



Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Louisiana

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Why I am...

Baptist!?!

Stagg-Tolbert Biblical Forum

October 4 - University Baptist Baton Rouge



Burt Burleson, Chaplain of Baylor will be the 2014 lecturer for the **Stagg-Tolbert Biblical Forum** to be held **October 4** at University Baptist Church in Baton Rouge.

*Registration begins at 9:30AM.
Program goes from 10AM-2PM. **Mark the Date!***

Books Galore at Bags of Hope



CBF-LA churches came through with hundreds of books to give to the throngs of kids and families of East Carroll Parish in addition to the school supplies and bookbags. Children of all ages left with armloads of books like these two pictured here. Improving literacy and education is a key community development goal. Thanks to the efforts of Mike Anderson, each student was also greeted by a group of Gideons from Oak Grove and offered a free Bible.



Many local volunteers, churches and businesses joined forces with CBF-LA churches to provide school supplies to virtually every student in need in the parish. Youth groups from Haynes Avenue Baptist and Church for the Highlands in Shreveport joined a young adult group from Broadmoor Baptist-Baton Rouge and a few folks from Temple Baptist-Ruston in sorting, organizing and distributing, with a smile, the needed supplies. Church for the Highlands Youth continued their tradition of celebrating afterward with a dip in the lake.

CBF-LA has a new bookkeeper and financial manager.



Meet Sabra Hicks who is taking over managing the books after the long years of service of Kenny Crump who continues in an emeritus/consulting role for us. Sabra is administrator at Church for the Highlands, wife to Nate and mother to Lake and Wes.

All offerings and financial gifts to CBF-LA should now be addressed to:

**CBF-LA Financial Office
c/o Sabra Hicks
520 Olive Street
Shreveport, La 71104**

Winds of the Spirit - Life is Precious



by Reid Doster, CBF-LA Coordinator

The world is finally turning its attention to the carnage sweeping through northern Iraq at the hands of a death cult known as The Islamic State, an unholy combination of the worst traits seen in al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, the Khmer Rouge, and the Nazis. Its soldiers have systematically rounded up

groups of "unbelievers" - which can mean anybody, including their fellow Sunnis - and slaughtered them in a manner Heinrich Himmler would have applauded. Addicted to bloodshed, they have targeted for total extermination entire categories of people. In case you haven't heard, they also insist they're coming for us. These lunatics will not succeed. Why? Because there are more of us, and we still view life as precious.

Admittedly, our own culture can cause us to grow a bit numb and jaded. I walk out of my office in New Orleans to the sound of five gunshots and see a man sitting motionless in his car, after another drug deal gone sour. Later, I hear of an unarmed Missouri teen being shot to death by a police officer, in the back seat of a patrol car, and it reminds me of another person shot dead just because he was walking through the neighborhood, and still another killed because someone did not like the vibrating music emanating from the victim's vehicle.

A mother of two is hit by an out of control vehicle and left for dead on the street. The driver flees the scene without calling for help. It's disgusting and unfathomable to think somebody would leave a human being lying there without any care. The victim was rushed to the hospital with two broken legs and severe head trauma, only to die a few hours later. Then, on the radio, I learn of the untimely, self-inflicted death of Robin Williams, whom Spielberg described as "a lightning storm of comic genius." And, over this past weekend, in New Orleans, there were five murders and 11 wounded by gunshot, which is less than the recent killing spree over a long weekend in Chicago, with at least 14 murdered and 58 wounded. Then, I read about a gang of teens descending upon a homeless man and beating him to death, "just for the fun of it." And then I watch a video of an infuriated racecar driver jumping out of his sidelined vehicle into headlong traffic, at a closure rate of 120mph, in a deadly confrontation with an arch rival known for his "precision driving." Against such a backdrop, I also follow erudite but, frankly, vacuous discourses among seemingly intelligent people arguing in favor of routine abortion, assisted suicide and "death coaching." Add into this mix disturbing reports of high-risk thrill seeking gone wrong, and deliberate, willful, habitual behaviors known by evidenced-based research to harm one's body, and you wonder if anybody values life anymore.

Genesis 2:7 declares: "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." God is the author of life and therefore life is precious. God is the sustainer and owner of life and, therefore, life is precious. God has set life apart for a special purpose, and so life is precious.

It is utterly unacceptable when people are abused mentally, physically or tyrannically. Any view of humans as mere objects constitutes abuse and profanation of life. If God is still granting a person breath and life, there is still value in that life, from conception to the grave and everything in between. That includes the toothless old woman in the clutches of advanced Alzheimer's, just hanging on while not knowing where or who she is. It also includes someone with severe disabilities, the baby born with multiple birth defects, the young adult who is autistic, or folks who cannot care for themselves. Does God have a plan for their lives, for this moment, for these days, for this season? According to what I learned in Vacation Bible School: "They are precious in His sight."

You are reminded life is precious when you're about to go under anesthesia for

emergency open heart surgery, or when you look into the eyes of your granddaughter and remember how close she came to not surviving birth, or when your wife looks up into your eyes from the hospital bed and says: "I don't think I'm going to make it."

Our world is facing some dark days ahead, and Christians need to pray without ceasing. Yet we are people who pray with hope and joy, confident in the radical grace of our Lord who has shown us in the end, love wins. Christians have an ancient message to share with the nations and with the neighbor next door: You can share it within your own world, in your own space and time, at any one moment, through what you believe, do and say. Your simple message is: "Life is still precious."

In His Love,

Reid Doster

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