Series featuring the Holman Christian Standard Bible) by Fred Wood; and *Safe & Sound*, a children’s book by Carey Drake. ■



CrossBooks has launched a nationwide ad campaign, “We’re Looking for a Few Good Authors.” More information is available at CrossBooks.com.

NEXT Coaching Networks help pastors overcome discouragement, isolation

by Scott McConnell

Pastors today feel the weight of responsibility in leading their churches. Amidst the typical leadership pressures of casting vision, setting priorities and managing interpersonal relationships, pastors must also discern God's message for their teaching and provide support for the hurting.

An online survey conducted by LifeWay Research in March 2008 revealed that 67 percent of Southern Baptist pastors somewhat or strongly agree that it is easy to get discouraged in their personal ministry.

Agreement that their own ministry can be discouraging is true regardless of the size of the church and among most age groups of pastors. Pastors age 60 and older are less likely to be easily discouraged, yet 48 percent of them still agree that discouragement easily enters their ministry.

The weight of leadership can at times feel heavier than a pastor can bear.

"Discouragement and loneliness are common among pastors today, but this is not a new phenomenon," said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research. "The apostle Paul's letters to pastors and church planters in the New Testament are filled with encouragement and exhortation to stand firm and endure.

"In response to this research," Stetzer continued, "LifeWay sought to find a way to encourage pastors and help them avoid the perception that they are isolated. To deliver this encouragement in the most effective way for pastors, we looked at the methods being used today, and the answer was clearly coaching networks."

LifeWay, in partnership with NEXT Networks, has launched a coaching network system for lead pastors around the country. Networks consist of 10-12 lead pastors who meet once a month for six months, and are led by an experienced pastor-practitioner. Each session is driven by a learning agenda but flexible enough to deal with immediate pressure points all lead pastors experience.

NEXT Networks Director and Founder Ron Sylvia is lead pastor of Church at The Springs in Ocala, Fla.

Several years ago, he attended a meeting with a high-level business owner in his church.

"I observed as 12 Christian men prayed, learned and shared life's burdens with each other," Sylvia recalled. "They counseled and challenged each other in business from a biblical perspective.



“As I sat, a silent visitor, one thought echoed in the halls of my heart: We need this for pastors. We need a network, a safe place, to share and learn. We need coaches who have been where we are in ministry. We need a coaching network!”

The next year Sylvia piloted a coaching network for pastors at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif. Since then, the ministry has expanded to include many experienced pastors who have coached more than 350 pastors.

“We designed the curriculum to develop leadership in pastors,” Sylvia explained, “but the added benefit in these networks became deep relationships.”

The survey conducted by LifeWay Research revealed that as pastors face ministry challenges, they often feel as if they are doing so alone. The survey, which polled 801 Southern Baptist pastors, found that 53 percent of pastors agree with the statement, “Ministry in a church this size makes me feel lonely at times.” Seventeen percent strongly agree.

“Ministry can feel like a thankless profession,” said Paul Castelli, pastor of Crosspoint Church in Spring Hill, Fla. “People are constantly in need. [They] always let you know when they are unhappy and when you’ve let them or their family down. But they seldom encourage, uplift or minister to pastors.”

Castelli said that being involved in a NEXT Coaching Network gave him “fresh perspective and insight” into his ministry as well as provided much-needed support.

“Knowing that I had a group of pastors who shared the burden I carried and could relate to where I was at the moment was refreshing,” Castelli said. “NEXT Coaching Networks gave me the outlet to be open and honest with where I was and what I was dealing with. If I needed advice, I got it. If I needed to be lifted up I was prayed for. If I needed an attitude check, I got that too.”

Three types of networks are offered: one designed for those launching new churches; one for pastors ready to advance their churches; and one for strategic leadership.

“Healthy pastors lead healthy churches,” Sylvia said. “Our goal is simple: No pastor should be left behind. It’s time to wipe out the isolation epidemic.”

Networks launched in the spring, and new networks will continue to launch near major cities. Get more information about the networks at www.NextCoachingNetworks.com. ■

LifeWay Research conducted the online survey in March 2008. Southern Baptist pastors who had previously agreed to receive survey invitations were e-mailed the invitation to participate. The sample of 801 pastors provides 95 percent confidence that sampling error does not exceed ±3.4 percent.

Conference offers resources, inspiration to **‘Be the Man’**

story by David Winfrey, photography by Kent Harville

Christ, not culture, models how black men can best lead their families, churches and communities, speakers said during the recent Be the Man conference.

“When we look at Jesus Christ as our model, we have the model – not a model – as to what it is to be a man,” said Fredrick Brabson, senior pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn.

The annual conference seeks to resource churches while countering the negative stereotypes that keep many men from attending church, described by two speakers as “60 percent women and 40 percent men acting like women.”

“You’re trying to reach the first generation of African-American men that have never been touched by the church,” said Edward Johnson, pastor of Greater Galilee Church

in Louisville, Ky. Still, he added, many older unchurched men previously attended church. “Did you ever think about asking them why they left?”

Johnson and other speakers said many men avoid church due to stereotypes and a congregational culture more suitable for women.

“Jesus is seen in ‘the hood’ as an effeminate cartoon caricature and the possession of the majority culture,” Johnson said.

Kevin Smith, pastor of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., urged churches to reach and disciple young men. “The church is hurt when men are not where men ought to be,” he said.

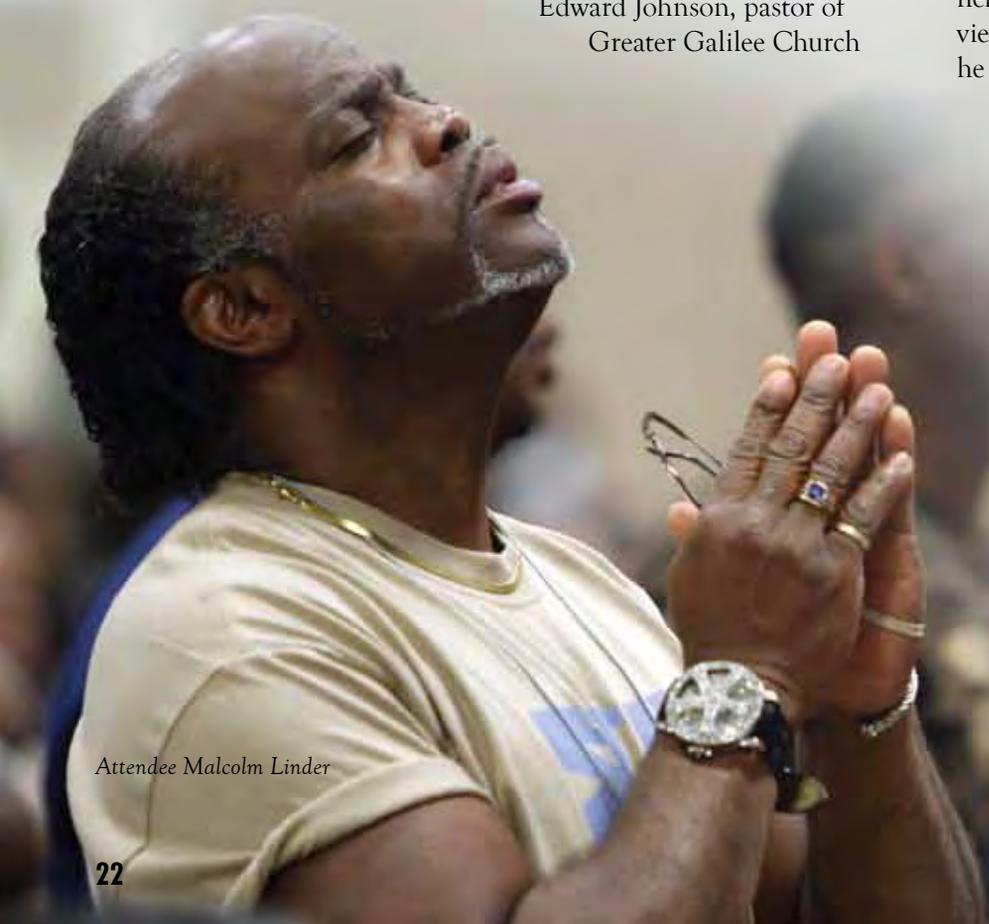
A study of Old Testament characters would help church leaders better portray a biblical view of manhood more attractive to most men, he added.

“One of the things that the culture throws at you is manhood submitted to Jesus Christ is weak,” Smith said. “And anyone who’s read the Old Testament and seen David or Joshua or Moses ... you realize that biblical manhood is anything but weak.”

Culture confuses submission and weakness, Smith added. U.S. military leaders who submit to the authority of President Barack Obama don’t lose their power,” he said. “It’s just an acknowledgement of the system.”

More than 450 men from nine states attended Be the Man, May 8-9, at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North

Attendee Malcolm Linder





Dwight Mason, Bobby Irvine and Roger Grundy, all from Bardstown, Ky.

Carolina. The annual event, which began in 2003, is a joint effort of LifeWay and the North Carolina Baptist Convention. Attendance grew significantly compared to last year, when about 300 people attended, said J. Edward Richardson, senior coaching consultant for the North Carolina Baptist Convention.

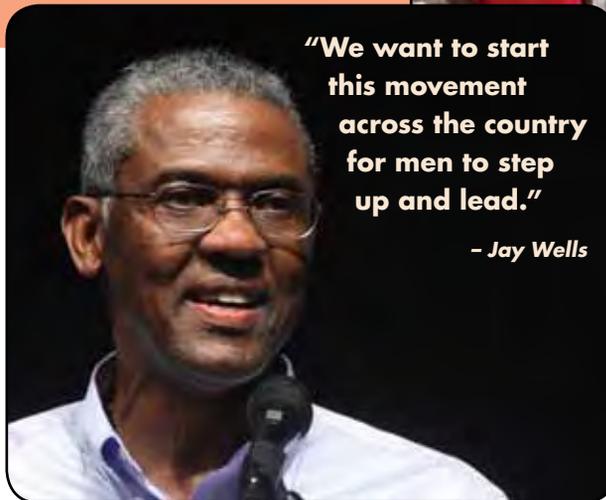
The two-day conference featured lively worship, resources and regular reminders that God has called Christian men to be spiritual leaders in all aspects of life.

“For us, the main goal is to help men become better men of God so that they can take the lead in their homes, to be better churchmen, leaders in their church, leaders in their community, to set the example of Christ and reach out to other men,” Richardson said.

The male-only environment allowed attendees the freedom to worship without many distractions, leaders said. “If you think about it, most men never experience a man-only worship,” said Jay Wells, LifeWay’s director of black church relations and consulting.

Workshops featured speakers on such topics as how churches can engage today’s masculine culture and ways to build men’s character.

Johnson said churches can reconnect with men by rebuilding bridges to their communities, presenting Jesus as



the strong man that He was, providing authentic and culturally relevant worship and providing meaningful mentorship.

“Paul helps Timothy and Titus, Barnabas helps Paul, but who helps the young brother today?” Johnson asked. “The church has to re-engineer and revision herself ... to serve this present age. I think what was done yesterday was good yesterday, but I do not believe it’s relevant to the present age.”

Brabson said men should match the character of Jesus in terms of their humility, treatment of women and integrity. “When we read the life of Christ, we see He was not interested in people’s attention,” Brabson said. “He was interested in people. Is who you are speaking so loud that I can’t hear what you say?”

During the conference, LifeWay launched “I’m the Man,” a theme designed to encourage creative and intentional outreach to and affirmation for men. It includes a set of promotional resources and Bible studies designed to help black

churches start or strengthen their men’s ministries.

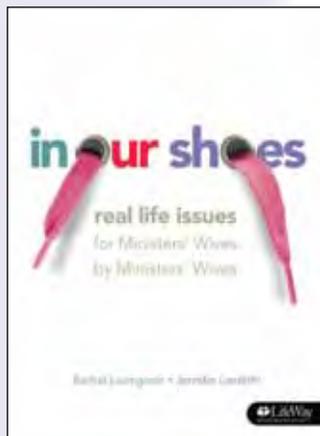
“We want to start this movement across the country for men to step up and lead,” Wells said.

Wells agreed with several speakers that men often don’t feel comfortable, welcomed or affirmed in many churches that cater to female members’ preferences.

“They don’t have the ‘man stuff,’” Wells said. “We want to help churches get that back, rediscover the masculinity part and affirm men in that. We’ve got to get a correction to make men more comfortable.”

Noval Mayes, a member of Greater First Baptist Church in Lewisburg, Tenn., said the Be the Man conference reinforces obedience to God. “It means that I’m doing everything that a man’s supposed to do as designed by my Lord and Savior.”

Mayes said he rode five-and-a-half hours with 21 other men from his church because he has been seeking God’s direction for several issues in his life. He said the weekend reinforced his need to focus on God’s activity. “Mainly what I came out of it understanding was I still need to be patient.” ■



If the shoe fits, make it a Bible study

by Polly House

If a woman is like a shoe, then a minister's wife is like a tan suede open-toe dress shoe with a two-inch wedge heel in a size 8 narrow. In other words, a minister's wife is a very specific woman.

Recognizing this, Jennifer Landrith and Rachel Lovingood have written a Bible study aimed at women like themselves. *In Our Shoes*, published by LifeWay, began as a Bible study for the staff wives at Long Hollow Baptist Church in Hendersonville, Tenn., where Landrith's husband is senior pastor and Lovingood's husband is student pastor.

"When we got into it, we decided if this were good for our ministers' wives, it'd be good for other ministers' wives," Lovingood said. "We want to encourage wives with the Word. We want it to be empowering, real and relevant."

Both women were conference leaders at the Between Us Ministers' Wives equipping event hosted by LifeWay's women's events area March 12-13 in Nashville, Tenn.

Landrith said as they began looking at what resources were available for ministers' wives, they found the pool to be lacking.

"Too many of them just said what to do," she said. "But not many of them said anything about how to live as a minister's wife. As we began working, we decided the need was for a Bible study, not a book of advice."

One of the first issues Landrith and Lovingood tackle in the Bible study is the "calling" on the life of a minister's wife.

"Some people don't really like the word 'calling,'" Landrith said. "We tend to think about calling in terms of how our husbands decided on their particular jobs. But the word

'calling' applies to all believers."

Landrith and Lovingood said for their purposes, they

categorized a minister's wife's calling into four descriptions:

- **A specific calling** – The woman feels a clear, distinct call to ministry.
- **A general calling** – The woman feels called to serve but doesn't know specifically in what capacity.
- **An unexpected calling** – The woman is surprised by the call to ministry.
- **An impersonal calling** – The woman sees the calling to ministry as her husband's job, and it doesn't apply to her.

"How she views her calling is going to influence how she views her role," Lovingood said.

The women also address a list of hot topic questions, such as dealing with the financial strain that can come with serving in ministry, developing friendships with other women in the church, and balancing home life and church participation.

In its eight chapters, *In Our Shoes* addresses the blessings and influence that are unique to a minister's wife – from buying deacon gifts to cooking for unexpected company.

It also gives suggestions on connecting with other ministers' wives by means such as hosting a monthly party for the staff wives in the church, forming an online community, creating a ministers' wives book club or holding a community wide interdenominational picnic or tea.

Whether a minister's wife sees her shoe of choice as a strappy sandal, a solid running shoe, a sturdy flat or a high-top combat boot, she needs to find the style that is most comfortable and appropriate to her life as a woman, as well as to her life as the wife of a minister.

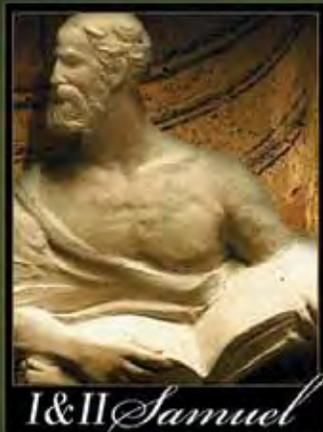
"One size – or even one style – of shoe doesn't fit everyone," Landrith said. ■

BLOG

Access the *In Our Shoes* blog at <http://inourshoesthestudy.wordpress.com>.

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Ministry, networking highlight National Collegiate Summit

story by Polly House, photography by Kent Harville

Their places of ministry are different – college campuses and local churches – but collegiate ministry leaders share a focus. Both sets of ministers want college students and young adults to have vibrant and meaningful relationships with Christ and other Christians.

The triennial National Collegiate Summit, hosted by LifeWay, met April 30-May 2 in Nashville, Tenn. The gathering of 575 collegiate leaders from Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) groups and local church college ministries gathered for workshops and networking.

Linda Osborne, LifeWay's national collegiate ministry director, said considering the tough economic times, the large attendance was encouraging and exciting.

"We had 575 participants who were from almost every state convention," she said. "There are 705 campus ministers in the SBC, so this attendance number is quite good. This tells me that our collegiate ministers see

the information, workshops, networking and encouragement they receive at the Summit as important to them."

Essential ministry

LifeWay President Thom Rainer told attendees that they were some of the "essential people" in the lives of young adults, referencing his book *Essential Church*, co-written with his son, Sam Rainer III.

"The kind of people who keep these young adults in the church and bring them back after they've been out are real, genuine and transparent," Rainer said. "Young adults don't want to see actors wearing masks. They want you to be real.

"I've never done your kind of ministry, but I know there are times of intense frustration. But, you are making a difference in the lives of these students and it is worth it."



Working together

While church and campus ministries may differ in their focuses, the desire of both groups is to reach out to college students and lead them first to a saving faith in Christ and second to an ever-deepening relationship with Him. Some students may see the campus ministry as a substitution for participation in a local church while they are in college, but this is not the intent of BCM groups.

“We absolutely want both ministries to reach students,” said Bruce Venable, minister of university students at First Baptist Church in Lubbock, Texas. “Not cooperating is not an option.”

Venable, a former Baptist Collegiate campus minister, then associate director of the state BCM staff in Louisiana, has been on all sides of ministry to students.

“As a church staff collegiate minister, I try to do what I can do aggressively, but we don’t step into what the campus ministries are doing,” Venable said. “For example, take missions. The BCMs do summer missions programs. We don’t, but since they do that so well, we plug into that.”

Steve Masters, campus minister at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, echoed that sentiment: “A real practical way to join with our local churches is to go together on mission trips.”

Osborne added, “Years ago when [then-called] BSU [Baptist Student Union] began, its goal was to connect the students to the local churches. Many of our BCMs have never strayed from this and have been very successful.”

Dave Owen, associate pastor of college and evangelism ministries at Providence Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., said college students are looking for community. “That’s why they join fraternities and sororities,” Owen said. “I did it too, but it was really pretty shallow.”

He said that the success of a campus ministry can be judged by what students do when they leave college and start their adult lives.

“Train your students to find a biblical, Jesus-loving, Scripture-preaching solid church and go there,” Owen said. “Tell them not to look for the best school district, not the most Starbucks or the closest Harris Teeter. Teach them to look for the best church and plant their lives in that neighborhood.”

Reproducers

David Platt, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., led a session on helping college students become not just receivers of the Word, but reproducers, too.

“What if our Christianity isn’t all about us, but about being not just receivers, but reproducers of the Word?” he asked.

To illustrate the point, he told of a time when he was in Sudan, teaching a group of Christians in a mud hut.

“They wrote down every word I said,” Platt said. “It wasn’t because I was so profound, but because they could take what they had learned and share it with their people.”

The job as leaders, Platt said, is to take the Word and display the greatness of God.

“Less of our humor, less of our opinions, just the Word of God,” Platt said. “If all we give them is our advice, when they are faced with a decision between advice and the flesh, they’ll choose the flesh every time.” ■



Daniel Berry, Lexington, Ky.



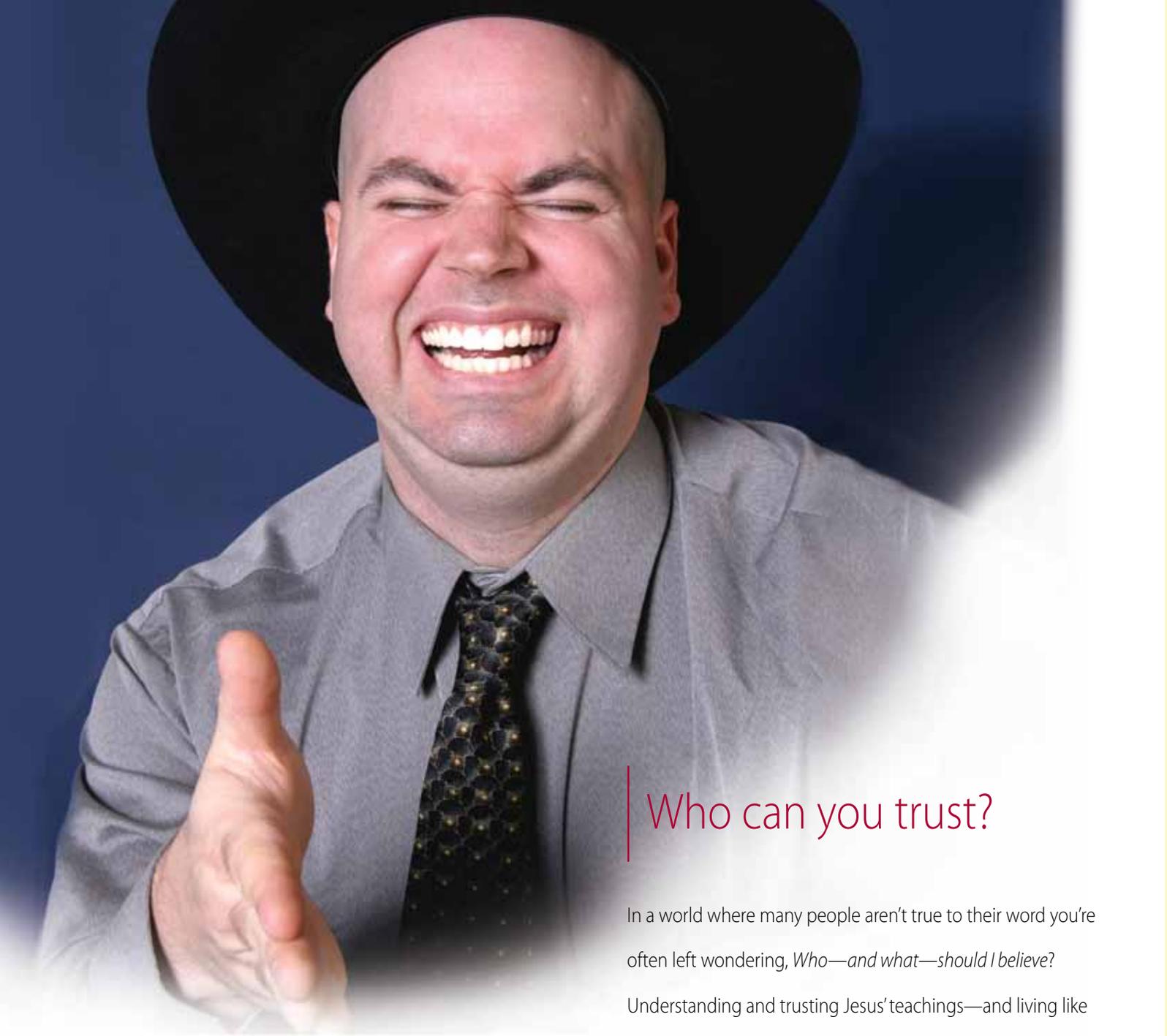
Dave Owen, Raleigh, N.C.



David Platt, Birmingham, Ala.

HIGHLIGHTS

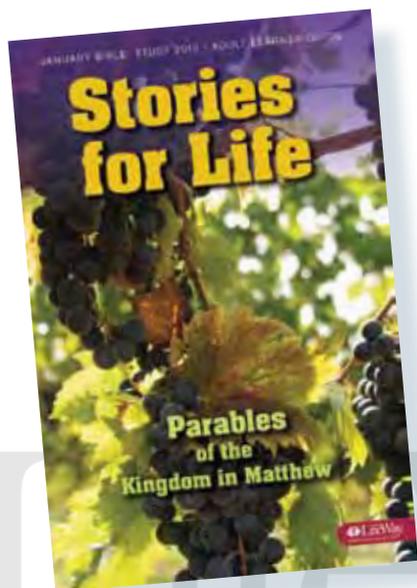
Highlights from the Summit are available on the Threads Web site at www.threadsmedia.com/blog/article/collegiate-summit-live-stream. Threads is LifeWay’s ministry area focusing on young adults.



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LifeWay | Adults

2008 ACP:

Missions giving up; membership, baptisms down

Southern Baptists gave 2.3 percent more to missions last year despite the economic downturn, but they lost members and baptized the lowest number of people since 1987, according to the denomination's Annual Church Profile (ACP), compiled by LifeWay in conjunction with Baptist state conventions.

Total giving to missions reached \$1.36 billion in 2008. Through the denomination's Cooperative Program (CP) and special mission offerings, local churches voluntarily pool funds to support mission efforts in their states, throughout the nation and around the world. For example, Southern Baptists support more than 10,500 missionaries who engage nearly 1,200 people groups throughout North America and around the world.

In addition, CP funds support six seminaries, the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board and other SBC entities. LifeWay and GuideStone Financial Resources are self-funding. At the state level, CP funds support a variety of ministries including children's homes, disaster relief efforts, colleges and universities and much more.

"Southern Baptists are among the most generous and mission-minded people in the world," said LifeWay President Thom Rainer. "They will give even when they're hurting so the spiritual and physical needs of others are met."

Offsetting the rise in giving, along with a slight increase in the total number of SBC churches and primary worship attendance,

was the nagging reality that baptisms in 2008 fell for the fourth straight year to 342,198, a drop of 1.1 percent. "The numbers simply tell us that Southern Baptists are not reaching as many people for Christ as they once did," said Rainer. "It still takes 47 Southern Baptists to baptize one person for Christ. I pray that all of our churches and our entities will become totally focused on obeying Christ's commission so that our convention will truly experience a Great Commission resurgence."

"Southern Baptists are among the most mission-minded people in the world. They will give even when they're hurting so the spiritual and physical needs of others are met."

- Thom S. Rainer

Total SBC membership fell by 38,482, or 0.2 percent last year, to 16,228,438. Sunday school enrollment dropped 123,817, or 1.6 percent, to 7,752,794.

Rainer pointed out that numeric/percent changes for certain categories could not be figured accurately for the 2008 ACP. Some state conventions did not ask for certain items to be reported, or asked in a way that gave results that were not comparable to totals reported in the 2007 ACP.

Impacted categories and their 2008 totals include:

- Discipleship training enrollment: 1,798,330
- Total tithes, offerings and special gifts: \$11.1 billion
- Music ministry enrollment/participation: 1,416,694
- WMU enrollment: 795,379
- Men/boys mission education enrollment: 403,575 ■

CHART

Go to www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends for a high resolution ACP statistical summary chart.

NEW RESOURCES

LifeWay Church Resources at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772
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B&H PUBLISHING GROUP

Love's First Light

by Jamie Carie

Christophe, the Count of St. Laurent, has lost his entire family to the French Revolution and must flee to survive. Christophe meets the beautiful widow Scarlett. When the Count learns that Scarlett is related to the man who murdered his family, he turns from love and chooses revenge. Heaven only knows what it might take for Christophe to love again.

Releases in July.
 Paperback. ISBN
 9780805448139. \$14.99

Sweet Waters

by Julie Carobini

Tara believes a move back to her childhood home of Otter Bay, Calif., will help restore the fun and fearlessness she's missing. Playing back memories of idyllic times spent there with her father along the majestic coast, a fairy tale seems just around the corner. But Tara begins to uncover shocking secrets about why her family left all those years ago.

Releases in August.
 Paperback. ISBN
 9780805448733. \$14.99

Seeing Things

by Patti Hill

Birdie Wainwright, 72, isn't concerned about seeing things that others can't. The impractical visions brought on by macular degeneration add more adventure to life.

But when she breaks her ankle and must convalesce at her son's home in Denver, Birdie's imagination really takes flight. As the line between reality and whimsy turns brittle, faith is tested and hope is reborn.

Releases Sept. 1.
 Paperback. ISBN
 9780805447514.
 \$14.99

The List: Figuring Out Prince Charming, the Corner Office, and Happily Ever After

by Marian Jordan

Every girl has her version of "The List," a handful of goals she wants to achieve (school, travel, career, marriage, children, etc.) by a certain age. But what if those dreams don't come true according to schedule or don't meet expectations?

Marian Jordan (*Wilderness Skills for Women*) says there's a better list to live by, a God-honoring set of priorities that makes every season of life beautiful.

Releases Sept. 1.
 Paperback. ISBN
 9780805446715. \$11.99

The Power of Persistence: Breakthroughs in Your Prayer Life

by Michael Catt

Michael Catt, senior pastor of Sherwood Baptist Church and executive producer of the Georgia congregation's

hit films *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*, is often asked why God has blessed their efforts in such a remarkable way. His answer is simple: "We have a praying church that is walking in unity. We pray over every ministry and every decision."

The Power of Persistence is Catt's invitation to a prayer-

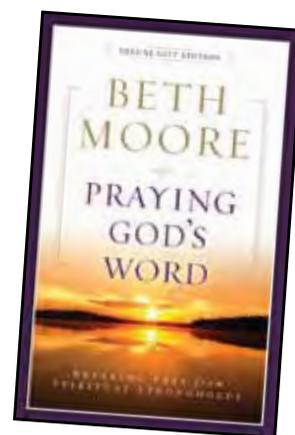
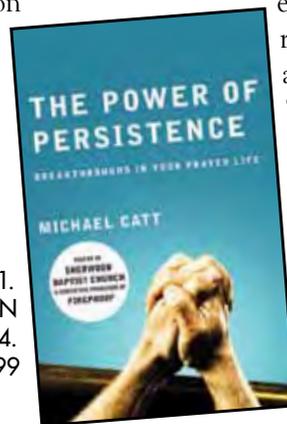
without-ceasing way of life. Stories from Scripture and personal ministry experiences attest to the work of prayer.

Releases Sept. 1.
 Paperback. ISBN
 9780805448689. \$14.99

Praying God's Word: Breaking Free from Spiritual Strongholds

by Beth Moore

Praying God's Word is the perennial favorite Scripture-prayer resource designed to help us decisively overcome specific strongholds: pride, idolatry, addiction, loss, depression, unbelief, temptation and more.



Beth Moore boldly reminds us that nothing is bigger or more powerful than the Lord.

Releases Sept. 1.
Hardback. ISBN
9780805464344.
\$19.99; Paperback. ISBN
9780805464337.
\$14.99



**Growing Disciples:
Live the Word**
by Philip Nation

The final volume in the *Growing Disciples* series, this study will teach participants to read, study, memorize and meditate on God's Word in order to know Him and understand His commands, His purposes and His ways. 6 sessions.

Released in June.
LifeWay product
#005035528,
\$9.95



God's truth. 4 sessions.
Released in May.
Learner guide, LifeWay
product #005094534, \$6.95;
Leader guide, LifeWay product
#005094535, \$12.95

Ruth: Gleaning Hope
by Fiona Soltes

Because of her willingness to take the first steps into the unknown and trust in God, Ruth ultimately played a vital role in the lineage of Jesus.

This study helps you really understand the lives of Ruth, Boaz and Naomi. Ruth's story is testimony that there's more than meets the eye. 7 sessions.

Released in May.
LifeWay product #005189437,
\$7.99

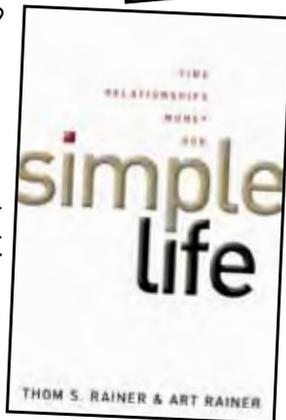
Ester (Esther)
by Beth Moore

This Spanish edition of *Esther* shows how she risked her own destruction as she faced the most influential personalities of the empire's government. Despite the

**Simple
Life: Time,
Relationships,
Money, God**
by Thom S. Rainer
& Art Rainer

The research and change methods that made *Simple Church* a ministry best-seller are now applied to everyday matters in *Simple Life*. Authors Thom S. Rainer and Art Rainer interviewed 1,077 individuals to confirm that most people feel their lives are overly stressful and misguided. As they share these highly relatable stories, the Rainers chart a simple path from joyless to joyful.

Releases Sept. 1.
Hardback. ISBN
9780805448863. \$19.99



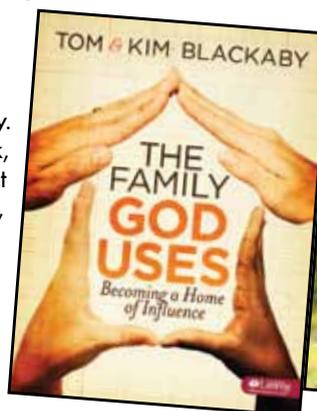
themselves up to God's work of conforming them to Christ's image. *Soul Shaping* encourages believers to experiment with and to appreciate each spiritual discipline. 6 sessions.

Released in June.
LifeWay product #005137993,
\$8.95

**The Family God Uses:
Becoming a Home of
Influence**
by Tom and Kim Blackaby

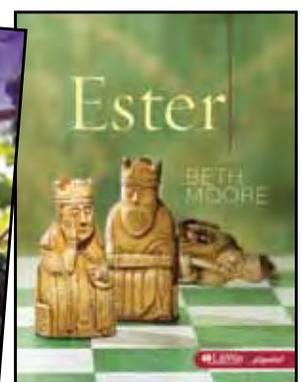
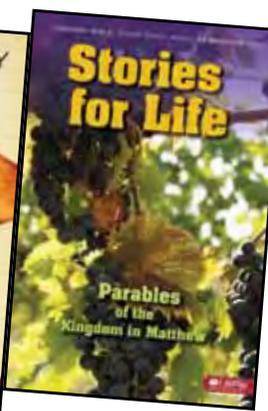
This new study shows parents how to get and keep their family God-centered and teach children their role in His Kingdom. *The Family God Uses* functions as a practical field manual for families looking to pray, grow and serve together. 7 sessions.

Releases in July.
Member book,
LifeWay product
#005189546,
\$14.95



**JBS 2010
Stories for Life:
Parables of the
Kingdom in Matthew**
by Jeff Iorg

Spiritual gurus, mystic philosophers, religious zealots and spiritual frauds who claim they are Christ are all on crusades to enlighten the world with truth. And people wonder: Who's right? Who and what should I believe and why? *Stories for Life* helps adults, students and children discover the sure and lasting foundation of



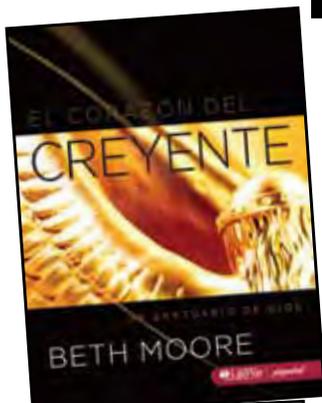
CHURCH RESOURCES

**Baptist Doctrine Study
2010: Soul Shaping:
Disciplines That
Conform You to the
Image of Christ**
by Jim L. Wilson

Spiritual disciplines are the small things Christians do intentionally to open

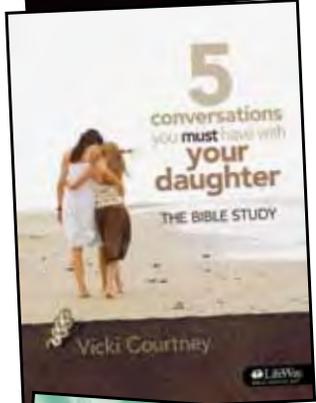
NEW RESOURCES

LifeWay Church Resources at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772
 LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123



danger, she trusted God and landed a crushing blow that saved her people. 10 sessions.
 Released in June.
 LifeWay product #005168047,
 \$16.95

El Corazón del Creyente
 (A Believer's Heart)
 by Beth Moore



This Spanish edition of *A Woman's Heart* explores the fascinating account of the building of the Old Testament tabernacle, its pivotal role in God's eternal plan and its meanings for believers today. 11 sessions.
 Released in May.
 LifeWay product #005167226,
 \$16.95

Interrupted: An Adventure in Relearning the Essentials of Faith
 by Jen Hatmaker

God wants to snatch us from the grip of consumer-driven Christianity and force us to answer some hard questions: What is the point of the Church? What's really on the heart of God? *Interrupted* is a journey into the issues of real life, real justice and real religion.

Releases in July.
 Member book, LifeWay product #005201449, \$7.95; DVD leader kit, LifeWay product #005146603, \$69.95

Chase the Goose: Reclaiming the Adventure of Living a Spirit-Led Life
 by Mark Batterson

Like caged animals in a zoo, we mindlessly and heartlessly

trudge through our day-to-day lives. But what if we could break out and reclaim a sense of spiritual adventure? *Chase the Goose* is an invitation to start reclaiming the spiritual adventure God has planned. 6 sessions.

Released in May.
 Member book, LifeWay product #005202109, \$7.95; DVD leader kit, LifeWay product #005189431,
 \$69.95

5 Conversations You Must Have with Your Daughter
 by Vicki Courtney

This study will help moms and daughters depend on our Lord in a culture that often leads otherwise. Moms will focus on helping their daughters understand who they are. 6 sessions.

Released in May.
 Member book, LifeWay product #005191375, \$11.95; DVD leader kit, LifeWay product #005125844,
 \$149.95

Covenant: God's Enduring Promises
 by Kay Arthur

Explore God's initiatives throughout history with humanity by studying His key covenants or enduring promises. Participants will learn what it means to live in a covenant relationship with Him as they learn through the process of inductive Bible study. 9 sessions.

Releases in July.
 Member book, LifeWay product #005207282, \$14.95; DVD leader kit, LifeWay product #005189424,
 \$149.95

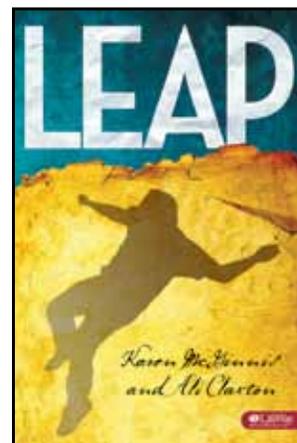
One in a Million: Journey to Your Promised Land
 by Priscilla Shirer

Join an exploration of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to a land of deliverance and you'll discover that the road to your promised land may be bumpy, but it is worth every mile. Priscilla Shirer encourages others to actually see the goodness of God in their lives, live beyond their circumstances and expect to see God move in miraculous ways in their everyday existence. 7 sessions.

Released in June.
 Member book, LifeWay product #005169734, \$11.95; DVD leader kit, LifeWay product #005169733,
 \$149.95

Leap
 by Karen McGinnis and Ali Claxton

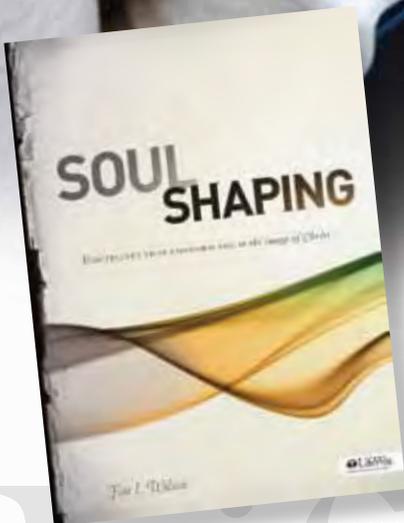
This study helps students understand what faith is and why they need it. 5 sessions.
 Released in May.
 Student book, LifeWay product #005189807, \$6.95; Leader guide, LifeWay product #005190077, \$9.95





Good habits help you get in shape.

Fruit or cake. A run instead of the couch. Water over caffeine. Each habit starts with a decision. And the *right* choices in these little, everyday decisions will eventually yield positive results. It's the same in our spiritual lives. Practice spiritual disciplines—do small things intentionally—and God can conform you more and more to Christ's image. The 2010 Baptist Doctrine Study, *Soul Shaping*, focuses on spiritual disciplines. It encourages you to experiment with the disciplines of intimacy, focus, service, and more until your new nature becomes second nature. Order online, call 800.458.2772, or visit the LifeWay Christian Store serving you.



www.lifeway.com

LifeWay | Adults

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NEW RESOURCES

LifeWay Church Resources at www.lifeway.com and (800) 458-2772
 LifeWay Christian Stores at www.lifewaystores.com and (800) 233-1123

Girl Talk: The Power of Your Words

by Pam Gibbs

Gossip. Lying. Language. Sensual dialogue. Trash talk. This Bible study tackles these tough topics with teen girls. 5 sessions.

Released in June.

Learner guide, LifeWay product #005189797, \$7.95; Leader guide, LifeWay product #005190069, \$9.95

Pure Parenting: Teaching Your Teen Why True Love Waits

by Lynn Pryor

This is a practical guide to equip parents to raise teenagers who embrace the pledge behind True Love Waits to live a life of purity. 4 sessions.

Released in June.

Member book, LifeWay product #005189805, \$7.95; Leader guide, LifeWay product #005213616, \$9.95

Girls' Ministry Idea Book

by Jimmie Davis

This book includes ideas that teach spiritual truths, rites of passage for teen girls, creative prayer ideas, father/daughter and mother/daughter events, ideas to make girls' ministry special and much more.

Released in May.

Book, LifeWay product #005190078, \$14.95

Fuel Ignited: Living Your Faith, Volume 1

Teach students how to live their faith with this new and improved line of the popular video-based

curriculum series designed just for them.

Releases in August.

DVD & CD-ROM leader set, Volume 1, LifeWay product #005190074, \$159.95;

Small group leader edition CD-ROMs, Volume 1, LifeWay product #005190076, \$9.95

Authentic Relationships: Being Real in a Fictitious World

by Carol Sallee

Teach students how to build relationships and recapture loyalty in a disloyal world. 13 sessions.

Releases in July.

Student book, LifeWay product #005189796, \$6.99; Leader guide, LifeWay product #005190068, \$13.95

Organized Mass Chaos (OMC)

Organized Mass Chaos is the large group game that will get your kids going crazy with a purpose. This game is perfect for VBS, fall festivals, Wednesday nights and any other children's gathering.

Released in May.

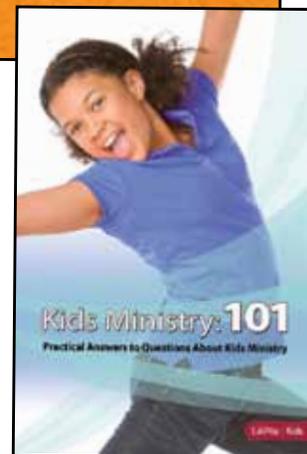
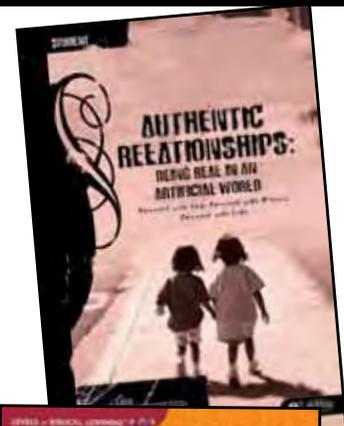
LifeWay product #005185510, \$39.99

Kids Ministry 101: Practical Answers to Questions About Kids Ministry

Kids Ministry 101 is your one-stop book for answering questions like: How do I choose the right curriculum for my church? How do I prepare a budget? How do I enlist volunteers?

Released in June.

LifeWay product #005191563, \$12.99



LIFEWAY WORSHIP

The Dawn of Redeeming Grace

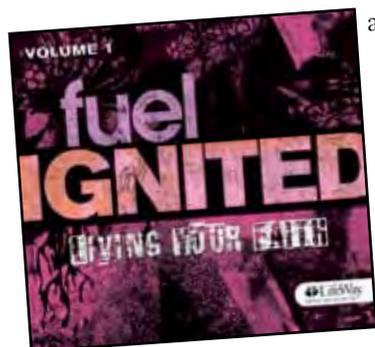
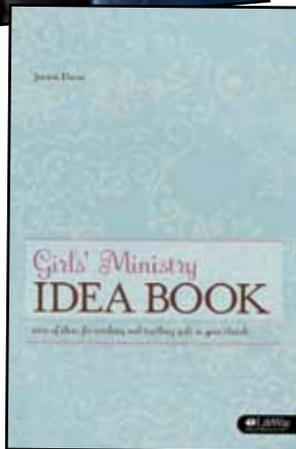
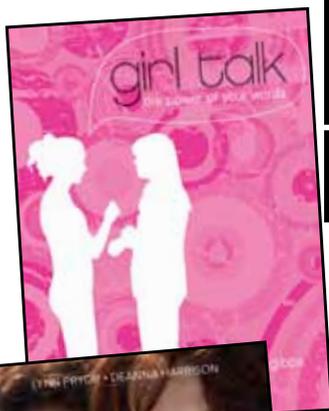
by Craig Adams

This stirring blend of joyous Christmas songs and short, dramatic narrative captures the retelling of the Christmas story, reminding us that through His Son, God offered us His matchless grace.

Released in May.

LifeWay product #005180727 \$6.95

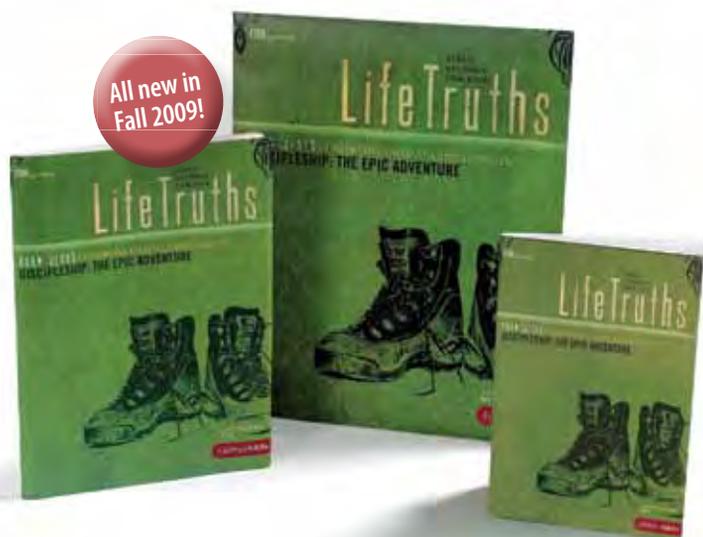
Summer 2009





What could happen if you started a Sunday School class just for parents?

Managing daily responsibilities along with being a godly role model for their children is challenging for Christian parents. Enter the newly redesigned Life Truths, a Bible study resource written by busy parents, for busy parents. Creating a Life Truths class will strengthen and grow your Sunday School ministry. Studying Life Truths curriculum will strengthen and grow individuals, parents, and families, too. Go online for more information, for downloadable samples, and to view the Life Truths study plan.



www.lifeway.com/lifetruths

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SUMMER 2009 - July, Aug., Sept.

ORACLE ID 005174963

LifeWay's communications awarded for 2008 work

LifeWay's communications department brought home awards in news and feature writing, photography, design, overall publication and podcasting. Award winners can be viewed at www.lifeway.com/factsandtrends.

Ragan Communications Recognition Awards

Kelly Shrout

- Grand Prize, best nonprofit magazine for employee communications.

Baptist Communicators Association

Wilmer C. Fields Awards Competition

Kent Harville

- 1st place, photography division, newspaper/newsletter single for "They Shall Rise Up and Call Her Blessed."
- 1st place, photography division, newspaper/newsletter series for "Living Lives on Mission."
- 1st place, photography division, magazine series for "Outreach in Uganda."
- 2nd place, photography division, magazine single for "Let the Little Children Come to Me."

- 2nd place, photography division, other media electronic for "Taking a Leap."

Polly House

- 1st place, news writing division, single article-magazine for "VBS 2009 Themes Announced."

Brooklyn Noel Lowery

- 2nd place, feature writing division, single article-magazine for "Sand and Light: Spring Breakers Share Rides, Pancakes, and Jesus at Beach Reach" (unavailable online).
- Honorable mention, news writing division, series or package - online publication for "Campers Challenged to 'Pay the Price' at Centrifuge."

Rob Phillips

- 1st place, news writing division, first person column for "Death and Life in the Valley of Camarones."

Russ Rankin

- 1st place, feature writing division, single article-magazine for "Neo-Nazi Finds Freedom in Prison."

Kelly Shrout

- 1st place, photography division, magazine

single for "Hope for Rwanda."

- 2nd place, news writing division, single article-magazine for "LifeWay Mission Volunteers Lead More Than 5,000 to Christ in 2007."
- Honorable mention (with Russ Rankin), audio-visual division, podcast for "Lifecast - Oliver North."

Chris Turner

- 1st place (with Brooklyn Noel Lowery and Russ Rankin), audio-visual communications division, podcast for "Inside LifeWay."

Religious Communicators Council DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards

Polly House

- Award of Excellence, writing, series for "VBS Outrigger Island: Waves of Success in Reaching People for Christ."
- Certificate of Merit, writing, series for "Lifeboxes Give Our Military Heroes a Positive Sign That Churches Care."

Katie Shull

- Award of Excellence, graphic design, publication cover for "Facts & Trends, May/June 2008." ■