



Volume 12, Number 10

For the months of June and July, 2014

The Towers

of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

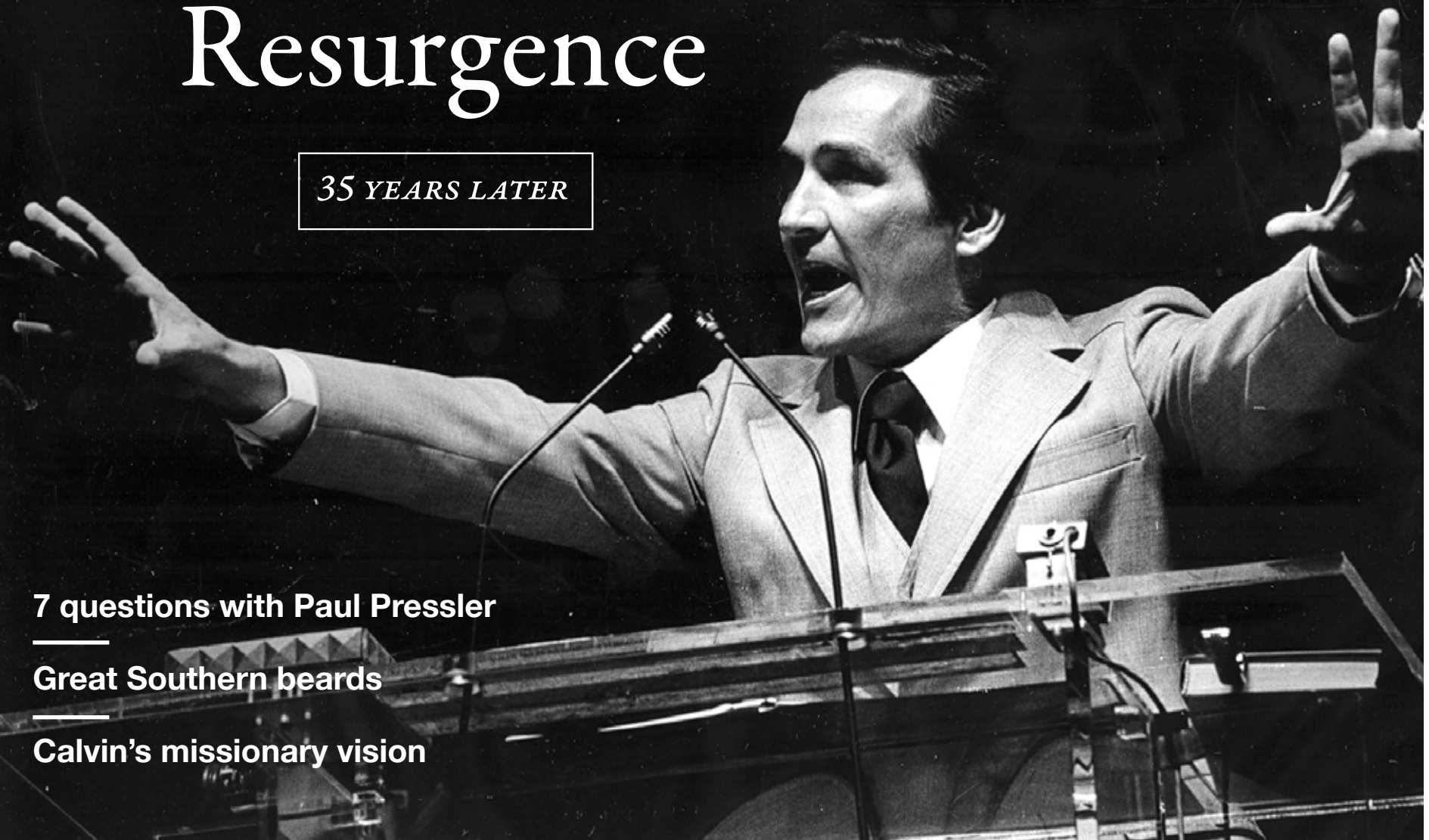
THE Conservative Resurgence

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7 questions with Paul Pressler

Great Southern beards

Calvin's missionary vision





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POSTMASTER

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12 A timeline of the presidential elections during the Conservative Resurgence

Thirty-five years after the beginning of the Conservative Resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Towers team presents a bird's-eye-view of the whole movement (so far).



From the editor:

Most of us know the story well: not too long ago, the Southern Baptist Convention wasn't as peaceful as the one we know today.

Many of the men and women in the convention's leadership at both national and state levels adopted

liberal views of the Scriptures — chiefly, denying of the doctrine of inerrancy. And, eventually, grassroots Southern Baptists rallied in support of a plan — led by layman Paul Pressler, theologian Paige Patterson and pastor Adrian Rogers — to reform the convention.

Conservatives needed to elect conservative presidents, who, through appointive authority, could affect the leadership of Southern Baptist entities, thereby aligning the Southern Baptist leadership with Southern Baptist

people. And, 35 years ago this June, Rogers became the first of these conservative presidents, marking the beginning of the Conservative Resurgence.

In this issue of *Towers* — the last of the 2013-2014 academic year — we look both at the movement's beginning and toward its future. Inside, Pressler answers questions about the early days of the resurgence and R. Albert Mohler Jr. explains why the Conservative Resurgence is a reformation that must continue.

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Calvin on mission(s)

Southern Seminary professor Michael A.G. Haykin discusses his new book, *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin's Missional Vision and Legacy*.

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7 questions with Paul Pressler about the Conservative Resurgence

The strategists of the SBC conservative movement talks about his experiences.

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Mohler on the CR

R. Albert Mohler Jr. says the Conservative Resurgence bought the SBC an opportunity to continue reforming.

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'Legendary' prof retires after teaching 35 years

This June-July Southern Story features Thomas J. Nettles, who this semester retires following a significant career.

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Great Southern beards

Learn how to choose facial decor from some of Southern's most famous beard-wearers.

Our mission is to use our time, resources and talents to tell the Southern story in an accurate, timely and creative manner to the glory of God.

Newslog



Mohler: Christian ministry is ‘breathtakingly uncomplicated’: ministers must open their mouths

By Aaron Cline Hanbury

God calls Christian ministers to open their mouths so that others can “hear his voice, believe and be saved,” president R. Albert Mohler Jr. told the 2014 graduates of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Two hundred fifty-five students received degrees — masters’ and doctorates — during commencement exercises on the seminary lawn, May 16, 2014. A week earlier, May 9, 107 students received degrees — certificates and bachelors’ — from Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary.

In an address from the Acts 10 titled, “So Peter Opened His Mouth’ — The Preacher’s Calling Reduced to Five Powerful Words,” Mohler drew from verse 34, where the text records “So Peter opened his mouth,” suggesting that these words encapsulate “the essential act of preaching” in Peter’s five words.

“The Christian ministry requires courage, and we can

see even more courage required in the near future,” he said. “There may well be a higher price exacted for opening our mouths. But God has called us to open our mouths so that others can hear his voice, believe, and be saved — so that his church will be fed and taught, and be matured.

“So, dear preacher, go ye into all the world, and open your mouth.”

Also at graduation, Mohler presented the annual Findley B. and Louvenia Edge Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence to Robert L. Plummer, who is professor of New Testament interpretation at the seminary.

Mohler’s entire address is available in audio and video at the SBTS Resources page, www.sbts.edu/resources. A complete manuscript of the address, “So Peter Opened His Mouth’ — The Preacher’s Calling Reduced to Five Powerful Words,” is available at www.albertmohler.com.

SWI offers fall courses, hosts Family Life Conference

By SBTS Communications

This fall, Seminary Wives Institute at Southern Seminary will offer seminary wives a full set of courses, beginning Aug. 28, 2014, in addition to a Family Life Conference, Sept. 12-13.

Seminary Wives Institute, a semester-by-semester program for seminary wives who desire to receive further ministry training from seminary professors and faculty wives, began in 1997. Its purpose is to train women for ministry alongside their husbands through courses in areas such as theology, spiritual disciplines and church history.

Available courses for the fall include discipleship training, taught by various instructors; Old and New Testament surveys; biblical parenting; introduction to biblical interpretation; Ephesians; and mentoring. Mary Mohler, wife of Southern Seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr., will lead a course about biblical femininity. And she will also help Gregory A. Wills, dean of the School of Theology, lead a course about the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Family Life Conference is required for all SWI participants and their husbands. Seminary professor Hershael York and his wife, Tanya, will lead the conference, which costs \$10 per couple.

Course registration is now open. Returning students should register through Moodle; new students through the SWI Web page. More information, including a detailed list of course descriptions with a course calendar through 2017, is available online at sbts.edu/women/seminary-wives-institute.



Boyce College professor Owen Strachan appointed to lead Henry Institute

By RuthAnne Irvin

Owen Strachan will lead the Carl F.H. Henry Institute for Evangelical Engagement, officials of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary announced last month.

“Owen Strachan is one of the finest young scholars and leaders serving the church today,” said Southern Seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. “He is also a veteran observer of the culture and a faithful theologian of the church. That is a powerful combination, and that explains why Owen Strachan is now the right leader for the Henry Institute. I look forward to seeing what Owen will do with this strategic platform and research center. Carl Henry would be very proud of this appointment.”

The Henry Institute, which began in 1998, takes its name in honor of the life and work of Carl F. H. Henry, who is widely regarded as the most important 20th century theologian.

The institute is “a think tank, an intellectual gathering place sympathetic to the plight of modern evangelicalism and interested in the renewal of the evangel-

ical movement through biblical doctrine anchored in confessional faith,” said Strachan, assistant professor of Christian theology and church history. The mission of the institute is to “equip modern Christians to understand their times and engage them from a historically attuned and theologically informed perspective,” according to Strachan.

Strachan said he plans to feature materials and opportunities that reflect the institute’s mission to produce “theological resources on a wide range of questions in order to help churches engage the culture.”

One of the initiatives sponsored by the Henry Institute is the Commonweal Project. The next event hosted by the Commonweal Project is Sept. 26, 2014. The project plans to host its first conference, Thrive - The Hard Work of Human Flourishing. Speakers will cover topics on faith, work and human flourishing.

More information about the Henry Institute is available at henryinstitute.org.



Strachan named president of CBMW, Southern student named executive director

By SBTS Communications

Boyce College professor Owen Strachan will become the new president of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, according to a news release from the organization last month. A few days later, the council named Southern Seminary student Grant Castleberry as the executive director, replacing Strachan.

Strachan, assistant professor of Christian theology and church history at Southern Seminary’s undergraduate school, told Baptist Press that CBMW will in the days ahead be positive and transformation-driven as it confronts distortions of God’s plan for gender and sexuality.

Strachan succeeds Ligon Duncan, chancellor of Reformed Theological Seminary, as president. Strachan served CBMW since 2012 as the executive director. He led the website relaunch and helped lead CBMW into its current growth and success. The new CBMW website increased in traffic tenfold, the council

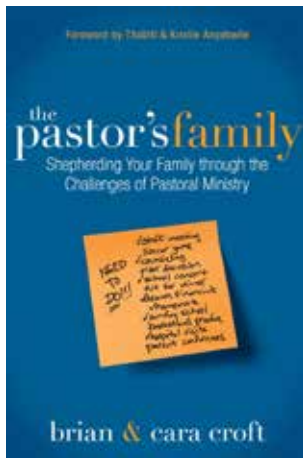
hosted its largest event ever in April and giving doubled between 2012 and 2013, according to a CBMW news release.

Castleberry, a master of divinity student at Southern Seminary, previously edited CBMW’s men’s blog, “Manual,” and then earlier this year transitioned to the council’s conference director for the 2014 CBMW national conference in conjunction with Together for the Gospel. He is married to GraceAnna and they have two young girls. He will assume the executive director role this summer.

Council members include Duncan; Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary; and Dorothy Patterson, wife of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson.

More information about CBMW is available online at cbmw.org.

Book Reviews



(Zondervan 2013, \$14.99)

The Pastor's Family: Shepherding Your Family through the Challenges of Pastoral Ministry

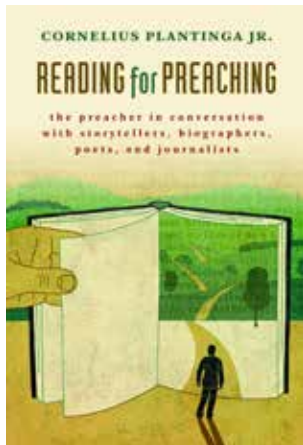
Brian and Cara Croft Review by RuthAnne Irvin

Ministry is a family job, and how to thrive in difficult ministry situations is often overlooked, according to Brian Croft in his recent book, *The Pastor's Family: Shepherding Your Family through the Challenges of Pastoral Ministry*.

With 10-plus years of ministry successes and failures, Croft and his wife, Cara, guide readers through a biblical perspective on the pastor's family and how to not just survive but thrive through the hardships and joys of ministry.

The Crofts cover the topics of family, children, spiritual disciplines in the home, how to manage time and other pertinent topics. Each chapter includes discussion questions for both husband and wife for further discussion.

The Pastor's Family should serve and encourage pastors and their wives.



(Eerdmans 2013, \$14)

Reading for Preaching: The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists

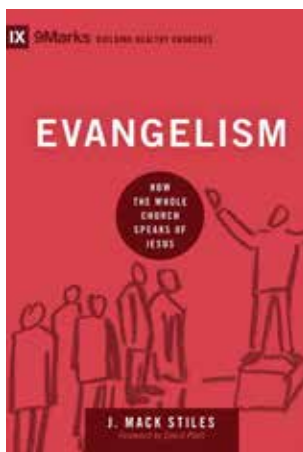
Cornelius Plantinga Jr. Review by Matt Damico

Why should preachers read? Cornelius Plantinga Jr. argues that “great writers know the road to the human heart and ... to the preacher, knowledge of what stirs human hearts is golden.”

Plantinga discourages preachers from reading at the expense of their devotion to “our community's book,” but he is confident that “a program of general reading is very likely to improve us in excellent ways.”

Those ways include reading for illustrations, for rhetoric and clarity, for broader wisdom and insight into both the depths of Scripture and the breadth of human life.

Reading for Preaching is fun and brief, ensuring that it does not impede the reading program that you will assuredly want to begin after putting this book down.



(Crossway 2014, \$14.99)

Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus

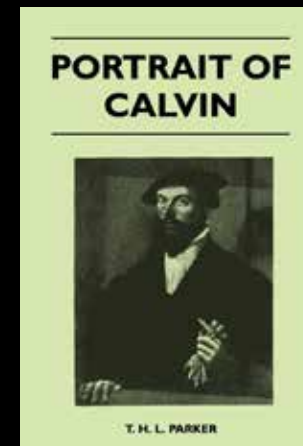
J. Mack Stiles Review by RuthAnne Irvin

“Evangelism,” writes Mack Stiles in his new book, *Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus*, is “teaching the gospel with the aim to persuade.”

In each of his five chapters, Stiles addresses areas of evangelism that are often misunderstood, like alter calls, the culture of evangelism in the church, connecting church and a culture of evangelism, intentional evangelists in a culture of evangelism and actually sharing our faith.

He describes what a “culture of evangelism” looks like, giving attributes like a culture motivated by love for Jesus and his gospel, a culture that is confident in the gospel, a culture that sees people clearly and several more distinctive marks of evangelism.

Stiles writes with the gospel as his focus and a desire for the local church and her members to yearn for a culture of evangelism that rightly handles Scripture and the command to go into the world and make disciples.



A Portrait Of Calvin

by T. H. L. Parker

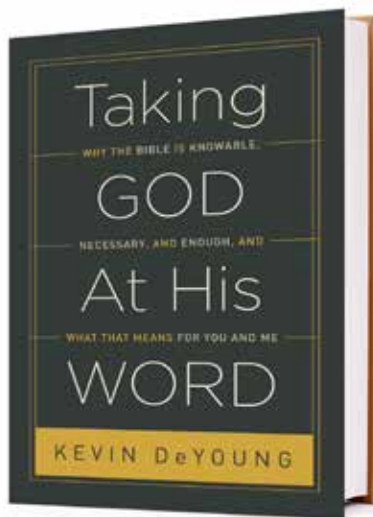
(Herron Press 2010, \$33.45)

“I think the best avenue into Calvinism is an older one by T.H.L. Parker called A Portrait of Calvin. It’s about 120 pages. It’s an excellent summary by a man who spent his lifetime studying Calvin, so he knew Calvin very well. He’s able to summarize in a very brief compass these major features of Calvin’s life and thought. It really is a very fine little study of Calvin.”

Michael A.G. Haykin

professor of church history and biblical spirituality; director of The Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies





Taking God at His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me

Kevin DeYoung

Review by Matt Damico

For professing Christians, the inspired writings of Scripture stand as the final authority for faith, practice and everything else, including how they view the Scriptures themselves.

Kevin DeYoung's new book, *Taking God at His Word*, aims to help readers understand "what the Bible says about the Bible," and to articulate "a doctrine of Scrip-

ture derived from Scripture."

Some may not appreciate the circularity of such an approach, but, anticipating that response, DeYoung writes, "You can't establish the supreme authority of your supreme authority by going to some other lesser authority."

The book surveys four attributes of Scripture — its sufficiency, clarity, authority and necessity — in addition to a chapter covering inspiration and a chapter about Jesus' view of Scripture. In that chapter, DeYoung concludes that "it is impossible to revere the Scriptures more deeply or affirm them more completely than Jesus did," and that his people should "believe about the Scriptures whatever

Jesus believed about the Scriptures."

Taking God at His Word ends with an exhortation for readers to read their Bible and not depart from its teachings, since "the goal of revelation is not information only, but affection, worship, and obedience," he writes. There's also an appendix with 30 book recommendations on different aspects of the doctrine of Scripture.

DeYoung's book serves as an accessible — with fewer than 140 pages — and faithful introduction to the doctrine of Scripture. Pastors would do well to keep a few copies on hand to help their people grasp what the Bible says about itself.

(Crossway 2014, \$17.99)

To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin's Missional Vision and Legacy

Michael A.G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson Sr.

Review by Matt Damico

When people play the name-association game, one person says a name, and the other says the first thing that comes to mind about that person. When people hear the name "John Calvin," you could probably guess some of the things that come to mind: Calvinism, predestination, election, commentaries, Hobbes. One term you likely won't hear is "missions."

Haykin and Robinson make their case convincingly, because they use the very words of Calvin and those who stand in his tradition to display that their commitment to the sovereignty of God over all things, including salvation, is anything but a hindrance to the cause of missions.

Michael A.G. Haykin and C. Jeffrey Robinson Sr. hope to remedy this situation with their recent book, *To the Ends of the Earth: Calvin's Missional Vision and Legacy*.

Haykin and Robinson seek "to lay to

rest the charge that to be a Calvinist is to cease being missional." They set to accomplish this goal by, in the book's first half, looking at Calvin's exegesis, his doctrine of missions and his zeal that undergirded considerable missionary activity.

The first chapter examines Calvin's exegesis of texts that are "problematic" to Calvinistic doctrine, such as John 3:16, Ezekiel 18:23, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9 and others. Calvin's exegesis of these texts reveals his commitment to the two wills of God and his belief that there is a "vast chasm that separates our understanding of how God's will should operate and how God understands himself"

The book's second half addresses the

missionary impact and activity of some of Calvin's theological heirs: the Puritans, Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Pearce. These men, and the movements that they represent and influenced — like the modern missionary movement and

evangelicalism — are part of the tradition that goes back to the "Reformed fountainhead in the writings and labors of John Calvin."

In their chapter about the Puritans, Haykin and Robinson pay special attention to the missionary zeal of Calvinistic Baptists in London between the years 1646-1660, beginning with the second edition of the First London Confession of Faith and restoration of Charles II. The commitment of these Baptists to reach the lost is clear in that, "During those sixteen years," they write, "these Calvinistic Baptists planted over 120 churches throughout England, Wales, and Ireland, a few of which survive to this very day."

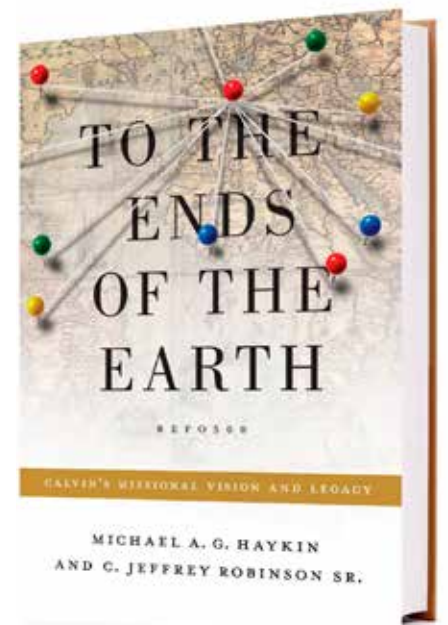
Haykin and Robinson make their case convincingly, because they use the very words of Calvin and those who stand in his tradition to display that their commitment to the sovereignty of God over all things, including salvation, is anything but a hindrance to the cause of missions. The authors make it abundantly clear that these men were committed to evangelism, church planting and missions directly as a result of their theological commitments. Establishing this, though, is not their only goal.

The goal of *To the Ends of the Earth*, in addition to quelling the myth that Calvinism and missions are mutually exclusive, "is

also a call to those who rejoice in their Calvinism to be sure that they are equally passionate about missions and evangelism."

Given this goal, this book would undoubtedly be a short and helpful tool for anyone curious about Calvin and his commitments to missions, but it could serve as a much needed corrective for any Calvinist whose doctrine does not drive action for the spread of the gospel.

(Crossway 2014, \$15.99)





The missionary zeal, legacy and influence of John Calvin

HAYKIN DISCUSSES NEW BOOK, *TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH*

By Matt Damico

EDITOR'S NOTE: In what follows, Michael A.G. Haykin, professor of church history and biblical spirituality at Southern Seminary, discusses his new book — co-written with freelance writer and alumnus C. Jeffrey Robinson Sr. — To the Ends of the Earth, with Towers book review editor Matt Damico. A brief review of the book appears on page 9.

MD: Why is this book necessary?

MAGH: I think a book like this is necessary because, in the last 100 years or so, there's been a perspective that Calvinism is a theological position that is inimical to evangelism, that people who are Calvinists aren't really interested in doing evangelism because of their conviction of the sovereignty of God in salvation. So, those whom God has elected to save he will save, therefore we don't need to do evangelism. And that's a charge that's been made a number of times; it's a frequent one that comes up, particularly in the SBC. And it just isn't true.

MD: What was Calvin's view of the Great Commission? Did he see it as fulfilled in the apostolic age?

MAGH: If you go through Calvin's perspective on the whole area of the expansion of the kingdom of God and missions, there is just no way that you can argue that he saw it as being fulfilled in the apostolic era. There is some indication that some of his successors in the 17th century would have argued that way. But there's no evidence that Calvin really argued that way. In fact, there's every evidence to the contrary.

You see it in Calvin's comments about the extension of the kingdom. You see it in Calvin's prayers, especially where he prays that the gospel will go to the ends of the earth. If he believed that was something already fulfilled, he certainly wouldn't be praying about it. And you also see it in the one opportunity he really had for significant cross-cultural mission to Brazil, and as soon as the opportunity presented itself, he and the

other elders in Geneva jumped at the chance.

So, in terms of his thinking, his praying and his activity, there is no indication that he felt that the Great Commission would already be fulfilled in his day.

MD: How did Calvin display his concern for the spread of the gospel? Was it just something he wrote about?

MAGH: There was one opportunity that presented itself where the French king had an opportunity to plant a colony off the coast of Brazil. The French king's thinking was more in terms of preventing the Portuguese and Spanish empires from dominating what becomes to be known as South America. But Calvin was offered the opportunity to send some pastors there with the possibility of having an actual mission station. He took that opportunity, and a couple of men were commissioned and sent. So that's one indication of Calvin's activities in missions.

Others would involve his actual correspondence. He was in correspondence with a significant number of princes in Europe. One of the things that is certainly different from us is that he was quite convicted that one of the ways to spread the gospel was through the conversion of political leaders. And so he would be in correspondence of a number of individuals: Queen Elizabeth I, for example, of England, and he hoped obviously through their embrace of the gospel that they would allow the gospel free course in their countries. None of these countries are democracies. Access was often dependent upon the good will of the ruler, and so as a strategy it makes sense.

Calvin was also carrying on an extensive correspondence with significant numbers of individuals throughout Europe. And one of the things he was doing with that, again, was seeking to use the medium of the letter as a vehicle of evangelism.

MD: You devote a chapter to the missionary zeal and activity of Jonathan Edwards. What's the relationship between John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards?

MAGH: Well, Edwards was a Calvinist, though he insisted that it wasn't because of what he read in Calvin, *per se*, but how much he knew of Calvin. Certainly we have access to a lot more of Calvin's writings than Edwards did. Edwards's Calvinistic convictions were not because of what he read in Calvin, but because of what he read in Scripture. Edwards is in that line of men who come down from Calvin and other reformed teachers at the time of the reformation.

MD: What relationship does Calvin have with the modern missionary movement?

MAGH: Well, all of the early wave — the first two generations of missionaries in the modern missionary movement, people like William Carey and Samuel Pearce, Henry Martin, Adoniram Judson — all of these men and women who went out, like Judson's wife, they all would've been Calvinistic. Again, how much they read of Calvin is a debated point. A lot of their Calvinism would've been learned in two ways: through listening to Calvinists preach and reading it for themselves in Scripture.

MD: How is it possible for someone to be a Calvinist and to believe in missions?

MAGH: Well on one level, we have no idea who the elect are, and it's not our duty to figure that out. Our responsibility very clearly laid out in Scripture is to evangelize, plant churches, take the gospel to the ends of the earth and so on. And, so one can do all of that with the deep conviction that God is using that ac-

tivity — using my preaching or my evangelism or my church planting or missions work — to convert those whom he has intended all along to save.

So, the doctrine of election is not at odds with the whole area of evangelism and missions. In fact, the doctrine of election gives confidence. If we don't have that confidence of God's sovereignty in salvation, it's feasible that we could spend all of our energy and effort and never see one convert. If it's all up to me and my energy and my persuasive skills and my techniques and my programs, etc., there's no guarantee that anyone will ever get converted. But, if the activities I'm involved in are the means by which God fulfills his purposes that he has planned from eternity past, then I go with the confidence that God will use my activity as part of that expansion of the kingdom. It gives great encouragement.

If it's all up to me and my energy and my persuasive skills and my techniques and my programs, etc., there's no guarantee that anyone will ever get converted. But, if the activities I'm involved in are the means by which God fulfills his purposes that he has planned from eternity past, then I go with the confidence that God will use my activity as part of that expansion of the kingdom.

MD: How would you describe Calvin's influence, and where does he fit among the other major figures in church history?

MAGH: Well, Calvin is one of those theologians that, if he had not lived or had not been converted, or if he had never gone to Geneva, I mean, the entire history of the western civilization would be completely different. There are very few figures that you can say that about, that the whole course of western history would be massively changed.

I mean, Calvin is an enormous influence in France. You have the struggle with French Calvinists, known as the Huguenots, all through the 16th and 17th centuries, and the determination of the French crown to destroy Calvin's French heirs, which he succeeds in doing in many respects. But, in doing so, he massively impoverishes France and destroys the French ability to exercise hegemony in western Europe. The 18th century was one long war between the French and the English. The English were at war with France every decade between 1690 and 1850. And one of the reasons why the English are able to win that war is because the French government's desire for a unified religious state has gutted the Calvinist church, but in doing so has gutted largely its middle class. Calvin appeals very directly to the middle class and by gutting the middle class, there was a whole

area of French life that never developed the way it did in Britain. And France didn't have the finances to ultimately win that war and it eventually ended up in the Revolution as we have in the 1780s. Many of those who left France, the French Calvinists, ended up in England. And many of the areas where they settled were the areas where the industrial revolution began. England is the first to undergo the industrial revolution, and in part that is because of these French Calvinists. And so that is a very key area.

Calvinism is the major shaper of Scotland. Presbyterianism becomes the state church in Scotland, and the English used the Scottish to expand their empire. For instance, in Canada, every university founded before 1900 was founded by a Scotsman, and most of them Scottish Calvinist Presbyterians.

In the United States, just to think about the United

States as it exists, the Puritans are Calvinists. And, like it or not, Puritanism is a major shaper of the American character, American understanding of its self-identity, etc. Again, had Calvin not existed, you wouldn't have had the Puritan movement in the shape that it was. And so America would be quite different.

So, if Calvinism had not existed — what we call Reformed theology or Calvinism — the Reformation probably would not have succeeded the way it did. Lutheranism wasn't radical enough, or it didn't have the revolutionary fervor (and I am using that in a religious sense and not a political sense), to carry the Reformation throughout the rest of Europe. But Calvinism did.

The Calvinists in the 16th century were very strongly religious radicals; they were determined that everything done in worship was going to be done according to Scripture. Whereas in Lutheranism, if something wasn't forbidden in the Word of God, then it was allowable. And that gives you a whole different perspective on worship.

Whether or not the Calvinists were right, they had enormous influence and a lot of it is traceable back to Calvin. So Calvin is enormously influential as a theologian. If you were to ask me five greatest theologians in history of the church after the New Testament, Augustine is obviously one, but Calvin would definitely be in that five. There's no way you could leave him out.

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A timeline of the presidential elections during the Conservative Resurgence



Adrian Rogers became the first in a series of conservative presidents.



1979 Houston, Tx.

11:30 p.m. June 11, 1979: Adrian Rogers prayed with his wife, Paige Patterson and Jerry Vines about whether or not to run for the SBC presidency, eventually he sensed “clear direction” to run. Later, he “won handily” over five other candidates.



1982 New Orleans, La.

James T. Draper Jr. wins the SBC presidency with a 56.97 percent vote in a runoff with former Southern Seminary president Duke K. McCall. Long-time pastor of First Baptist Church Dallas, Texas, W.A. Criswell, called Draper’s victory a miracle, “like the crossing of the Red Sea.” Moderates did not oppose Draper’s re-election the next year.



1980 St. Louis, Mo.

Bailey Smith wins election over five opponents, including the initially favored Richard Jackson. With Smith’s victory, and the traditional second, one-year term, conservatives extended the conservative presidencies for three years (opposed to two, if Rogers ran for reelection)

1981

February: Paige Patterson debates Cecil Sherman in North Carolina; **June:** Patterson debates Kenneth Chafin in Los Angeles, Calif.



1984 Kansas City, Mo.

Charles F. Stanley defeats Grady Cothen and continues conservative momentum. And, for the first time, moderate entity heads speak publicly against the conservative movement.



1985 Dallas, Tx.

June 11–13: A special 22-member Peace Committee — comprised of an equal number of leading conservatives and moderates — was commissioned to determine the sources of the controversy within the convention in order to recommend a resolution. The committee made a preliminary report in 1986 and a final report adopted in 1987.



1988 San Antonio, Tx.

Jerry Vines defeats inerrantist moderate — “the turnaround candidate” — Richard Jackson with a mere 50.53 percent of the vote. According to James C. Hefley’s account, “some moderates threw their ballot cards down in disgust. Others walked out of the hall with tears in their eyes.”

Hefley describes the 1988 convention the most “acrimonious” in SBC history, including a group of 200 protesters tearing a copy of a resolution standing in front of the Alamo.



1990 New Orleans, La.

Morris Chapman, in a drawn out, dramatic election, wins against Daniel Vestal by 57.68 percent. This represented the 12th straight victory for conservatives in the SBC presidency. And the last convention at which moderates ran a candidate.

Many moderates and liberals within the convention leave and form the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, signalling, in part, a withdrawal from the battles of the Southern Baptist Convention.

1986 Atlanta, Ga.

Adrian Rogers elected president again — with more than 40,000 messengers present — this time defeating Winfred Moore.



1987

The Peace Committee issues its widely anticipated report: While the report found some political causes for the SBC controversy, it found the primary cause of was theological, with significant diversity of views about the nature of Scripture, especially as defined in the Baptist Faith and Message.

By the end of 1987, every board, except for Southern Seminary, comprised of a clear conservative majority.

Sources

Information drawn from Southern Baptist Convention documents including Annuals and committee reports, as well as James C. Hefley’s Truth in Crisis series.

Seven questions with Paul Pressler about the Conservative Resurgence

Thirty-five years ago this June, Tennessee pastor Adrian Rogers became the first theologically conservative president of the Southern Baptist Convention as part of the effort now called the Conservative Resurgence. Here, *Towers* editor Aaron Cline Hanbury asks Judge Paul Pressler, who is one of a small group of men who planned, organized and helped carry out the Conservative Resurgence within the Southern Baptist Convention, about the election of Rogers as president of the convention, and about the conservative movement in general. Edited for clarity.



ONE

When did you begin thinking about the need for reform in the SBC?

I went to Philip Andover, a boy's prep school when I was 16. And the Baptist pastor there was very liberal, and his wife was from North Carolina — she came from a liberal group in North Carolina of Southern Baptists. And that's when I first realized there were problems. And I picked up little pieces like that, and then Ralph Elliot's book [*The Message of Genesis*] was a real eye-opener shocker to me.

TWO

What needed to happen in the convention from a process perspective in order to succeed?

I learned from Bill Powell, who was the editor of *Southern Baptist Journal*, of the way the convention works, with the president appointing the committee on committees, and the committee appoints the committee on nomi-

nation that nominates all the trustees. And, the way my mind works, I don't care how many resolutions you pass, if you don't have the power to carry out those resolutions, you don't accomplish anything. So my influence was to direct us not to pass resolutions, necessarily — that's fine and good, if you want to, but, instead, to elect officers who could get the right people in the right places to do things.

THREE

In 1979 in Houston, messengers at the convention elected Adrian Rogers as the first conservative in a series of conservatives. Why did the organizers of the movement choose Rogers to nominate?

We were ideologically bent, not candidate-bent. And so we went around and told people we could change by electing the right president. Then the night before the [1979 annual meeting in Houston] ... we talked, we prayed, we fellowshiped and then we discussed for an hour or so who the best candidate would be. And three names came to

the surface: Adrian Rogers, Bailey Smith and Jerry Vines. ... Adrian was the overwhelming choice. When I told him, he said, "That's good, but I'm not going to be nominated." ... So I went to bed Monday night thinking we didn't have a candidate. What happened after that is that Adrian Rogers ran into Mrs. Bertha Smith. ... She said, "Adrian, God's changing my mind: he's telling me you're to be elected as president of the convention tomorrow." Then Adrian went up to his hotel room and [his wife] Joyce was up there — and Joyce had been very opposed to his running. And she said, "Adrian, God's changing my mind. I think you're supposed to be nominated tomorrow." Well, that really shook him, because the two women he was closest to in the world — and the two who had been telling him not to run — had changed their minds. So he took the elevator down to walk around, and when he got to the first floor, coming from one direction was Paige Patterson coming from the other direction was Jerry Vines. And he said, "Men, we gotta talk." So they got back on the elevator and went in with Joyce.

They prayed the matter through, and Adrian decided to run. So I found out who I was voting for when I came down the morning of the election.

FOUR

Can you describe the 1979 election of Adrian Rogers?

My son, when he was 10 years old, developed a seizure condition. And he was having a particularly hard time [the morning of the election]. ... So I was completely preoccupied during the vote.

I need to tell you another story: about four times before the convention, I had this dream of God's people marching along Main St. in Houston with that white line in the center. We were marching to the convention hall, and we're singing "We're Marching to Zion." I told my wife Nancy about it; I had it at least four times. We had no idea it would have any significance. Then the day of the election, I heard the nominations. ... And there was confusion on the stage [because the registration secretary could not be found]. And then [presiding president Jimmy Allen] said, "Well, we have to do something until we find [the recorder]. Song leader, come lead us in a song." The song leader came and said, "Let's all stand and sing, 'We're Marching to Zion.'" And I burst out crying and dropped into my seat. I told Paige Patterson, who was next to me, "Adrian's won without a run-off. I've had a sign." And in five minutes, Adrian had won without a run-off.

It is unbelievable. ... But, I think sometimes when you're in a great deal of conflict, God gives you a sign that this is his and not yours.

FIVE

Why was the conservative movement worth the fight?

If we have no standard by which we judge things, then there's no solid basis of belief. And if I didn't believe the Bible was true, why should I believe Jesus was virgin born? Why should I believe he died a penal substitutionary death on the cross to pay for my sins? Why should I believe he's coming again? Why should I believe there's victory in Jesus if it's just somebody else's idea? The Bible is the basis of what I believe. And, therefore, if people come out of our schools and go into our churches teaching doubt, then we are not going to have conviction preached from the pulpit. The Episcopalians are dying, the Methodists are in bad shape and the Presbyterians are dissolving, and we'd be in the same place. But you preach the Word and God blesses. So that's why I wrote my book entitled *A Hill on Which to Die*, because I'm not going to die over women's ordination. ... It's not a primary issue; it's a secondary issue. But there are two primary issues as far as I'm concerned: one is the inerrancy of Scripture, and two is the blood atonement. And if you're right on those two issues, you're not going to be wrong on much else.

SIX

What were the respective roles of you and Paige Patterson in the Conservative Resurgence?

We just were friends. We didn't sit down and say, "You do this and I'll do that." The one time he told me what to do was when I went up to Waco, Texas, and had dinner with some students who had been saved from our youth group. ... Here were some young people I'd seen saved and their faith was being attacked at a school I was giving money to support. And so I called Paige and said, "We've got to do something." He said, "Well, let me pray about it." He called me back in a couple of days and said, "Alright, I'll join you and we'll do it together. But you have to go see eight or 10 people before to explain what's going on." And he gave me the names like Jerry Vines, Homer Lindsay Jr., Adrian Rogers, Jimmy Draper, Richard Jackson, Bailey Smith. So I took a trip around the country and I called these people and I said, "This is Paul Pressler from Houston, Texas. I'm worried about the convention. I think I know a way to solve it, if you'll give me one hour of your time." And everybody agreed.

SEVEN

What responsibility did the conservative movement leave the current generation of Southern Baptists?

Understand what the problem was and make sure that it is not repeated.

I am somewhat concerned about a lot of our fabulous young preachers who want to be so independent, but they don't understand or recognize the need to work together. ... Some of these wonderful young preachers who do their own thing and don't support the convention, don't like bureaucracy. Well, I don't like bureaucracy, either. But you've got to work together to do things a local church can't do. And so the other recommendation: I'd say don't be so conceited that you think can do it all yourself, and recognize that we must cooperate. And give up a little of your independence to be able to accomplish things together that are essential for the kingdom.



***Semper Reformanda* and the Southern Baptist Convention**

Mohler discusses the Conservative (on-going) Resurgence

By Aaron Cline Hanbury



Southern Baptists should view their convention's conservative movement of the late 20th century as a reformational movement, said R. Albert Mohler Jr. during a recent conversation about the Conservative Resurgence. And, like the Protestant Reformation, the conservative movement set a course for continuing reform.

Mohler grew up in an era when Southern Baptists were "basically conservative, unquestionably cooperative and evangelistic and missions-minded." And he attended a Southern Baptist college and eventually earned two degrees from Southern Seminary — the flagship Southern Baptist seminary.

Just before Mohler graduated from college, Memphis, Tenn., pastor Adrian Rogers became president of the Southern Baptist Convention, which signaled a shift in the denomination and served as an unofficial launching of a concentrated, organized conservative movement to reclaim the SBC's doctrinal purity.

On the surface, the conservative resurgence appeared concerned with mere intellectual differences of two opposing views of the culture. But, according to Mohler, the motive behind the movement was far deeper.

"The Great Commission was anime and cause and the great motivating issue for the thousands of Southern Baptists who showed up to vote was not just the inerrancy of Scripture," he said in a recent conversation about the movement of the 1970s and 1980s, "but it was the inerrancy of Scripture for the furtherance of the gospel. ... The purpose of this was not just to make sure we articulated all the right doctrines, but that we were driven by the right passions."

In seminary, as Mohler studied some of the various theological controversies in history of the church — such as the Nicene and pelagian controversies — he recognized a pattern into which this Southern Baptist controversy fit.

"This is the way truth is vindicated, this is the way error is exposed," he said. "And I felt like, 'Okay, I'm living in one of those very epics now.' That's what's happening. The truth is being vindicated, the false teaching is being exposed."

Still, Mohler realized that the need for renewal in the convention was "underestimated," even by conservative leaders. The problems, he said, were "infinitely greater than even the conservatives understood."

"By the time I graduated from Southern Seminary, it would have been impossible for someone who was neo-orthodox to have been elected to the faculty at Southern Seminary," he said. "They would have been far too conservative — neo-orthodoxy would have been far too conservative."

Usually, left-ward denominations continuing on that trajectory — as with mainline protestantism in the United States, which Mohler called an "unmitigated disaster." He emphasized that "unmoored from any kind of

creed or confession, and not to mention biblical authority, [denominations] simply shift further and further to the left."

But the Southern Baptist Convention, after longer than a decade of struggle, did turn around. And that nothing like it ever happened before. That turn-around, at least for Mohler, was essential for the future of the denomination.

"We wouldn't be where we are ... if the Southern Baptist Convention had not experienced the Conservative Resurgence," he said.

The resurgence, according to Mohler, was and is reformational movement, even as "necessary and as painful as was the Reformation in the 16th century." And, just as with the Protestant Reformation, the conservative movement represented more than a single moment in history.

"We owe a tremendous debt to a generation of courageous Southern Baptists who put their lives and ministries on the line for this Conservative Resurgence. ...they put themselves on the line, and we'll be forever grateful for them."

Rather, it aimed to ensure reform in the future, too.

"By an incredibly high price, we bought an opportunity to continue a reformation," he said.

Mohler continued: "It's never over. You buy an opportunity to continue it."

One of those continuing effects, Mohler said, is the growing popularity and acceptance of Calvinism with the denomination.

"I think the resurgence of Calvinism in the SBC is a logical product of the Conservative Resurgence," he said, "because once you make inerrancy of Scripture the issue, then people who take the Bible seriously will be led in the direction of affirming what they believe clearly to be revealed in Scripture concerning the sovereignty of God and how this relates to our salvation and the accomplishment of God's purposes and the fulfillment of God's promises."

"I'm not saying that all serious readers of Scripture get there, and not all inerrantists will get there. And I'm not saying that Calvinism now or at any point has characterized all of the Southern Baptist Convention, but it's

always been an important part," he said.

Mohler said further that the "Conservative Resurgence basically, in terms of buying an opportunity for a further reformation, opened the door for Calvinist resurgence as well."

He noted that the leaders of the Conservative Resurgence found friends in Calvinists, particularly in the area of biblical inerrancy — "the Calvinists were bold defenders and definers of biblical inerrancy," he said.

Still, Mohler acknowledged that Calvinism is a "tension point" in the Southern Baptist Convention. And he emphasized the need to approach the issue with "great sensitivity as a matter of stewardship and brotherly love and affection."

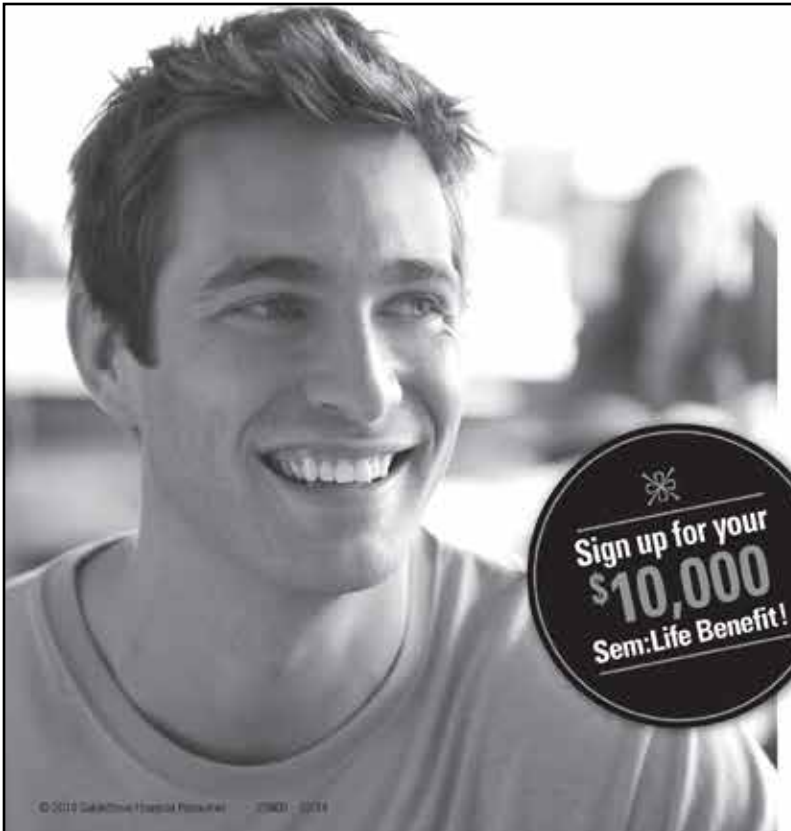
Mohler emphasized, too, that if current and fu-

ture generations want to preserve the denomination from another theological drift, they require "constant awareness" that culture constantly draws all truth claims into ambiguity.

"We're not paranoid," he said. "We're not insecure. But we are aware of the fact that opportunities for the loss of the faith — bit by bit, step by step, decision by decision — looms before us all the time. And that is very clear in the New Testament."

But even looking forward, Mohler recognized that Southern Baptists today can only continue the denominational reformation because of the price paid and opportunity bought during the conservative movement of the 1970s and 1980s.

"We owe a tremendous debt to a generation of courageous Southern Baptists who put their lives and ministries on the line for this Conservative Resurgence," he said. "People like Paige Patterson, Paul Pressler, Adrian Rogers, Jerry Vines, you can go down the long list. They put themselves on the line, and we'll be forever grateful for them."



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Pictures of the Conservative Resurgence and Southern Seminary

By Trey Moss



Southern Seminary's eighth president, Roy L. Honeycutt giving the seminary report at the 1983 Southern Baptist Convention in Pittsburgh. This annual meeting marked the fifth consecutive election of a conservative convention president.



August 28, 1984, Honeycutt preached a seminary convocation message titled, "To Your Tents, O' Israel." Honeycutt's sermon became a rallying cry for moderates and characterized conservatives as "Judaizers" while at the same time calling for unity.¹



Authorized during the 1985 convention, the Peace Committee was appointed with both moderates and conservatives. They met several times in 1986 to try to resolve the theological conflict within the convention and reported that three of the six convention seminaries (Southern Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) allowed liberalism to be taught on their campuses.



By 1990, it was clear that the tide had turned definitively in favor of the conservatives. It was during this trustees' meeting that conservative trustees gained a majority on the board and now had the ability to change the theological climate of the seminary. Here students in support of Honeycutt and the moderate faculty watch the proceedings.



Honeycutt speaks with reporters in Alumni Memorial Chapel after announcing his retirement in October 1992. Honeycutt's love for the seminary and his sense of timing prompted his unexpected resignation.² His resignation also signified a theological changing of the guard at Southern.



In the spring of 1993, the presidential search committee nominated R. Albert Mohler Jr. as the ninth president of Southern Seminary, signaling the seminary's theologically conservative renewal. Here, Mohler stands between Honeycutt on the left and Duke K. McCall, the seminary's seventh president, on the right.

ENDNOTES

¹ Roy L. Honeycutt, "To Your Tents, O Israel: A Biblical Call to Duty, Unity and Honor" (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 6. Video of sermon available here <http://hdl.handle.net/10392/2988>.

² "Honeycutt Steps Down from Presidency," *The Tie* (November/December 1992), 1.

‘Legendary’ historian, retires from Southern Seminary

SOUTHERN STORY: TOM NETTLES

By Jeff Robinson and James A. Smith Sr.

Thomas J. Nettles, professor of historical theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary since 1997, is retiring from full-time teaching after 38 years in the classroom.

Nettles’ teaching has involved “areas which I have thought are important and even critical for the health of Christianity and for the health of Baptist churches,” he said in a recent interview.

“I have sought to help students become better pastors by helping them to understand the critical truths that churches have been built upon in the past.”

Before joining the faculty at Southern nearly 17 years ago, Nettles spent 21 years at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Nettles’ students can attest that his classroom is a place of joy and song. A gifted singer, he often breaks spontaneously into a song or hymn.

He is renowned for a particular song, said Donald S. Whitney, now a fellow professor at Southern Seminary who was among Nettles’ students at Southwestern, recounting, “No matter how many classes you have had with Tom Nettles, you’ve never really had him as a professor until he has sung in class ‘Ya Got Trouble’ from ‘The Music Man,’ a musical in which he played the lead when he was in college.”

Whitney is but one of many for whom Nettles has served as a spiritual father during his decades in the classroom.

Nettles, however, never planned to be a seminary professor.

He attended Mississippi College, a Baptist school, and then moved on to Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Nettles entered seminary during a tumultuous time in the Southern Baptist Convention over the question of the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture. The Lord would eventually insert Nettles and a fellow Southwestern student, Russ Bush, into the front lines of the denominational battle.

During his second year as a master of divinity student, Nettles accepted the challenge of a moderate professor to defend biblical inerrancy in a class session. The experience was pivotal to his ministry future.

Nettles eventually completed a doctor of philosophy degree in historical theology, still at least partly convinced that his future lay in the pulpit of a local church.

But in 1976, Southwestern hired him to a teaching po-



sition in the history department. In 1980, Moody Press published the landmark study by Nettles and Bush on the historic Baptist view of Scripture, *Baptists and the Bible*. The book crystallized and strengthened the case for inerrancy as they showed how thoroughly Baptists had adhered to that fundamental doctrine in the past.

Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. said Nettles is a “legendary” Southern Baptist professor, citing his crucial role to the SBC’s Conservative Resurgence.

“When he and Russ Bush penned *Baptists and the Bible*, they put to rest the argument that Baptists had ever held historically to anything other than the total truthfulness and trustworthiness of the Word of God,” Mohler said.

“At decisive moments in Southern Baptist history,” Mohler said, “[Nettles] has stood for the faith of those who founded our Southern Baptist Convention, and he has been a winsome and deeply convictional advocate for those beliefs.”

Nettles also has written important books on Baptist ecclesiology, catechisms and the place of Calvinism in Baptist history.

“Tom Nettles is a formidable scholar,” said historian Gregory A. Wills, dean of Southern Seminary’s school of theology. “His *Baptists and the Bible*, co-authored with Russ Bush, and *By His Grace and for His Glory* have had wide influence and established him as a Baptist scholar of the front rank.” *By His Grace and for His Glory* argues exhaustively that Baptists are theological heirs of the Protestant Reformation

Wills also commended Nettles’ recent biographies of James P. Boyce and Charles Spurgeon as “remarkable achievements.”

“The breadth of his command of the historical documents of the church across 2,000 years has amazed me many times,” Wills said. “Most impressive, however, is the fact that his scholarship has always been in the service of the church’s gospel mission.”

Throughout his long career, Nettles emphasized, his wife, Margaret, provided — and provides — stability and warmth for their marriage and family.

“At every stage, she has been my partner, she has been my collaborator and she has been there person who has given evenness and stability to our lives,” he said. “And she’s just been a great wife.”

The Nettles have three grown children (Joe, Robert and Sara) and several grandchildren.

Describing Nettles as a “masterful classroom teacher,” Mohler said the full reach of his classroom “will never be known in this life, for there will be many people around the world who will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ because of his influence on the lives of those who will take the gospel to the nations.”

“I have always wanted what I’ve done to be serviceable to the church,” Nettles said. “I’ve wanted it to be something that can be taken by our students who are going into the pastoral ministry and be used for the glory of God and the clarity of the gospel and the good of their churches.”



Seen at Southern

Southern Seminary's second annual 1937 Project, April 26, sent students, their spouses and families to serve through various projects around the city of Louisville, Ky. The project is named after Louisville's Great Flood in 1937, when the seminary served the city by offering its campus as a refuge. This year's 1937 Project sent students to churches and ministries around the city, including Sojourn Community Church; Kids Against Hunger, Louisville; Scarlet Hope; and Jefferson Street Baptist Center and many other locations.

Photography by Emil Handke and Sarah Ayers.





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Announcements

Seminary Wives Institute

Registration for Seminary Wives Institute fall courses is now open for both returning and new students. Course descriptions as well as a list of courses through 2017 are available www.sbts.edu/women/seminary-wives-institute. After August 1, a childcare request form will be posted on the SWI Web page. Email SWI at swi@sbts.edu.

Health and Rec

More information on hours and fitness classes are available at sbts.edu/hrc, the front desk or call 897-4720.

- Aqua Alive M 8 - 8:15 p.m.; T/TR 5 - 5:45 p.m.
- Body Blitz M, W, F 7:15-8 a.m.
- Cardio Jamz F 9:15-10:15 a.m.
- Edge Martial Arts M, Tr 6 - 8 p.m. Sat. 9 - 11 a.m.
- Fast Feat T, TR 6:15-6:45 a.m.
- HIIT for men T, TR 9 - 9:45 a.m.
- HIIT T, TR 9 - 9:45 a.m.
- Mommy and Me M, W 10 - 11 a.m.
- Total Toning T, TR 4:45 - 5:45 p.m.
- Co-ed core foundry M, W 6 - 7 p.m.
- ZUMBA M 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

Seminary Clinic hours

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Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

More information and price listings are found on the clinic website, sbts.edu/clinic.

Free sewing class

The free sewing class led by Mrs. Barbara Gentry meets from 6 - 7:30 p.m., Mondays in Fuller Room 34. Sewing machines are provided at no cost. No experience is required, but women with experience may also participate. Knitting and crocheting lessons will also be offered. Mrs. Gentry leads the class assisted by Mrs. Donna Chancellor. For more information, call Mrs. Gentry locally at 423-8255.

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1	2 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	3 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
8	9 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	10 SBC annual meeting Baltimore, Md. Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
15	16 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	17 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
22	23 D3 Youth Conference Week 1 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	24 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
29	30 D3 Youth Conference Week 2 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
	D3 Youth Conference Week 2	1 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
6	7 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	8 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
13	14 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	15 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
20	21 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	22 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon
27	28 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	29 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon

JUNE 2014

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	5 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	6 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	7
11 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	12 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	13 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	14
18 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	19 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	20 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	21
25 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	26 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	27 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	28

JULY 2014

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	3 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	4 Independence Day Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	5
9 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	10 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	11 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	12
16 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	17 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	18 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	19
23 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	24 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	25 SBTS summer term ends Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	26
30 Childcare 9 a.m. - noon	31 Alumni Academy: Introduction to Global Missions Childcare 9 a.m. - noon		

Towers

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
2825 Lexington Road · Louisville, KY 40280

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Questions

WITH

Paige Patterson

President of Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary.

*Drawn from a previous interview.
Edited for brevity and clarity.*



-1-

Can you describe the culture of the SBC seminaries during the Conservative Resurgence?

Southern [Seminary] was orbiting around Pluto; it was pretty far out, of course, as was Southeastern. In fact, I would have to say, in all fairness, that Southern was not rotating around a planet nearly as far removed from reality as Southeastern was when I got [there]. For example, I went to the library and removed more than 350 volumes on not homosexuality pathologies or anything like that, but how to become involved in homosexuality. And that was just typical of many things we found that the average Southern Baptist, had he known he was supporting, would have quit.

-2-

Did you think that the seminaries could turn around?

I was the pessimist of the movement. Judge [Paul] Pressler was the optimist. People had asked Richard Land, “What’s it looking like?” And he would say, “Call Paul Pressler and ask him, and then call Paige Patterson and ask him. And get in between them because Pressler’s unduly optimistic and Patterson is unduly pessimistic.”

I began the effort because I didn’t want to have to tell my children and my grandchildren that I did not have the courage to do it and to stand for the truth. But I never believed we would actually succeed. Every denomination executive was against us both in the state conventions and in the national convention. And so when I looked at Southern and Southeastern and Midwestern, I doubted very seriously that we would ever see those turnaround.

-3-

Why does it matter that the seminaries turn from moderate to conservative?

I don’t think anything more noble can happen than for an institution to return to the faith of its founding fathers; and unfortunately that’s very rare. ... If an institution that is founded for the church, it is placed where it is placed for preparing pastors to go into churches and to build churches that honor God, then it cannot do that from a liberal perspective. Now granted, Southern Seminary may never have been nearly as liberal as Yale or Harvard or something like that, but, in fact, it was so liberal that it was turning out pastors for churches that did not win people to Christ and did not teach the biblical revelation. So sermons became lightweight sermons that were more inspirational, if anything, than textual and biblical.