

# BULLETIN

Equipping Today's Church Leaders

Volume 1, Issue 3

## In This Issue

**PREACHING:** *From Cosmic Crisis to  
Crowning Praise*

**WORSHIPPING:** *Triangular Worship*

**REVIEWING:** *Expository Exultation*

**ENGAGING:** *Worship and the Word*

**READING:** *Designer Universe:  
Intelligent Design and the Existence  
of God*

*Who Will Be Saved? Defending the  
Biblical Understanding of God,  
Salvation, & Evangelism*

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:** *Valerie Burnett  
Hometown: Bartlett, TN*

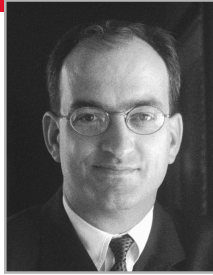
## BULLETIN

The Union University *Bulletin* is a bi-monthly  
publication designed to equip church leaders.

Editor ..... Charles Fowler, Ph.D.  
Vice President for  
Development/Church Relations  
Contributors ..... Todd Brady  
George Guthrie, Ph.D.  
Michael Penny, DMA  
Gregory A. Thornbury, Ph.D.  
Ray Van Neste, Ph.D.

All Tennessee Baptist Convention pastors receive a copy  
of each issue of this publication. Electronic copies in  
Adobe Acrobat format are available to all other church  
leaders at <http://www.uu.edu/unionbulletin/>. If you or  
other church leaders would like to receive an e-mail  
notification of each new issue, simply visit the website  
and fill out a short form.

## PREACHING



### From Cosmic Crisis to Crowning Praise Revelation 5:1-14

George Guthrie, Ph.D.  
Chair of the School of Christian Studies  
Benjamin W. Perry Associate Professor of Bible

Four senior Chemistry majors at a university decided to take a road trip just prior to finals. They partied, were delayed in getting back to campus, and missed their main Chemistry final exam for the semester. However, they decided to tell their professor that they had had a flat tire on the way back to campus and ask to take a makeup. The professor graciously agreed. When the students came to take the exam they were placed in four corners of the room. Turning the test over, they were confronted with a single question: "Which tire?" Needless to say, they had just moved into crisis mode!

It is likely that you have experienced some crisis, big or small, in the past few days. Perhaps your crisis has been a lost set of keys, a near-deficit at the bank, a child who has been disappointed at school, a relational conflict at work, or one of a thousand other tension-building circumstances. Yet, most of these crises pale in light of acts of violence, economic downturns, or social decay in our broader communities; and these community crises fade before global crises, such as the threat of war in the Middle East.

However, the crisis that constitutes the focus of Revelation 5:1-14 is bigger still. In fact, it is the greatest crisis of all time, and all other crises flow from it. It is The Cosmic Crisis, and we are introduced to it in the first four verses of the chapter.

**1. The Cosmic Crisis (Revelation 5:1-4).** The scene is in heaven around the throne of God, and God himself is sitting on the throne. In his hand is a book, or "scroll." Most books at the time John wrote Revelation were scrolls made of papyrus, a paper-like material made from the reed of a plant. Sheets of papyrus were glued end on end until they reached as much as about thirty feet in length, and then rolled up. A writer would unroll one end and roll up the other as he or she was writing a document. Most of the time writing was just on the inside of the scroll, but in certain documents there was also a summary of the contents written on the outside, like a table of contents. What John sees here is a legal document that has been sealed legally with seven seals. With official documents, usually wax was dripped along the seam of a scroll. Official witnesses "stamped" the hot wax with a seal (somewhat like a notary public does today with ink), sealing the document until it

See *PREACHING* on page 6

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



## Valerie Burnett

Hometown: Bartlett, TN  
Home Church: Bellevue Baptist Church  
Major: Christian Studies  
Year: Junior

“My time at Union University has changed my life in every sense of the expression. The experiences I’ve had here, from chapel services to hanging out with friends in the dorm rooms, have been precious, and God has used the relationships I’ve formed in powerful ways to move me deeper in my walk with Him.

Academically, the classes at Union have challenged me to reach farther and deeper than I ever dreamed possible. I have been encouraged to struggle through difficult issues in order to come to a thoroughly Christian worldview. The professors at Union not only demand excellence from their students, but also are willing to invest personally in them. I treasure the relationships that I have formed with my professors; their impact in my life is incalculable.”

# WORSHIPPING



## Triangular Worship

Michael Penny, D.M.A.  
Associate Professor of Music

When it comes to worship, what is our real thrust? What is our real aim? I submit we often do not allow our picture of worship to grow and refine.

Dorothy Sayers in her book *The Mind of the Maker* brilliantly shows how many works of art are flawed because they do not recognize the Trinity aspect of creation. By this she means that all creations have an idea (which Sayers corresponds to the Father), energy (or action, which corresponds to the Son) and power (what it does, that is, the reaction of those who encounter the creation, here corresponding to the Spirit). Many works of art are flawed because they concentrate on one member of this Trinity and ignore (or their creators failed to recognize) one of the others. A theoretical example may be a chapel speaker here on the Union campus who has a wonderful idea in his message but who uses such high-falutin' theological terms that the students fail to understand him.

Can this not also be true of worship? It is true that one of our main tasks as followers of Jesus is to make disciples. But when we come together for corporate worship, aren't there other forces at work?

---

*We are to direct praise to God (Psalm 119:175, 22:3 and others) as well as edify and have fellowship with the brethren (Ephesians 5:19).*

---

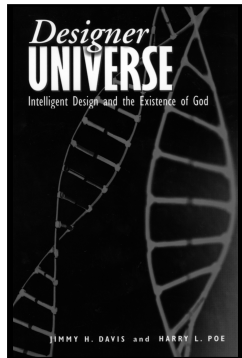
Yes, every service ought to be designed to win souls, to evangelize. But they should at the same time direct praise to God and fellowship and edification to our brethren. All three elements should be present.

We can certainly and deliberately emphasize one over the other in a given service; a revival service is designed primarily as a soul-winning outreach in most churches. But it also contains praise to God and strengthening for the church members (hence the term "revival"). A praise service, including a Christmas presentation by the choir that takes up the whole service, may place more emphasis on praising God. But it will also provide opportunity for persons to come to know Christ. A service in honor of Miss Effie who has played the organ for 40 years, or a pastor appreciation Sunday, or Mother's Day recognition, places strong emphasis on edifying the body. But it will certainly contain praise and a time for giving one's life to Christ.

May I suggest first, that we examine our worship to see if perhaps the legs of the Trinity triangle aren't a bit skewed--Sayers uses the term "scalene." Second, may I suggest we reconsider our opinion of certain types of service? The choir cantatas need not be just for show or self-indulgence; the handbell choir can indeed be a tool for praise, edification and

*See WORSHIPPING on page 7*

## READING



### Designer Universe: Intelligent Design and the Existence of God

**By Jimmy H. Davis and  
Harry L. Poe  
Broadman and Holman, 2002**

Does the universe display design? How compelling is the evidence for someone who does not know the Designer? Can someone come to know the Designer by observing the design? Does the evidence compel only one conclusion about the origin of the design?

These are some of the questions addressed in *Designer Universe*, a collaboration between Union's professor of chemistry, Jimmy H. Davis, and professor of Christian studies, Harry L. Poe. The authors write from the perspective of faith. Not only do they believe that the universe was designed, but that they also know the Designer.

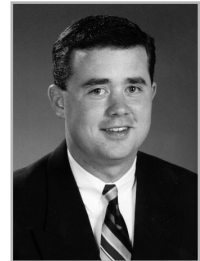
This book explores why the notion of the design of the universe should suddenly reappear at the end of the twentieth century after its supposed demise at the hands of Darwinian naturalism. The first three chapters of the book explore the different ways in which people have considered design over the last three thousand years or so. The authors mention briefly how different

## REVIEWING

### Expository Exultation



Ray Van Neste, Ph.D.  
Director, Center for Biblical Studies  
Assistant Professor of Christian Studies



Todd Brady,  
Minister to the University

As we consider worship in this issue it will be good for us to consider the preaching of the Word, which has historically been considered the climax of the corporate worship of the Church. The fact that preaching is too often not considered a part of worship probably says something about our preaching. If our preaching is centered on ourselves, then indeed it will not be worshipful. However, if our preaching is, as it should be, focused on God and His glory as the One who alone can satisfy our deepest desires, then preaching cannot help but be a part of worship both for the preacher and the congregation. Two books stand out in our minds as great resources in encouraging such preaching- preaching which John Piper has labeled "Expository Exultation."

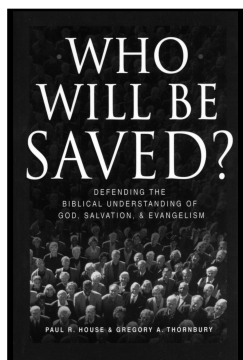
The first book is written by John Piper and is titled *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* (Baker, 1990). From the first line of the Preface to the last sentence of the book, Piper powerfully articulates that the privilege and responsibility of proclaiming the supremacy of God is the greatest and most glorious work that the preacher does. With a call for God-motivated, God-saturated, and God-glorifying preaching, Piper builds his appeal on the claim that the people of God are starving for the greatness of God. Theologically grounded, passionately communicated, scripturally soaked, and practically focused, this potent work will lift the spirits of anyone who has been called by God to proclaim His Word and challenge them to become more serious and more determined than ever to truly preach the Word.

While many in the modern church may call for practical pointers and helpful hints concerning the living of daily life, Piper reminds us that in a world where no one seems to be in control, a God who is supreme and sovereign over creation is waiting to be savored by those who take the time to listen to us preachers. The example of Jonathan Edwards' preaching is a poignant reminder that the preacher whose life and words are ablaze with the supremacy of God cannot help but be heard.

A fresh reminder that preaching is not primarily about those who hear us, but about the One for Whom we speak, this book will challenge you to fill your preaching with more and more of God. Upon reading this book one will empathize with Paul who said, "Woe to me if I do not preach!" (1 Cor 9:16). However, considering the gravity of the preacher's task to present to his people the absolute, all-consuming supremacy of God on a consistent basis will certainly lead the reader to his knees in desperate prayer before a Holy God- agreeing with Paul once again, "Who is adequate for these things?!" (2 Cor 2:16).

The second book, *Spirit Empowered Preaching*, by Arturo G. Azurdia III (Christian Focus Publications, 1998) addresses our inability and desperate need for God's enablement if we are to preach as we ought. The goal of preaching, Azurdia states, is the transformation

## READING



### Who Will Be Saved?

#### Defending the Biblical Understanding of God, Salvation, & Evangelism

By Paul R. House and  
Gregory A. Thornbury  
Crossway Books, 2000

For centuries Christians agreed that God is sovereign, that He does not change, that He is both kind and all-powerful. Yet in recent decades process theologians have regularly depicted God as a constantly evolving deity, and postmodernists have defined Him in diverse, even contradictory ways. A number of scholars — some of them with evangelical roots or affiliations — have even gone so far as to claim that salvation may come through other religions and exclusively through a conscious personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Given these internal and external challenges, evangelical Christianity must reassert the inerrant, biblical definition of God and the doctrine of salvation, and do so in a way that is convincing in our postmodern setting. That is the goal of *Who Will Be Saved?*

Some of the most significant figures in evangelical theology (including Carl Henry, R. Albert Mohler, Jr., Donald

*See READING on page 7*

## ENGAGING



### Worship and the Word

Gregory A. Thornbury, Ph.D.

Director, Carl F.H. Henry Center for Christian Leadership  
Assistant Professor of Christian Studies

Many conscientious pastors today feel severe pressures from modern culture with respect to worship service planning. Such pressures, of course, are intensified by the heightened expectations of church members who live in an entertainment-driven culture. We sit passively in front of screens of various sorts (whether computer, TV, or the like) and demand to be amused. Many families today could not imagine life without cable television, computer games, and the local video store. It is not surprising, then, when the average American comes to church and expects the church to conform to the entertainment mentality. As a result, worship planners find themselves tempted to think of the gathering of Christians on Sunday morning as an “audience” rather than as the “congregation” of the body of Christ.

Biblical patterns for worship defy such expectations for amusement. Throughout the New Testament, we see both by command and example what our priorities in Christian worship should be. Congregational gatherings must emphasize the centrality of the expositional preaching of the word of God, prayer (both of confession and praise), and congregational singing. For the moment, let us set aside the matter of preaching and consider the two latter elements.

The question of a proper mixture of the elements of worship is indeed an urgent one today. The regulative principle (i.e. all elements and activities in worship are drawn directly from Scripture) requires serious emphasis on prayer and hearty congregational singing. An analysis of the New Testament reveals that the prayers of the people of God are to be earnest, steadfast, and constant. (Rom. 12:12; 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 1:19, 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:1, 4:5.) We must keep in mind that the apostle Paul wrote his epistles first and foremost to the local church as a corporate body. Therefore his exhortations should be taken in the first instance congregationally — a word for individual devotional life, yes — but exhortations especially for the local church.

I believe that of the elements outlined above, the importance of congregational prayer and singing are currently the most undervalued elements of worship in evangelical churches today. With respect to the former, most prayers in worship receive attention only so far as their inclusion in a bulletin or order of service. Stated differently, many prayers suffer from little forethought. Given the emphasis of the Scriptures listed above, prayer in worship must be earnest (not an afterthought), central (as opposed to optional), intercessory, remembering the specific needs of the saints and the world (rather than non-descript), and humble before God (not presumptuous or florid).

Another under-emphasized element of worship is singing as a conscious and valuable act of corporate worship. In Eph. 5:18, Paul stressed the importance of congregational singing, stating that we as the gathered church should be “addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.” In congregational singing, church members “address one another.” The

*See ENGAGING on page 5*

## Celebrate Today!

### The 7th Annual Senior Adult Extravaganza Banquet & Concert

Thursday, August 1, 2002  
6:30 p.m.

For more information call  
731-661-5162

#### REVIEWING..continued from page 3

of lives. If we fail at that, we fail entirely. Clearly then, we are doomed for failure if God does not intervene. Thus, if we expect the Spirit's power, Azurdia argues, we must use His means (preaching) and His method (Christ-centered interpretation). Azurdia also poignantly describes the congregation's responsibility to pray for God's blessing on their preacher.

This book will challenge, rebuke, convict, humble, encourage, and stir up a renewed desire to go at it again! Our hearts were truly stirred. We want to be a part of 'the proclamation of the gospel, by men clothed with an alien power to overcome the most violent resistance of sinners' (p. 66). We yearn to know more of that 'other-worldly kind of courage that can compel an ordinary man to invade the domain of darkness and demand the deliverance of people enslaved to that realm' (p.126). And yet, we know what it is to be 'a man possessed by a holy compulsion but hobbled by human inability' (p. 118). This book will remind you that the answer is neither to lower expectations of the effectiveness of preaching, nor to rely subtly on human oratory to 'back it up,' but to learn ever more of our weakness and to find in that weakness the power of God to glorify Himself.

#### ENGAGING..continued from page 4

shared theological confession expressed in singing with all one's heart encourages a fellow brother or sister. It is our opportunity to exhort one another, and bear witness to the world. We build one another up in the faith when we can hear one another sing.

Sadly, inspired congregational singing has fallen on hard times. People increasingly rely upon the intensity or performance of a music leader, praise team, or soloist to make the worship experience "meaningful." Churchgoers refer to songs performed by an individual or a group as "special music" — as if hearty congregational singing was not special! Perhaps, by God's grace, congregational singing might yet become viewed as "special" once again.

Finally, since the content of the Word of God defines biblical worship, the majority of time must be given over to Scriptural exposition. We know that it was the preaching of the apostles which formed the core of the corporate worship meetings of the early church. So many other activities in public worship threaten to squeeze out the preaching and teaching of the Bible from its elevated and normative role. To the contrary, the early church "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42) Our Christian gatherings must be devoted to the teaching of the Word of God, which is the central aspect of Christian worship par excellence.

God created His people by His Word. Abram was called out by the Word of God, Israel's identity derived from obedience to the written law of God, and the church is by definition a people of the Book. Indeed, Hebrews informs us that the universe itself holds together by virtue of "the word of [Christ's] power." (Heb. 1:3) In our preaching, praying, and singing, let us place the Word of God in its proper place of centrality.

## Darkness to Light

Peter 2:9-10

Union University students are traveling to the ends of the earth this summer to share the message of Christ. Please be in prayer for them as they engage the world with the Truth of Christ.

The following is a list of countries and states where students are serving. There are 58 students involved in international mission projects and 93 involved in domestic missions.

#### International Service:

Australia, Brazil, Central Asia, France, Dominican Republic, East Asia, Global Youth Ministry, Honduras, India, Kosovo, Mexico, North Africa, Romania, Scotland, Senegal, Southeast Asia, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia.

#### Domestic Service:

Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington.

#### Summer GO Trips:

Burkina Faso, North Africa, Rome.

---

## R. G. Lee Center for Christian Ministry

Dr. R. G. Lee embodied the passion and thoughtfulness that pastors aspire toward in their ministries. He was a great Christian leader who literally touched the world through his teaching, writing and especially his preaching. The Lee family graciously donated Dr. Lee's scrapbooks, sermon outlines and a large portion of his extensive library to Union University to serve as a continuing resource for pastors for years to come. Union is grateful to be able to carry on his important legacy through the R. G. Lee Center for Christian Ministry. The purpose of this Center is to encourage and enhance the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One way that this is accomplished is through the R. G. Lee Society of Fellows. The R. G. Lee Fellows spend study time on campus in Dr. Lee's library and prepare a sermon. All of these sermons are available on-line at [www.uu.edu/centers/rglee](http://www.uu.edu/centers/rglee). Please feel free to visit this website and add it to your list of preaching resources.

---

### READING...continued from page 3

religions and philosophies have thought about design. They then explore how philosophical views have influenced both the theology and the science of the West.

Chapters four through six explore three major realms of scientific study in which major breakthroughs have provided renewed speculation on design. The chapters explore cosmology, math and physics, and chemistry and biology. In the course of this survey the authors introduce the new terminology of the design discussions: anthropic principles, irreducible complexity, and specified complexity. The discussion suggests that science has been quite successful at describing processes, but has failed at explaining origins.

### PREACHING...continued from page 1

could be opened legally. What is the content of this legal document? It contains the climax of God's purposes for his people—their inheritance.

And this is where the crisis comes in. In v. 2 a strong angel asks, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" The crisis? "And no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book and to break its seals." In other words, no one was found who could bring about God's purposes for his people. Notice the comprehensive nature of this inability—no angel, no human, no creature whatsoever could open the book. We live in an age in which people want to be "self-made;" we want to "pull ourselves up by our bootstraps." We feel we can forge our own destiny, without God. John Dewey once wrote, "Man is capable, if he will but exercise the required courage, intelligence and effort, of shaping his own fate." Although much can be said for self-initiative and hard work, this brand of humanism is sorely out of touch with reality. Philosopher Simon Weil remarked that humanism "was not wrong in thinking that truth, beauty, liberty, and equality are of infinite value, but in thinking that man can get them for himself without grace." If we are going to find the purposes of God for us, the grand gift of all that he wants our lives to be, we are going to need help. We cannot "open the book" ourselves.

So, what is John's response to this crisis? "And I began to weep greatly . . ." He is left in utter despair, which happens to people who know there must be more to life but fail to look to God for help. This type of despair reaches down into the nitty gritty details of life. All of our little crises come back to this point—we are limited and need help. Thankfully, the passage does not end there! John now encounters the Christ!

---

*In our hopelessness and despair, in our complete inability to bring about the purposes of God for ourselves, Jesus, through his sacrificial death and powerful resurrection, opens up true life for us.*

---

**2. The Christ (5:5-7).** John is told, "Stop weeping, behold!" A great deal of emphasis in Scripture is placed on seeing from the right perspective. At times we need to look up, or look at things from a different angle. Here, someone comes into the picture, who changes everything! He is, first of all, "the Lion from the Tribe of Judah." In Genesis 49:8-12 Judah receives the prophecy that He would be like a lion, a ruler who would overcome His enemies by His overwhelming power. So this image is an image of power. Jesus is also called "the Root of David," which, based on Isaiah 11:1-10, is another image of the strength of the Messiah but also speaks of His wisdom and justice. Finally, the Christ is shown to be a lamb, which, of course is a picture of sacrifice and weakness. So, in some way, He is a lion who is a lamb; the Lion of Judah conquers by his suffering. Jesus overwhelmed death and sin by letting His enemies do their worst to him on the cross. This is a strange lamb, however, with 7 horns and 7 eyes. The horns (Daniel 7:7-8:24) again show his power and the eyes (Zechariah 4:10) show that he knows everything. This lamb is the sacrifice and sufferer, but He is, at the same time, the all-powerful, all-knowing God. And His power is manifest in that He is able to take the book and open it; He is able to bring about the

*continued on page 7*

*WORSHIPPING...continued from page 2*

even evangelization, likewise the organ; RA recognition can be used for all three as well. Not only is it questionable to think of a service as having only one emphasis, I'm not sure we can rightly say that it truly can.

Even within the service, an anthem or solo or hymn can have its scalene Trinity triangle. Consider how each relates to the trinity we have mentioned: evangelism, praise, and edification. But in a structural sense the worship triangle can also be skewed. Is the music designed to communicate to the people or does it fail to reach them at times? Likewise, do we not often settle for second-rate music or even preaching in order to coerce our people into the position we want them in? Does a time of welcome or handshaking come so late in the service it is difficult for the people to "settle down" for the breaking of the Word? I feel that the triangle analogy is apt: if one leg is skewed, it must mean the others are too. Our worship must have idea (careful and prayerful planning), energy (appropriate action) and power (appropriate response). Francis Schaeffer said that there is no jealousy among the Trinity, but let us be aware that our understanding of the Holy Trinity is reflected in our worship, whether we realize it or not. Take this moment to examine the legs of your triangle.

*READING...continued from page 4*

Carson, et. al.) explore the traditional view of the doctrine of salvation and its impact on evangelism in this age. Beginning with the doctrine of God as the author of salvation, pressing issues such as the exclusivity of the gospel and modern evangelism strategies, are examined. It's a forceful, clear presentation of how to stay true to biblical doctrines and faithful to the Great Commission in postmodern times.



Franklin Pollard



Rick White



Paul N. Jackson



More more information and registration:  
Union University Pastors' School  
731.661.5160  
[www.uu.edu](http://www.uu.edu)



Greg McFadden



Sheila McFadden



Charles Fowler

*PREACHING...continued from page 6*

purposes of God for his people! "He took it out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne." This is the great news of the Gospel. In our hopelessness and despair, in our complete inability to bring about the purposes of God for ourselves, Jesus, through his sacrificial death and powerful resurrection, opens up true life for us. He is able to bring about an inheritance for the people of God, an inheritance that includes forgiveness of sins and eternal life. How then should we respond? With crowning praise.

**3. The Crowning Praise (5:8-14).** Once he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the 24 elders respond by falling down before the Lamb in worship. They sing a new song:

*You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain and purchased for God with your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation!*

In other words, they praise the Lamb of God for the salvation he has brought to humanity. This rolling song of praise then issues out from the center of heaven. In vv. 11-12 the praise expands to include countless angels who proclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" Then (v. 13) "every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them" get in on the scene. They praise the Lamb who sits on the throne and shout of His blessing, honor, glory, and dominion.

So, the Lamb's ability to open the book, to open up salvation for people, giving answer to our hopeless despair, results in resounding praise. If Christ is this powerful, if He can solve the Cosmic Crisis, He also can solve all the lesser crises we face in this life. This answer to the greatest crisis of humanity puts all other crises in perspective. This day as we think on Christ's work on the cross and his power to bring about all of God's purposes in our lives, let us join the chorus and worship Him!

# A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Greetings from Union University! I know you are in the middle of a hectic summer. I hope that as you struggle to meet all of the demands upon your time, that you have managed to find enough time to read the second issue of the Union University *Bulletin* mailed to you in mid-May. I pray it was a blessing to you. Likewise, I hope this third issue will be as well. Our writers have chosen to focus this issue on worship. The topic of worship is often discussed and debated, but for a myriad of reasons, our churches and church leaders still experience disagreement and struggle for much wanted common ground. We do not pretend to know all of the answers, nor do we believe this issue of the *Bulletin* will resolve all of the current debate. However, we do believe that we are offering insight into the heart of biblical worship.

Worship is at the forefront of conversation whenever pastors gather together for fellowship these days. Unfortunately too many of these conversations focus on frustrations experienced while trying to manage competing expectations by those involved, those

attending and those leading our worship services. It would be a great joy to hear pastors sharing testimonies of encounters with Almighty God and the corresponding stories of changed lives. This is truly what I believe God intended for our worship experiences. Gary M. Burge states that "Worshippers seek an encounter with the glory of God, the transcendent power and numinous mystery of the divine – and in so doing, they recognize a Lord whose majesty evokes strong praise, petition, and transformation." I feel certain that Burge's words resonate with your heart as they do mine. Perhaps an article or statement contained in this issue of the *Bulletin* will inspire you to evaluate and plan your corporate worship experiences with renewed vigor for helping our congregations encounter Almighty God.

God is so gracious to allow you and me to serve as His instruments to build and equip His Church. I pray He uses this publication to be a blessing to your ministry.

For His Glory,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles A. Fowler".

Charles A. Fowler

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 608  
Jackson, TN

UNION UNIVERSITY  
1050 UNION UNIVERSITY  
JACKSON, TN 38305