



# Texas Baptists Committed

April 1999

## Paul Powell to be Keynote Speaker

1999 TBC Annual Convocation July 16-17 San Angelo



Paul Powell

Paul Powell, former Executive Director for the Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board, will keynote the 1999 Texas Baptists Committed Convocation in San Angelo, July 16-17. The Kingdom of God will be the theme for this year's convocation.

The convocation is always a non-political event. We do not discuss the conven-

tion controversy. The purpose of the convocation is to provide a break during the year to give our supporters a 24-hour dose of fellowship, encouragement and spiritual direction.

We are very excited about this year's program. TBC's work has always been focused on spreading the Kingdom of God.

Other speakers include James Shields, professor at Logsdon School of Theology, Abilene; Ellis Orozco, pastor of Corpus Christi Baptist Church; Gary Cook, president of Dallas Baptist University; Kenneth Hall, president of Buckner Baptist Benevolences, Patty Lane, Multi-ethnic consultant for the BGCT and Dean Dickens, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Garland.

The meeting will begin with a banquet at 6 p.m., Friday, July 16, at the San Angelo Convention Center. A banquet reservation form is on page 15. Cost for the banquet is \$13. Mail-in reservations are preferred, but phone reservations for the banquet will be accepted through our office beginning July 1 by calling 915-659-4102.

Rooms are available at the Holiday Inn, adjacent to the Convention Center, for \$59. Call 915-658-2828 and ask for the Texas Baptists Committed block of rooms.

Powell is president of the Board of Advisors for BGCT'S Texas Baptist Leadership and a BGCT past president. He has been pastor of Texas Baptist churches in Belfalls, Troy, Taylor, San Marcos and Tyler. Author of more than 30 books, he is well known to Texas Baptists for leadership and service.

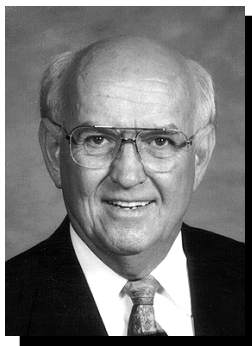
The staff of TBC is excited to welcome supporters to our home town. The decision was made to host the event in San Angelo because the BGCT meets in El Paso in November, which is quite a distance for most Texans.

A golf tournament is scheduled on Friday morning. For non-golfers, a trip to the "painted rocks" is being planned during the same time.

The complete program of the TBC Convocation is on page 14. We look forward to seeing you there!

### CO-CHAIR THOUGHTS FROM JEROLD McBRIDE

### Texas Plan Producing Great Results!



*Editor's Note: Last Year, Ted Kersh, then president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma sent a letter to Oklahoma Baptists that was critical of both Mainstream Baptists and Texas Baptists. The following is McBride's response.*

Some of the happiest years of my ministry were the years I served in Oklahoma. Two of the finest churches in the state gave

me the privilege of being their pastor—the First Baptist Churches of Chickasha and Ponca City.

Then the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma honored me by my election as Director of Evangelism. Serving with Dr. T.B. Lackey continues to bless and enrich my ministry.

Because of the years spent in Oklahoma and the two years I served as president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, I read with interest and dismay the letter sent by Ted Kersh to Oklahoma pastors. I was shocked to realize that such a drastic change has taken place in the state convention that had made such a contribution to my life and ministry.

The letter mentioned the BGCT several times. He stated, "I am not interested in following a plan that has polarized the

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[www.txbc.org](http://www.txbc.org)

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McBride, from page 1...

Texas convention to the extent that some are compelled to form a new convention.” Ted went on to say, “We, faithful and free Oklahoma Baptists are not interested in the Texas Plan.” Not knowing exactly what Ted had in mind, I would like to share with you what the real Texas Plan is doing.

## Real Results

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Last year Texas Baptists baptized 69,266 people. This is the second highest total in our history and the most baptisms in more than 10 years. In 1997 Texas Baptists accounted for 22.9% of the SBC’s Cooperative Program increase this past year. Oklahoma and any other state convention would do well to follow this Texas Plan.

Texas Baptists gave more than \$24 million through the Cooperative Program in 1998 with more than \$22 million going to SBC agencies and programs. In addition, we gave more than \$14 million to the Lottie

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**“We, faithful and free Oklahoma Baptists, are not interested in the Texas Plan.”**

Ted Kersh, former president of BGC

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Moon Christmas offering. Our BGCT budget is more than \$49 million and receipts were 4.2 percent over budget this year. Receipts have exceeded our budget for several years. These facts seem to indicate that the Texas Plan is working quite well!

**What makes Texas Baptists different is that they are not different. They have not changed despite the transformation of the SBC.** They have remained steadfastly true to the old time Baptist beliefs and principles on which the SBC was formed in 1845. We believe the Bible is the Word of God and as such is the sole and final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

We are truly faithful and free Baptists who will bow to no one, save Jesus Christ our Lord. We believe that every Christian has the right and responsibility to interpret the Bible, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, for himself. This does not mean he is free to deny those great Baptist doctrines grounded in God’s Word.

We believe the pastor is to follow the servant role set by Jesus and that he is not the ruler of the church.

One reason Texas Baptists are flourishing is found in their belief in and practice of the autonomy of the local church. Giving showed a marked increase when the BGCT assured the churches that they have the right to direct how their mission dollars are channeled.

As a current member of the BGCT Administrative Committee, I can affirm that our state convention has no desire to dictate to churches whom they may call as pastor or whom they may ordain.

Furthermore, it is our conviction that the state convention (and the SBC) exists for the good of the local church rather than the local church’s existing for the good of the convention. There is no hierarchical mentality in the BGCT! Coercion, pressure, and intimidation are met with zero tolerance among Texas Baptists.

## Everyone Free

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Dr. Hershel Hobbs expressed the spirit of Texas Baptists well when he said, “*So in reality Baptists are the most broad-minded of all people in religion. They grant to every man that he shall be free to believe as he wants. But they insist upon the same right for themselves. The moment that a Baptist seeks to coerce another person—even another Baptist—in matters of religion, he violates the basic belief of Baptists.*” For this reason we support the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

**We are mainstream, traditional Baptists. We are fair Baptists and consequently we make room for all Baptists.** We are aware that some Texas Baptists sincerely support the radical right turn of the SBC and the fundamentalist movement. These are still Texas Baptists and therefore are included, heard and considered equal to any other Texas Baptist.

Such consideration and respect for any who may differ, led us to make some changes. We began permitting churches to delete up to five line items in the BGCT budget and still have their gifts counted as Cooperative Program giving. Why did we do this? Because some did not want to support Baylor University or the Baptist Joint Committee and others did not want to support specific BGCT programs. We acknowledged these honest differences of opinion and made it easy for people to express their convictions. We refused to force our way on any person or church. This is the Baptist way of doing things. This is the Texas Plan.

## Inclusive Policy

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In 1994, while I was president of the BGCT, we began to treat all the gifts of

local churches equally. If a church wanted to give to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, we said that was fine. If a church wanted to give to Criswell College instead of one of our BGCT related universities, we said that was fine. We reached out to all sides by being inclusive of their various differences of opinion.

While messengers at our state conventions have chosen to elect officers such as I, we have made certain that everyone is heard. That is why there was a minority Cooperative Program report at the 1994 BGCT annual meeting. Others and I saw that these individuals were included on the committee and given every opportunity to present their perspective.

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**Texas Baptists baptized 69,266 people... gave more than \$24 million through the CP.**

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I am convinced we must focus on Jesus Christ, practice historic Baptist principles, respect differences of opinion and those who hold them, reach out to those who disagree and include all viewpoints.

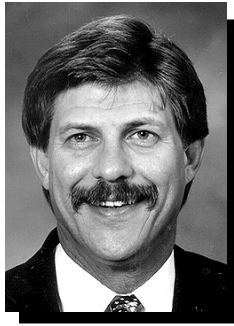
Should you be successful in moving beyond fundamentalism and returning to a traditional Baptist state convention, you can be sure fundamentalists will form their own state convention as they have in Virginia and Texas because that is the nature of fundamentalism, be it political or religious. Fundamentalism either must be in control or seek to destroy that which it cannot control.

I love Oklahoma and Oklahoma Baptists. For more than 30 years I have spent a week of my vacation in Oklahoma. I believe the vast majority of Oklahoma Baptists are real Baptists—the kind I worked with as a pastor and denominational leader in Oklahoma. They are intelligent Bible-believing people who, if given the facts, will make the right decisions. They do not need to be protected from hearing both sides of the story.

Become informed, refuse to be intimidated or coerced, and stand up for the things you know in your heart are right. The 50-plus years I have spent in the ministry have affirmed our Lord’s words, “The truth shall make you free!” This is important to the Kingdom of God. Together, Baptists can be known as a people of grace.

**Focus,  
Faith and  
Fairness**

By  
**David R. Currie,**  
Coordinator



The time we live in as Texas Baptists is both a time of anticipation as well as a time of uncertainty. Texas Baptists have made it clear that the majority want no part of the fundamentalist movement and yet we do not have a clear sense of direction for the future of our state convention.

To complicate matters, our Executive-Director, Bill Pinson, who worked so hard keeping us focused on missions and ministry, has announced his impending retirement, creating even more uncertainty over the question of leadership.

A new state convention has been created called the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. It is comprised of persons and churches who support the fundamentalist movement and no longer want to be a part of the Texas Baptist family.

They are urging churches openly to leave the Baptist General Convention of Texas. They cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention in degrading the BGCT and justifying the fundamentalist movement in Baptist life. They especially “love to hate” the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, which is supported by many “county seat” churches which also relate to the BGCT. In short, it is above all, a confusing time. What is a traditional, Bible-believing, Jesus loving, Texas Baptist to do?

A few suggestions:

**Focus on Jesus Christ**

FOCUS on Jesus Christ above all else. Denominational disagreements must not define who we are. Persons on both sides of the denominational argument can lose all perspective and define themselves by what they are not. This is unfortunate and a dead-end to one’s spiritual growth.

Each of us is a child of God who should be totally committed to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Before we are Baptists, family members, deacons, pastors, and church workers, etc., we are individual and corporate members of the body of Christ.

We need to individually, and corporately,

FOCUS on JESUS! We need to seek his will daily and remember we are his body, we are the “extension of the incarnation.” While we have a mission that includes the work of the denomination, we primarily start with our own personal ministry and that of our local church.

**Focus on the Kingdom of God**

To FOCUS on Jesus is also to focus on the Kingdom of God and our part in it as individuals and as a body of cooperating believers. We need to ask some serious questions about the effectiveness of our personal witness, our local church ministry and our cooperative partnerships.

Are we helping spread the Kingdom personally and corporately? Are our partnerships resulting in good stewardship of God’s resources?

**Focus on Faith**

Second, we need to keep our faith. Yes, these are uncertain times but we worship a BIG God who’s plan will not be stopped by the disobedience of some. God will simply alter his plan and work with those who do FOCUS on His will and purpose. Whatever the future holds, it will be wonderful and glorious because we worship a wonderful and glorious God.

No, I do not believe it was God’s will that Southern Baptists lost their focus on missions and evangelism to become a body primarily focused on political power (both religious and secular politics), but it happened.

I also believe the future is bright for the those who hold to the Biblical principles long practiced by Southern Baptists. My FAITH is strong that someday soon, there will be a Baptist cooperative effort that is much larger and more effective than the organization now calling itself the Southern Baptist Convention, which is Baptist in name only. God ordained our historic practices and He will honor them wherever they are practiced by both local congregations and cooperative bodies.

**Focus on Fairness**

Third, we need to continue to focus on fairness. I am proud of our record at TBC on fairness. We have never advocated any policy or program that in any way was not fair to every Texas Baptist, including those firmly committed to fundamentalism. As long as I am involved in TBC, you have

my word I will never advocate anything unfair.

The Cooperative Giving Study Committee recommendations, which were passed in 1994, were fair to every Texas Baptist. Neither TBC nor the BGCT has ever tried to “control” the manner in which local churches may partner with other Baptist bodies. Every church that relates to the BGCT and through the BGCT has the same freedom today it had 50 years ago. Any changes made in the future must always protect the rights of the minority to cooperate freely as they choose.

We must be FAIR in what we say about each other and to each other. Through the years I have responded strongly to what I considered to be lies or misrepresentations. I do not apologize for that. Lies and false accusations anger me.

As I have watched 20 years of what can be considered unethical behavior, and con-

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**We are a people not  
afraid to dream, not  
afraid to risk and not  
afraid to lead.**

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tinue to observe it in things like the Missouri Layman’s Association video, the website, [www.ncbaptist.com](http://www.ncbaptist.com), and the SBC Life articles on Valentine and Dunn, I have tried to respond with integrity and fairness, but have occasionally overreacted. As we turn toward the future, the fact is, Texas Baptists are distancing themselves from the political struggle and I believe God is leading this new direction. God gave us Baptist principles and wants an organized group of churches and individuals to lead the way in living them out and demonstrating them to the world.

I think as we FOCUS on Jesus and His Kingdom, we will continue to make changes, design new programs and partnerships. I believe that Texas Baptists will lead a rejuvenated traditional Baptist cooperative effort in the 21st century.

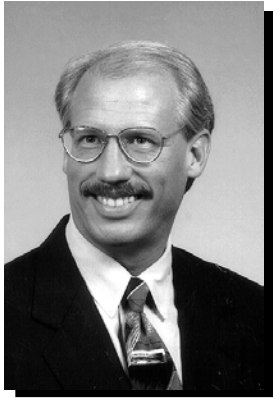
I think we will do this because we have a long history of FAITH that is pushing us forward into the future. We are a people not afraid to dream, not afraid to risk and not afraid to lead. Texas Baptists have always risen to the challenges of the day and we will do so again with great FOCUS and FAITH in Jesus.

We will move forward with compassion  
*see Currie, page 5...*

# False Representation Catalyst For Conflict

## Reflections on the Roger Moran Arguments Against CBF

**Charles C. McLaughlin,**  
**Associate**  
**Coordinator**



The problem with mishandled conflict within a church is how it distracts the energy of the church away from its true purpose and mission. So it saddened me when our office received a call from a First Baptist Church member in a county seat town who described a problem creating a division in their church.

The catalyst for conflict was a video tape featuring Roger Moran, research director of the Missouri Baptist Layman's Association. Serious problems were caused when a member, who reportedly got the tape at the November '98 Southern Baptist of Texas meeting in Houston, showed it to a selected group in the church.

Others in the church with knowledge of Baptist polity and familiar with the fundamentalist tactic of selling false innuendo for truth helped their fellow members get a grip on the reality of the situation.

After viewing the Moran tape, I believe it is necessary to address briefly some of the issues Moran raised.

So much of what appears negative in our TBC newsletter is in response to false accusation, misinformation and perversion of Baptist polity. People believe lies when truth is not defended.

### Scathing Attack

The video can be summarized as a scathing attack on the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as a "wolf in sheep's clothing," including hard jabs at the BGCT and some fine Texas Baptist people who have been faithful in their service to Christ. Their research and conclusions are incorrect and misleading. Consider the following examples:

1) In one of the many attacks on the

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Moran stated "BJCPA Executive Director Speaks with Wicca Priestess in Colorado." He reminds the listener that another speaker was a Universalist spokesperson.

The guilt by association implication is that James Dunn must agree with the Wicca priestess and the Universalist, therefore, Dunn is a liberal and CBF is liberal for supporting BJCPA.

**Moran does not tell you that: BJCPA did not set up the program for the event.** Dunn used the occasion to present a Christian witness. A young woman named Debbie received Jesus Christ as her savior because she heard Dunn's witness.

Witchcraft was not and has never been endorsed by BJC. Taking the opportunity to witness for the cause of Christ has not only been endorsed but practiced.

The BJC does not advocate any homosexual agenda, nor does it advocate homosexual behavior. It has never endorsed nor supported any program which advocates pornography in any form. It has never promoted abortion.

### Guilt by Association

2) Another example is Moran's attack on at least nine people who have served as what he calls "Breakout leaders." He says they train people on "how to be Baptist according to CBF's understanding." Even his description sounds like a plot to indoctrinate.

**Moran admits in the video he is using guilt by association.** What he does not tell you is how he uses this to distort the truth to create a misperception of CBF.

**He does not tell you** in this example that a number of these were not "leaders" in terms of training others. They called the meeting to order and introduced the speaker. So in some cases, they were not even the influential key speaker. In other cases, when these persons were actually leading, it was not on the topic that Moran chooses to argue about, with his selected quotes.

**He also does not tell you** that during CBF general assemblies from 1990 through 1998, *no* breakout sessions advocated the ordination of homosexuals, bi-sexuals, and trans-gendered persons. *None* advocated an "unambiguous sexual norm" in Scripture,

denial of God's existence; the worship of Sophia and Christ or repeal of sodomy laws. *None* were held advocating calling God Mother; pro-choice in abortion or abortion as a means of population control, which he implies are sessions at CBF.

According to Bart Tichenor, who has written to defend the BJC from Moran's accusations, the persons attacked by Moran were involved in 15 sessions out of 577 or 2.5% and represent only 1.8% of the 817 breakout session leaders from 1990 to 1997. Yet, the video seeks to convince the listener that this represents the vast majority of those involved in CBF.

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Instead of practicing freedom in giving as the Lord leads, the fundamentalists call for restriction of freedom within a local church.

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The attacks on CBF and others are so numerous there is not enough space in our newsletter to answer the far-fetched accusations. **Using guilt by association Moran has chosen "hot button" issues to connect emotionally with Baptists concerned about America's morality.** CBF is falsely labeled for supporting homosexuality, pornography, federal funding for the arts and abortion. The video seeks to create a moral zeal to turn people against CBF and any person, church, or state convention that would consider partnering with CBF.

### Local Church Freedom Restricted

Apparently faith set free is very frightening to some. Instead of focusing on the need of the church to cooperate for missions, for reaching others for Christ and for developing a fellowship that meets the needs of its members and its community, the video calls for negative responses.

Instead of practicing freedom in giving as the Lord leads, the fundamentalists call for restriction of freedom within a local church.

*Continued on Page 5...*

# SBC Life Magazine Off Base in Attacks on Valentine and Dunn

by David R. Currie, Coordinator

*"Mess with my friends, you mess with me."* I have always been like that. I will not allow people I admire to be falsely accused. I will not tolerate character assassination and that is what the SBC leaders have done to Foy Valentine and James Dunn.

I am referring to two articles in the January, 1999, issue of *SBC Life*, the official publication of the SBC Executive Committee, and paid for by your Cooperative Program contributions.

"I think it is true that the liberal antinomianism represented by James Dunn, Glenn Hinson, and Foy Valentine is partially responsible for producing people with the tragically flawed moral compass of a Bill Clinton, " Richard Land said in an article entitled "Groundwork for Immorality." Land is the current president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, formerly the SBC Christian Life Commission.

Antinomianism is a type of theological doctrine which says that by faith and God's grace a Christian is freed from all laws including the moral standards of the culture.

Bill Clinton's actions, which I find appalling, cannot be blamed on some climate of "liberal antinomianism" created by Dunn, Hinson and Valentine or some nonsense about an "overemphasis on grace." There is no such thing as an "overemphasis on grace," because the Gospel is grace, pure 100 percent grace. It is grace that saves us all. That's Bible, not liberal!

I do not know Glenn Hinson well, but I

know Dunn and Valentine and their personal ethics are outstanding, and they would never condone Clinton's personal actions. To blame President Clinton's immoral actions on the beliefs of Valentine and Dunn, is as ludicrous as blaming the bombing of abortion clinics and the murder of the young homosexual man in Wyoming on the strong statements against abortion and homosexuality that Land and other SBC leaders have made. Do their words "create an atmosphere" for hate crimes to happen?

I do not blame Land and other SBC leaders for "hate crimes" caused by people taking their beliefs too far. Nor is it fair to blame "sexual immortality" on Valentine and Dunn who have spent their lives stand-

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Valentine has been a giant in standing up for social concerns.

Dunn has been a shining light on a hill for the traditional Baptist position of church-state separation.

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ing up for Biblical morality.

Valentine has been a giant among men in standing up for racial justice, compassion for the poor and healthy families. He has stood against pornography, gambling and many other biblical social concerns.

Dunn, who the magazine article says has been a "champion of a radical vision of church-state separation" has been a shining light on a hill for the traditional Baptist

position of church-state separation totally consistent with Roger Williams, John Leland, George Truett, and many others.

The only "radical vision of church-state separation" being pushed today is that of the SBC leadership who wants, according to the article, government money (vouchers) for religious schools, which is historically as non-Baptist a position as a Baptist could possibly hold.

The article goes on to justify the fundamentalist takeover of the SBC saying that "the theological recovery of the last two decades started with the issue of biblical authority and inerrancy, but quickly spread to the recovery of biblical positions on ethical and moral issues as well."

Is character assassination ethical as a frequently used method for taking over the SBC? I know of no Biblical ethic that justifies the firing of Russell Dilday, Dan Martin, Al Shackelford, or the lies told about Keith Parks, Dan Vestal, Richard Jackson, and Winfred Moore.

I cannot find in Scripture anything that justifies the lies told in recent years about the BGCT and its leaders. If the last 20 years is an example of the recovery of "biblical ethics," then God help us.

Land goes on to say that "to me Foy Valentine was a radical liberal undermining Southern Baptist beliefs." For me, Richard Land, Al Mohler, Paige Patterson and other SBC leaders would do well to aspire to the kind of character, courage, and personal and public morals which make Dunn and Valentine outstanding. After watching 20 years of exaggeration, lies and guilt by association which continues unabated, I have little use for those kinds of ethics.

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*McLaughlin, from page 4...*

In contrast, not one Texas Baptist church giving to CBF restricts the freedom of its members to give to the SBC.

Freedom and choice are Baptist principles rooted in what it means to be Christians. This allows the spirit of Christ to work within a congregation to encourage partnership in winning our world to Christ. It is a positive focus instead of focusing on control and power.

Moran's work may create serious division within the local church. Hopefully, churches will steer clear of such a negative approach and pursue a more Biblical spirit of kindness and honesty.

At the conclusion of the video, Moran makes it clear that truth is more important than unity. Divisiveness is promoted for the sake of the truth, but Moran does not bring the truth. He misrepresents individuals and especially CBF.

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Hopefully, churches will pursue a more Biblical spirit of kindness and honesty.

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Thus, a church is faced not only with division but with distorted impressions based on false allegations. When we allow ourselves to be divided, over false allegations instead of the truth, then, who is the wolf in sheep's clothing?

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*Currie, from page 3...*

and fairness for those who do not yet have the vision, or who do not even want a new vision. We will move forward with FAIR concern for those still trapped in fundamentalism, i.e., missionaries and others that cannot be abandoned.

But no one should make the mistake of thinking Texas Baptists are not on the move for the FATHER, with a clear FOCUS, a heart full of FAITH and a commitment to FAIRNESS in all that we do. Texas Baptist leaders are focused on the FUTURE and I urge all my readers to "turn your eyes upon Jesus" and where He is leading us. It is going to be a glorious journey.

# Blame it on the Baptists

By Michael Clingenpeel

Editor's Note: Reprinted from the Religious Herald

Last November Kenneth L. Woodward, a reporter for *Newsweek*, penned an analysis of President Clinton's bizarre personal behavior. He suggested that the president's personal beliefs allow room for "plenty of license" and cited the moderate Baptist ethos in which Clinton was raised as a contributing factor to the chief executive's sloppy morality.

Southern Baptist fundamentalists — architects and guardians of the new Southern Baptist order — went ga-ga over Woodward's analysis. It confirmed their opinions about Clinton and the old Southern Baptist Convention, and it gave them

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Our depravity and our nobility is more fully explained by the fact that we are human beings than that we were raised as a particular kind of Baptist.

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compelling spin to use in the public relations campaign to convince Baptists that a moderate SBC was evil while the new fundamentalist SBC is good.

Baptist Press, the public relations arm of today's SBC, offered Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. a forum to affirm the *Newsweek* analysis. Last week, Mohler's article was carried in *SBC Life*, the monthly voice of the SBC executive committee.

**Mohler's argument runs something like this.** President Clinton felt at home in the Baptist theology and ethical positions of the old SBC. His "twisted moral worldview" is a product of his upbringing in the old moderate Baptist climate. Baptist leaders such as James Dunn, Glenn Hinson and Foy Valentine, moderates who lost favor during the conservative resurgence of the SBC, were Clinton's moral advisors who thereby served as his "enablers in a lifestyle of gross immorality."

The rightward shift of the SBC over the past 20 years, therefore, was necessary to save Southern Baptists from years of theo-

logical compromise. This theological rescue led directly to a recovery in Baptist ethics and morality.

It is an interesting argument, and at its starting point Mohler is correct. By any reasonable definition, President Clinton's behavior in the sexual scandal that led to his impeachment is sin, and his faith did not rescue him from behavior that was wrong and loaded with consequences. To suggest that his actions were neither sexual nor adulterous defies credulity.

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## Mohler misses the mark

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Beyond this, however, Mohler misses the mark. So eager is he to demonstrate the theological and ethical superiority of the SBC's new-found conservatism that he misses several obvious chinks in his position.

**First,** Mohler blames Clinton's immorality on the president's Baptist nurture during a "liberal denominational regime," but he makes no attempt to explain the thousands, maybe millions, of Southern Baptists, who continue to be straight shooters while being raised in the same denominational milieu.

If a moderate Baptist ethos is the key ingredient to ethical decline, why are Baptist churches filled with men and women who have never cheated on their spouses, always paid their taxes on time, neither smoke nor inhale and oppose abortion on demand? Every Southern Baptist over 20 was raised in this Baptist culture, including Mohler.

**Second,** Mohler is quick to pin the president's "gross immorality" on moderate Baptist influences, but he fails to account for the sexual immorality that felled several prominent Southern Baptist conservatives in recent years. Was it immersion in conservative doctrine and denominational politics that brought down these men whose names and sins are known by most denominational leaders but out of decency are not enumerated here? Hardly.

**Third,** Mohler's argument adopts a naive, simplistic notion about the way in which human behavior is formed. It is undoubtedly true that one's views of faith and morality are shaped by the ecclesiastical culture in which one is nurtured. Religious traditions cast long shadows over our lives. But no intelligent person would ar-

gue that a distant denominational culture and its faceless leaders will carry the same shaping power as one's mother and father, brothers and sisters, classmates, elementary and secondary teachers, and pastor and church staff.

No larger cultural context is likely to influence us as much as these close individuals, and when it does it is likely to be a popular media culture that winks at sexual indiscretion and a political culture that bestows power and encourages its participants to wear an entitlement mentality.

If this cluster of influences is not enough, there remains the tyranny of our genetic

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No intelligent person would argue that a distant denominational culture and its faceless leaders will carry the same shaping power as one's mother and father.

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heritage and deep inner forces that none of us can name or fully comprehend.

King David's moral lapse that led to adultery and murder was hardly a function of a Hebrew ethos that glossed over immorality. David grew up with a strict code of prohibitions. David's sordid sin began deeper than his ecclesiastical context. It lay dormant in his inner being, in a region beyond reason that even he had never explored successfully.

The apostle Paul came closest to an explanation of the mystery of human behavior when he wrote that "what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing" (Romans 7:19).

Our depravity and our nobility is more fully explained by the fact that we are human beings than that we were raised as a particular kind of Baptist. An unbiased reader might conclude that Mohler, and those who originally gave his thoughts a forum, may have used President's Clinton's wrongdoing and Woodward's *Newsweek* article as an opportunity to slam moderate Baptists and promote themselves. Such opportunism, unlike the president's behavior, is shallow enough to be explained by current Baptist loyalties.

# We are proud to be supporters...

...of Texas Baptists Committed and are grateful to God for the way Texas Baptists Committed has been effective in supporting and advancing the programs and ministries of the Baptists General Convention of Texas.

*The following is a partial list of TBC supporters who gave their permission to be listed in this newsletter. TBC has thousands of contributing supporters not listed here due to space limitations. All names listed represent the person's individual support of TBC. Church listings are for identification only. Churches do not join TBC.*

Mr. & Mrs. Goza Tolle, Calvary, Abilene  
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# Don't Submit to This

**Joel C. Gregory, Fort Worth**

What happens to Baptists happens to Texas.

That being so, the tragic forced resignation of Alan Brehm from the faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth should alarm every thinking person. This venerable institution has been hijacked and is being driven toward a mindless, rigid, narrow provincial fundamentalism.

Just like many of your readers, I know Southwestern. I pastored two of its presidents at Travis Avenue and Gambrell Street Baptist churches, taught on its faculty, and pastored First Baptist Church of Dallas, which supplies at least three chairmen to its board of trustees. That should give me some perspective.

In June 1998, the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Salt Lake City adopted a Neanderthal resolution on the relationship of husbands and wives. That resolution called for a “submission” of wives equal to a cringing subservience. Of the six Southern Baptist seminaries, only Southwestern forced its faculty to sign that statement.

In Baptist polity, the denomination has no power to force a seminary to require such a signature. Alan Brehm is a Baptist and Texas hero for refusing to sign.

Historically, Baptists shed their life's blood to protest just such coercive signing of tyrannical documents. The Baptist distinctive, sealed with martyr's blood, is the competency of each soul to determine such matters.

The Baptists of Fort Worth should let Southwestern President Kenneth Hemphill know that they will not tolerate this. The residents of Fort Worth should hope for something better. Such an institution newly baptized in reactionary rigidity will effect the life of the city and its churches.

*Editor's Note: Formerly an editorial in Fort Worth Star-Telegram.*

# Is Judgmentalism Idolatrous?

**By Colleen Taylor-Martin**

I believe the answer is unequivocally a “yes.” I believe it is one of the worst forms of idolatry because of its nature of mean-mindedness, tight control, narrow definitions and slander both insidious and outright.

Need I tell anyone that to judge others is to place oneself above God? The act of hurling accusations has caused more heartache, dissension, disease and destruction within, not only in our denomination, but in many local churches and countless individuals as well.

## Personal Perspective

**I can tell you from a personal point of view** just how much this hurts. My husband, Dan Martin and co-worker Al Shackelford, were fired from Baptist Press nearly a decade ago.

You see, all my life, I thought I was a fundamentalist. I was brought up in a Baptist church in a small town in North Central Texas—a real grassroots church. I was taught to believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and have never doubted it.

After Dan was fired, we went into the mountains of western North Carolina where he pastored a small church for several years. We were deeply hurt and wounded beyond belief. Worse was yet in store for us.

**Pastors in neighboring churches prejudged us.** They said hurtful things about us, our church members and other ministers who were our friends. Those pastors and others decided they knew all about us—about our salvation and our beliefs even though they never bothered to ask.

We walked in pain and slander, but at the same time, God heaped countless blessings upon us. We literally walked through the 23rd Psalm. God spread a banquet before us in the presence of those who wanted do evil to us.

**We walked in pain and slander, but at the same time, God heaped countless blessings upon us.**

Pastors supposedly called to minister in the binding of wounds and the healing of the brokenhearted instead were instruments of hurt in our lives.

None were interested in our testimony. They did not want to know just how fundamental we are in our beliefs—that we are not “wild-eyed liberals.” But, do not pity us because, through it all, we have experienced God's goodness and His awesome Presence.

We refused to allow others to define who we were, or to control us. During those days of trial, God turned an ending into a new beginning.

If Jesus did not come to judge the world but to save it, then we have no authority or right to judge. Does God hurt when people misuse His Word to try to prove it is okay to dominate others and dictate their own petty points of view? Those who exclude others because of real or imagined differences in theology or practice, or draw lines, are devious.

**Judgmentalism is a spiritual plague that has infected our churches and denomination far too long.**

I do not think it is any different today than it was in Ezekiel's day. The prophet had some words to say to God's own shepherds who did not feed the flocks and caused the flocks to scatter. The shepherds of Ezekiel's time failed to strengthen the sick, bind up wounds and heal the diseased (*Ezekiel 34*). Have we not seen that same thing across these years of trouble in the SBC?

Many churches have been torn up and many people have been hurt. We cannot show forth God's boundless love when we isolate and condemn others. The Lord's Prayer teaches that our Father in Heaven will forgive us when we forgive others (*Matt. 6*).

One of the saddest stories in the Bible is about David and Absalom. Here were two beautiful men, both right about much, but also so wrong in their false pride and stubbornness to wholly forgive one another. We all know the end of that story, how Absalom met his untimely death hanging from a tree. We grieve with his father falling down on his face in anguish, beating the earth and crying out to God for forgiveness.

Perhaps this example fits many today. I know pastors on both sides of the fence who are truly godly men—loving and forgiving. They grow healthy churches. I know others, also on both sides, who, like Absalom, are too unbending to give up their pettiness and hard attitudes toward anyone who disagrees with them.

## The Problem of the Pharisees

Like the Pharisees, their legalism has led them into pits of destruction. Law and tradition become bondage. Jesus pointed out that we will be judged by our own standard of measure (*Matt 7:2*).

Judgmentalism is a spiritual plague that has

# Why I did not Sign the SBC Family Statement

By *H. Alan Brehm*

I'm really not against the family — honest. Just ask my (wonderful) wife of 18 years and my three (great) kids.

I'm really not against the Bible — really. I spent 13 years working toward a PhD so that I could teach the Bible as a Southern Baptist Seminary Professor!

What I *am* against is the disgusting and deceptive way that some use the Bible to oppress and manipulate faithful, honest church folks.

The SBC's "statement on the family," which faculty members at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary were asked to sign, presents a case in point. One of its more controversial parts says that husbands should provide for, protect, and lead the family. The wife should submit graciously to her husband's "servant leadership," manage the household, and nurture the kids.

Yes, it actually said wives should run the house and take care of the kids!

What it boils down to is another shot fired in the culture war ensnaring our society. The "powers that be" among Southern Baptists would like nothing better than to drag our society — kicking and screaming if necessary — back to the 1950s. In fact, one critic called the SBC statement the "June Cleaver" approach to motherhood.

**But what looks good on the surface may simply serve as a mask for a darker reality.** I doubt that the '50s were as pure, as wholesome, or as "Christian" as religious right-wingers claim. Do you really think all our social and moral problems began with the '60s?

I have a hard time believing that sexual abuse, pornography, child abuse, and domestic violence — not to mention the more obvious ones, like racism, greed, and dishonesty — grew to such epidemic levels only recently.

In the process of this very political campaign, Southern Baptist leaders didn't think twice about doing what they do so often:

infected our churches and denomination far too long. It is the highest form of idolatry. Only God can heal us of this sickness. Like David in his anguish, we must cry out to God for His forgiveness. We must count on His leadership to cleanse our hearts and help us learn to wholly forgive as Jesus forgave from the cross.

Far too many people continue to be hurt.

twisting the Bible to make their point. Why let Holy Writ get in the way of a good sermon?

To understand the Bible's teaching about the family, you have to look at the historical background. A text without a context is a pretext.

**In the first-century world,** the man of the family had absolute authority. His wife, his children, and his slaves had no choice but to obey him.

The Apostle Paul took that family model and "turned it upside down," to borrow a phrase. He taught early Christians that one of the marks of God's presence in their

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What looks good on the surface may simply serve as a mask for a darker reality.

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lives was to submit to one another by showing humility, respect, and a willingness to give in.

Although the term for "submit" was used in military settings for a "chain of command," that is definitely not the way Paul used it!

Paul then applied the principle of mutual submission to families. He not only told wives, children, and slaves to practice that kind of humble respect, he also expected the men to do the same.

What a radical departure from the "family values" of the day — husbands were to be considerate toward their wives, parents were to treat their children with dignity, and masters were to view slaves as fellow human beings!

So it seems that when the SBC statement places a fairly lop-sided weight on wives submitting to their husbands, it works against what the Bible has in mind.

**What really clinched it for me,** though, was the way the Southern Baptist

Too many churches have been torn up. The flock has been divided. I entreat your prayers for all those who have stood up, or, out of their integrity, have been forced to resign their places of service. It is very hard to rebuild a wrecked life.

**Some criticize TBC and compare it with the fundamentalists. It is an unfair comparison because no lives have ever**

spin doctors tried to support the family statement. They knew that the term "submission" has all kinds of negative undertones for most people these days. So they justified their use of it by stating that women have a separate function but they are equal in worth.

Yes, they said "separate" but "equal." That combination was not lost on many of us.

That got me thinking about T.B. Maston, one of my forerunners at Southwestern Seminary. Maston was a professor of ethics and a true civil rights pioneer. He was calling for racial integration — even for white SBC churches in the South — in the 1930s!

His portrait hangs outside my former office, and I've often found myself asking him what he would do with the mess we've had in the SBC over the last few years.

**I tried to imagine** what Maston would've done if Southern Baptists had come up with a statement on race relations calling for segregation as the "biblical" approach.

(Yes, many SBC churches were preaching in those days that segregation of the races was God's plan for human society.) Well, there's no way under the sun that Maston would've signed something like that.

At that moment, I knew what I had to do. In one sense, however, I really shouldn't compare myself with Maston. He faced death threats for his views. I've just had to give up my life's dream. But then I'm not alone in that, am I?

Of course, my friends know that the real reason why I didn't sign is because my wife wouldn't let me.

*Alan Brehm is a former assistant professor at Southwestern Theological Seminary. Article originally printed in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.*

**been wrecked by TBC.** Pray for the wounded and their families. Support them and encourage them. Let us not fail in our calling to bind wounds and heal the brokenhearted.

*(Colleen Taylor-Martin is a chaplain, retreat speaker and copy editor for TBC. Her husband, Dan Martin, is a staff writer for the BGCT.)*



Paul Powell

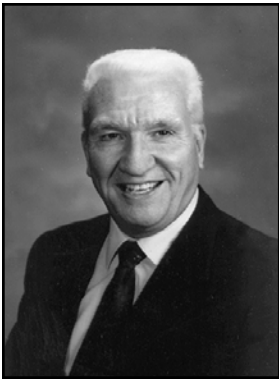
# TEXAS 2000: KINGDOM OF GOD

## TEXAS BAPTISTS COMMITTED ANNUAL CONVOCATION

SAN ANGELO CONVENTION CENTER  
JULY 16–17, 1999 • SAN ANGELO, TX



Gary Cook



James Shields

### Friday, July 16

**6:00 p.m.**

Session One, Banquet

*“The Role of the Church in the Kingdom of God”*

Paul Powell

*“Biblical Perspectives on the Kingdom of God”*

James Shields

*“The Role of the Family the Kingdom of God”*

Ellis Orozco

**9:00 p.m. — Dessert Fellowship and Concert**



Ken Hall



Ellis Orozco

### Saturday, July 17

**7:00 a.m.**

Texas Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Breakfast

*“The Role of Baptist Principles in the Kingdom of God”*

Gary Parker

**9:00 a.m. Session Two**

*“The Role of Christian Higher Education in the Kingdom of God”*

Gary Cook

*“The Role of Social Ministries in the Kingdom of God”*

Ken Hall



Patty Lane

**10:00 a.m. Break**

**10:30 a.m.**

Session Three

*“The Kingdom of God in Many Faces”*

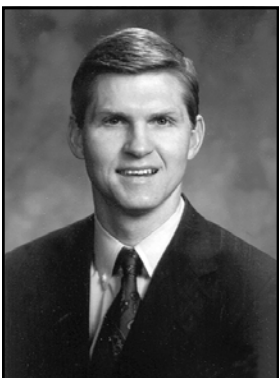
Patty Lane

*“The Role of Missions and Evangelism in the Kingdom of God”*

Dean Dickens



Dean Dickens



Gary Parker

**11:45 a.m. Adjourn**

# Pre-Convocation events planned

Fun will kick off this year's convocation. For those of you who want to come in on Thursday, July 15, two social opportunities — a golf tournament and an historical excursion — are scheduled.

On Friday at 8 a.m., July 16, we will sponsor a golf tournament at "one the top 20 overall courses in Texas," the new Quicksand golf course.

According to writer Rick Taylor, *Texas Golfer Magazine* has ranked Quicksand among the top 20 courses in the only three categories for which it was eligible, including the most prestigious — top 20 overall courses.

Quicksand also rated in the top 20 in the toughest courses and in the top 20 daily fees categories. It rated among the top 20 toughest courses last year, which was the first time in *Texas Golfer Magazine* history a course had ever ranked in the top 20 of any category within its first four years of operation.

"You're in there with the Champions and the Horseshoe Bays — that's pretty flattering — the Barton Creeks and all of the other ones that you think about," Quicksand professional Don Bryant said of being ranked among the top 20 in Texas.

**The tournament will be a four-person scramble so all types of golfers are invited to play.**

For those who are not golfers, we will sponsor a tour of the "painted rocks" in David Currie's hometown of Paint Rock. The "painted rocks" are the second largest collection of Indian Pictographs in North America. It is quite amazing and

is located on private property at the edge of Paint Rock. This tour will leave the Holiday Inn at 7:30 a.m. and another tour at 9:30 a.m., July 16.

You will not need a tour to shop, since San Angelo has an excellent historic district and is known for its antique shops.

Two social opportunities —  
a golf tournament and a historical  
excursion — are scheduled

## RESERVATION FORM

### TBC CONVOCATION BANQUET RESERVATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$13 per plate to the TBC Convocation banquet featuring Paul Powell on Friday, July 16, 1999 at the San Angelo Convention Center at 6 p.m. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)

## RESERVATION FORM

### PAINT ROCKS TOUR RESERVATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$4 per person for the "painted rocks" tour. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)

## RESERVATION FORM

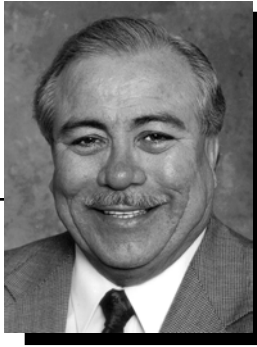
### TEE OFF GOLF TOURNAMENT RESERVATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Mate Requested (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ handicap: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$35 for my entry fee which includes breakfast, green fees, cart and prizes. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)

CO-CHAIR  
THOUGHTS  
FROM RUDY  
SANCHEZ



**Summer  
Opportunities**

This summer offers many important events for our Baptist work with Hispanics in Texas. There are two that I want to emphasize in this writing. First, is the Hispanic Baptist Convencion meeting in Wichita Falls will be held at Faith Baptist Church, June 28-30.

Rudy Camacho will again be nominated to serve a second term as President. Rudy

has done an outstanding job circulating around the state to meet with leaders, laypeople and pastors to promote continued cooperation in reaching our state and our world for Christ. As a retired layman he has had more time than a pastor, so he has given himself unreservedly to being the presence on behalf of all of us in the midst of many committees.

The Convencion is an important time of fellowship for Hispanics and our friends from all over the state. I hope you will make your plans to attend and that all of the Texas Baptists Committed friends will be in prayer for this vital meeting. Hispanic Texas Baptists must continue to grow in our cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The pattern for more Hispanic leadership within the BGCT continues to be enlarged as Hispanics are asked to serve on

important boards and commissions. We should remember to be in prayer for myself, Rudy Comacho and others who serve on the BGCT executive director search committee.

The second important event is TBC's annual convocation in San Angelo, July 16-17. If you live in this area of the state I want to invite you to join me in attending the weekend convocation. Ellis Orozco, pastor of Corpus Christi Baptist Church, will be speaking along with an excellent slate of speakers. I urge you to take the time to come and learn about TBC and discover the wonderful fellowship that I have found among our Christian brethren. This is not a political meeting, but inspirational. You will experience much of the spirit that brings great support to the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Hispanic Baptist Convencion.

## TEXAS CBF Breakfast July 17

Texas Baptists who support the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will host a breakfast during the annual Texas Baptists Committed convocation in San Angelo. The breakfast will be Saturday morning in the convention center, July 17, at 7 a.m. The featured speaker will be Gary Parker, Baptist Principles Coordinator for CBF. Keeping

with the theme of the convocation, he will be speaking on "The Role of Baptist Principles in the Kingdom of God."

Tickets for the breakfast can be ordered on the form below. They should be mailed to the Texas Baptists Committed office. Cost for the breakfast is \$9. Mail-in reservations are preferred, but phone reservations for the breakfast will be accepted beginning July 1, by calling 915-659-4102.

### RESERVATION FORM

### TEXAS COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ tickets at \$9 per plate to the Texas CBF breakfast featuring Gary Parker on Saturday, July 17, 1999 at the San Angelo Convention Center at 7 a.m. Return this form with your check to TBC, P.O. Box 3330, San Angelo, TX 76902-3330. (915-659-4102)

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