

## Questions for GHBC

1. Please name some Christian programs or organizations that you support and are actively participating in or have participated with in the past or are not opposed to participation with. Examples Fellowship of Christian Athletes, local Rescue Missions, Interfaith food shuttles, recovery groups like Grief Share and others.

### **In the past:**

Religious Community Services (RCS) in New Bern, NC. This was where about 30 churches worked together along with the Salvation Army to care for the hungry, destitute, homeless, battered women with children, etc. It was kept very Christ-honoring that helped the needy. In order to get a bed for the night, the organization would require you to go to the police dept. to ensure there was no warrant for your arrest and that you were not a predator, etc. It was not a church, but churches could ensure that no one was going from church to church trying to get as much money as possible. Everyone who asked for funds was directed to RCS first. This helped all of us hold folks accountable.

We had Celebrate Recovery (CR) every week and saw many escape the addiction of drugs, alcohol, even hoarding, etc. We were aware of some controversies with Saddleback Church, so we tailored the program theologically to fit our church and were clear about the Gospel and Christ. We used it as an outreach and invited all to attend worship on Sunday/Wednesday and other events. I had the pleasure of baptizing several who were a part of that ministry.

There was Interfaith Refugee Ministry (IRM) that helped process the Burmese refugees coming out of refugee camps in Thailand. We would work with them to sponsor families and get them moving in the direction of self-sufficiency but would not partner with IRM as they were very theologically liberal. Because of that, we started 4 Sunday school classes and eventually sponsored a church plant for these new citizens.

We did not have a Grief Share program but handled grief ministry through our Bible Fellowship Groups (Sunday school class on steroids) and our Hope Network (counseling ministry).

In Waller, TX, we had Waller Area Restoration Ministries (WARM). It was similar to RCS but did not have beds but would help place needy, especially women with children in a shelter for protection.

My family in the past has supported the Baptist Children's Homes of NC.

### **Presently:**

Our church in the past has supported Faith Mission in Brenham, TX. It was similar to RCS and WARM, but they got cozy with the government and compromised in a few areas, and would not make their accounting available to supporting churches. We, therefore, quit sending them funds but will still partner with them for hurricane relief, hurricane-refuge relief, etc. We will join to help a great need but will not financially support them mixing the government and the watered-down Gospel in day-to-day activities.

Our church did have a Celebrate Recovery, but Covid killed it and when we attempted to restart it, it did not gain traction. However, the leaders and those who were serious about recovery, do still stay in touch, meet, and support one another so if we ever re-launch it, we could. Again, we tailored it to our church and was clear about God's Word and Christ.

The church has supported a few young men who were in pursuit of an Eagle Scout achievement with projects, etc. However, we do not host a group as we realize that even this long-standing organization has shifted toward cultural compliance which we do not support.

Presently my family sponsors a teenager in Kenya through Childcare Worldwide.

An organization may do good things to help people physically but there is so much that is going on in our world that I cannot support. A local church has a PFLAG chapter, another church that seeks to bring Christians and Muslims together, etc. and of this, I will not join. Another thing that I will not be a part of is what happened a few years ago when some in the SBC were seeking to utilize the "camel method" of evangelizing Muslims.

2. Please name any other organizations that you are a part of or may have been a part of in the past such as FreeMasons, Fema Pastors, and Red Cross.

None. In fact, I have had to do recovery ministry for some who have come out of the Free Masons, and their kids. Regarding the Red Cross and being a military man, I have given blood on many occasions either at the military clinic or when the Red Cross would collect blood. Other than that, I have not been involved with them. I have never encountered a FEMA pastor but if I did and overheard something that was in violation of Scripture, I would address it. I did receive SBC disaster training, but that certification has expired. I think it is good for 3 years and then you must attend refresher training.

3. We would like to know your overall opinion of what is happening within the Southern Baptist Convention right now?

The SBC is attempting to be relevant in the changing culture at the cost of the Gospel. I could be wrong but think that some of it is financially driven. At the SBC annual gathering in Houston in 2013, the seminary presidents were all discussing/arguing about Calvinism, I thought that it was sad that it had come to that point.

I think sexual abuse has happened for many years, probably more so in the past before electronic surveillance and we are just now beginning to hear of it and how it was not handled correctly in many cases. Regarding this issue, there can be no 2<sup>nd</sup> chance. The leadership is entrusted with the trust of the congregation and that must be protected by transparency. The church must deal correctly with those who are recovering sexual predators.

From my own experiences, we have had to deal with some who have had a past legal issue with the sexual abuse of a minor. In one case, we spoke to the man, and he agreed to follow our guidelines to worship and never caused a problem. When he wanted to transfer to another church, we attempted to tell the other pastor, but he would not return the call. We tried to inform him, but he was too busy or didn't care to be informed. This is a tragedy. In another case, we discovered that a man had a past life as one who took advantage of a client, he was counseling. We attempted to meet with him, but he refused, left, and we never heard from him again. In another case, we discovered that a man was "stalking" and "grooming" a young girl. We caught it and attempted to confront him, but he fled. We notified the pastors in our community so they would be prepared. The SBC in all cases cannot compromise in this area, regardless of who it is, especially their leaders.

I support the reaching of others for Christ and for decades the SBC has strived to do this with excellence through less than excellent (fallen but redeemed) missionaries. We haven't always gotten it right.

The one thing I do appreciate about the SBC and where it has not compromised (as far as I know) is the exclusiveness of heterosexual marriage and the exclusiveness of the truth of God's Word.

Another area that I have seen that hasn't been handled well in some SBC churches is the role of women in the church. Various groups will have their proof texts and, in some cases, they can have the right theology but they are incorrectly applying it from the wrong texts and communicating it incorrectly. When not done correctly and humbly we can make a mess out of things where it need not be. We say what Scripture says and don't try to go beyond it to make people comply with it (kind of like Eve did in Genesis 3:2-3).

4. What do you think of the embracing of CRT; the "wokeness" within the SBC?

This too has the SBC attempting to be relevant and engage in social issues that are not near as important as leading the lost to Christ. The SBC is to be an evangelical organization, not a social organization. I am much more attuned to Christ than the SBC. The SBC is not the savior of the world, Christ is, and my loyalty is to Him first.

So, when I come to something in the text that seems to be speaking into an area that the culture is all over the place regarding, I try to humbly reveal the context of the text and how that applies today, and from that, we treat everyone with dignity, respect, and at all times realize that the person we are addressing is someone that Jesus deemed worthy of His death. When we conduct ourselves humbly and treat others as we should, a lot of the wokeness will die (but not all) and what does not die, we cannot devote our resources toward as the more important task is leading the one nearest hell to Christ. However, when encountering a "woke" person, I always leave the Lord opportunity to work in the person's life. I don't want to get in His way.

5. What are your thoughts concerning the SBC president that was recently elected and all of the controversy surrounding him?

I am not one who gets too involved in convention politics, but I am aware of Ed Littleton and accusations regarding sermon plagiarism. The internet has made some preachers lazy, and it appeared that Ed was taking a shortcut to sermon preparation. It would have been ok for Ed to use the outline (the points) but utilize his own work and experiences to highlight the Biblical text and present his experiences and research as his own, not use another pastor's work as his own. This is unethical.

From what I have read, Ed has not been as timely, transparent, and forthright as he should be. According to what I have read, he used some resources from JD Greer with his permission. This is ok. What is not ok is preaching it as your own regardless of how much permission was given. The person in the pew was left to believe that what Ed preached was his own prayerfully sermon preparation and it wasn't.

6. Are you aware of the corruption within the North American Mission Board? If so, what are your thoughts on that?

I am aware of accusations regarding using tithes and offerings to help foster a favorable vote for Ed Littleton. Also, the accusations regarding prominent figures in the SBC receiving "financial perks" that should have been allocated for reaching the lost and not lining someone's bank account.

The church where I presently serve has had an eye on things like this for years and we give very little to the SBC via the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention which is the theologically conservative state convention in Texas. We fund missionaries and mission

agencies that are like-minded directly. Therefore, we are not contributing to those we are not in agreement with (some NAMB stuff). We get regular updates from those we support and if they are unable to provide an update, provide some sense of accounting, activities, results, etc., we no longer support them. We see ourselves as accountable for the financial resources we are stewards of.

7. What are your thoughts on Critical Race Theory and the "wokeness" that's been adopted by many churches and Christians in general?

There is one race: the human race. Christ is the equalizer and that is seen in Colossians 3:11 - In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile (*past religious and cultural background*), circumcised or uncircumcised (*ethnic and religious background*), barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free (*lifestyle and employment status*). Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.

Also, if one studies world history, mankind has done evil, ever since Genesis 3. Native Americans killed their neighbors and stole each other's land over and over. In Europe, nation upon nation conquered and enslaved others. In this country, there were things done that were not right. Unfortunately, the church in America turned a blind eye to it and should have read Exodus 21:16 - *"Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper's possession."*

Kidnapping someone is a theft of a person and was and remains today wrong.

However, it is high time that we learn from the past, quite blaming those that are long dead, and live for the now and the future. This advice is good even for the unbeliever.

I believe Critical Race Theory detracts from the real issue(s) and stirs up emotions where they are not needed or in ways that they are not needed.

Wokeness is also a terrible thing. If you recall, I told you about the sermon I preached; "Your Past does not Dictate Your Future" about the homosexual, one who has had an abortion, and one who has had a sex-change operation, that if they are seeking Jesus, they are welcome here with open arms. The other sermon had to do with truth and that untruth had its source in Satan as John 8:44 tells us. Therefore, the author and object of Islam is Satan.

I did not preach that to start a fight. It was a sermon to help us see through the demonic fog that has engulfed many believers and the churches they attend in the name of political correctness.

Let me sum it up by this. I preach down the crease of the bible; truth but do so in love and speak in such a manner that the person knows or should know I'm more concerned about their soul than their social happiness.

8. What is your interpretation of Romans 13:1-5? (there are many believers who are not interpreting this passage correctly)

You are correct, many are not, have not interpreted this correctly. To understand this verse, we must recognize when it was said. Paul said it when Israel was under Roman rule. That is the immediate and specific context. However, it is also stated in a way that is timeless; meaning before and after the specific time in which it is given.

Some take this verse to mean explicit compliance with the government. This verse can't mean that. Look at North Korea, China, or the former Soviet Union. God never condones the arbitrary killing or aborting of a female child as was the case in China. This is just one example where a Christian is not to comply, even when it may require your martyrdom.

The Bible has NEVER called anyone to bow a knee to evil. There is always the right or greater good.

In Joshua 2, Rahab recognized the higher good and hid the spies. She defied her government. In Daniel 3:16-18 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to follow the government and its religious system. In Daniel 6, Daniel did not follow the government's religion and was thrown in the lion's den. These are but a few examples of a servant of God not going along with an evil government.

So, let's get to the time of Romans 13. Israel is under Roman rule, and they are there because of their disobedience. If you look at what is forewarned in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, God forewarned the Hebrew people that if they followed His commands, they would prosper. If they did not, He would be patient with them but warned them what would come. One of the curses prescribed would be that they would have a foreign ruler over them. This of course took place in the exile but when they were back in the land and still disobedient, they had a foreign ruler over them; Rome. Rome ruled over them because of their disobedience and that rule was harsh. However, they were allowed to worship at the Temple, observe the Old Testament laws, etc. However, due to disobedience, Rome ruled over them.

So, the context of Romans 13, for those in Jerusalem is that the government is there because of your disobedience. If the nation would repent, the curses would be lifted. They, as a nation will not repent until Revelation.

The broader perspective of what Paul is saying is that for the Jew, the issue (Roman rule) is not the issue. The issue is the nation's disobedience.

For the Gentiles throughout the world, the application of this is that you follow the laws of your government (speed limit of 55, stop on red, pay taxes, etc.). But if ever the government calls you to offer your child to Molech, that is where you are unable to follow such a law because that law is evil.

People are to look to the government of God as primary because that is where our citizenship lies. In the US, we look to the government of the United States because that is where we physically, presently live. We follow the law(s) as far as it does not explicitly violate Scripture. Having served in the USMC for 20 years and lived in this country for 55 years, I have never been called (that I am aware of) to violate a command of God. Our government allows things (same-sex marriage, etc.) but I have never been forced to enter into such a relationship and I have always had the choice to do right by God.

Covid brought this to the forefront with the mask, quarantine, vaccinations, etc. We have to be careful here. We must make wise and humble decisions, statements, and actions. I don't like wearing a mask as I doubt it is all that effective. However, when I go into the grocery store, if the manager says to wear a mask, they are the authority and I wear one. If I make a scene, I just lost the opportunity to be a witness for Christ.

The vaccine, I had Covid very bad and made a health decision and weighted everything as best as I understood them and received the vaccination and will for the booster in a couple of weeks. For my family's sake, I don't want to go through that again because if I had gotten pneumonia when I had Covid, we would not be talking. It was a personal choice I made as I medically balanced everything as best as I understood it. I do not condemn those that got it nor elevate those who haven't.

Some take the mask/vaccine and attempt to force an incorrect meaning derived from Romans 13; they take the text out of its Biblical context and make a mess of things.

We must be Biblically informed (Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Romans, and without a doubt, the whole counsel of Scripture) before we get vocal and attempt to fix the entire world by a Facebook post.

Thank you for this opportunity.

