



Leader Guide

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BCE is a pro-ethics voice for thoughtful moral reflection and practical solutions to real problems.

For more information about Acacia Resources, call 800-469-4223 or visit our Web site at www.ethicsdaily.com.

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Acacia Resources

The biblical witness singles out acacia wood for its uniqueness. The only wood mentioned in the building of the ark of the covenant, the tabernacle and the altar is acacia. Acacia wood is listed with other precious objects—gold, silver, fragrant incense, onyx stones—given to honor God.

The name *acacia* symbolically ties BCE's curriculum initiative to our biblical heritage. The acacia tree represents the wise value attached to the family, the diversity within families and the durability demanded for growing healthy Christians, whether they are singles, couples with children or senior adults.

Today's acacia tree is known for its ...



Value

Some acacia trees have fragrant flowers used in making perfume. The seeds are edible. The bark is rich in tannin, a substance used in tanning, dyes, inks and pharmaceuticals. Furniture, cars, tools and gunstocks are made of the hard lumber from the acacia tree.

Diversity

Some 1,200 species of acacia trees and shrubs exist throughout much of the world, including Africa, Australia and North America.

Durability

The acacia species is tough enough to survive the semiarid regions of Africa where its roots sink deep to capture the rare water which runs quickly into the soil.

Acacia Resources will guide Christians and draw them godward, as the ark of acacia wood guided the people of Israel in their journey and represented the presence of God in their midst.

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Teaching Tools

Leadership Call

Few positions influence others as that of teacher. You are a special person, chosen to teach God's word to God's people. The role of teacher is an awesome one. James even warned that "not many . . . should become teachers" (Jas 3:1). But teaching is the only way God's Word will be communicated to people who are struggling to find a star by which to guide their lives.

You have been chosen for that special task. It is difficult, but it is so rewarding. Most of all, you are exercising the gift God has given you to teach. That means that you do not teach on your own. You teach with God blessing you through the Holy Spirit.

Your purpose as a teacher is not to impart information; it is to introduce people to God so the Spirit can work in their lives.

We believe in you, and we welcome you as a significant part of the teaching team. We will give you ideas on how to communicate the truths of the lessons. However, you must take these ideas and shape them for your class.

Leadership Overview

Real Baptists: Spotlighting Changes in the Baptist Faith and Message examines cornerstones of Baptist belief and practice. We hope our suggestions will stimulate new ideas in your own mind.

Links to relevant Web sites appear at the end of many lessons. Visit these sites and decide how you will use them. You may use these sites as:

- an enrichment study for the teacher;
- a discussion starter;
- an attention-getter to begin class.

Leadership Weekly Checklist

- Start early in the week—some teachers start on Sunday afternoon.
- As you read and meditate on the lesson, think about the members of your class and how the lesson will apply to their lives.
- Read the Scripture references in several different translations.
- Look for articles in the paper and on the Web. Listen for current

ideas on television or radio. And don't forget your own experiences which may apply to the lesson.

- Write out your own teaching plan.
- On Saturday or Sunday morning, pray for each member of the class as you make your final preparation.
- Ask God for help in making an impact on people you teach.

Leadership Teaching

Begin each class with prayer. Specifically pray for:

- wisdom;
- the courage to face biblical truths;
- commitment to make appropriate changes; and
- endurance to stay the course of change.

Keep in mind these tips for better group discussion:

- Enlist members in advance to read Scripture and portions of the lesson.
- Allow for silence, even though it might be uncomfortable, when you ask questions.
- Ask open questions that will allow members to share their feelings rather than closed questions that can be answered by short answers such as yes or no. A good way to generate discussion is to ask: "How do you feel about . . . ?"

Share the Take-home Line at the end of each lesson.

Begin and end on time.

Take-home Line

The Take-home Line is a summary of the lesson and a challenge for class members to consider throughout the week. Write it on a notecard and distribute it to each class member or ask members to write it at the top of their notes. Encourage them to memorize and recite the Take-home Line.



Meeting Jesus

Matthew 16:13-18

Take-home Line

Jesus says, “Follow me!”

Teacher’s Goal

To enable members to journey freely with Jesus

Introduce the Lesson

Point out that lesson writer Bob Setzer viewed Jesus differently at various stages in his (Setzer’s) life: Jesus as a Superman, as a hip brother, as an Eastern sage, as “the human face of the Eternal.”

Ask members if their image of Jesus has changed throughout the years. Ask volunteers to share how they viewed Jesus as a child, during their college years and as adults. Ask other members why their images changed.

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Matthew 16:13-18. Reread verse 13. Ask: Who did the people think Jesus was? Point out that the people had a variety of opinions about Jesus’ identity: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

Ask: How would you answer this question if Jesus asked you?

Read Peter’s confession (v. 16).

Setzer wrote, “Peter confessed Jesus as the One due his loyalty and devotion. Such loyalty and devotion would propel Peter into a journey that would reveal much more clearly who Jesus was and is.”

Ask: How do you think this statement by Peter affected his relationship with Jesus? Others?

In Luke, a few verses after Peter proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus said to his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Lk 9:23).

Discuss: How is belief merely the beginning of a journey, not the end.

Explore what it means to follow Jesus. Read Luke 4:16-19. Discuss this passage as Jesus’ mission statement.

Offer Practical Handles

Setzer wrote: “There are those within Southern Baptist life who say the essence of being a Christian is holding to right ideas about Jesus: he was born of a virgin, died a substitutionary death for the sins of the world and will return on a cloud to rescue the redeemed. Strangely, Jesus himself never made any of these things a condition of discipleship.”

Ask: What implications does this fact have on our teaching and evangelism?

The 2000 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement, in its article on “God the Son,” clarifies beliefs about Jesus: his virgin birth, substitutionary death, and resurrection, to name a few.

Setzer said Jesus’ “summons was much more concrete, unsettling and revolutionary. It was and is a simple creed, consisting of two words only: ‘Follow me.’” Ask: Is it possible to believe in Jesus and not follow him?

Following Jesus is about giving one’s heart to him and following after him. It is believing in him, not just about him, according to Setzer.

Ask: Would you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

Ask the class to discuss what Setzer termed “the essence of discipleship”—“Follow me.” Explore faith as a matter of what you give your heart to, a commitment to follow. Compare this understanding with the creedal faith that emphasizes faith as speaking the right words.

Close with the Take-home Line



Treasuring the Bible As A Record of God's Revelation

Galatians 1:12

Take-home Line

The Bible is both a record of God's revelation and God's revelation.

Teacher's Goal

To help members identify different forms of God's revelation

Introduce the Lesson

Say: During the debate over the proposed revisions to the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement, a member of the committee said, "The issue is whether the Bible is the word of God or merely a record of God's word. The Bible is not merely a record. It is the revelation of God."

The SBC official was responding to a Texas pastor who challenged the change in the 1963 confession from the Bible "is the record of God's revelation" to the Bible "is God's revelation."

The SBC official distorted the debate by inserting the word "merely," as if those who supported the traditional Southern Baptist position had a lower view of the Bible.

Lesson writer Fisher Humphreys wrote that the Bible is both "the record of God's revelation" and "God's revelation."

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Galatians 1:12. Paul said he received the gospel through God's revelation of Jesus Christ to him.

Note the three different categories for revelation in the New Testament:

1. God gave revelatory visions. Read Revelation 1:1, 2 Corinthians 12:1 and Ephesians 3:3.
2. God will give future revelations. Read 1 Corinthians 1:7 and Romand 8:18-19.

3. God gave revelations that are not visions. Read Matthew 11:25-27, 16:17 and Philippians 3:15.

The Bible itself speaks of accounts that have been handed down by eyewitnesses and servants so that we might know the truth. These accounts are a record of God's revelation. For example, Luke said he had written "an orderly account" about Jesus' life (Lk 1:1-4). He also wrote, "I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning" (Acts 1:1).

The biblical witness says, "All scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim 3:16). These records of God's revelation are "useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (v. 16).

Offer Practical Handles

On a chalkboard or large sheet of paper, write the five components of the patterns of revelation mentioned by the lesson writer. Remind the class that "we know God, and we know about God by reading the New Testament records of Jesus' revelation of God."

Ask: Why do you think the 1963 confession was changed at this point?

Ask: Do you think the committee changed the document for the sake of change? If the Bible is both a record of and God's revelation, then why did a committee member pitch the issue in terms of an either/or proposition? Does the rejection of the Bible as a "record of God's revelation" disfigure the truth? How could the new confession lead toward an idolatrous worship of the Bible, instead of the living word, Jesus Christ?

Read aloud the following paragraphs: The most noted Southern Baptist theologian of the 20th century, E.Y. Mullins, wrote, "The Bible is indeed our supreme and authoritative literary source of the revelation of God which leads to salvation. But salvation is not conditioned upon our belief in, or acceptance of, a book."

Mullins continued, "The knowledge of God of which we now speak is not derived from merely reading the pages of the Bible, or from the most rigidly scientific interpretation of its teachings. God's revelation of himself to us comes through his direct action upon our spirits. He comes to us in redeeming grace. There is a spiritual transaction within us. We are regenerated by his power, and lifted to a new moral and spiritual level. It is then that we acquire a new appreciation of the Bible. God thus becomes our supreme authority, and the Bible is recognized as the authoritative

record of his supreme revelation” (*The Christian Religion and Its Doctrinal Expression*, p. 41).

Discuss: What difference does it make whether we say the Bible is a record of God’s revelation or the Bible is God’s **revelation**?

Close with the Take-home Line



Reading the Bible with Jesus' Help

Matthew 12:1-14

Take-home Line

Jesus is the guiding light for interpreting the Bible.

Teacher's Goal

To equip members with the understanding of why Jesus is needed to help us interpret the Bible

Introduce the Lesson

Say: When Southern Baptists revised their time-honored confession of faith in 2000, they removed Jesus as the criterion for interpreting the Bible.

Ask: What does the word "criterion" mean? (A rule, standard, guiding principle or benchmark)

Lesson writer Charles Wade wrote, "To say Jesus is the criterion for interpretation of Scripture does not demean Scripture. It is rather the strongest affirmation possible for the truth of the Bible."

Ask: How is the Bible to be interpreted if Jesus is not the benchmark? What guides our interpretation of the Bible?

Identify briefly the three ways some Christians interpret the Bible without Jesus.

1. Dispensationalism follows a literal reading of the Bible and divides history into different ages or dispensations. Biblical material in one dispensation may not apply in another dispensation, for example.
2. Another approach treats all texts as equal. Jesus' commandment to love one's neighbor has the same importance as Moses' dietary laws (do not eat pig, rabbit and shrimp).
3. Religious authorities decide what the Bible means through pontifical statements, creeds and resolutions. Like the Pharisees, these leaders tell church members how to understand the Bible and what to do.

Ask: What are the dangers of each of these three approaches?

Say: Without Jesus, as the benchmark, Christians may ignore or misuse the Bible. Text without context may become proof texts. Led by the Spirit and guided by the community of faith, our understanding of Jesus helps us interpret tough biblical passages and navigate tough issues in life.

Examine the Biblical Witness

Have six different members read aloud Matthew 5:21-39 in the following passages. Have them repeat the sentence in each section that says, "But I say to you."

1. 5:21-26. Verse 22.
2. 5:27-30. Verse 28.
3. 5:31-32. Verse 32.
4. 5:33-37. Verse 34.
5. 5:38-42. Verse 39.
6. 5:43-48. Verse 44.

Wade said Jesus set an even higher standard than what was in ancient times.

Read Matthew 12:1-14. Explore how Jesus dealt with the Pharisees and their interpretation of the ancient law related to the Sabbath.

From the parallel story in Mark 2:23-28, read the words of Jesus in verse 27: "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath."

Returning to the Matthew passage, explore Jesus' words related to the accusation that his disciples were working on the Sabbath when they plucked and ate the heads of grain (Mt 12:1-8). Also, examine what Jesus said about the work of healing on the Sabbath (12:9-14).

Offer Practical Handles

Wade identifies two differences that result if Jesus is or is not the criterion for interpretation. In advance, copy the two paragraphs in the lesson that begin with bold: "One Difference" and "Another Difference."

Give these slips to two different members. Ask the first member to read “One Difference.” Ask: What is wrong with this approach? How does this actually lower the view of the Bible? Do this with “Another Difference.” Point out that there is “A Better Way.”

Identify the three actions of the Spirit mentioned by the lesson writer.

Wade wrote that the Holy Spirit “continues working in the hearts and minds of those who read the Bible.” The Spirit helps us understand and apply the Bible, which is our “perfect treasure of divine instruction,” according to the first article in the *Baptist Faith and Message* statement.

Ask: What implications does this statement have for our reading the Bible.

Ask a volunteer to read aloud the story of how Philip helped the Ethiopian to interpret the prophet Isaiah (Acts 8:29-31). Ask members to suggest principles or guidelines from this passage that can help them interpret the Bible. Write these on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper.

Remind members that Jesus is the guiding light for interpreting the Bible and that we need the community of faith to help us understand the Bible.

Close with the Take-home Line



Embracing Soul Competency

Ephesians 2:8-18

Take-home Line

Soul competency is the hub of Baptist ideals.

Teacher's Goal

To help members explain the doctrine of soul competency and identify consequences for faith and practice

Introduce the Lesson

Say: Each individual “is free and responsible in his or her relationship with God,” wrote Michael Clingenpeel, the lesson writer. “No human being, sacred document or special place stands between you and God. Your religion is a personal matter between you and your creator. That’s soul competency.”

Read these observations from Baptist historian Leon McBeth: “The competency of the soul and the priesthood of all believers are vitally related; we could not have one without the other,” he wrote. In an article titled “God Gives Soul Competency and Priesthood to All Believers” (in *Defining Baptist Convictions: Guidelines for the Twenty-First Century*), McBeth added, “They are not just individual doctrines; they undergird and form the foundation of other doctrines as well.”

Examine the Biblical Witness

Soul competency’s roots are in the Bible.

Read aloud Genesis 2:15-17. Remind members that when God placed Adam in the garden of Eden, God disclosed to him all he needed “to know to enjoy life and to be rightly related to his Creator,” according to the lesson.

Read aloud Genesis 1:26-27, 31. Ask: How does being created in God’s likeness give us the capability or competency for discernment about our relationship with God? Why do you think God gave us the freedom to choose and be responsible for our choices?

Read aloud Ephesians 2:8-22. Point out that God gives us the gift of

salvation made possible by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the divine-human mediator.

Clingenpeel wrote, “Belief in soul competency never presupposes that salvation is possible without the redemptive work of Jesus at the cross.”

Ask: Why would you agree or disagree with this statement?

Lead members through the study and discussion of John 16:12-13 and Psalm 119:97-105, found in the lesson.

Offer Practical Handles

Clingenpeel wrote that soul competency is the hub of Baptist ideals. He offered six conditional sentences that each begin with, “If you are free and responsible in your relationship with God, then ...”

Copy these six sentences on small strips of paper and give them to six persons to read. On a large sheet of paper, draw a wagon wheel with a hub and rim. Draw six spokes. Ask each person to read his or her sentence and write on each spoke the following phrases: priesthood of believers; not a creedal people; regenerate church membership; believer’s baptism; separation of church and state; and voluntary connectionalism.

Ask after each sentence is read: What implications does this statement have for this doctrine?

Critics of soul competency—and its twin doctrine the priesthood of believers—say it leads to rampant individualism. They imply that this cherished belief advances moral relativism. Their anecdote is creedalism, establishing a binding belief system on church members and quenching their freedom under Christ.

Such an approach says, “Either one supports a binding interpretation of the Bible or one favors immoral individualism.” Ask: What is wrong with this approach? What other options are available to Bible students?

To avoid the false choice of an either/or approach, lead a discussion on the relationship between the individual and the local church in discerning moral decisions. Ask: How does a community of faith help an individual interpret the Bible and express moral convictions? Ask: Why is soul competency best practiced in the context of the “cloud of witnesses”? Ask: What consequences result from practicing this doctrine?

Close with the Take-home Line



Practicing the Priesthood of Believers

1 Peter 2:5, 9

Take-home Line

All believers have access to God through Jesus Christ and are responsible for being priests one to another.

Teacher's Goal

To help members explain the doctrine of priesthood of believers and identify the implications of this doctrine

Introduce the Lesson

Lesson writer Bob Newell asked, “What does the priesthood of believers really mean for clergy and laity? Why does it matter for rank-and-file church members who struggle to have healthy families, succeed at work and live faithfully? Are Baptist people destined for a crash if they continue the journey, having so damaged this essential of our faith? What are the positive impacts of a renewed commitment to it?”

He answers that the priesthood of all believers “is a commitment to the notion that human beings, made in the image of God, may come to know God through Christ without the requirement of any human, priestly intermediary.”

Writing in *The Doctrine of the Priesthood of Believers*, historian Walter Shurden said, “All believers are priests.” He added, “Every Christian—and I do mean *every Christian*—is ‘to relate to and act for God’” (p. 10).

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read aloud Exodus 19:1-6. Underscore the idea that God wanted the people of Israel to be a special “priestly kingdom” and “a holy nation.”

Read aloud 1 Peter 2:5 and 9. Highlight the phrase “a holy priesthood.” Ask: What do these two passages teach about priesthood?

Read aloud 1 Timothy 2:5. Point out that Christ Jesus is the only mediator between human beings and God. Neither clergy nor creeds are mediators between God and human beings. Our relationship with and responsibility to God is through God’s Son.

Offer Practical Handles

In *The Doctrine of the Priesthood of Believers*, Shurden identified five implications for this doctrine:

1. Accessibility means everyone has access to God.
2. Equality necessitates that every believer has equal voice in the church.
3. Responsibility requires every believer to engage in God’s redemptive work in the world. We are priests one to another.
4. Universality says that priesthood is defined neither by gender nor ordination. All God’s children are priests.
5. Liberty means every believer affirms the lordship of Jesus Christ and practices citizenship, instead of claiming our nation is God’s chosen nation.

In advance, write these five statements on large strips of paper and tape them to the back of five chairs. Ask the persons sitting in the chairs to read the statements and tape them to the focal wall.

After each statement is read ask: If our church fully obeyed this statement, how would it change the way we do church?

An Alternate Approach: Organize the class into five groups. Assign one of Shurden’s five implications to each group. Ask each group to list the ways each implication is worked out in your church.

Newell carefully spells out what happens when this doctrine is suppressed or disfigured. Review his observations with the members. Ask: Do you agree or disagree with Newell’s conclusions? Why?

Close with the Take-home Line



Practicing Local Church Autonomy

Ephesians 2:19-22

Take-home Line

Our church is both free and responsible.

Teacher's Goal

To help members describe the basis and results of local church autonomy

Introduce the Lesson

Say: A week after the release of the proposed revision of the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement, the study committee issued a statement that spoke in part to the issue of local church autonomy. Newspaper headlines across the nation said Southern Baptists rejected women in ministry. The negative publicity forced the study committee to defend its article on the church.

The committee said, "We faced the fact that the Bible is clear in presenting the office of pastor as restricted to men. There is no biblical precedent for a woman in the pastorate, and the Bible teaches that women should not teach in authority over men."

The committee's statement crossed the line of local church autonomy and began dictating to churches whether women could serve as ministers or teach men.

Lesson writer Donna Forrester wrote, "Local church autonomy means that each local congregation, under the sole authority of Jesus Christ, has the freedom to govern itself in a democratic way." She also pointed out the many ways church autonomy may be lost and the great need to preserve local church autonomy.

Examine the Biblical Witness

In advance, enlist three different people to read aloud the following passages: Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:2 and Galatians 1:2. Remind the members that in each passage, Paul wrote to local communities of faith.

Ask members to read silently Ephesians 2:19-22. Ask them what verse shows that Jesus is the church's ultimate authority (v. 20). Identify the

images Paul used to describe believers (citizens, saints, household members).

Ask: What impact do verses 19-20 have on the way churches should operate?

Point out that Ephesians 3:7-13 identifies the church as the vehicle for the wisdom of God. Ask members what this responsibility means for your congregation. Ask: How can this obligation be lost? What happens if it is lost?

Read Ephesians 4:1-6. Explore what the oneness theme means practically for congregational cooperation with other congregations.

Offer Practical Handles

Point out that Forrester wrote that the revised *Baptist Faith and Message* statement affirmed church autonomy but imposed a particular interpretation of one passage of Scripture. She said other passages that relate to women in church ministry were ignored.

Read and discuss the passages she cited. Ask: Does the revised Baptist confession meddle in local church decision making? If so, in what ways?

Explore the connectedness and freedom of your own church with denominational bodies.

Ask: Does our church have the freedom to decide what Sunday School curriculum it wishes to use and what mission efforts it wishes to support? What makes this difficult?

Ask members to suggest how their church balances its freedom from and cooperation with other churches.

Close with the Take-home Line



Ring the Bell of Religious Liberty

Galatians 5:1, 13-14

Take-home Line

The best thing government can do for religion is to leave it alone.

Teacher's Goal

To underscore the importance of religious liberty for all people

Introduce the Lesson

Say: Charles Haynes, an expert on religious liberty, wrote: “Thanks to the First Amendment—the principle of ‘no establishment’ as well as ‘free exercise’—we are the heirs to the boldest and most successful experiment in religious freedom the world has ever known.”

As the lesson points out, Baptists played an instrumental role in this experiment.

Ask: What role do Baptists currently play? Is this role stronger or weaker than it has been in the past? Why?

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Galatians 5:13-14.

Contemplate and discuss the following phrases:

- “You were called to freedom” (v. 13a).
- “Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence” (v. 13b).
- “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (v. 14).

Point out that lesson writer Brent Walker wrote, “Our freedom in Christ can never be separated from—and must always be limited by—the responsibility we have to one another. Thus, freedom and responsibility must always be held in tension. They are two sides of the same coin.”

Recall that other biblical passages address this tension between freedom and responsibility. Adam and Eve were free to live in the garden but were responsible for it (Gen 2:15-17). Jesus said, “You received without payment; give without payment” (Mt 10:8b).

In light of these and other biblical passages, discuss Bill Moyers’ statement that “our religion is an adventure in freedom within the bounds of accountability.”

Offer Practical Handles

Charles Haynes wrote: “Often it’s only when people find themselves in the minority that they suddenly remember that full religious liberty means protecting each and every citizen from the ‘tyranny of the majority.’”

Ask: Have you ever been in the religious minority? Would you like to be? Would you likely clamor for religious liberty if you were?

Read aloud each of the five bulleted statements from Walker’s lesson. Ask after each statement: Would you agree or disagree with this statement? Why? What would be the results if the opposite positions were adopted?

Ask members to recite the pledge of allegiance together. Ask: What does the last phrase, “with liberty and justice for all” mean?

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information, visit the Freedom Forum at <http://www.freedomforum.org/>

Teach Baptist History to Youth and Children

Children’s minister Nancy Walker recommends two resources related to religious liberty:

Citizens of Two Kingdoms is a 47-page booklet that contains four lessons designed to instruct middle-and-high-school-age youth. Each lesson offers themes, commentary, suggestions for preparation, step-by-step lesson plans as well as reproducible materials for students. Lessons are intended to be participatory and interactive, stimulating discussion.

Order copies from the Baptist Joint Committee, 202-544-4226.

Keepers of the Faith uses a cartoon format that appeals to elementary-aged children as they explore their Baptist heritage. Listed alphabetically, these short biographies include 71 Baptist heroes. Among those featured are George Truett, John Leland, Anna Kay Scott, Ann Hasseltine Judson and Roger Williams. The book’s goal is to awaken an interest in history, making children aware of many who have come before who enable

children to be who they are today.

Order copies from BCE, 800-469-4223.

“Baptists cannot afford a generation of historical illiterates,” said Walker. Both of the above resources are invaluable in connecting young readers to the larger Baptist Christian community throughout the centuries. Baptist history and heritage is not just for adults anymore!

Nancy Walker serves as minister of children at Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Virginia, and is the wife of Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee.



Keeping Church and State Separate

Luke 20:20-26

Take-home Line

Church and state should be kept separate.

Teacher's Goal

To provide members with an understanding of the biblical basis and Baptist heritage for the separation of church and state

Introduce the Lesson

Read the following two paragraphs:

In 1920, George Truett said: "That utterance of Jesus, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,' is one of the most revolutionary and history-making utterances that ever fell from those lips divine. That utterance, once for all, marked the divorcement of church and state . . . Christ's religion needs no prop of any kind from any worldly source."

In 1984, W. A. Criswell claimed "the separation of church and state is a figment of the imagination of some infidel."

Is the separation of church and state a figment of the imagination? Does Christ's religion need a worldly prop?

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Luke 20:20-26. Write on a large poster verse 25. Keep the poster in front of the class during the session.

Lesson writer Mike Smith wrote, "At the very least, he [Jesus] taught that God and state are not identical. In addition, his words placed a heavy responsibility on his followers. They would have to discern the boundary between religion and the state."

Ask: How do followers of Jesus exercise this responsibility of discernment?

Read Luke 4:1-13. Focus on verses 5-8.

"With the power of the state to back him, Jesus could enforce his religious vision on others," Smith wrote. Yet Jesus rejected the offer.

Ask members why they think Jesus rejected the power of the state.

On a chalkboard or large sheet of paper write the headings of Romans 13:1-7 and Revelation 13:1-9. Have two members read aloud these passages. Using the lesson, contrast these two views of the state. List the differences in the appropriate column.

Offer Practical Handles

In advance, copy on a large sheet of paper the first sixteen words of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Place this on the focal wall.

Ask: What are some of the issues that are currently being considered that are affected by this Amendment?

State: Fundamentalist pastor Wiley Drake, who initiated the SBC's boycott of Disney, founded Americans United for Unity of Church and State. One of the group's first goals involved placing the Ten Commandments in public schools.

Lead a discussion regarding the display of the Ten Commandments by using the following questions: What advantages would posting the Ten Commandments in public schools have? What disadvantages? What biblical principles should govern this action?

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information, the article, *Ten Commandments and a Number of Views* by Robert Parham is in Appendix A, page 21.



Influencing Culture

Matthew 5:13-16

Take-home Line

Christians are to be salt and light in culture.

Teacher's Goal

To help members list ways they are active agents in their culture, not passive victims of it

Introduce the Lesson

Ask: What comes to mind when you hear the word “culture?” Do you think of popular culture? Folk culture? Elite culture? Which of these three types of culture do you think affects us most? Why?

Ask: What have Christian leaders said about culture generally and popular culture specifically?

Examine the Biblical Witness

Remind members that Matthew 5:13-16 comprises part of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus “saw the crowds” (Mt 5:1). This passage is preceded by verses stating that Jesus’ “fame spread throughout all Syria” (Mt 4:24) and “great crowds followed him” (Mt 4:25).

Was Jesus himself part of popular culture? Why did crowds follow and listen to him?

Did Jesus urge the crowds to become passive victims or active agents in their culture?

Note that the Sermon on the Mount concludes with Jesus saying, “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. . . . And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand” (Mt 7:24, 26).

Now read aloud and discuss Matthew 5:13-16. Pay special attention to the metaphors “salt of the earth” and “light of the world.” Use the lesson to

discuss these two metaphors. Ask: What ways were you salt and light this past week?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. Discuss the concept of reconciliation and the ministry of reconciliation.

Explore the title of ambassador. Identify ways ambassadors represent their nation in a foreign nation.

Offer Practical Handles

Ask: Do we sometimes fear culture because we do not understand it? And do we not understand it because we do not engage it? Why do we disengage and complain about culture, pointing fingers and criticizing it?

As the preface to the *Baptist Faith and Message* statement reads, “Our generation faces the reality of a postmodern culture, complete with rampant relativism and the denial of absolute truth. A pervasive secularism has infected our society and its corrosive effects are evident throughout the life of our nation.”

One way to lessen fear is to promote understanding. Understanding comes from engaging. The student guide suggests eight ways Christians can engage the culture. List these on a large sheet of paper and place it on the focal wall. If you have members who have participated in one of these ministries, ask the person to share briefly about the ministry and future opportunities. (In advance, secure information about as many of these ministries as you can and/or list others that are more relevant to your church.)

Point out that these suggestions offer practical ways in which Christians can act on the words of Jesus and build houses on rocks, not sand.

Distribute small pieces of paper to all the members. Ask them to list one way they will seek to influence their culture. Ask them to keep this in their Bible as a reminder.

Close with the Take-home Line



Doing Evangelism

Matthew 9:35-10:8

Take-home Line

“Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.”

Teacher’s Goal

To encourage members to describe a holistic concept of evangelism that is more than words

Introduce the Lesson

Say: Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, long-time Southern Baptist mission leader, wrote, “When the Southern Baptist Convention revised the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement in 2000, it changed the paragraphs on evangelism and missions.”

She noted, “The new statement made two changes. First, it added a sentence: ‘The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations.’ Second, it replaced the phrase ‘personal effort,’ referring to winning the lost to Christ, with the phrase ‘verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle.’”

Then she asked, “So, what is the problem?”

Crumpler, who directed the SBC’s Woman’s Missionary Union for almost 15 years, said the change suggested that missions must be preaching and verbal witness. She noted that, historically, Southern Baptists did missions and evangelism through a variety of ways.

She also expressed concern about target evangelism and commitments that degrade other faiths.

Examine the Biblical Witness

Crumpler looks at five different passages of Scripture.

Assign different members to read aloud each text. Ask the group to develop a principle for evangelism for each passage. Suggestions are given in parentheses.

1. Matthew 9:35—10:8 (Jesus’ disciples preached and met human needs.)
2. Matthew 22:35-40 (Jesus’ command to love our neighbor contains the idea that we are to have a relationship with those to whom we express charity. Some evangelism strategies focus on strangers, those with whom we have no relationship.)
3. Luke 19:1-10 (Jesus made eye contact and sought a relationship with Zaachaeus.)
4. Acts 1:8 (The nature of evangelism is global.)
5. James 2:14-17 (Meeting human needs is a priority.)

Offer Practical Handles

Retell the stories of “Hope, Precious Jewel,” “Sojourner” and “Sarah.”

Explain the differences between the Roman way and the Celtic way of evangelism. Use the diagram below:

Roman Model

Present the Message

Call for Decision

Welcome into Fellowship

Celtic Model

Establish Fellowship

Engage in Ministry and Conversation

Invite Belief and Commitment

Ask: What would our evangelism be like if we use the Roman model? Celtic model? Which is more like Christ’s approach?

Quote Saint Francis of Assisi who said, “Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” Ask members how they would apply his advice.

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information on George Hunter’s book, *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*, read more in the article in Appendix B, page 23.



Opening the Doors to Women in Ministry

Galatians 3:27-28

Take-home Line

Neither male nor female has superiority in Christ.

Teacher's Goal

To help members to identify the biblical basis for women serving in leadership roles in the church

Introduce the Lesson

A week after the release of the proposed revision in the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement, the study committee issued a statement that spoke in part to women in ministry. Newspaper headlines across the nation said Southern Baptists rejected women in ministry. The negative publicity forced the study committee to defend its article on how the church related to women.

While the committee claimed it was simply following biblical teaching, it also opposed women in ministry with a cultural argument. It said Southern Baptists were “united in conviction. Far less than one percent of churches cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention have ever called a woman as pastor.”

Did a cultural reality determine their selective reading of the Bible?

Lesson writers David and Jane Hull asked, “Should women have equal opportunities and responsibilities for ministry because that is the direction of our culture? What exactly does the New Testament tell us about women in ministry?”

Quoting an SBC official, they asked if he was right when he said “our positions and our perspectives” should be “dictated by Scripture.”

Their reply was, “Let’s see what the Bible says about the subject.”

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Galatians 3:27-28. Quote the lesson writers: “Paul was not specifically writing about holding an office in the church or being

ordained. Instead, he was giving an overarching principle of what it means to be a new creation in Christ.”

Make a list of the many biblical texts in the lesson that share about the role of women in the New Testament. Read each text and identify the different leadership roles women played. Place this information on a large sheet of paper on a chalkboard.

Ask: Even though the first century was male dominated, what do these texts indicate about the role of women in the New Testament?

Explore 1 Corinthians 11:5-16 and 14:34. Ask how the culture of that day shaped Paul’s writing. Ask, were Paul’s instructions “timeless commandments”? How can we know the difference between “timeless commandments” and “cultural adaptations”?

Offer Practical Handles

Some churches refuse to let women teach men and to pray in worship services. They believe women should keep silent. Yet these same churches ignore women having braided hair and wearing gold, pearls or expensive clothing.

Ask: Why do we pick some biblical instructions to follow but ignore other instructions? Why do we literally interpret some passages and overlook others?

Ask: “How do we separate a culturally-based instruction from a timeless commandment?”

Using the lesson’s material, ask members to list ways we can distinguish between “timeless commandments” and “cultural adaptations.” Ask: What are the benefits of accepting that neither male nor female has superiority in Christ? What are the dangers?

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information on Baptist women, the article, *Baptist Women: Separate Spheres*, by Carol Ann Vaughn is in Appendix C, page 24.



Submitting Mutually

Ephesians 5:21-25

Take-home Line

Submit mutually one to another.

Teacher's Goal

To identify ways that the Bible teaches mutual submission, not the lordship of the husband over the wife

Introduce the Lesson

Say: In 1998, the Southern Baptist Convention amended its 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* statement to include a controversial article on family.

The article remedied slightly the harm caused by the 1984 SBC resolution that gave men more worth because they were “first in creation” and devalued women because they were “first in the Edenic fall.” It acknowledged the idea of covenant commitment, contrasting the prevailing culture of divorce. It also underscored the biblical truth that “husband and wife are of equal worth before God.”

However, the statement “emphasized a hierarchical view of marriage, with the wife submissive to the husband,” according to lesson writer Marv Knox.

His conclusion is reinforced with two other ideas in the statement. First, it said the husband “has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.” Second, it said the wife is to serve “as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.”

The image here is of the husband as breadwinner and wife as homemaker.

No wonder this statement touched a nerve in society.

Examine the Biblical Witness

Write the words of Ephesians 5:21 on a large poster and place it before the group. Read it aloud.

Ask a member to read Ephesians 5:21-25.

Share with the members the lesson writer's observation: “Unfortunately, the SBC statement did not reference the first sentence of the passage: ‘Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ’ (v. 21).”

Ask: How does this set the context for all that follows.

The biblical concept of “mutual submission is mandated not by feelings but out of ultimate love for Christ,” wrote Knox.

Have members review other biblical teachings related to family. Note that Jesus emphasized family turned godward, not inward. Jesus spoke against the self-centered family (Mt 20:20-23) and for the outwardly focused family (Lk 11:27-28). Jesus understood that self-centered, inwardly focused families were dangerous and destructive. He knew that God's kingdom, ultimate love for Christ, came first.

Recall that numerous biblical references refer to women who worked outside the home: Hagar survived as a single mother (Gen 21:15-21); Jochebed worked for Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:8-9); and Lydia had an import-export business in dyeing purple cloth (Acts 16:14-15). Point out that Proverbs 31:10-31 describes a woman who engages in business.

Offer Practical Handles

Make four strip posters on which you list the following four practical handles for practicing mutual submission:

1. recuperate from sick stereotypes;
2. make sound decisions;
3. involve both mates in all aspects of family life; and
4. provide role models for our children.

Place the first poster on the focal wall and ask members to identify “sick stereotypes” that need to be eliminated. Ask: How does mutual submission help couples strengthen each other in marriage?

Place the second poster on the wall and ask members to identify examples of unusual decisions. Ask: How does mutual submission help couples make sound decisions?

Place the third poster on the wall and ask members to identify areas in

which both mates should be involved. Ask: How does mutual submission help involve mates in all aspects of family life?

Place the fourth poster on the wall and ask members to identify how mutual submission provides a role model for children.

Read the article on family in the new *Baptist Faith and Message*. Note the roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women.

Have members share their experiences with the family model of the wife as homemaker and husband as breadwinner. Ask if this model reflects the life experience of an older generation. Inquire if this model corresponds to most contemporary families.

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information, the article, *Seven Pro-Active Issues for Marriages*, by Bill Wilson is in Appendix D, page 25.



Leading Like Servants

Mark 10:35-45

Take-home Line

Leaders should lead like servants.

Teacher's Goal

To help members engage servant leadership by examining the life of Jesus

Introduce the Lesson

Webster's dictionary offers the following definitions of "lead" and "serve":

Lead: "to direct on a course or in a direction" or "to have charge of"

Serve: "to comply with the commands or demands of" or "to answer the needs of"

Ask: How does a person—a pastor, for example—manage the tensions inherent in a model of servant leadership?

Does it require a radical, or Christ-like, reconceptualization of what it means to lead?

Examine the Biblical Witness

Read Mark 10:35-45. Reread verses 43-44.

Lesson writer Bill Wilson wrote, "That radical notion ["whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all"] did not go down any easier with the disciples than it does with us."

Ask: What was the reaction in verse 41 when the other 10 disciples heard of James and John's power play? How do we react when we hear of power plays for special treatment and position?

Ask: Are your leaders—religious, civil and otherwise—slaves of all? If yes, how?

Read John 13:1-16. Reread verses 14-15.

Ask: What other activities, in addition to foot washing, might symbolize the servanthood and humility a leader should exhibit to followers? Consider the example of church leaders in Acts 6:1-6.

Have a volunteer read 1 Timothy 3:1-3. Focus on verse 2 and the word "hospitality." Then read Titus 1:8 and focus on the phrase "he must be hospitable." Point out that in the early church one of the marks for leadership was the practice of hospitality. Leaders were required to serve the needs of the poor and those who traveled.

Offer Practical Handles

Point out that Bill Wilson wrote, "Authentic leadership grows out of self-awareness and self-definition. Jesus himself modeled this when he spent 40 days in the wilderness defining himself and becoming clear about his own sense of call and place in God's kingdom."

Wilson then shared stories about Philip II, Teddy Roosevelt and Canute, pointing out how each tried to remain self-aware.

Ask members to think about their own positions of leadership. Ask: How do you strive to remain aware of your leadership calling? How does this awareness shape your sense of humility? How does it manifest itself in servanthood?

Wilson also wrote, "Servant leaders begin with a humility that grows out of a keen sense of God's omnipotence, sovereignty and providence. Servant leaders understand that all they are is a gift from God. They are to be used for God's glory and to advance his kingdom."

Though not specifically about servant leadership, the *Baptist Faith and Message* statement's article on stewardship indirectly addressed the obligations that come with gifts.

The article reads: "They [Christians] are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others."

Discuss how servant leadership reflects good stewardship.

Close with the Take-home Line

For more information on leadership, the article, *Of Shepherds and Sheep Dogs: Leadership Characteristics of Effective Pastors* by June McEwen is in Appendix E, page 26.



Appendix A

Ten Commandments and a Number of Views

By Robert Parham

The following article appeared in *The Orlando Sentinel* on Sunday, April 2, 2000. America is warring over the Ten Commandments. New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani accused U.S. Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton of “hostility toward America’s religious traditions.” In a fund-raising letter, the Republican mayor referred to “liberal judges” who “have banned the posting of even the Ten Commandments in our public schools.”

The Indiana House of Representatives and Senate overwhelmingly passed legislation permitting schools to display the Ten Commandments with other historical documents. The legislation, which was signed into law by Gov. Frank O’Bannon, is an attempt to circumvent a 1980 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that posting the Ten Commandments in public schools was unconstitutional.

The Kentucky Senate approved a similar resolution encouraging schools to post the Ten Commandments, although the House there has yet to act on it.

State legislatures have considered such bills in Colorado, Georgia, South Dakota, and here in Florida. The Florida bill, which is not given a strong chance of passage, would tell state courts that the state has the power to allow the posting of the Ten Commandments in public places.

Renewed interest in posting the Ten Commandments began in 1995, when the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit against Roy Moore, an Alabama county circuit judge who had a plaque of the Commandments above his right shoulder on his courtroom wall. The ACLU said Moore was violating the First Amendment.

As the war of words escalated, Alabama Governor Fob James threatened to call out the Alabama National Guard to protect the plaque. Although the case eventually was dismissed in a state court on a technicality, Moore’s defiance opened up another front in America’s cultural war over the separation of church and state.

School boards debated the issue. Conservative Christian organizations profiled Moore on the covers of their publications. In March 1997, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution supporting the display of the Ten Commandments in courthouses.

But not until June 1999 did the effort explode onto the national agenda.

The Republican-controlled U.S. House of Representatives voted 248 to 180 that the Ten Commandments could be displayed in public schools and other public buildings. The rationale for supporting the House measure was the school killings at Columbine High School in Colorado. Bill sponsor, Rep. Robert B. Aderholt, R-Ala., said that posting the Ten Commandments “is one step that states can take to promote morality and work toward an end of children killing children.”

The legislation, however never has passed the Senate and almost certainly would be vetoed by President Clinton.

Some religious conservatives began asking in rallies: If the Ten Commandments had been posted in Columbine High School, would the two teenage gunmen have acted so callously?

Preacher Wiley Drake said, “We’ve tried metal detectors and everything else, maybe we ought to try the Ten Commandments.”

Drake, the fundamentalist pastor who instigated the Southern Baptist Convention’s boycott of Disney, began Americans United for Unity of Church and State. The group’s first goal was to get the Ten Commandments displayed in schools, although he acknowledged the Commandments were not posted in his own church or other supportive churches he knew.

Late in 1999, the Family Research Council launched its “Hang Ten” campaign, insisting a nationwide movement for the Ten Commandments was emerging. The council recently boasted 750,000 Ten Commandments book covers had been distributed.

Posting the Ten Commandments is the conservative religion’s latest effort to re-establish the Judeo-Christian faith in the public square.

It has long argued the removal of prayer from public schools in the 1960s led to moral decay and restoring prayer would lead to moral recovery for the nation.

A counter movement to Hang Ten also has emerged, including civil libertarians and religious liberty advocates.

Leading the legal battle has been the ACLU, which has filed lawsuits challenging the posting of the Ten Commandments in Alabama, Kentucky and Kansas, arguing that the U.S. Constitution prohibits government from

favoring a religious viewpoint.

Americans United for the Separation of Church and State called Hang Ten a “bad idea” and opposed the movement for a number of reasons: The U.S. Constitution mandates the separation of church and state; different faith groups have different versions of the Ten Commandments; and it alleged that special-interest groups are exploiting a religious symbol for political gain.

Bob Lockhart, a retired Baptist pastor in Corbin, Kentucky, said, “You’ve got this mystical idea you can hang the Commandments on the wall and people will start behaving. That’s ridiculous. If that worked so good, why don’t they hang them in their churches and quit fighting.”

At best, however, opponents to Hang Ten occupy the more vulnerable ground, politically.

Public opinion favors display of the Commandments. A June 1999 Gallup Poll of roughly 1,000 adults with a margin error of 3 percent found that 74 percent of Americans supported displaying the Commandments, compared with 24 percent who opposed it.

More importantly, moral rhetoric works against opponents to Hang Ten.

The issue is framed in terms of a false choice: One is either for the Ten Commandments or against them. To oppose posting the Ten Commandments is to appear to be against high moral standards and even God.

Frank Flinn, a First Amendment expert who teaches at Washington University in St. Louis, said, “If I tell you, ‘No, the Ten Commandments don’t belong in a courtroom or in a classroom,’ then automatically I look like I’m for murder and fornication and theft.”

Thoughtful Christian leaders face a knotty dilemma. On one hand, ministers advocate obedience to the Ten Commandments, as evidenced in the upsurge in sermon series on them. They know moral education is best done by churches, not by public schools or government entities. On the other hand, they prefer to avoid the negative reaction that results from opposing Hang Ten.

To cut through this dilemma, Christian leaders must reframe the issue away from the false either/or framework to a constructive both/and approach.

For example, they could stress both their commitment to the Ten Commandments and their obedience to them.

They also could state both their support for the moral standard expressed in the Commandments and their belief that they should first be posted in churches to test their power to shape internal church behavior.

After all, until Christians more closely conform their behavior to the Commandments, why should we expect a plaque on a school wall would change the behaviors of others.

Robert Parham is executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics.

Appendix B

Celtic Evangelism

By Robert Parham

Much Christian debate is dominated by false choices. One is either pro-family or pro-women. Christians support either school prayer or secularism. Believers embrace either creationism or science.

Another example arose in response to my column on the widespread negative national attention to the Southern Baptist Convention. I said the SBC's targeting of Jews, Hindus, Catholics and residents of Chicago resulted from its crusading theology rooted in a flawed view of history known as the "trail of blood."

Friendly critics and others objected to my opinion editorial. They asserted what the SBC is doing with target-evangelism is acceptable, even biblically mandated. They said: one either supports target-evangelism or opposes evangelism.

From my vantage point, these critics offered a false choice. My opposition to target-evangelism is grounded in the belief that it violates the Golden Rule. It does not treat others as we want to be treated. It is disrespectful, avoids authentic relationships and verges on spiritual escapism.

Nevertheless, mainstream Baptists need both to follow the Golden Rule and to walk visibly on the evangelism front.

A fresh source for reflection on evangelism is found in George G. Hunter's *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West . . . Again*.

Hunter begins with the assessment that Western culture is increasingly secular. A growing number of Westerners have no Christian memory and do not know what Christians are talking about. "Many Western church leaders are in denial; they plan and do church as though next year will be 1957," he writes.

The model of Celtic Christianity offers Western church leaders a way forward into the 21st century. Celtic Christianity stands in contrast with the early church's mission to "Romanize" and "Christianize" other peoples. Early Christians, Protestant reformers and 20th century mission leaders

believed barbarians first must be civilized before they could be christianized.

Celtic Christianity had five features: First, Celtic Christians evangelized in teams who settled with a people, identifying with them and fostering friendships. Second, these monastic communities lived with depth and compassion. Third, the Celts engaged in imaginative prayer. Fourth, they practiced hospitality. Fifth, Celtic Christians focused on the nonbeliever's experience.

According to Hunter, Romans and Celts had different models of evangelism:

Roman Model: Present the Message, Call for Decision, Welcome into Fellowship

Celtic Model: Establish Fellowship, Engage in Ministry and Conversation, Invite Belief and Commitment

Another difference involves communications. The Roman way was left-brained. It was propositions, concepts, apologetics and theological abstractions. The Celtic way was right-brained. It was imaginative, intuitive and emotional. It was music, poetry and storytelling.

Much of Western Christianity's evangelism is one-on-one. Sometimes it is confrontational evangelism or public-preaching crusade.

Unlike the Celtic approach, we offer words more than works, superficial relationships more than deep friendships and our cultural lifestyle more than the Christian lifestyle. We emphasize transcendence more than the presence of God. We separate ourselves from nature instead of valuing it. We stress total depravity more than goodness in the human character.

Hunter's highly readable book will cause brainstorms and fill in gaps in church history. To those who reject target evangelism, it will also offer handles for rethinking and engaging in postmodern evangelism.

Robert Parham directs the Baptist Center for Ethics.

To order Hunter's book, call BCE at 1-800-469-4223 or visit Recommended Reading under Curricula at <http://www.ethicsdaily.com>.

Appendix C

Baptist Women: Separate Spheres

By Carol Ann Vaughn

The first great wave of Baptist women mission volunteers coincided with the first American movement for women's rights, in the 1840s. At that time mainstream American religion prescribed the role of "domestic evangelists" for women. Their ministry was to occur in the private "sphere" of the home, "separate" from men.

As Baptists competed with Methodists and Disciples of Christ for members, social roles and gender stereotypes for both women and men divided the denomination.

Southern Baptists seceded from the national convention in 1845 over slavery. When one of the Southern Baptist Convention's first missionaries spoke in 1851, the all-male convention voted to suspend its business before hearing from a woman. At that time many Southern Baptist men believed women's mental abilities inferior to men's, and they advocated corporal punishment of wives.

In 1885, Arkansas sent two female messengers to the SBC. Male messengers voted 202 to 112 not to seat the women, fearing more women would follow. The majority changed the SBC constitution to read "brethren" rather than "messengers." The minority 112 men continued, in varying degrees, to support women's representation, shared decision-making responsibilities, and the spread of the Gospel by any means.

In 1888, white women leaders formed a missions auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention. The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) was led by, among others, the talented Annie Armstrong and Fannie Heck. Armstrong worked closely with leaders of the Woman's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, which emerged when freed slaves left Southern Baptist churches after the Civil War.

Both the WMU and the Woman's Auxiliary addressed various gender-related issues within their respective conventions. The WMU eventually became one of the most effective mission agencies in Protestant history, making it an attractive target to other interests later.

WMU named its largest missions offering in honor of Lottie Moon, who noted that women missionaries followed her to China seeking the "free opportunity to do the largest possible work" for God's kingdom. Congregationalist missionary women criticized Moon for demanding equal voting rights in mission meetings and decision-making.

Women's suffrage became the issue of the second American women's movement at the turn of the 20th century. Significantly for Baptists, this wave of Feminism in America coincided with the rise of 20th-century Fundamentalism.

As Baptists wrangled over Fundamentalism-Modernism, debates over the roles of women often took center stage.

Carol Ann Vaughn, Ph.D., is director of the Christian Women's Leadership Center at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Vaughn received her doctorate from Auburn University, where she specialized in women and religion.

Appendix D

Seven Pro-Active Issues for Marriages

By Bill Wilson

At BCE's recent conference dealing with family concerns, I had the opportunity to be taught and challenged by some of the best. — Bill Wilson

Jim Hightower works on the staff at First Baptist Church, Huntsville, Ala. He addressed seven areas of concern for every marriage.

1. Communication. “Speaking the truth in love” is the model that is too often not descriptive of how couples talk to one another. Learning how to express feelings and how to listen is primary for a healthy marriage.

2. The “You’ve Got To Be Different” Syndrome. Most spouses have a hard time allowing the other to be who they are. Most of us spend great energy trying to change our spouse into who we think they should be.

3. The “I’m not in Love with You Anymore” Problem. Hightower suggests that our preoccupation with how happy our spouse can make us overlooks the true nature of love. Real love begins when the romance fades and we must decide to love our spouse.

4. Responsibility. Too often marriages get off track when no one takes responsibility for what is or is not happening in the relationship. A good question to ask: Who is tending to our marriage?

5. Money. In marriage, money represents power. In 80 percent of divorces, finances are cited as a cause for the break-up. Money is about empowerment, control and respect. Ask yourself, “Who writes the checks, who carries the checkbook, how do we share the money/power?”

6. Relatives. Every family must establish boundaries and policies regarding the extended family. How enmeshed are you with your family of origin? How two people establish a home independent from, yet related to, the extended family is an important and complicated task.

7. Sex. While sex gets the lion’s share of our attention when discussing problems in marriages, Hightower suggests that it is more likely to be a

gauge of the relationship as a whole. When problems in other areas are addressed and resolved, the sexual relationship will often improve correspondingly.

Every marriage deals with these and other concerns. As God’s people who are decidedly pro-family, we want to minister to these needs and others in His spirit of love and compassion. That is an important part of who we are and who we will be in the coming days.

Bill Wilson is pastor of First Baptist Church, Waynesboro, Va. and a member of BCE’s board of director

Appendix E

Of Shepherd and Sheep Dogs:

Leadership Characteristics of Effective Pastors

By June McEwen

The girls and boys listened intently to the description of Jesus as shepherd. The pastor described the challenge for the shepherd to keep all the sheep safe and together. One lively five-year-old boy exclaimed, “If I was Jesus, I’d get me a sheep dog!”

Perhaps that is what we all strive to be, sheep dogs for the shepherd. But what are characteristics of effective sheep dogs and shepherds, for modern congregations? Effective pastoral leadership depends on the skills and abilities of the pastor and needs of the congregation. The degree of success depends on a good match of the church’s members and the church staff.

James MacGregor Burns in his book, *Leadership*, speaks of leaders who use transactions: “I’ll do this for you if you do that for me.” Burns contrasts this style with transforming leadership.

A transforming leader is one who leads by raising followers to higher levels of morality and motivation in pursuit of common goals.

“Transforming leadership...raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both leader and led, and thus it has transforming effects on both.”

We have all heard of the caring, people-centered, self-sacrificing pastor who is revered and loved by the congregation for these qualities. Often this pastor is oblivious to administrative and organizational demands. This person often must be reminded to cash the salary check or even gently required to give the check to the family—not to the first needy person who asks for help!

We also admire the pastor who excels in the pulpit often at the expense of pastoral care duties. Many congregations are willing to find other staff members to visit, counsel and administer in order to ensure strong, effective pulpit work.

There are energetic, innovative, creative pastors with whom the congregation can do rebuilding, outreach and evangelism. They can be

seen on all fronts: shaping the youth programs, helping with the music ministry, leading the church committees into action, proposing building programs, and getting lay people involved in ministry.

Sometimes a church responds to a pastor who leads in applying the gospel to social problems. This kind of leader inspires the people to take stands on controversial issues and to call their fellow Christians to confront the gospel in its basic applications. Here the transformation of the people is clearly seen as they rise to be better as a group than they would be as individuals.

Today we are seeing a consensus leadership which patiently works with the church in lay-lead small groups. These groups may be special interest groups created to meet specific needs, such as parenting, divorce support, drug rehabilitation, healthy lifestyles, and spiritual development.

In some churches, this leader will quietly guide church committees into spiritual and material guidance for the entire congregation. Regardless of the pastor’s emphasis, effective leaders in every pastoral role have some characteristics. These include spiritual maturity, commitment and dedication, willingness to listen, to hear and to accept advice, proper humility and self-esteem, and the ability to provide a vision for the congregation. These are modeled by the great shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ.

There are also behaviors and attitudes which must be avoided by leaders. Among these are the temptations of power and an inclination to manipulate.

The pastor who demonstrates effective leadership with Christian integrity will avoid an inflated ego and self-centeredness. Leaders sometimes struggle against seeing the activities of the church as expressions of personal gain and personal glory. It is essential that the pastor strive against confusing the role of servant with savior.

Hardworking pastors often succumb to burnout. These crises can be the result of overestimating one’s own authority and role, by the inability to admit humanity and vulnerability, and refusing to find support and counsel when it is needed.

The balanced pastor has a sense of call and mission, and has come to a clear understanding of who he/she is, by knowing what kind of gifts are brought to bear in the work of the pastor/leader.

There is a temptation in our culture to measure success in quantitative terms: number of members, amounts in the budget, buildings on the campus, and programs operated. Perhaps a corrective to this material measurement would be to apply the words from the prophet Isaiah, which Jesus proclaimed at the beginning of his ministry:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release
to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*

(Luke 4:18-19 NRSV)

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