

SOUTHERN SEMINARY



**CHRISTIANITY
AND POP CULTURE**

The scandal of biblical illiteracy

While America's evangelical Christians are rightly concerned about the secular worldview's rejection of biblical Christianity, we ought to give some urgent attention to a problem much closer to home — biblical illiteracy in the church. This scandalous problem is our own, and it is up to us to fix it.

Researchers George Gallup and Jim Castelli put the problem squarely: "Americans revere the Bible — but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates." How bad is it? Researchers tell us that it is worse than most could imagine.

Fewer than half of all adults can name the four Gospels. Many Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples. According to data from the Barna Research Group, 60 percent of Americans can't name even five of the Ten Commandments. "No wonder people break the Ten Commandments all the time. They don't know what they are," said George Barna, president of the firm. The bottom line? "Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate."

Multiple surveys reveal the problem in stark terms. According to 82 percent of Americans, "God helps those who help themselves," is a Bible verse. Those identified as born-again Christians did better — by one percent. A majority of adults think the Bible teaches that the most important purpose in life is taking care of one's family.

Some of the statistics are enough to perplex even those aware of the problem. A Barna poll indicated that at least 12 percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Another survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife. A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham. We are in big trouble.

Secularized Americans should not be expected to be knowledgeable about the Bible. As the nation's civic conversation is stripped of all biblical references and content, Americans increasingly live in a Scripture-free public space. Confusion and ignorance of the Bible's content should be assumed in post-Christian America.

The larger scandal is biblical ignorance among Christians. Choose whichever statistic or survey you like, the general pattern is the same. America's Christians know less and less about the Bible. It shows.

How can a generation be biblically shaped in its understanding of human sexuality when it believes Sodom and Gomorrah to be a married couple? No wonder Christians show a growing

tendency to compromise on the issue of homosexuality. Many who identify themselves as Christians are similarly confused about the Gospel itself. An individual who believes that "God helps those who help themselves" will find salvation by grace and justification by faith to be alien concepts.

Christians who lack biblical knowledge are the products of churches that marginalize biblical knowledge. Bible teaching now often accounts for only a diminishing fraction of the local congregation's time and attention. The move to small group ministry has certainly increased opportunities for fellowship, but many of these groups never get beyond superficial Bible study.

Youth ministries are asked to fix problems, provide entertainment and keep kids busy. How many local-church youth programs actually produce substantial Bible knowledge in young people?

Even the pulpit has been sidelined in many congregations. Preaching has taken a back seat to other concerns in corporate worship. The centrality of biblical preaching to the formation of disciples is lost, and Christian ignorance leads to Christian indolence and worse.

This really is our problem, and it is up to this generation of Christians to reverse course. Recovery starts at home. Parents are to be the first and most important educators of their own children, diligently teaching them the Word of God (Deut 6:4-9). Parents cannot franchise their responsibility to the congregation, no matter how faithful and

biblical it may be. God assigned parents this non-negotiable responsibility, and children must see their Christian parents as teachers and fellow students of God's Word.

Churches must recover the centrality and urgency of biblical teaching and preaching, and refuse to sideline the teaching ministry of the preacher. Pastors and churches too busy — or too distracted — to make biblical knowledge a central aim of ministry will produce believers who simply do not know enough to be faithful disciples.

We will not believe more than we know, and we will not live higher than our beliefs. The many fronts of Christian compromise in this generation can be directly traced to biblical illiteracy in the pews and the absence of biblical preaching and teaching in our homes and churches.

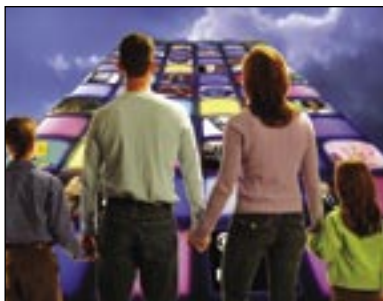
This generation must get deadly serious about the problem of biblical illiteracy, or a frighteningly large number of Americans — Christians included — will go on thinking that Sodom and Gomorrah lived happily ever after.



R. Albert Mohler Jr.
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President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



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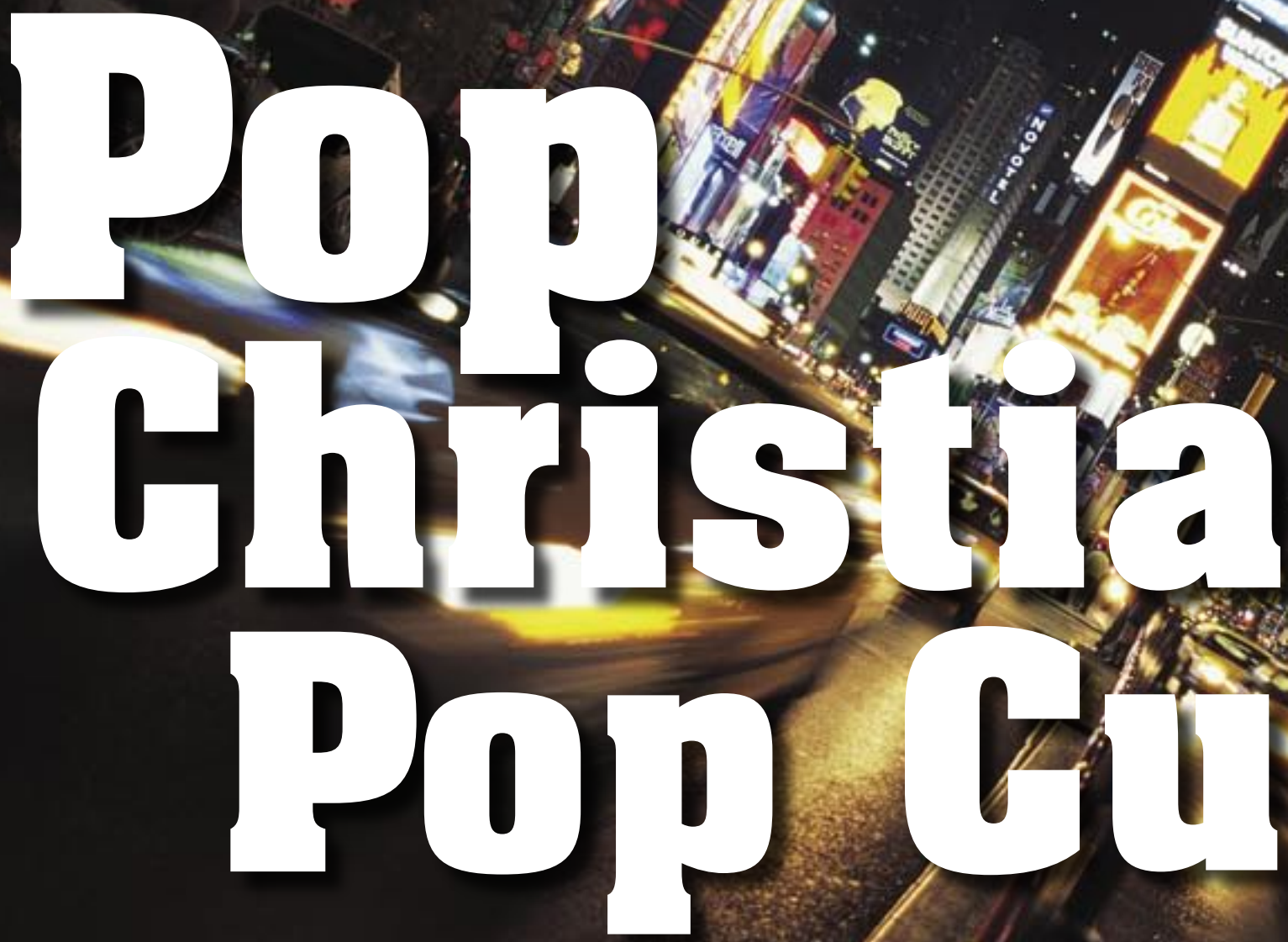
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Pop Christiana Pop Cu

Take your choice: Christian boy bands or “The Gospel According to the Simpsons.” The era of the fundamentalist who boycotted the local “movie house” is long gone — and, in many ways, that is a good thing. But in its place there reigns sheer confusion among evangelicals about how to relate the Gospel to popular culture. One group wants to make money off evangelicals. Another group wants to win the respect of Hollywood. Both find their justification in the same first-century Athenian hilltop. If Christians are going to engage popular culture, without losing our souls, we are going to have to decipher how to relate Mars Hill to Rolling Stone.



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Off-Brand Evangelicals

The first model of evangelical pop culture engagement are Christians I call “off-brand evangelicals.” They seek to listen to trends within pop culture and to reproduce them in Christian dialect for use within the evangelical subculture.

GQ magazine sent one of its reporters last year to a Christian music festival in Pennsylvania to check out what is going on among the “Religious Right” subculture. “Christian rock is a genre that exists to edify and make money off of evangelical Christians,” the author concluded after scoping out the evangelical version of Woodstock. He remarked that the most essential quality of Christian popular music was its parasitism. “Remember those perfume dispensers they used to have in pharmacies — ‘If you like Drakkar Noir, you’ll love Sexy Musk?’” the journalist asked. “Well Christian rock works like that.”¹

He pointed out that Christian pop music recruits “off brand” performers to ape and mimic current popular artists, to “edify”

believers all over North America. Oh, and to make money off of them too. It is hard not to wince at the magazine’s assessment.

Off-brand evangelicals watch what is happening in the culture (that is, what is making money), and then find people slightly less talented but more in love with Jesus (or at least able to play it on TV) to do something similar (that is, make some money for the corporate bosses).


**The era of the fundamentalist
who boycotted the local
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themselves as “‘South Park’ Conservatives” because they could be for a free-market and a hawkish foreign policy while enjoying the crude humor of the R-rated cartoon “South Park.”²

This model is popular among a generation that humbly dares to call itself “the emerging church,” although it includes aging baby boomers who have been writing movie and music

“South Park” Evangelicals

The second type of evangelical pop culture engagement happens among those I call “‘South Park’ evangelicals.” They are reminiscent of the culturally-libertarian hipster right-wingers who billed



reviews for Christianity Today and Campus Life since the era when the Partridge Family had a hit record. These Christians up turn their noses at Christian pop culture and bask in whatever Hollywood and Manhattan churn out, looking for “signs of redemption” therein. Young evangelicals are able to read the weblogs of virtually unemployable but awfully hip evangelicals who can discuss the “redemptive value” of “Million Dollar Baby.”

Often pop culture is further compared to the missiological contextualization Christians attempt when working with other cultures internationally. It is, therefore, of little value to criticize pop culture — such is “fundamentalist” and passé. “Preaching against culture is like preaching against someone’s house,” one Southern Baptist church planting guru said. “It’s just where they live.” Contrasting the messages of pop culture with the messages of a Christian world-and-life view is often derided by these evangelicals as the rhetoric of “culture scolds” rather than that of evangelists.

In this model, one seeks to know pop culture, not in order to imitate it, but first to enjoy it as an aspect of common grace, and second to share a common cultural dialect with unbelievers. You don’t fight a “culture war” with Hollywood, the “South Park” evangelicals tell us; you seek to redeem Hollywood instead, by finding the aspects of contemporary music and film that are consonant with biblical truth. Christians are to highlight these commonalities, and downplay the divergences.

The Path from Mars Hill

In either case, Acts 17 covers a multitude of sins. Christians seek to engage pop culture, pointing to the Apostle Paul’s speech before the Areopagus, in which he cited the lyrics of pagan poets and the architecture of pagan temples. Popular culture should be used, it is argued, to “build a bridge” with pop culture consumers, creating “common ground” through which we can later communicate the Gospel.

But is this what’s going on at Mars Hill? The answer is no. The apostle might say, “God forbid.” Often those pointing to Acts 17 wish to begin with Paul’s address in verse 22. But one must look, first, as to how Paul found himself on the Hill in the first place. He was summoned there because of a controversy he evoked among the populace “because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection” (Acts 17:18).³ Paul did not wish to start with a “common ground” idea of a generic god, and then reason along to Jesus. He started with the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth — proclaiming among the Gentile philosophers exactly what he had proclaimed among the Jewish rabbis: that God had raised Him from the dead. Where Paul starts is also where he ends: with the guarantee that God will bring about judgment found in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (17:31).

Yes, Paul quotes pagan poets, and, yes, Paul takes note of the altar to the unknown god. But in neither case is he “building a bridge,” at least not in the way pop evangelicalism wishes to do so. He points to the altar of the unknown god to demonstrate that the Athenians themselves acknowledge ignorance. How can you pontificate about the nature of the divine, he is asking, when even you tell me that there is something out there you admit you do not know?

In the citations from the poets, Paul does not find some form of “redemptive analogy” he can use among a people who do not acknowledge the authority of Scripture. To the contrary, he calls them to repentance on the basis of a scripturally revealed storyline of humanity (17:26-27, 30-31). In the poets’ words, Paul demonstrates that Athenian philosophy and culture are self-contradictory. How can you claim that these temples house the gods, he asks, when even your own culture-mavens say the divine cannot be housed in edifices made with hands?

Paul’s discourse on the Areopagus is strikingly different from many Christian attempts to be relevant to popular culture. He points to their culture not so much to bring out what the Athenians know as what they deny. Paul systematically unhinges key facets of Hellenic thought — the multiplicity of gods, their representation by images, their dwelling in temples, Greek racial superiority, the distance of the gods from humanity. He boldly points to common ancestry of humanity, from “one man” with God determining the “bounds of their habitation,” even though, as New Testament scholar F. F. Bruce notes, this challenges Greek pride in being “autochthonous — sprung from the soil of their native Attica.” As Bruce makes clear, Paul’s preaching “removed all imagined justification for the belief that Greeks were innately superior to barbarians.”⁴ And this Greek tribal pride was woven throughout Athenian culture.

Paul does indeed see a common humanity and a common imago Dei at work in Athenian culture. But he sees this common grace twisted and perverted by human rebellion. This is why he is “provoked” by the idolatry in the city (17:16). This is why he refutes the culture’s affirmation that gods can be made of gold and silver, and propped up in a man-made house (17:24-29). And this is why he warns the Athenians, in the strongest terms imaginable, to flee the wrath of the God of Jesus by repenting before His throne (17:30-31).

Pop Culture as Mission Field

Contemporary evangelical attempts at pop culture engagement are partly right. We cannot ignore popular culture — and this is especially true now. Pop culture is more important in twenty-first century America than high culture. Broadway plays now reproduce the screenplays of Disney animated movies (such as “The Lion King”), and not the other way around. American presidential contenders announce their candidacies on “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart” on the Comedy Central television network. Avoidance of pop culture is not possible, especially among the unbelieving American populace we are seeking to evangelize.

This means our engagement with popular culture must be about more than counting curse words and exposed body parts. We do indeed find aspects of the imago Dei and common grace in the oddest of places, especially among those creating culture. The Bible speaks of culture being “redeemed” eschatologically; cultural artifacts seem to be in view as the “glory of the nations” brought into the New Jerusalem in the new creation (Rev 21:24-26). We should not demand personal regeneration for artists we can enjoy — whether that artist is Mozart or George Jones.

Paul’s discourse on the Areopagus is strikingly different from many Christian attempts to be relevant to popular culture.

Christians should ask why culture resonates with the Superman mythology of a hero from beyond the stars who rescues humanity from itself. We should ask why country music singer Toby Keith sings about the unity-in-diversity he longs for in his song “I Love this Bar.” We should ask why, as the City Journal’s Harry Stein points out, trashy talk shows such as “The Jerry Springer Show” always end with a “moral lesson for the day,” despite the fact that the rest of the broadcast has dismissed the very idea of moral absolutes.⁵ Why do gangster-rap hip-hop artists sing so much about their rage against an absent father?

We can see in pop culture, what we can see also in the ideologies of Marx, Freud, Darwin and others: the longing for a story that makes sense of the world. In literature, films and ballads, we can see a flash of what we know to be true — that man does not live by bread alone, or by orgasm alone or by self-image alone. We are created to find ourselves in a storyline that culminates in Christ — even while, as sinners, we kick against the reality of that story.

The Christian analysis of popular culture always proceeds with a knowledge that there is enmity between the idolatries of man and the kingdom of Christ, that we are most susceptible to evade Christ by looking to the works of our own hands (Isaiah 2:8), even (or maybe especially) when these works are culturally impacting.

It is necessary to confront a Gospel of life, for example, with the love of death in a film such as “Million Dollar Baby” or “Cider House Rules.” That is not being a scold; it is being a shepherd.

Embracing the Strangeness

What pop-culture-engaging Christians need to understand most of all, however, from Acts 17 is the response. It is interesting that Luke tells us that what arrests the attention of the Athenians is not the so-called “bridges” Paul builds by citing Athenian cultural products. What pricks their attention at the end is what pricked their attention at the start: Jesus and the resurrection: “Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, ‘We will hear you again about this’” (Acts 17:32).

Often at the root of so much Christian “engagement” with pop culture lies an embarrassment about the oddity of the Gospel. People will not resonate with this strange biblical world of talking snakes, parting seas, floating axe-heads, virgin conceptions and emptied graves. It is easier to meet them “where they are at,” by putting in a “Gospel according to Andy Griffith” DVD (for the less hip among us) or by growing a soul-patch and quoting Coldplay at the fair-trade coffeehouse (for the more hip among us). Knowing “Andy Griffith” episodes or Coldplay lyrics might be important avenues for talking about kingdom matters, but let us not kid ourselves. We connect with sinners in the same way Christians always have — by telling an awfully freakish-sounding story about a man who was dead, and is not anymore, but who we will all meet face-to-face in judgment.

Early in my ministry, I served as a youth pastor in a Mississippi Baptist church near an Air Force base. Like every other evangelical youth minister, I received all the advertisements from youth ministry curricula-hawkers, telling me how I could be “relevant” to “today’s teenagers.” The advertisements prom-


ised me ways I could “connect” with teenagers through Bible studies based on MTV reality shows or whatever songs were on the top-40 charts that month. All I knew how to do, though, was preach the Gospel. Yes, I knew what was happening on MTV, and I would often contrast biblical reality with that, but I fit nobody’s definition of cool — including my own.

A group of teenagers, mostly fatherless boys, some of them gang members, started attending my Wednesday night Bible study. Some of them arrived at the church literally engulfed in a cloud of marijuana smoke. I found they were not impressed with the “cool” supplemental video clips provided by my denomination’s publisher. They laughed at Christian rap stars, in the same way I laughed at my high school history teacher’s effort to “have a groovy rap session with you youngsters.”

However, what riveted their attention was how weird we were. “So, like, you really believe this dead guy came back from the dead,” one fifteen-year-old boy asked me. “I do,” I replied. “For real?” he responded. I said, “For real.” They were amazed at the fact that my wife and I had dinner together, and that we did not really want to be somewhere else. “Dude, this is like ‘Nick at Nite,’” one said, referencing the black-and-white family sitcom reruns on television each night. It all seemed strange to them. And, just as at Mars Hill, this strangeness commanded attention. Some believed; some walked away. I was heard, and I was even loved, but I was rarely cool.

Too many attempts at reconciling Christianity and pop culture have to do with being seen as “relevant” by the culture — on its own terms. We will never be able to do that. Pop culture is a rolling stone, and it waits for no band of Christians seeking to imitate it or exegete it.

Yes, we must learn to listen to what culture is saying. More importantly, we must remember to listen beneath the cool to hear the fear of a people

who know that judgment day is coming — it is written in their hearts (Rom 2:15-16). Let us not be scared to tell them what they are holding on to — we can see it in their films, hear it in their music — is often nonsense and that they know that themselves. And let us preach beyond the cool to the strangeness of an old Gospel story of a crucified and resurrected Messiah. 

Avoidance of pop culture is not possible, especially among the unbelieving American populace we’re seeking to evangelize.

¹John Jeremiah Sullivan, “Upon This Rock,” *Gentlemen’s Quarterly*, February 2005, 132.

²Brian C. Anderson, *South Park Conservatives: The Revolt against Liberal Media Bias* (Washington: Regnery, 2005).

³All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version (ESV).

⁴F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts*, *New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 356.

⁵Harry Stein, “Daytime TV Gets Judgmental,” *City Journal*, Spring 2004, 68-77.

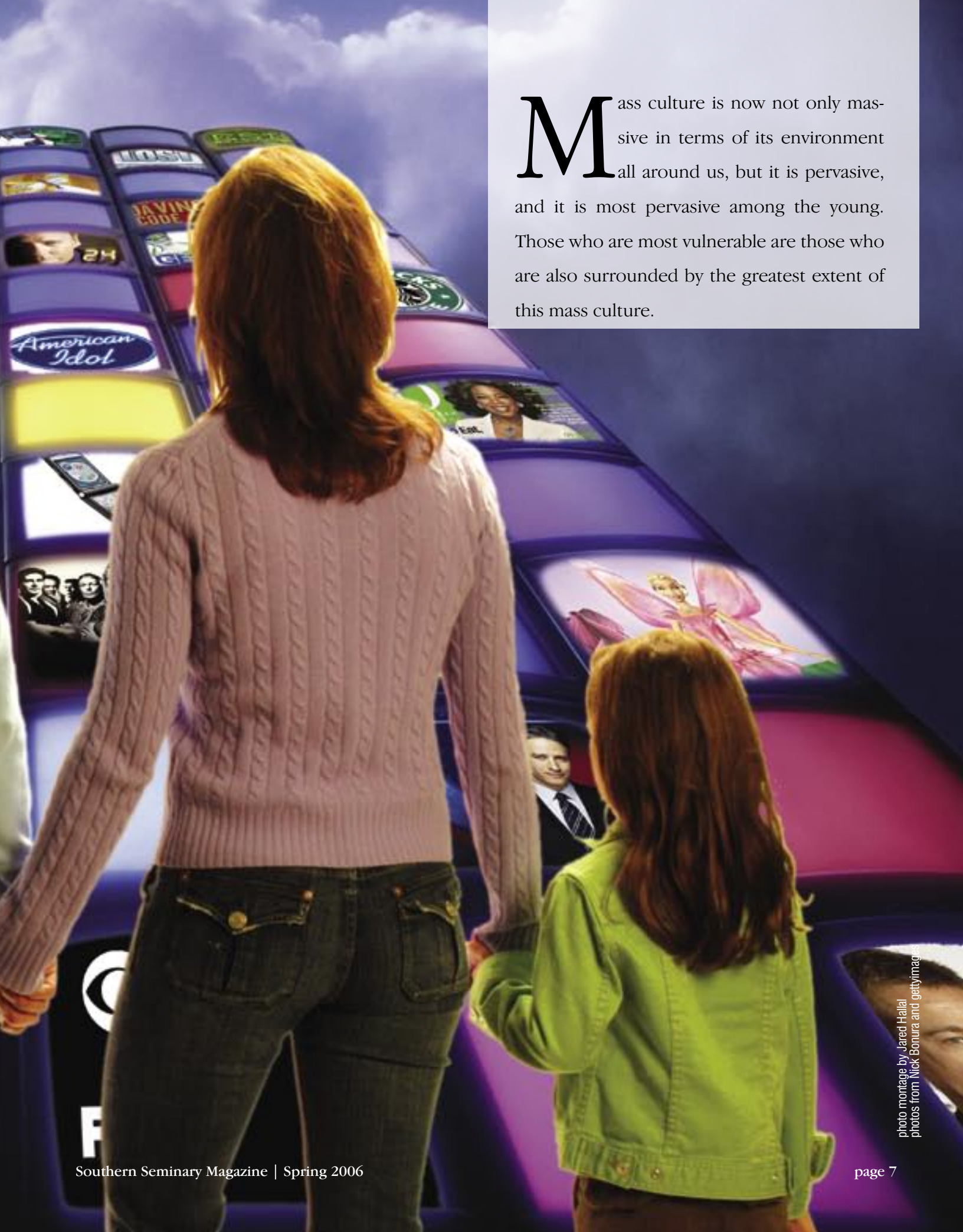


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Pop Culture



our children's future



Mass culture is now not only massive in terms of its environment all around us, but it is pervasive, and it is most pervasive among the young. Those who are most vulnerable are those who are also surrounded by the greatest extent of this mass culture.

photo montage by Jared Halal
photos from Nick Bonura and gettyimages

One of the things we need to realize is that most of this mass culture is directed towards adolescents. If you read the financial pages of the newspapers, you will come to understand that the adolescent, especially the older adolescent and the young adult, are determining the kind of products and the way products are marketed and developed and sold. The issue is how we as thinking, believing Christians can engage all of this culture with discernment, and do so in a way that will build this discernment and inculcate this discernment in our children.

The Danger

We all have a worldview and basic understanding. We need to make sure that our worldview is Christian. To help us understand this, Peter Berger, a prominent sociologist, talks about “plausibility structures.” These plausibility structures are ideas that have in our mind as to what is and is not plausible. You could go beyond that to say what is and is not good, what is and is not evil, what is and is not normal.

You do not have to think about these things all the time. We have neither the mental time nor the mental energy to think about all these questions every moment. Instead, we have to have a basic framework that makes sense to us, that becomes a filter through which we think about all these things. If we are mature Christians confronting mass culture, those plausibility structures are active, they are back there. We do not have to think about it. We do not have to ask, “Now am I a Christian or not? Do I believe in right and wrong or not?” That is all imbedded in our minds, our plausibility structures, our worldview. Those filters are already in place.

However, for most adolescents, they are not firmly in place. This is a double problem because not only are they not in place, but mass culture will provide its own set of plausibility structures. That is to say, the more our kids are immersed in this culture, the more their ideas of good and evil, of right and wrong, of normal and abnormal, are being created by the culture around us rather than inculcated by you as parents on the basis of Christian truth.

Just to take one example, the success of the homosexual movement in imbedding and implanting homosexual themes and homosexual characters in television programming is a way of normalizing homosexuality. Kids who start to see this begin to think that is normal, and then all of the sudden normal gets concretized as this rather than something else. And that is a problem.

It is not a problem that can be solved just by turning off the television. It is a problem that requires Christian thinking. We as parents have to be talking about why homosexuality is not normal. It may be normal in the culture at some point, but it is still not normal according to God’s word. We have to approach even that question in a way that is going to require a critical distance from the culture. We have to be able to stand back and say, “Hollywood may think that is normal or want me to think that’s normal, but I cannot go there. I cannot allow my plausibility structures to be reconfigured by this and we cannot allow it to happen to our children.”

Narrowing the Bandwidth

One of the first things we have to do is understand that if we allow our children to be completely immersed in this culture without boundaries and controls, we cannot possibly know the content of which they are consumers, and the messages of which they are recipients. We have to get control over this — that means limiting the cell phone, that means limiting the computer use, that means putting boundaries around television, cable, and that means boundaries of time and boundaries of choices. These are not easy things, because their peers are probably not going to be suffering the same parental oppression. They will likely think themselves to be horribly oppressed and repressed and abused by the fact that they are having their choices limited and that there are boundaries that must be honored as the bandwidth is narrowed.

Movies

If there is one thing you get out of the movies, it is this: You cannot trust the ratings system at all. First of all, it is not even what it was supposed to be. There is a phenomenon known as “ratings creep,” in which what used to be X became R, and very quickly R became PG.

Movie producers work hard at getting the rating they want. The rating they want is on the edge between PG-13 and R. They want to get it as close to R as possible, because what they want for mass distribution of movies and big sales at the box office are adults and teenagers both watching the movie. And so, they try in their own creative way to come up with that — a movie on the edge between PG-13 and R.

The way they often negotiate this is to put together the movie and then find out what the rating would be as it is cut. The studio then makes the necessary adjustments, very often small adjustments, in order to negotiate the PG-13 from the R. What you end up with is an R-rated movie that, by negotiation, is now rated PG-13.

Television

One of the problems with television that is that you cannot count on any safe message whatsoever. The family hour is a thing of the past. There is no safe hour, there is no safe channel, not totally.

You might think that a kid’s channel would be safe. You cannot count on that anymore. Let me just give you one example, and this has nothing to do with sex or drugs or alcohol. It has to do with parental authority. What do you do with the Berenstain Bears cartoons? The dad is a doofus! Every single storyline of the Berenstain Bears has to do with somebody revealing to dad how stupid he is. Generally, even the kids are smarter. What you have here is the father’s authority completely undermined. The father becomes the fall guy.

That is not unique to the Berenstain Bears, it is found in other children’s narratives as well. Also, it is the staple of sitcoms. In fact the worldview of the sitcom is that kids are wise and parents are stupid, and eventually the turning point in the episode comes when the parents catch on to how wise the kids are and smarten up. That is, by and large, the formula for television.

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Music

Our children are living in a world that is driven by the beat of the music. It is in the background of all that they hear. They are almost never without it.

When I was out in California, I got to talk to some of the people in the movie industry in Hollywood. One of the producers said to me, "I can make anyone cry. I hold that power in my hand. You could get the UCLA Bruins and line them up here and I can make every one of those young men cry. All I have to do is have a dog die with the right soundtrack and they'll be weeping." Why? Because of the incredible emotional power of concentrating so much visual imagery, so much compact narrative and storyline with the music in the background. The music reaches our hearts in ways we do not even recognize.

We have to know where there are truth issues at stake, and where there are taste issues at stake. Because the kids are going to be able to see through it if we say that everything is a truth issue. If they like this music because of its style, and you dislike it only because of its style, that is probably not going to get you very far. There has to be a truth question involved.

Technology

The first thing you need to do is eliminate some technological access. That is one of the greatest heresies I could possibly utter in the year 2006, but we must narrow some of the technological access.

I do not believe you should have a television in your adolescent's bedroom. If you do, ask yourself "why?" Remember, the social interaction of the family is undermined by access to television. Shared television watching experiences are better than unshared watching experiences. Even that is no substitute for healthy engagement, engagement that is not electronic and does not involve people mutually watching a digital screen.

You have to narrow the technology when it comes to cell phones, as well. Unrestricted cell phone use is not just about using up minutes with mindless chatter. It is about instant messaging. It is about sending photographs and music and electronic files and all the rest.

You have to limit the access to technology. I am not saying they should not have an iPod. I think they can be very useful devices. But what are they listening to? Do you know what is on your kid's iPod? Do you even have the technological know-how to find out what is on his iPod?

So, narrow the bandwidth and narrow the content.

The Internet

No teenager should ever have unrestricted access to the Internet, period. Underline that. Put an exclamation point next to it. I think no individual should have unrestricted access to the Internet. There needs to be some process of accountability.

What then should you do with the Internet? When I say there should be no unsupervised use of the Internet, I do not mean that you are always sitting there looking over their shoulder. However, you should be doing that at least electronically, so that you know exactly who has been where, and how the Internet has been used. You need to put protection software on your computers, which, while never perfect, are at least a start.

Second, one of the biggest challenges right now in terms of urgency is blogging on Internet sites such as Myspace and Facebook and Xanga. The good news is that most of it is simply stupid and silly. Does anyone really care that this person likes Snickers better than Milky Way, or what they had for breakfast this morning, etc.? That's probably 80 percent of what is out there.

The bad news is the other 20 percent. A pastor recently told me that in his youth group this has become the biggest issue. They discovered that a lot of the kids in the youth group had been blogging. He said these kids that he had been seeing every Sunday and every Wednesday had been blogging about each other and blogging about their friends, using language with references to drugs and to sex. Such discoveries lead us to wonder if we ever knew these kids in the first place.

Schools are discovering the same thing. A frightening number of heartbroken parents are discovering it as well. Two things are happening on these blogs. Some kids are telling the truth and some kids are making it up. Either way you look at it, it is really dangerous. Some kids create a persona on the web that is kind of the "bad kid" they fantasize about being, and some of them are letting you know they are doing the bad stuff they are talking about.

There is all kinds of debate about this. My favorite is the debate about whether parents should have access to this information. I actually have had people call into my radio program and argue, "You know, I think we should treat this just like the diary and not

read it." So their kids are broadcasting to the world, and the only person who is not supposed to read it is the parent? That is the most corrupted and convoluted, upside-down understanding of parental authority one could ever imagine.

One great issue here is concern for the kids' safety. A lot of them are actually posting their personal information.

They are letting out their address and where they go to school. A girl in Oregon was raped after a predator tracked her down off of one of these sites, and it is believed that a co-ed at Virginia Commonwealth University may have been murdered by a man who tracked her down simply on the basis of what she was putting on one of these blog sites. That is just the tip of the iceberg.

As parents, we are responsible before God for our children's spiritual well being. Let us stand up and let our voices be heard once again over the din of noise coming from the popular culture. 📢

[This is an excerpt of a three-hour lecture series Dr. Mohler gave at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., on this vital topic of training our children to interact with pop culture. To listen to the full messages, go to http://www.albertmohler.com/audio_list.php.]



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Love and Hate at the movies

A few weeks before the massive, 1985 Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas (with 45,000 in attendance), one of my deacons at First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark., expressed anxiety at attending what promised to be a contentious meeting. We were still fairly early in the conservative resurgence, and things still hung in the balance. Anticipating conflict, he observed, "I feel like the Scotsman who said, 'I'm going to Glasgow to get drunk this weekend, and, oh, do I dread it.'"

That's kind of the way I feel when I agree to write on movies to an evangelical audience. There is so much ill will for Hollywood out there, most of it deserved, that even the slightest kind word for a product of the film industry can prompt a pious sigh or rebuke. I began to understand the depth of disdain while finishing my degree in philosophy at Vanderbilt in the mid-1970s. Discovering that there were no philosophy jobs at the 20 SBC colleges I had contacted, I turned to other Christian schools at the prompting of a fellow graduate student.

I soon discovered the world of the Christian College Consortium (Wheaton, Gordon, Westmont, etc.), and I sent out feelers. New York's King's College was interested, but my early enthusiasm cooled when the dean told me that their behavioral guidelines precluded attendance at movies or Broadway productions. Ouch! I could not believe a college would rule out even "The Sound of Music."

A couple of years later, I found myself on the faculty at Wheaton, where there was no such rule — only the requirement that we exercise good judgment in choosing what to see. But even that was tricky. Ten years earlier, Wheaton had a policy similar to that of King's, and a number of the faculty and administrators missed the old strictures. Grudgingly, they accommodated G and some PG movies, but Rs were virtually unthinkable.

I was assigned to teach aesthetics/philosophy of art, and I spent a lot of time with painters, actors, sculptors and musicians. In each of their disciplines, there was a flash point, whether figure studies, profanity or rock. And movies could punch all the buttons, with foul-mouthed, unclad characters speaking over a rock soundtrack! Indeed, there was much that was vile in film, but from my youth, I knew there was much that was wonderful.

When I was very young, the Coppenger family piled into the Buick and went to the drive-in to see "The Robe," a Cecil B. DeMille epic about the convicting power of Christ's crucifixion. In the years that followed, I had watched Davy Crockett movies in my "coonskin" cap, laughed at the antics of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, and stayed up late to watch the old black-and-white "King Kong" on TV.

On into college and graduate school, I saw film after film, many of them gratifying and memorable. I think, for example, of the historically fascinating "Young Winston" [Churchill], the deliciously terrifying "Jaws," and the convictingly heartbreaking film, "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter." Some were R-rated, e.g., "Deerhunter" (about heroism in the crucible of Vietnam) and the iconic 60s film "Easy Rider." Others were thoroughly G-rated, e.g., "Song of Norway" (a musical about composer Edward Grieg) and one of the "Pippi Longstockings" films.

In the 80s, I was shocked to read a Harvey Conn column in the old Eternity magazine. In one of his film reviews, he reflected on complaints that Eternity "dignified" Hollywood with attention. For them, the very presence of reviews was the problem. Years later, I hosted a group of SBC communications staffers at Ridgecrest, where Joel Belz and Marvin Olasky of *World* magazine were the program personalities. When I mentioned Conn's remarks in Eternity, they said

they faced similar criticism for even offering film reviews. Things hadn't changed much in the intervening years. Film was still leprous to many.

Some of this is understandable. Film has shock power and immediacy not common to literature. I don't recall jumping in horror while reading a novel the way I did when a drowned fisherman's face drifted into view through a broken, sunken boat hull in "Jaws." Similarly, the sight of a shocked, mutilated soldier picking up his own severed arm at Normandy in "Saving Private Ryan" was more disturbing than it would have been on the pages of a script. And, of course, the titillating images of nudity and sex on screen are high voltage occasions for sin, not often equaled in a book account.

Again and again, the force of film shows itself — in a galvanizing speech by WWII's Third Army commander ("Patton"), in the tearful reunion of a beloved, revived George Bailey with family and friends on Christmas Eve ("It's a Wonderful Life"), in the stirring Christian nobility of a Scottish runner, respectful of the Lord's Day ("Chariots of Fire"), and in hilarious comeuppance of a pompous villain, caught in a shell game of his own design ("Princess Bride").

But that force can take one to the Dark Side, and the vehicle can be surprising. I believe the most dangerous film I ever saw was rated only PG, "Same Time Next Year." The story had Alan Alda and Ellyn Burstein meeting by chance in a mountain inn restaurant. They fell into adultery, and then renewed their tryst annually under the same travel excuse. Through thick and thin, with abundant tenderness and care, they persisted through the decades, all the while maintaining their licit familial relationships in the lowlands. It was charming — and quite evil. The message was that adultery can be challenging, but oh-so-fulfilling if

done right. Nonsense!

The Bible tells us to "speak the truth in love," and those two criteria, truth and love, are good measures for evaluating a film. I think particularly of the signal failure of two movies I saw in recent weeks; one was a hate movie, the other a big lie. "Brokeback Mountain" was billed a gay love story, but the movie was actually a hate story, dripping with contempt for conventional, moral life. Normally, these two utterly implausible homosexual cowboys were forced to suffer the squalor of bland or kitschy quarters, disappointing wives, creepy in-laws, wearisome children, thuggish bosses and dreary work back in town, but their spirits soared as they ascended the high country with rushing brooks, big skies, snow-capped peaks, lush mountain meadows and crisp, clean air. Alas, after their soulful hugs, etc., these Marlboro Men were forced to once again assume their places in the sad world of heterosexual marriage, gainful employment, and civic responsibility, a world disparaged by director Ang Lee. Rather than speak the truth in love, this film (much celebrated in Hollywood) spoke falsehood in hate.

Speaking of falsehood, I finally saw (on DVD) the Keanu Reeves film "Hardball," which had Bill Seitz of the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association up in arms, along with Mayor Richard Daley. Bill was involved in a youth baseball league bringing new life to disadvantaged kids

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in the Cabrini-Green Housing Project. Inspired by Daniel Coyle's "Hardball: A Season in the Projects," the screenwriters promptly ignored the message of the book, recasting the admirable kids as foul-mouthed punks and a Christian coach as a self-destructive gambler. I give the movie some credit for love, in that they portrayed a measure of redemption for team and coach alike, but they utterly missed the truth of the real, uplifting story and slandered some kids along the way. (You can't help but sympathize with coach Bob Muzikowski who sued Paramount, unsuccessfully, for misrepresenting the league; maybe they'll think twice before mutilating another wholesome story.)

Recently, two other films showed me some helpful truths. But thanks to the filmmakers' agendas and the call of dramatic effect, these features were skewed. Seeing "Lawrence of Arabia" again inspired me to read T. E. Lawrence's WWI memoir "Seven Pillars of Wisdom." Therein, I discovered that Daud did not really die in Sinai quicksand and that the wounded man Lawrence "euthanized" was felled by a bullet, not a blasting cap. Still, I gained a much better grasp of the British Middle East legacy. And I have just finished viewing "The Battle of Algiers," concerning the French legacy in North Africa. Though heavily tilted toward the Algerian cause, the movie provides depth of understanding to Muslim terrorism we see today. (In the arts, one cannot be too finicky while looking for truth. As one iteration of Murphy's Law has it, "90% of everything is crud." So that 10% you do find is gratifying.)

As for love, I have a bone to pick with the new version of "The Pink Panther," starring Steve Martin in the role made famous by the late Peter Sellers. It is a cute film, with plenty of silly pratfalls, but the filmmakers could not resist a little dirt. On two occasions,

Martin's Inspector Clouseau gets physically tangled in an innocent way with his secretary, a tangle whereby they assume postures characteristic of sexual activity. It makes you want to shout, "Why!" Don't they know there are kids in the house? Don't they know that parents want wholesome entertainment for their children? What is the point to such gratuitous sleaze? Is it to keep their credentials as edgy artists intact? It can't be love, for love would regard the sensibilities of the audience.

On a happier note, I should mention the luminous "March of the Penguins," made with love for

God's marvelous creation (though these National Geographic filmmakers may not know the Lord), and attentive to the wondrous, intricate truth of natural survival in Antarctica. You can hardly watch it without shouting, "Praise God!"

So what is a Christian to make of this? Should film be shunned? I would argue not, for it is an extraordinarily fruitful medium, the components of which are gifts from God, whether the dramatic elements of storytelling, the technology of special effects, or breathtaking scenery. The Christian community should at least tolerate film enthusiasts and encourage

those who show a genuine sense of calling to the industry, for theirs is a daunting task. Particularly in the early stages of their careers, they are what one Christian actor called, "servants in Caesar's household." Unfortunately,

evangelicals have tended to run from film, and through the years, the industry has remained in the hands of others. Consider this list (from an *Illinois Baptist* column) of Hollywood players from other faith (and non-faith) groups:

Mormon (Jared Hess – "Napoleon Dynamite"), Jewish (Steven Spielberg – "Schindler's List"), Hindu (M. Night Shyamalan – "Sixth Sense"), Quaker (David Lean – "The Bridge on the River Kwai"), Christian Science (Frank Capra – "It's a Wonderful Life") and agnostic (Clint Eastwood – "Pale Rider").

Until we have our own biblically-conservative people in place, we are dependent upon the kindness of these directors and others, such as the Catholic Mel Gibson ("The Passion of the Christ") and Christian Scientist screenwriter, Horton Foote ("Trip to Bountiful," "Tender Mercies").

As for the apologetic task, it is much the same as it was in the early church. When pagans called Christians cannibals for "eating Christ's body" and charged them with incest since "Brother John" had children by "Sister Margaret," somebody had to set the record straight. And when innocents (such as unwanted children) were abused (by abandonment and exposure to the elements), the Church Fathers cried, "bloody murder," and denounced the failure of love.

Regarding film, evangelicals must denounce the lies and rebuke the lovelessness, even hatred. But the task is not simply negative. Like Muslim terrorists, who can blow up cars but not build them, evangelicals are much better at blowing up movies with withering denunciation than at crafting movies of their own, which are often painfully saccharine, clumsy and phony.

Addressing the believer's proper love-hate relationship to movies, one of our Northwestern University student church members recalled the old saying, "Love the cinema, hate the sin." I think there is wisdom there. 🏴‍☠️



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Using your Christian Imagination

Mommy: James, what is it?

James: I can't sleep.

Mommy: Didn't I just leave you in your bed 30 seconds ago?

James: But my eyes are not tired.

Mommy: I don't care! Now, just go up there and lie still and quiet, and don't come down here again until morning.

James: But I just can't.

Mommy: Why not?

James (*wincing and putting a hand to his forehead*): I feel a great disturbance in the Force.

Was this the teachable moment, a time to enforce strict obedience and discuss the deceptions of New Age philosophy? Or has God just sent me some comic relief? Does He want me to exhort the child or just sit back and laugh my head off?

If I believe that God is in complete control of everything in my life, and I do, then these are the kinds of questions I want to be asking. I want to consider carefully how I listen, and strive to see His purpose in every image, event and experience. What is God showing me about Himself here? What is He teaching me? Why, when I am tired and ready to sit down and eat some ice cream and watch the "X-Files," is the Lord confronting me with this wakeful little "Star Wars" fan? When I seek to answer these kinds of questions, I am seeking to interpret reality through the scope of a godly imagination.

When I am imaginative and inventive, I am expressing the image of God the Creator in me. I glorify God when I create and dream and make up fun and interesting ideas. Being imaginative also prepares me to confront and interpret my experiences in light of the fact that they come from God.

I am not saying that being imaginative is a moral imperative. One can be wholesome and a bit dull. But developing a godly imagination can be a good and useful thing in living the Christian life.

Now, I do want to choose the best things for my family. I



want them to see and hear and learn things that are beautiful and helpful and good. We are a Christian family and we are set apart to God. However, I cannot control every image and event in my children's lives. There are times when they experience things that I do not necessarily choose for them. And this is good. It reminds me that God has a plan for their lives and that He is in control. He has good things for them to see and experience that I do not know about.

My first prolonged exposure to SpongeBob Squarepants was when my son, James, was lying in intensive care after a severe post-tonsillectomy hemorrhage. I had just watched my child throw up more blood than I thought was in his body, and now (horrors!) they were putting me in here with this worldly, irreverent, evil Nickelodeon. Why, oh why, oh why? I thought I should turn it off and pray with the child. But I was so upset and tired and hungry. And he was peaceful watching it. Even worse, he seemed to be enjoying it.

In the midst of my worry and exhaustion, I began to use my imagination and consider the possibility of God's grace at work here. I decided to give SpongeBob a chance.

I discovered that SpongeBob is not only a bit annoying, irreverent and sometimes a little gross, he is also sweet and kind and full of energy. He has the most positive attitude. He loves his work and does his best at it. He tries to influence others for good. He is joyful. He loves his friends devotedly. And he does make me laugh.

I found that there are many lessons that I can teach my children through observing SpongeBob. Not only his positive character traits, but also his faults and those of his friends can be discussed. SpongeBob's boss, Mr. Krabs, is a great character to observe. He is sometimes a very paternal figure to SpongeBob. He tries to steer him away from bad choices. He is lovable. But he is also greedy. Mr. Krabs loves money. He sleeps with it. He has pictures of it on his wall. My kids, from age 4 to 14, can see this aspect of his character. They see that it is ridiculous.

SpongeBob's friend Patrick is another character worthy of examination. He is a loyal friend. He is enthusiastic. He is also lazy, sloppy and gluttonous. But again, this is blatantly obvious. We know we don't want to emulate those things in Patrick. Yet, that doesn't mean we hate him or shun him completely either.

By viewing that experience through the scope of a godly imagination, and listening carefully, I found that God was blessing me with some sweet humor in a time of difficulty.

I want to prepare my children to make these types of judg-

When I am imaginative and inventive I am expressing the image of God the Creator in me.

ments in their own lives, not to jump to hasty conclusions and answer before listening — because that is a folly and a shame — but to discern and focus on whatever is true, lovely, admirable and of good repute. I want to influence them to listen carefully, to take their thoughts captive, to develop and use their God-given imaginations. How does one attempt such a thing?

My friends tell me that I am a pretty imaginative person. Well, I was influenced by some very imaginative people. My parents were — and are — full of imagination. My parents loved to tell us stories about when they were young. They loved music, the theater and books. They loved to get out and play baseball, go fishing and water skiing. They took us to amusement parks, museums, plays, restaurants and historical sites. They gave me a guitar and encouraged me to play and sing. They gave me a tape recorder on which my stepsister and I made up hundreds of songs and skits that made us laugh and laugh. They joyfully encouraged me in my academic and extra-curricular endeavors. They were always confident in me and excited about whatever I wanted to try.

My young summers were spent at my dad's house in rural North Carolina where there were few toys and no neighbors nearby. I didn't see other children on a daily basis. I was often alone with my thoughts. I was free to explore outside, look through books, play with my grandmother's saltshaker collection and listen to records. To this I owe my great knowledge of Beatles lyrics. And during those times, I found scope for my imagination in what some might call boredom and neglect.

My parents did not go to church much when I was young. But when I was about eight years old, God sent a young pastor who invited me to ride the church bus on Sundays. There my imagination was made new and given true purpose when God opened my heart to His Gospel. I began to read His Word, the most miraculous, powerful and creative of all books.

During middle and high school, I was surrounded by encouraging, imaginative friends and teachers. I learned classical singing, acting, calculus, science, tennis and dance. I fell in love with a cute boy. I felt like a rock star.

Sadly, during my first few semesters of college I found my imagination being squelched by intolerance and fear of failure. A Christian worldview displayed in the secular classroom is an invitation for scorn and ridicule, not to mention bad grades. I have never been one who liked being scorned and ridiculed. I like being teased, but not scorned and ridiculed. I could also do without the bad grades. So I did not delve too deeply into the humanities.

The mathematics building turned out to be the place for me. There I found scope for my imagination in God's amazing world of number theory, differential equations, topology and combinatorics. This was also an opportunity for me to learn to figure things out for myself. I had been spoon fed academics up to this point. Now my brain began to develop in ways that I had never known before.

During graduate school, my future husband influenced my imagination. He encouraged me to be interested in things, to wonder about things, to want to know about things. When I first met him I was frankly shocked by how interested he was in knowing things. I was a child of the school system who had been trained to only know the things that were going to be on the test. He was always pulling down the encyclopedias, finding out about things that didn't even *matter*.

I remember once he was introduced to some of my country relatives of whom I was somewhat ashamed. And I thought, "How embarrassing this is going to be, such a cringing and degrading experience." Well, he sat there with those people and talked to them just like they were human beings. He asked them all these questions about home remedies and child labor laws — these incredibly interesting questions that I had certainly never thought to ask. Who knew?

In time I managed to persuade him to marry me and we moved to a lonely apartment in a city where I had no friends

or family. My new husband then promptly toddled off to do his doctoral studies. I had come full circle to boredom and neglect once again.

At this time I began to find scope for the imagination in extensive reading. I read biographies of Queen Victoria and the Romanovs. I read adventure stories about New England whalers and Everest explorers. I discovered some of my favorite books and through these imaginative works, God informed my mind and influenced my character, not to mention giving me a much needed escape from the nightmare of teaching high school at the age of 23.

A few years later, the children began to arrive. I don't remember anything after that.

Our kids are some of the most imaginative people I have ever met. About five years ago, Sam and Abby arranged our house, much like Disney World, into lands. The whole house came to be known as Rock Raiders Cave. The basement area is Lego Land. The upstairs is Playmobil Land. Rock Raiders Cave even has its own theme song. Sam used to play and sing the theme song before they would start playing.

There is an ongoing story of which I know very little. I know it involves characters such as King Leo the good king of Lego Land, and Bad Lion and his henchmen, Evil Buzz and Garbage Man, who seek to overthrow King Leo. Fox, the magic German shepherd, can bring dead people back to life. Super Pooh and Good Buzz fight for truth and justice. In this story there have been weddings complete with organ music and photography. It is tradition that the Beany Baby wedding guests throw up simultaneously when the couples kiss. There have been funerals and resurrections. Criminals have been brought to justice. Kingdoms have been won and lost. The kids think of it as a movie they are watching. If one of them needs to take a quick potty break during play, they will yell, "Pause it!"

Now, that's imagination. 🐾

**My imagination was made
new and given true purpose
when God opened my heart
to His Gospel.**

Cathy Wills is the wife of Greg Wills, professor of church history at Southern Seminary. They've been married 16 years and have four children: Sam (13), Abby (10), James (7) and Maggie (4).



Providence leads Payne through ministry, football and family

By David Roach

God's providence has been a recurring theme in Brian Payne's life.

Consider his call to ministry.

A former University of Alabama football player, Payne traveled to Chicago in 1998 as a Fellowship of Christian Athletes speaker to address teenagers at a missions conference. Charles Stanley, longtime pastor of the First Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga., was the conference's keynote speaker. After the conference's final service, some of the speakers had brunch together at a local country club.

Providentially, Payne encountered Stanley waiting for an omelet.

"Dr. Stanley had an influence in my life because early on in my walk, pointing that Bible at that screen really encouraged me to get into the Word," Payne said of Stanley's popular television program, *In Touch*.

photo by David Werrfield

As the two men struck up a conversation, Payne told Stanley he sensed some form of a call to ministry on his life but was still working to understand the specifics of that call. At that point Stanley moved closer to give some pointed counsel.

"He got about eyeball to eyeball with me," Payne said. "Literally there were two inches between us. And he said, 'Let me ask you a question. If there were anything in the world you could do, what would you do?'"

When Payne said he would preach, Stanley was ready with a response. "He said, 'Son, what is God going to have to do to get you to submit to His call?'" Payne remembered.

"It certainly awakened me from my preaching slumbers," he said.

Following that encounter Payne went back to Nashville, where he was working in the pharmaceutical industry, and enrolled in a Southern Seminary extension class in preparation for ministry.

That's when providence struck again.

Payne's grandmother died in the fall of 1998, and Payne attended the funeral. Standing over her casket, a friend of the family approached him and asked whether his grandmother had told him about a Southern Seminary program in Auburn, Ala.

The woman told Payne that her husband, Al Jackson, was leading a program at Lakeview Baptist Church where he was pastor. In the program students combine seminary classes with local church experience, she said.

"She described the program and it really resonated with me," he said. "It had a very strong emphasis on the local church and accountability in the local church, and Al Jackson would be serving as my pastoral mentor."

On the basis of that conversation, Payne eventually moved his studies to Auburn. He graduated with a master of divinity in 2002 then moved to Louisville where he earned a master of theology in 2003. Currently he is pursuing a Ph.D. in systematic theology to better equip himself for ministry.

In addition to his formal training for ministry at Southern, a rich past of practical Christian service prepared Payne as well. As a linebacker at Alabama he was heavily involved in FCA and lived a Christian life among the culture of college athletics.

The teams on which Payne played

enjoyed consistent winning records, claiming the Southeastern Conference championship in 1989 and playing in several bowl games, including the Sugar Bowl his senior year. Payne won the "Jerry Duncan I love to practice" award in 1988 and 1989 for consistency and playing through pain.

"It's kind of an 'all heart' and 'no talent' award," he joked.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree, Payne pursued a master's degree in marketing and became a graduate assistant coach at Alabama. The teams Payne coached continued the winning tradition, appearing in the Fiesta Bowl in 1991.

Along with his coaching, he began traveling the country as an FCA speaker — a course that led to the encounter with Stanley and an education at Southern Seminary.

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Family life is another area in which Payne has seen God's providence at work.

While living in the Nashville area, Payne met and married his wife Heather, who is a member of the popular Christian singing group Point of Grace.

But despite Heather's success and rigorous touring schedule, the Paynes have remained committed to their family and their local church.

"It's a conviction that we share that motherhood and being a wife and being a committed member of the local church take priority," Payne said.

At times Heather has come home from the road on a Sunday morning and gone directly from Point of Grace's bus to the church. She also hosted a women's Bible study in her home in Nashville every week. In Auburn, Heather participated in evangelistic visitation every Tuesday night and sang in the church

choir.

Since the arrival of the Paynes' two children — Ella, 3, and Nate, 1 — Heather has demonstrated a commitment to make children and church a priority ahead of her music career, he said. They are expecting another son in April.

"She's still trying to come to terms with having infants and what she does in the church," Payne said. "She's working in the nursery now and attends a women's Bible study. But we're still trying to come to grips with balancing family, studies and my service in the local church."

The Paynes love children so much that they even provide financial support for one child who is not a member of their family through the Christian organization Compassion International. Each month they give money to provide a child in El Salvador with food, clothing, education and an opportunity to hear the Gospel.

In January they traveled to El Salvador to meet their child, a four-year-old named Lissbeth who lives with her mother and grandmother in a tin hut in an area of San Salvador ravaged by the infamous gang, MS 13.


On that trip God showed Payne how He is working providentially to change the lives of gang members in El Salvador.

"El Salvador is gang-controlled," he explained. "Many consider MS 13 the most dangerous street gang in the world."

Although these gang members will not attend church themselves, some allow Compassion International to minister to their impoverished children through local churches.

"You've got gang members who allow these churches to do this because these churches are ministering to their children," he said. "So you have a lot of gang members right now getting saved through the ministry of their children. There's a great work of God taking place in El Salvador."

In every facet of Payne's life — his ministry, his education and his family — he says he strives to apply God's truth and teach sound doctrine. Southern Seminary provides key preparation to carry out this mission, he said.

"We have this mandate to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict. That is a very important role for the pastor and the minister. I just felt like pursuing a Ph.D. in theology would better equip me to carry out that mandate." 

Parker connects Gospel and culture

photo by John Gill

By Jeff Robinson

James Parker did not always see the utility of a college education.

At 18 years of age, Parker, then a college freshman at Baylor University, made an appointment with his pastor during Christmas break. Parker had quitting on his mind. James Flamming, pastor of Parker's home church, First Baptist of Abilene, Texas, listened thoughtfully as his teenage parishioner expressed words of post-high school angst.

"I wanted to be a youth evangelist and, at the time, James Robison was huge. He was just 24 years old and he didn't finish college, so I asked 'Why do we need to go to college?'" Parker said.

"I told my pastor, 'I'm thinking about dropping out of school and just becoming a full-time youth evangelist.' He was very wise. He responded with grace and gentleness. He said, 'Now Jim, I've seen a lot of people come and go over the years and it may be good that when you preach that you have something to say. And oftentimes the way you do that is by studying.'"


It is fair to say that Parker heeded his pastor's sage counsel.

More than three decades later, the Abilene native owns a Texas-sized list of academic degrees that includes two masters degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary, a doctor of theology from Basel University and post-doctoral studies at John Hopkins University.

Today, the once reluctant student also serves as professor of worldview and culture and associate dean of worldview and culture in the School of Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Southern Seminary.

As it turns out, Flamming was also correct on a second score: the well-matriculated Parker now has plenty to say, particularly on issues of Christian theology and popular culture.

Prior to joining the Southern Seminary faculty in 1999, Parker served as director of the Trinity Institute, a study and retreat center in Tehuacana, Texas. It offers seminars in apologetics, spiritual disciplines and theology, all of which are aimed at helping believers engage popular culture and the



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arts from a distinctly biblical worldview.

The Trinity Institute, which Parker founded in 1991, is modeled after L'Abri Fellowship which was established in 1955 by the late Francis Schaeffer. Schaeffer's writings, along with those of Carl F.H. Henry, have served as cornerstones for Parker's thought and theology.

"We are to engage culture," Parker said. "These two men, along with C.S. Lewis, helped me to see this very clearly.

"We are not supposed to take the Amish or Mennonite approach, which is to withdraw into isolation. I think we are to be salt and light in the culture. ... We are to be integrated into the culture and seeking to influence it by a biblical worldview."

Parker points out that most Christians are immersed within popular culture even if they don't realize it. Most everybody goes to movies, watches television or reads best-selling books, he said.

However, few Christians possess a thoroughly biblical worldview that can serve as a lens through which they analyze the culture, Parker said. Many Christians naively have their worldviews shaped by the culture instead of the opposite, he said.

"This is where (Francis) Schaeffer began to see the importance of culture and the importance of pop culture," Parker said. "He pointed out that there are a handful of culture-shaping institutions: higher education, media and arts/entertainment. Those three cultural institutions give the shape to the content of the culture around us.

"The question is not whether our culture is going to do it because there is not a drop of Amish blood in our culture in terms of how we relate to culture. In fact, we are probably too much influenced by the culture.

"So we need to be involved in the culture with our eyes open. We need to have a spirit of discernment and not be taken in blindly by the culture around us. We need to do that within a Christian, biblical worldview so that we can automatically be able to evaluate and judge as a natural reflex the culture around us from a biblical worldview. That takes biblical, theological study. We must let the content of the Bible judge and evaluate and critique everything that comes our way in culture."

Parker teaches a number of disciplines at Southern Seminary, including philosophy, ethics, theology, aesthetics and courses on Christianity and the arts. He still serves as director of the Trinity Institute and spends summers and Christmas breaks in Tehuacana helping students develop a Christian way of attacking issues related to popular culture and the arts.

In 2007, he will take a sabbatical leave from Southern, during which he plans to complete a book on beauty and aesthetics from a Christian perspective. Parker laments the loss of objectivity among Christians in discerning true beauty. He wants to help Christians see that the nature of God provides an objective standard of beauty in the same way it sets forth clear standards of morality and truth.

"If beauty is grounded in the character and nature of God, the first inference we

draw from that is beauty can't be relativistic any more than morality can or truth is," he said.

"It may be more of a challenge to come up with criteria to judge beauty, but you know that if you have a normative standard, then it is possible to do it. It may take a lot of work. But we must reject the secular cliché that beauty is in the eye of the beholder.


"Evangelicals have written very little about that. We have pretty much left it to the secular world or theological liberals to deal with that. It is an area in which we need to spend time and energy."

Parker is a fan of the fiction works of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Epic works such as the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, while not explicitly Christian, can help unbelievers become acquainted with foundational biblical truths such as the existence of a moral universe and the idea of an innocent man dying for the guilty, he said.

This use of popular culture can pave the way for the clear proclamation of the Gospel, Parker said.

"Books and movies such as the Tolkien trilogy and 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' give a metaphor for the Christian faith so you can begin to think in certain categories," he said. "Certain categories of thought become exposed to people in the culture that may not have been before.

"The same thing works from the non-Christian worldview. Take the 'Star Wars' series. There you have a kind of pantheistic worldview that is communicated to millions of people at a very popular level. There are many who have never heard of pantheism and yet at a very deep level they are exposed to fundamental pantheistic concepts. So if they ever meet a Buddhist or a pantheist, they will pick up on it immediately. It makes ideas more palatable in a culture. So when you actually meet somebody who actually holds those views, it doesn't seem so strange.

"The Christian notion of morality and values and the Christian concept of the innocent dying for the guilty come through in Lewis's works. In Tolkien, it is a morally charged universe and [readers] get acquainted with those concepts so when the Gospel is actually proclaimed those are not strange concepts to them. In this way, the medium of popular culture is very helpful as a vehicle to communicate these truths. As Christians we must learn this." 

Living a dream: Alum fulfills desires through biblical counseling

By Garrett E. Wisball

Most kids dream about what they will be when they grow up. For some, playing center field for the New York Yankees is the vision, while for others performing concerts across the United States comes to mind. From being on the silver screen of Hollywood, to driving a police car, to putting out fires as the local fire chief, kids imagine a passel of grand things they could do. However, few of these dreams actually come true.

photo by Bill Crandall

But the story of Amy Beth Spraul (formerly Croft) is different. From her teenage years, Spraul — who goes by Beth — developed a vision for her life that she now fleshes out through service in the local church. Spraul wanted to counsel people.

“A lot of my friends came from homes with divorce and abuse and I saw a lot of my friends hurting deeply from their family experiences,” she said. “I felt from the beginning that God had blessed me with a good home life and a good relationship with my parents and my brothers and I developed a heart for those who were hurting.”

Influenced primarily by her parents, Spraul accepted Christ around age 15 and said she is grateful for her parents’ spiritual guidance.

“They showed great patience with me explaining the truths of the Gospel and truths of Scripture to me during times in my teenage years when I wasn’t sure that I believed,” she said. “I remember going on father/daughter date nights with my dad and having long conversations about why Christ had to die, sin and how He reconciles us.”

Spraul now serves as the women’s counselor at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. In addition to counseling, Spraul is training other women in the church to do biblical counseling. What enabled Spraul to fulfill her dream? There were many steps on the path.

Spraul grew up in southern Indiana in the New Albany area, where her parents still live. She has two older brothers, Scott, who is a lawyer, and Brian, who serves as the senior pastor of Auburndale Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.

Spraul’s relationship with Christ grew through high school, as did her desire to counsel. Seeking a college where she could study counseling from a biblical perspective, Spraul chose Taylor University in Upland, Ind.

Graduating from Taylor in May 2001, Spraul began to search for a place to further her training. At this point, her brother Scott encouraged her to look at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Through several phone conversations with Eric Johnson, associate professor of pastoral theology, Spraul became convinced of the merits of the school. In August 2001 she enrolled in the Master of Arts in Christian Counseling program.

In her time at the seminary, Spraul

said she learned from many professors, but the two she gleaned from most were Johnson and Russell Moore, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology at Southern Seminary.

“Sitting through Dr. Moore’s theology classes was like drinking from a fire hose. They were so rich with biblical truth,” she said. “His theology classes laid a crucial foundation in my heart and mind for how I would then apply that theology in counseling situations. I still sometimes refer to my notes from his classes.”

Spraul said Johnson helped her flesh out these truths in her ministry.

“Dr. Johnson unpacked the biblical theology and helped us apply it to real-life ministry situations,” she said. “He showed me how to make the Gospel and the hope that we have in Christ the foundation for all counseling.”

It has been such a joy
to serve in this position
in the local church,
ministering to women
and I praise God for the
opportunity to do this.

Between her first and second years at Southern Seminary, Spraul’s life began to come into focus with two major developments: meeting her future husband and finding her future church and employer.

In the summer of 2002, Spraul did a crisis counseling internship at a hospital in Washington, D.C. Her brother Scott worked in the city at the time and was a member of Capitol Hill Baptist, and Spraul began attending church with him. There she met Greg Spraul. They began dating and a year later got married. Greg works with the Water Security division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which was created after the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. Beth said he helps protect the nation’s water supply from terrorist threats and “loves what he does.”

Spraul finished her two years of classroom work prior to getting married,

and then moved to Washington, where she completed her one-year practicum. Upon graduating from seminary in May 2004, Spraul accepted a job with a Christian counseling ministry in the Washington area, while also counseling women at Capitol Hill Baptist on a volunteer basis. In January 2005, Spraul accepted a staff position at the church and said she could not imagine a more ideal setting for counseling than the local church.

“It makes sense for personal ministry to take place in the body of Christ with a group of local believers who have already covenanted together to encourage one another, admonish one another and carry each other’s burdens,” she said. “For counseling to happen in a local church is natural because you are already sharing the church covenant together.”

Spraul said Southern Seminary’s shift to a biblical counseling model — which emphasizes counseling in the local church — was a good decision.

“I think it is a great move because they have made the decision to center their counseling program on the Gospel of Christ and truths of Scripture and on applying all of the riches of Scripture to life and to how we minister to each other,” she said. “The fact that they are intentionally building their program around the Gospel, Scripture and the church is encouraging.”

At Capitol Hill, Spraul is currently training other women in biblical counseling for their own daily relationships and to help with lay counseling situations in the church. This could come in handy soon, as Spraul is due to give birth to their first child in May. The girl will be Greg and Beth’s first child, and Spraul said she would like to eventually continue counseling part-time, possibly by seeing women at home as well as at the church. She, her husband and Capitol Hill’s elders are still working out the details. Regardless of the decision, Spraul said she feels blessed by God.

“Being married to such a wonderful man, being a part of such an amazing church and having had the privilege of studying under such wise teachers at Southern are all huge blessings,” she said. “It has been a such a joy to serve in this position in this local church, ministering to women and I praise God for the opportunity to do this.”

The childhood dreams of Southern Seminary graduate Amy Beth Spraul have indeed come true. 🙏

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**The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary**

SOUTHERN NEWS AND NOTES

First mark of a true church: Gospel preaching

Biblical preaching is central to the task of the church of Jesus Christ, R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said during the school's annual spring convocation Jan. 31.

"Preaching is the first mark of the authentic church, the essential mark, the mark without which the other marks do not matter," he said. "... Where this mark is not found, there is no church."

Preaching from Colossians 1, Mohler told seminarians that while not everyone is called to be a preacher, everyone is called to understand the importance of preaching and ensure that faithful Gospel proclamation is carried out in churches.

"The Word of God goes in and does surgery that the hearer does not even immediately recognize is taking place," he said. "It's in the mystery of the preaching of the Word of God, accompanied by the Spirit, that the believer is conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ in the silent, invisible surgery of the soul."

"If you want quick results, you'll be



photo by David Merrifield

Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. told students Jan. 31 that if "everyone agrees with you, you're not preaching the Word." Conflict, Mohler said, always accompanies biblical preaching.

tempted to do something other than preaching. If you want instant gratification, you'll look at some other form of programming or you'll get excited about some other dimension of ministry at the expense of preaching. But if you want to build Christ's church and if you want to see Christ's people conformed to His image, preaching is the indispensable mark of the church."

To preach the Gospel requires diligence and a dedication to show how every verse of

the Old Testament and New Testament is fulfilled in Christ, Mohler said.

"It is the preacher's responsibility to deal with every single word of the text but always to go from every single word of the text to the great big picture of God's plan, of God's purpose, of God's church, of God's truth, of God's Gospel," he said.

Faithfulness to preach the entirety of Scripture will result in proclamation of truth, correction of errors and teaching of believers, he said, noting that such a task requires the preacher to believe in the inerrancy of God's Word.

The importance of preaching demands that preachers, churches and seminaries ensure that all

of their activities further the cause of Gospel proclamation, Mohler said.

"Remember that this is why this institution stands — not in order to confer degrees and to teach courses and to accredit professionals — but to train preachers and teachers of the Word of God who will go out to take this Gospel." ❖

By David Roach

1,100 attend “Give Me An Answer” Collegiate Conference

As an 18-year-old University of Tennessee-Martin freshman, Brent Moore came to the first “Give Me An Answer” collegiate conference at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2001 hoping to be equipped to better proclaim the Gospel to a culture that is hostile to biblical truth.

Five years later, Moore, a Clarksville, Tenn., native, has not only learned how to “earnestly contend for the faith,” but he is preparing for the ministry at Southern Seminary and is promoting the school he has grown to love by serving as an ambassador.

“I attended the first two collegiate conferences and was really, really impressed with the seminary,” he said.

“I got to meet President Mohler when two of my friends and I just kind of popped into his office out of the blue to meet him. He took a lot of time with us and of course gave a great presentation at the conference. When I surrendered to the ministry as a senior in college I knew there was only one seminary I wanted to attend.”

More than 1,100 such students from across America visited the Southern Seminary campus Feb. 3-4 to attend the school’s sixth annual collegiate conference.

Scott Davis, Southern Seminary’s director of admissions, said the conference is well attended because it is unique in nature; it seeks to give biblical

answers to difficult theological and cultural questions.

“I think the big attraction is that we are aiming at their heads, proverbially speaking, and most student conferences do not do this,” he said.

“College students, pastors and the youth ministers that were here all commented about how much they appreciate us helping to train their young people.”

The 2006 conference theme was “The People of Truth: Believing, Defending and Living Biblical Truth in a Post-modern Age.” More than 20 professors from Southern Seminary unpacked various aspects

of the theme with specific topics dealing with issues such as spirituality, sexuality and the emerging church, among others (see accom-

panying stories).

Mohler, in one of his general session presentations, said such a gathering is vital because all believers are commanded to provide answers to questions that arise regarding the Christian faith.

“Christians cannot live by denying the questions,” he said. “That is not intellectually honest. And you who are in college and involved in education know that dignifying the questions is an essential Christian responsibility. We do not determine the questions, but we do have the responsibility to acknowledge them, to take them seriously, but also to answer them...The question mark is not the great symbol of Christianity, the answer is.

“We are living in a time in which we are told there are no answers or that no one can know the answers or if you do know the answer, you ought to be too humble to tell anyone else the answer. But that is not what we find in the New Testament as the model of Christianity. When Peter and John were hauled

before the Sanhedrin in the book of Acts, they were asked questions. They gave answers. That’s where we are today; we are being asked questions by the world and it is our responsibility to give answers.”

Brent Moore can vouch for the impact the conference can have on students’ lives.

“The collegiate conference is vital first-time exposure for potential [seminary] students. It is effective at putting into students hands the tools for ministry on their campuses.”

By Jeff Robinson



Beware postmodern spirituality

Being biblically grounded and church-centered is essential to true Christian spirituality in a postmodern culture, Don Whitney told students at the 2006 “Give Me an Answer” Conference.

Whitney examined and critiqued post-modern spirituality among people who are professing Christians. He identified several characteristics of such “spirituality.” The first element is the eclectic, or varied, religious practices such people use.

“Post-modern spirituality will draw from almost any source,” he said. “If a perceived spiritual benefit can be achieved then the practice is considered valid regard-

less of whether or not it is in the Bible.”

Whitney said contemporary sources of spirituality might include Catholic and Protestant practices, ancient and modern traditions and even pagan religious practices. As long as spiritual benefit is perceived then the act is considered

valid, however, Whitney argued that this opens people up to heresy.

“One of the dangers of grasping merely at

the practice without examining the source, is that you unwittingly take some of the beliefs that go along with it,” he said. “People believe that something they perceive as so beautiful spiritually must be right and they get into heresy.”

Whitney pointed to Scripture as the authority for developing appropriate spiritual practices.

“The Bible is the measure of the validity of any spiritual experience, and if an experience is not validated by Scripture then there is a conflict,” he said. “Every one of our spiritual experiences should be inaugurated with the Bible or be informed by the Bible.”

By Garrett E. Wisball



Trustees approve study centers at Southern Seminary

Trustees at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary on April 11 unanimously approved the creation of two new theological study centers—the Center for Theology and the Arts, and the Center for Theology and Law, during the board's annual spring meeting.

Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. said the new study centers aim at equipping pastors and church leaders to think biblically about pivotal issues which dominate contemporary culture.

"One of the ways we want to lead Southern Baptists is through helping evangelicals and Southern Baptists in particular to engage some of the most critical issues of our day," Mohler said.

"This is not a time for Christians to be out-thought by the world, but in general that is what happens. We find the church behind the times in thinking about some of the most crucial issues of our day."

Mohler also announced the appointment of two new faculty members to lead the centers.

Steve Halla will head the seminary's Center for Theology and the Arts and serve as assistant professor of philosophy (see related story in this issue of the TIE).

Peter J. Richards has been appointed the director of the Center for Theology and Law. Richards presently serves as a research fellow in law and history and is administrator of the World Law Institute at the Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Ga. He earned a doctor of a master of laws and a doctor of the science of law Yale University, a doctor of jurisprudence from the University of North Carolina, and a bachelor's degree in medieval and renaissance studies from the University of Michigan. Richards and his wife Johanna have four children.

The Center for Theology and Law will focus on the interaction between Christian theology and the world of law and will offer a master of arts degree in theological studies with an emphasis on theology and law. The one-year program is intended for those who are bound for law school, those who have just graduated from law school and those whose professional service in ministry includes interest in both theology and law. Both study centers will be operated out of Southern's School of Theology.

Russell D. Moore, dean of the School of Theology and senior vice president for academic administration, hailed the new study centers as "an historic moment" in the lives of both Southern Seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Issues of the arts and media and understanding the law are issues that are confronting not only individuals and the culture but

Southern Baptist churches," Moore said.



Mohler also named Kurt Wise as the new director for Southern's Center for Theology and Science, and professor of theology and science. Wise currently serves on the faculty of Bryan College in Dayton, Tenn., where he is also director of the Center for Origins Research.

Wise earned both a doctor of philosophy and master of arts in paleontology from Harvard University. He and his wife Marie have two daughters. Wise replaces William Dembski, who is leaving Southern Seminary to join the faculty at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary so he can be closer to his family.

In other business, trustees:



- Approved the appointment of Kevin L. Smith as assistant professor of church history for the seminary. Smith is a doctor of philosophy candidate at Southern Seminary. He also received a master of divinity from Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tenn.

Smith has served as the Martin Luther King Jr. Fellow at Southern since 2002.

- Approved the appointment of Thom S. Rainer as distinguished professor of evangelism and church growth. Rainer served as founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Evangelism, Missions and Church Growth at Southern Seminary from 1994 until 2005 when he resigned to become president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

- Approved a \$33 million budget, a 9.9 percent increase over last year's budget.

- Heard a report from President Mohler that Southern's enrollment has topped 4,000 students for the first time in the seminary's history.

By Jeff Robinson

Southern Seminary Upcoming Events

May 12: Boyce College graduation

May 19: Seminary graduation

June 13-14: Southern Baptist Convention

July 15: Seminary and Boyce College applications due

August 11: New student orientation

August 14: Classes begin

October 12-14: Seminary Preview Conference

October 20-21: Boyce Preview Conference

New SBJT examines "Missions to the Glory of God"

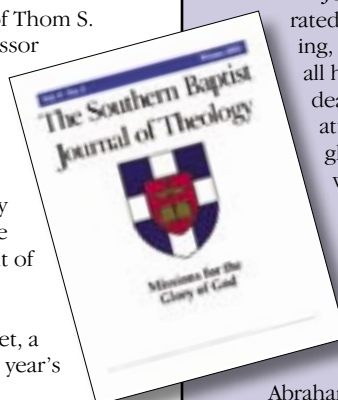
Ultimately, the goal of carrying out the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel to the nations is to shine a spotlight on the glory of God, essayists in the latest edition of the Southern Baptist Journal of Theology assert.

The work of missions shines forth the glory of God as He works to save sinful men, journal editor Stephen J. Wellum writes in his editorial. Wellum is associate professor of Christian theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Jesus the Christ, who inaugurated the kingdom in his coming, has now won victory over all his enemies—including sin, death, and Satan—all of which attempt to rob God of the glory due his name," Wellum writes. "It is from this posture of authority that the risen Lord impels his followers forward, to go and make disciples of all the nations—a command that brings to fulfillment the promises made to

Abraham many years ago and that anticipates the climactic consummation of all of God's purposes in the new heaven and new earth.

To subscribe to the journal or for more information, please call 502-897-4413 or e-mail journaloffice@sbts.edu.



Eleven with SBTS ties appointed by NAMB

Aaron and Carmen Coe are serving in New York City, where Aaron has been appointed core church planting missionary pastor for NAMB's Strategic Focus Cities Team.

Prior to his new position, Aaron served as president/founder for One Goal Sports, Kennesaw, Ga., and as collegiate team leader for New Hope New York in New York City. A native of Kentucky, Aaron earned a bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tenn., and also attended The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans.

Carmen, a native New Yorker, earned her bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University.



Won and Diane Kwak are serving in Carlstadt, N.J., where Won has been named church planting missionary pastor.

Before his new position, Won served as educational instructor for IVY Total Education, Fort Lee, N.J. A native of Korea, Won earned a bachelor's degree at Rutgers University, Newark, N.J., and his master of divinity from Southern Seminary.

Diane, also from Korea, earned a bachelor's degree from Tufts University, Medford, Mass., and attended Teachers College at Columbia University in New York, and Mont-

clair State University, Upper Montclair, N.J. The Kwaks have two children, Madelyn and Bethany.



Boyd D. and Janice Lacy are serving in Fort Wayne, Ind., where Boyd has been appointed as an associational

missionary.

Previously, he served as senior pastor at First Baptist Church, Sheffield Lake, Ohio. A native of Kentucky, Boyd earned a bachelor's degree in religion and philosophy at Kentucky Wesleyan College, Owensboro, Ky., and a master of divinity in evangelism, missions and church growth at Southern Seminary. From 1998-2004, the Lacys served as missionaries with the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board in Richmond, Va.



Andrew and Sera Lucas are serving in Fenton, Mich., where Andrew was named as a church planting missionary pastor.

A Florida native, Andrew earned an associate's degree in liberal arts at Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Fla., and a bachelor's degree in Bible from Trinity College of Florida in New Port Richey. He has also

attended Southern Seminary.

Sera, also a native of Florida, received an associate's degree in biblical studies at Trinity College of Florida. They have one son, Josiah.



William J. "James" McCray is serving in Ft. Rae Edzo, Northwest Territories, where he has been appointed church planting missionary pastor.

Prior to his appointment, McCray attended Southern Seminary, and earned a bachelor's degree in missions from Boyce College. A native of Slocumb, Ala., he served as a submarine sonar technician in the U.S. Navy for five years.



Gary M. "Mike" and Lennette Parker are serving in Waverly Woods, Md., where Mike has been appointed church

planting missionary pastor.

Prior to his new position, Mike attended Southern Seminary, where he earned his master of divinity in North American church planting. He also earned a bachelor's degree at Shorter College, Rome, Ga. An Indiana native, he has served as youth minister at Trinity Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mike and Lennette, an emergency medical technician, have four children: Brendy, Kelsey, Mallory and Rhenn. 🇺🇸

Students add to education with mission trip

Pig's hooves served as percussion instruments accompanying the strumming of a guitar and people singing in three languages. Eight Southern Seminary students preached, shared their testimonies and worshipped into the night with the indigenous people of Quito, Ecuador.

"The singing really started spontaneously in the different languages of English, Spanish and Quichua," said M.Div student Timmy Brister. "It was a sweet experience, especially knowing that regardless of the dialect we were singing truths back to God that we all held dear."

The students experienced the culture of Ecuador and the development and current state of missions work in the Third-World country during a mission trip, Jan. 2-10. David Sills, associate professor of missions and cultural anthropology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, took the students to the country where he served as a church planter for several years to give them a taste of Ecuadorian culture.

"The purpose of the trip was to let stu-

dents with classroom exposure to missions and cultural issues see firsthand what these people's lives, culture and reality are like," he said. "The students got to go to the Ecuadorian communities, see how the natives live, see



the desperation on their faces ... It was really an eye-opening experience."

"We got to see several different kinds of missions work, from indigenous church plants to the Seminario Teológico Bautista del Ecua-

dor [Ecuadorian Baptist Seminary]," said Jeff Love, a master of divinity student in the Billy Graham School. "We visited an indigenous tribe that was still into Shamanism. One of the tribal members said, 'I know Jesus is good, but I still want to worship my ancestors.' It was interesting to see that syncretism in person."

Luis Anda, a master of divinity student whose father is from Ecuador, said seeing a church without a pastor in the town of Puio broke his heart at the need for missionaries in Ecuador.

"In Ecuador, there is Catholicism, Mormonism, animism and paganism," he said. "There is a need for the truth and for discipling people in the truth and all they are getting are lies from Catholicism and Mormonism. We have a responsibility to go to all nations, tribes and peoples and we need to return to places we have been before and take the Gospel there again." 🇺🇸

By Garrett E. Wishall

Southern establishes Center for Theology and the Arts

Hires Steve Halla as Director

To minister to a culture that is increasingly interested in the arts, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will establish doctoral degrees in Christianity, arts and culture and establish the Center for Theology and the Arts.

"It is very likely that the arts are going to play an increasing role in the way people discover and articulate Christian faith," said James Parker, associate dean of Southern's school of theology and professor of worldview and culture. "We have an opportunity to step into a vacuum in today's theological world and provide a model of an evangelical theological aesthetics that is rooted in normative and prescriptive propositional revelation enscriptured in the Holy Bible."

To lead the new programs, Southern Seminary has hired Steve Halla, an instructor of systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas. Hall is pursuing a Ph.D. in studio art and philosophical aesthetics at the University of Texas at Dallas. Halla earned a master of theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary and a bachelor of arts from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Ill.

The new degree programs will include a doctor of philosophy in philosophy with a specialization in philosophical and theological aesthetics and a doctor of ministry in Christianity, the arts and culture.

Doctoral seminars in the new programs will include "Beauty: Theological and Philosophical Aesthetics," "Visual Art and Art Criticism," "Christianity and Literature" and "Film, Theatre and Pop Culture." Candidates for the Ph.D. will also take courses in systematic theology, biblical theology, worldview analysis and philosophy of religion.

As part of Southern Seminary's emphasis on the arts the seminary will offer master's-level classes on such topics as "Christianity and the Visual Arts," "Jesus and Modern Culture: Icon, Celebrity, Savior," "Christianity and Film" and "Christianity and Literature." The first two courses will be offered in the fall of 2006.

All of the new classes will "equip future

leaders of the church ... with new languages and skills drawn from the world of the arts, so that congregations will be able to discover, explore and learn the Christian faith in fresh and relevant ways," Parker said.



Dr. Steve Halla

The Center for Theology and the Arts will help Christians relate theology to the arts and think biblically about issues of aesthetics and beauty.

The center will hold colloquia, sponsor a gallery on campus and generally oversee the arts at Southern. The center will not oversee Southern's school of church music and worship but will work with musicians to promote musical arts.

The center will counter wrong notions about Christianity and the arts promoted by the emergent church movement — a growing movement

seeking to move beyond the approach of many modern congregations, Parker said.

"Arts and culture is one of the most important agendas of the emergent movement — of course, they get it wrong," he said. "The [center] will be the arm to popularize the biblical way to do it."

Both the degree programs and the center will teach believers how to defend a Christian view of the arts and demonstrate how the arts can enrich theology, Parker noted.

"The overall objective is to discover and demonstrate how the arts can advance and enrich theology with particular attention to the life and mission of the church and teach the student to develop critical biblical worldview analysis skills in the arts," he said.

Parker added, "Massive cultural shifts are taking place as we move from what the commentators call a modernist culture through a postmodernist one toward a relatively unknown future. A growing disillusionment about the grand claims once made for the sciences has led many to the world of the arts and the imagination.

"People of all generations are increasingly artistically literate. Young people in particular are influenced in a myriad of ways by the arts. Christians are responding to these changes."

By David Roach

LEGACY CENTER CALENDAR

July 5-7: Women's Ministry Institute: Women and Mentoring

July 7-9: Women's Ministry Institute: Women and Evangelism

September 11: Women's Ministry Institute: Event Project

September 11-13: Women's Ministry Institute: Next Level

September 13-15: Women's Ministry Institute: Girls' Ministry

September 23: Youth Vision Conference VIII

October 9-12: Heritage Week

October 23: January Bible Study Preview Conference

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LEGACY CENTER
Retreats and Conferences
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Promoting the Gospel is key, McGill says

For John McGill, getting to know the ministry of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was a gradual process.

It began when a pastor in Owensboro, Ky., told McGill about the scholarship and devotion to Christ among students and faculty at the seminary.

Then in 1993 McGill attended the installation of R. Albert Mohler Jr. as president of Southern Seminary, where he heard Billy Graham speak in person for the first time. A native of Charlotte, N.C., McGill was impacted positively by the North Carolina evangelist's support for the seminary.

Providentially, McGill came into contact with Mohler again at the annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana in 1994, where Mohler spoke of God's work at Southern. By 2000 McGill was rapidly becoming a fan of Southern Seminary and a trip to Southern's annual Heritage Week helped convince him to become a member of the Southern Seminary Foundation Board in 2001.

Today McGill actively supports Southern with his prayers, his service and his finances. He cites Mohler's leadership and the quality of the faculty as among the reasons he hopes to generate \$1 million for the seminary by 2010.

"Dr. Mohler is a compassionate, clear, articulate conservative who takes a warrior's stand for absolute biblical truth and the Gospel of Jesus Christ," McGill said. "He challenges the modern culture on the radio, TV and the Internet. Southern's world-class faculty believes the Bible, lives out its beliefs and follows Dr. Mohler's leadership."

Anyone who is able should consider giving to Southern because the seminary's passion for evangelism combined with its high standard of academic achievement have the potential to impact the entire world for Christ, McGill said, noting that gifts to the seminary translate into trained workers for Christ.

"Southern is producing a generation of leaders and pastors who aspire to fulfill the Great Commission by taking the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to lost and unreached people over all the world," he said. "At the same time faculty members are producing leading-edge scholarship in biblical studies and Gospel proclamation."

One way McGill hopes to increase gifts to Southern is by encourag-

ing donors to enter matching-gifts programs where companies match charitable donations made by employees. For example, the General Electric Company, where McGill worked as a mechanical engineer for 39 years before retiring in 1994, matches charitable gifts up to \$50,000 per year. Over 8,600 companies match gifts to non-profit organizations, McGill noted.

As Southern's donor base increases, McGill hopes to see the seminary's endowment grow and additional endowed chairs established. He also has a vision for decreasing tuition costs for all students.

An active member at Wallace Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville,

Tenn., where he currently resides, McGill has carried his enthusiasm for Southern into east Tennessee by establishing the Bill Wallace Memorial Scholarship Fund. The fund helps send ministerial students from Wallace Memorial and east Tennessee to Southern for further training.

In addition to helping ministerial students from the church receive a seminary education, McGill serves Wallace Memorial members by ministering as a deacon. He has also participated in the Faith Sunday School evangelism program since 1998 and taken numerous overseas mission trips with other church members.

Recently McGill's missions experience inspired him to fund the publication of books about missionaries who have retired from the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board.

In 2005 he funded the publication of "Servant on the Edge of History" by retired IMB missionary Sam James. At Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, McGill established the Marion G. Fray Mission Project Fund to publish one book each for retired missionaries Ted Cox and Marion G. Fray.

But merely producing stories about past missionaries will not satisfy McGill's desire to carry out the Great Commission. He is committed to training another generation of workers that can lead a great revival in America and across the world.

"Southern graduates pastors who have the seminary's vision to witness in their communities and around the world," he said. "I want Southern to be the seminary to lead a great revival for America which will return America to its Christian roots."

By David Roach



"I want Southern to be the seminary to lead a great revival for America."



Build a Legacy

With your help we can continue to build on the legacy of Southern Seminary's founding fathers. By investing in the work of preparing God-called men and women for ministry, you will play a vital role in advancing the Kingdom of God. You will build a legacy.

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People and Places

Southern Seminary has a rich history of alumni serving Christ throughout the world. The intent of this section is to help the seminary family stay close — whether that be through the news of a new ministry position, a retirement, a birth or a death. To submit information to People and Places, call 502-897-4143 or e-mail irprojects@sbts.edu.

30s **Paul Elledge** ('37) celebrated the 75th anniversary of his ordination to the Gospel ministry on Nov. 30, 2005.

Lois Hart ('37) continues to participate with Nueva Jerusalem, a Hispanic congregation, as well as a mission in New Mexico.

40s **W. Luther Tracy** ('43) has been honored with the title of pastor emeritus for 50 years of service at Calvary Baptist Church in Rio Grande, Ohio.

Sam ('44) and **Jean** ('43) **Brown** celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Nov. 21, 2005.

50s **Perry Ginn** ('53) retired and resigned from Valley Brook Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga. on Jan. 8.

Edwin Armitage ('59) and his wife, Elsie, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 25, 2005 at Liberty Heights Church in West Chester, Ohio.

H. Raymond Langlois ('59) is now interim pastor of Fairfield Glade FBC, Tenn.

60s **Lee Turner** ('61) recently released his fourth solo piano CD, "I'll Fly Away." He also recently played in three concerts for Bill Gaither, including the Jacksonville Arena in his hometown of Jacksonville, Fla.

Johnny Tallent ('66) was recognized by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists for 25 years of service in evangelism. He was presented with a plaque at the Convention in Nashville last June.

Daniel G. Ariail ('68) has retired after 23 years as pastor of Maranatha Baptist Church.

Patrick McCuan ('68) has helped create a new dormitory at St. Margaret's School in Virginia.

70s **Fred W. Edwards** ('70) has completed six years as chaplain at Herrin Hospital in Herrin, Ill. after serving 27 years in the music ministry. He and his wife, **Sandra** ('65), celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in July.

Harold E. Newman ('70) was elected unanimously on Jan. 26, to be the 18th president of Shorter College in Rome, Ga.

Russ Waldrop ('72) retired from the Staunton, Va., Reserve Police Dept. and has recently published a book entitled *From the Pulpit*, a collection of 104 of his weekly newspaper columns for the Waynesboro News Virginian.

Tom Mobley ('73) has recently had a second edition of his textbook, *Chaplaincy in Law Enforcement*, published. He is scheduled to teach at the 2006 ICPC Annual Training Seminar in Indianapolis.

Mark Stover ('75), president and CEO of Gospel Life Ministry, relocated to West Virginia. on Oct. 2, 2005.

David Briley ('78) recently joined the staff of First Baptist Church, Decatur, Ala., as associate pastor of worship and arts.

Harold Hostetler, Jr. ('78) retired from the International Mission Board (IMB) in February 2005. On Sept. 7, he began work as associate pastor of Calvary Baptist in Portsmouth, Va.

Nina Belle Wilson Durr ('79) is beginning her 25th year as keyboard minister at Faith Baptist in Georgetown, Ky.

Mike Lewis ('79) is serving as the chaplain of the 30th Medical Brigade at Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq.

80s **Bob Langlois** ('80) is rejoicing over his ninth grandchild, a granddaughter, born in Hawaii in 2005.

Victor Lyons ('80) is senior pastor of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church in Mount Airy, N.C. In June and July he was visiting professor at the Moscow Theological Seminary of Evangelical and Baptist Churches.

Doug Carver ('82) has been promoted to deputy chief of chaplains for the U.S. Army.

Richard Bruce Carlton ('83) has served with the IMB in Asia for the past 20 years. He is presently completing his dissertation for the Doctor of Theology in Missiology through the University of South Africa.

Daniel A. Weaver ('85) began serving as chaplain at Via Christi Regional Medical Center in Wichita, Kan., in May 2005.

Greg Bittle ('86) celebrated his 10th anniversary working with the mentally ill and developmentally disabled as a chaplain endorsed by the North American Mission Board.

Charles L. Smith ('86) has been named Kentucky's new long-term care ombudsman in the state Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

Pete A. Menendez ('87) is director of missions at Marion Baptist Association.

90s **Amy C. Mathis** ('92) began working in June 2005 as a specialized care coordinator with Value Options in Albuquerque, N.M.

Miguel De La Torre ('95) was appointed as the director of the Peace and Justice Institute and associate professor of social ethics at Iliff School of Theology. In addition, he recently published *Leer la Biblia desde los Marginales*.

Mitzi Eaker ('96) is now a ministry consultant for children audiences for the Women's Missionary Union.

Charles D. Ransdell ('96) retired as a NAMB missionary and began working for the Kentucky Baptist Convention Missions Department on Dec. 15, 2005.

Matthew Robert Perry ('97) and his wife welcomed twin boys David Matthew and Daniel

Robert to their family on Sept. 30, 2005.

Brett Bredbenner ('98) announces the birth of Grace Elizabeth on June 30, 2005. She joins Jack (8) and Katie (6).

Donna Marie Lister ('98) has held 2 different daycare director positions since graduating. In 2001 she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. She now volunteers in her church, working with children and adults.

Sungsook Yi ('98) is happy to announce the birth of a son, Ryan Christian, on May 1, 2005.

2000s **Dick "Bo" Fawbush, Jr.** ('01) and his wife, **Ali-cia** ('01), announce the birth of their daughter, Abigail Joy. She was born on January 21, 2005 in Louisville, Ky.

John D. Girdley ('01) is pastor of Florida Avenue Baptist Church in Avon Park, Fla.

Joel and Amy Rainey ('01) announce the birth of their son, Seth Jason. He was born on Sept. 12, 2005 in Columbia, Md. He joins his big brother Samuel.

Clay Layfield ('02) is the associate pastor of music and senior adults at FBC Eastman, Ga.

James Overbee ('02) is pastor of New Hope Community Baptist Church in Jackson, Ky.

Fred Winters ('02) was elected on Nov. 9, 2005 to serve as the president of the Illinois Baptist State Association. He continues to serve as the senior pastor of FBC Maryville, Ill.

Timothy Scott Eanes ('03) was recently elected as a trustee of Southern Seminary.

Barry Maxwell ('03) and wife, Amy, recently finalized their adoption of Lydia Grace. They now reside in Copperas Cove, Texas, where Barry is pastor of Southern Hills Baptist.

Michael Cassity ('04) is pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Montgomery, Ala.

David Dykes ('04) married **Ericia Boggs** ('04) on October 15 in Louisville, KY.

David J. Cahen ('05) was ordained to the Gospel ministry on Oct. 16, 2005.

DEATHS

Glenn Jeanne Crowell died Aug. 29, 2005.

Michael H. Flake died Jan. 27, in Helen, Ga., where he served as a director of resort ministries for the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

Charlotte V. Triplett, widow of Joseph N. Triplett ('44), died on Sept. 17, 2005 at the age of 92.

1930s
Lucille H. Edge, wife of **Robert C. Edge** ('30), died on Feb. 9, 2005 at the age of 100.

William J. Fallis ('39) died Sept. 20, 2005 at the age of 91.

1940s
Bennett Freeman Hall ('43) died Sept. 27, 2005.

Harry Wildeson, Jr. ('47) died Sept. 9, 2005 in Minneapolis, Minn., where he and his wife have lived for the last five years to be near their two sons.

1950s
William Robert Moyle ('51) died Aug. 20, 2005.

Earl Vaughn ('53) died March 11, 2005.

Rosalie Self ('54) died Jan. 24, 2005.

J. Earle Reeves ('56) died June 3, 2005. He was 78.

Milton Dan Stone ('56) died Oct. 7, 2005.

Cliffodean Boyd ('57) died March 13, 2001 while residing in Salem, Va.

Harmon Popham ('57) died Sept. 30, 2005.

William Robert Hollis ('59) died very suddenly of a massive stroke on Dec. 13, 2005.

Fred L. White ('59) died March 2, 2005.

1960s
George W. Freeland ('64) died Dec. 2, 2005 of cancer.

1970s
Terry Moncrief ('72) died Dec. 7, 2005 after a yearlong battle with brain cancer. The Clark Howell-Techwood Baptist Center of which Moncrief had served as director since 1972 has been renamed The Moncrief Center in his honor. 🏛️



CORRECTION: The individuals in this photo were incorrectly identified in the Winter 2005 issue of Southern Seminary Magazine. The caption should have read:

Clockwise from top left: Claude Broach, Raymond Coppenger, George Gordh, Lucian Pinnix

Thank you to Mrs. Barbara Pinnix Meigs for this correction. 🏛️

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Roll Call 2005

A Letter From Our President



Southern Seminary stands as a testimony to the sovereignty of God and the faithfulness of His people. This roll call of giving represents a testimony of faithfulness through the generous contributions made by Christians who care deeply about the training of ministers.

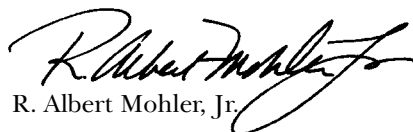
I want you to know how much I appreciate your generous support of Southern Seminary. This institution is sustained, nurtured, and undergirded by faithful friends who share generously of their financial resources and make Southern Seminary a regular concern in prayer.

This roll call is more than a record of gifts. It is a “hall of fame” representing the hundreds of persons who have given directly to Southern Seminary over the past years. As you look through this list of honor and generosity, you will be introduced to many friends who stand with you in providing financial resources for the glorious work of training future ministers, missionaries, evangelists and pastors. To be involved in this great endeavor is a wonderful privilege and honor.

Southern Seminary represents a legacy of excellence in theological education. Nevertheless, that legacy is but the foundation for what we are confident our Lord will do in the future. This past year has been one of the most remarkable seasons in Southern Seminary’s life and history. This institution is ready to face the challenges of the future and is committed to follow the high calling which our Lord has placed before us.

Again, thank you for your generous support. My prayer is that you will draw great satisfaction from knowing you are making a very real difference, not only in the lives of our students, but also in the ministries of the churches they will serve. I pray God’s richest blessings upon you and all you do for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R. Albert Mohler, Jr." in a cursive script.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

The President's Associates

Individuals, denominational groups, and businesses contributing a minimum of \$1,000 in 2005 are members of the President's Associates. Within the President's Associates are several specific giving societies: Distinguished Associate, Leaders Associate, Founders Associate, John A. Broadus Associate, and Associate.

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The John A. Broadus Associate level acknowledges individuals, church groups, and businesses that contribute \$1,500 to \$2,499 annually. Southern Seminary founder John A. Broadus challenged faculty peers during the Civil War with the impassioned words, "Let us quietly agree that the seminary may die, but we'll die first!" The John A. Broadus Associate recognizes the spirit and commitment of individuals who extend themselves and their resources to ensure financial grounding for Great Commission training provided by Southern Seminary.

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TEXAS

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Businesses, Denominations, and Foundations

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The Association of Theological Schools
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
BellSouth Communication System
Stuart, Florida

C.S. Trucking I, L.P.
Crystal Springs, Mississippi
The Campbell Group, LLC
Portland, Oregon
Chattanooga Christian Foundation
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Coca-Cola Company
Atlanta, Georgia
Commonwealth Life Insurance
Louisville, Kentucky
Florida Baptist Convention
Jacksonville, Florida
Hamer Foundation
Kenova, West Virginia
Jolley Foundation
Greenville, South Carolina
Jolly Evangelistic Foundation
Dalton, Georgia
Michael-Walters Industries
Louisville, Kentucky
National City Bank
Louisville, Kentucky
Nations Bank
Petersburg, Virginia
New York Baptist Convention
East Syracuse, New York
George W. Norton Foundation
Louisville, Kentucky
OfficeScapes, Inc.
Bartlett, Tennessee
Oklahoma Baptist Foundation
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
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Atlanta, Georgia
Rademaker Corporation
Louisville, Kentucky
Rockwell International Corporation
Seal Beach, California
South Carolina Baptist Foundation
Columbia, South Carolina
South Central Bell
Birmingham, Alabama
Virginia Baptist Foundation
Richmond, Virginia
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Jackson, Mississippi
Covenant Life Church
Gaithersburg, Maryland
First Baptist Church
Bowie, Maryland
The First Baptist Church Foundation
of Laurel, Inc.
Laurel, Mississippi
Hurstbourne Baptist Church
Louisville, Kentucky
Memorial Baptist Church
Arlington, Virginia
Providence Baptist Church
Raleigh, North Carolina
Trinity Baptist Church
Etowah, Tennessee
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Cincinnati, Ohio
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Charlottesville, Virginia

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Mrs. Edna I. Taylor

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Dr. & Mrs. Noel M. Taylor

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Dr. Richard G. Crowe
Dr. & Mrs. B. F. Hawkins
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Rev. & Mrs. Joseph A. Talley

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Rev. & Mrs. James P. Blackwelder
Rev. & Mrs. Charles W. Drake
Mrs. Josephine H. Folsom
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Mrs. Martha J. Hand
Rev. & Mrs. John E. Hasel
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Miss Constance A. Via
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Ms. E. Hortense Barnes
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Chap. & Mrs. H. Marlowe Link
Dr. & Mrs. Richard D. Lucas
Mrs. Patricia R. Permenter
Rev. & Mrs. Billy G. Rivers

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Dr. & Mrs. Edgar E. Hatfield
Rev. & Mrs. George B. Kimsey

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Mr. & Mrs. Gerald D. Brenner
Mr. & Mrs. Michael T. Hankins
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Mr. & Mrs. C. Grant Logsdon, Jr.
Rev. & Mrs. Walter K. Price

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Mr. Gilbert L. Southall
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Woodard

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Mr. & Mrs. Marty G. Wilkins
Mr. & Mrs. Brian K. Wonn

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Dr. & Mrs. Paul H. Chitwood
Mr. Robert C. Clingham
Dr. & Mrs. Hal W. Dixon

Rev. & Mrs. Charles E. Hamlin
Mrs. Alice M. Rabb
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Reeder
Mr. & Mrs. Te-Lun Wu

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Mr. & Mrs. Torn Chea
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Rev. & Mrs. Steven N. Davidson
Dr. & Mrs. Ken D. Fentress
Mr. & Mrs. Michael E. Goodwin
Dr. & Mrs. John T. Hellams, Jr.
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Dr. & Mrs. Timothy R. McKnight
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Rev. & Mrs. Charles D. Ransdell
Drs. Gregory A. & Kimberly C. Thornbury

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Mr. & Mrs. Charles R. Fanning
Ms. Yu-Chi R. Hsu
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Dr. & Mrs. Donny R. Mathis, II
Dr. & Mrs. Shawn S. Merithew
Rev. & Mrs. Gerald F. Nuzum
Dr. & Mrs. Robert L. Plummer
Mr. & Mrs. Bryan E. Ready
Mr. & Mrs. James F. Ricer, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. H. Dale Scott

Mr. & Mrs. Joel J. Young

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Dr. & Mrs. Yong Kyu Cho
Mrs. Tracy N. Christina
Dr. & Mrs. David R. Deklaven
Dr. & Mrs. Larry D. Mathis
Dr. & Mrs. Donald W. McCulley
Mrs. Angela F. McKnight
Mr. & Mrs. Russell D. Painter
Mrs. Jayne M. Schweizer
Dr. & Mrs. Danny S. Sinquefield
Mrs. Sungsook Yi

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Rev. & Mrs. David R. Burney
Dr. & Mrs. Bradley S. Butler
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Callihan
Ms. Jaein Chong
Rev. James J. Joswick
Mr. & Mrs. Michael A. Klinedinst
Ms. Rebecca J. MacEwen
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert R. Morris
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie C. Phillips
Rev. Wayne E. Rogers
Mr. & Mrs. James A. Smith, Sr.
Mrs. Cynthia A. Winfree

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Mr. & Mrs. Raymond G. Carroll
Mr. & Mrs. D. Michael Cook
Mrs. Angela L. Girdley

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Dr. & Mrs. Phillip A. Jones
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Dr. & Mrs. Richard L. Lewelling
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The Southern Seminary Luncheon 2006

Wednesday, June 14, 2006, 12:30 pm

Sheraton Four-Seasons Hotel

Greensboro, NC

Imperial Ballroom (A-H), Level One

Ticket Information:

\$20 in advance

May be purchased at SBC Booth for \$24

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