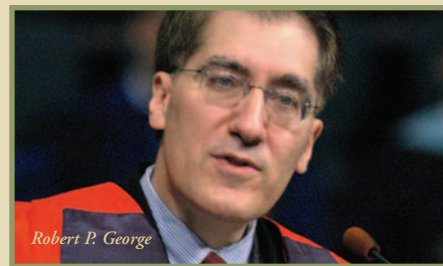


Lloyd John Ogilvie



Michael Spradlin



Robert P. George

# UNION AWARDS DIPLOMAS TO 788 IN 2003

**I**f we might make any mistake tonight, it would be to underestimate the calling of God,” Lloyd John Ogilvie, retired chaplain of the United States Senate, told members of the spring 2003 graduating class. “He’ll always give you something only He could accomplish through you.”

In an address entitled “Declaration of Dependence,” Ogilvie encouraged graduates with a message from 2 Timothy 1:7. The fear Paul writes about, he said, can best be described as “refusing to take the tremendous opportunity which is given.” He warned graduates not to make the same mistake.

Several thousand people attended the 178th commencement service on May 24 on the Great Lawn. Degrees were conferred on 360 graduates in an evening ceremony that featured the university’s symphonic band, choir and Ogilvie’s address.

Senior class president Casey Stafford presented the gift from the Class of 2003, an amphitheatre that will be constructed on the north side of the Miller Clock Tower. Stafford thanked the university for the “wedding of faith and learning” he and his class experienced at Union and presented architectural renderings of the amphitheatre to President David S. Dockery.

This year’s University Academic Achievement Awards went to Paul Nicholas Butler, Lee Christopher Holt, Derek Scott Moore, Sherryl Lynne Schrock and Stephen Christopher Wilson. The awards recognize members of the graduating class who have the highest academic achievement and have completed a minimum of 56 hours in residence at Union.

Rebecca Carlson received the 92nd Elizabeth Tigrett Award, for the outstand-

ing senior in each graduating class. Since 1912 the award winner has been selected by the faculty based on the citizenship, character, leadership, scholarship and service of a student who has completed an entire undergraduate program at Union.

In the fall commencement service, more than 2,200 people watched as 242 students - Union’s largest December graduating class - received degrees Dec. 13 at West Jackson Baptist Church.

Robert P. George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence, director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University and a member of President Bush’s Bioethics Council, delivered the commencement address titled, “Christianity, Conscience, and Law.” He dedicated his message to the memory of renowned theologian Carl F.H. Henry, who died Dec. 7.

George reminded graduates of the biblical story of the rich, young ruler, told in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

“The story of the rich young man reveals just how stern a monitor Christian conscience can be,” George said. “Although the challenge for the young man was to sacrifice his riches for the gospel, for each of us it may be something else. Perhaps in the cause of justice for the unborn (or some other just cause) we are called by Christ to risk reputation, social respectability, prospects for career advancement, friends or family, health or comfort. Each of us must pray and reflect upon our own unique circumstances, opportunities, talents and abilities in making the judgment of conscience required of us in the matter.”

George said Christians should discern the requirements of conscience in light of the gospel, “each of us must consider that

he or she is called by Christ himself to do more than merely meet the moral minimum of the natural law. One way or another, the Lord calls each of us to self-sacrificing love.”

George was presented with an honorary doctor of letters from the university.

Hoyt Wilson, the longtime pastor of First Baptist Church, Lexington, was awarded the Robert E. Craig Service Award.

Since 1978 Wilson served as senior pastor of the West Tennessee church. He recently retired from the pastorate but remains actively involved in ministry. Wilson is a Union University graduate. He holds graduate degrees from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In August, 186 members of the summer graduating class received their degrees in commencement ceremonies at West Jackson Baptist Church.

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary President Michael Spradlin addressed the graduates with a message entitled “Praying for Results.”

“It is critical that we as Christians spend time in prayer,” said Spradlin. “Specifically, praying for results.” The primary result for which one should pray, according to Spradlin, is impact in the kingdom of God. The goal, he said, is “to be not just a good citizen, but to be followers of Jesus Christ and good citizens of the kingdom of God” [making] an eternity’s worth of difference.”

Union University National Alumni Association President Jerome Teel provided the charge to the graduates. “You have been blessed by your studies here,” he said. “Now, you must be a blessing to others.”



English major Ashley Guinn  
at Spring Graduation 2003