



## Pastor’s Pen

I have been writing these short articles for over 25 years. This is the first one I’ve written with some trepidation. This is because my goal has always been to write something that is positive in nature, spiritual in application, and foundationally focused on scripture. I will not stray too far from my personal goals in this edition but not everything will be positive. Recently I have been asked by many of you readers, “What’s up with the SBC these days?” I will try to answer that question.

The actual genesis of the problems the SBC is currently facing is hard to identify. I believe, as do many others, that it began with a publication of a Houston Chronicle article claiming rampant sexual abuse within the SBC. That article, published in February 2019 is online. Then at the June 2019 SBC Annual Meeting in Birmingham, messengers were informed by an advocacy group that the SBC leadership, primarily the Executive Committee, was covering up sexual abuse against women and children. This was not the case, but as we now know, truth doesn’t matter. Simply shape, state, and sound a narrative long enough and loud enough, and people will believe it is true. The 2020 SBC Annual Meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. At the 2021 Annual Meeting in Nashville a motion was approved by the messengers (who lacked adequate information) that directed the newly elected president to appoint a sexual abuse task force (SATF) that would oversee or initiate a third-party review that “includes an investigation into any allegations of abuse, mishandling of abuse, mistreatment of victims, a pattern

### Inside This Edition

Pastor’s Pen	page 1
Putting on Full Armor of God	page 3
Meet Your Deacons	page 5
Calendar	page 5
Finance Committee	page 6
Birthdays and Anniversaries	page 7

of intimidation of victims or advocates, and resistance to sexual abuse reforms”. The motion further stated the investigation was to cover a 20-year timeline (Jan.1,2000-June 14,2021) and be funded from Cooperative Program allocations. On the surface this sounds like a reasonable motion. The problem is that for many reasons it was an out of order motion. Then president, JD Greear was informed by the Parliamentarians that it was out of order. Nonetheless he allowed it on the floor and the motion passed. (Note: there are so many

details that I have firsthand knowledge of that I cannot include here due to space constraints. I am happy to visit with you personally should you desire more detailed information). The SATF hired Guidepost to do the investigation and then brought two recommendations to the 2022 SBC Annual Meeting in Anaheim. Messengers (still lacking full knowledge of the ramifications of their vote) voted to adopt the two SATF recommendations. The result would be establishing a new Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force (ARITF). The dollar amount for this is \$4 million for the first year. This money was pledged by Dr. Kevin Ezell from Send Relief Funds. The messengers also voted to adopt resolution #6: on Lament and Repentance for Sexual Abuse. This resolution said the SBC publicly apologizes and asks for forgiveness for our failure to care well for sexual abuse survivors and that the SBC publicly laments the harm our actions and inactions have caused survivors of sexual abuse. In the aftermath of Anaheim and against the back drop of the foregoing, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) opened an investigation of the SBC. We were formally notified last Friday (August 12, 2022). The full details and scope have not been identified. Again, far too much to say here than space allows.

It seems to me and many others that there is a liberal takeover of the SBC afoot. The group of individuals involved are united, intentional and making significant progress. Using the false narrative of rampant sexual abuse and cover up is a platform that garners much sympathy and support. I readily admit that there are bad apples in every organization. I also say without equivocation that there is no room in the SBC for even one sexual predator or pedophile. But neither is there any room for false narratives. We are facing perilous times, just as Paul reminded Timothy would be the case:

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

II Timothy 3:1

Pray for the SBC and for FSBC as we seek God’s will for us going forward.

Standing on His promises,

Pastor Jim Gregory

### **Operation Christmas Child**

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry formed by Franklin Graham that takes Christmas gifts and the Gospel to underprivileged children all over the world. We are collecting items to fill shoeboxes in November. Each month we will highlight a different item to bring in. For September please bring in school supplies.

# PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

## APOLOGETICS - FROM BOB NEUBAUER

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### Essentials of the Faith God's Self Existence

If anything exists something must have always existed. For if there was ever a time when nothing existed, no God and no universe, then nothing would exist today. In fact there would not even be a today in which nothing could exist. Since even the most radical of so-called scientists admit the universe had a beginning then whatever existed must have had the power to create the universe. Therefore God not only existed but He must have always existed. This takes us to Genesis 1:1, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* All that we see, all that we know came into existence by the hand of the one creator God. The vastness of His creation is enormous and as time goes by we continue to learn more and more about its immensity. Yet God created it by simply speaking it into existence – Then God said, *“Let there be light”*; and *there was light.*

If God has always existed then what we need to consider is God's self-existence or what theologians call His aseity. Aseity refers to the fact that the Lord depends on nothing outside of Himself. He is totally self-sufficient and in need of nothing. While we depend on God for our very existence He depends on nothing. We need air to breathe, water to drink and food to eat. The sun needs to shine and the laws of nature like gravity need to function or we will cease to exist. God needs nothing. While we have being He is the supreme being, the one who has being in and of Himself. Hear what the apostle Paul said to the Athenians, Acts 17:24-28a *"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist."*

Aseity reflects the great difference between man and God. Yet it does not preclude His entrance into His own creation. Jesus saves us not because He needs to since the Lord of all creation needs nothing, but because of His love for us. Beyond all comprehension is how Yahweh could love sinners who from conception hate Him, and to love us to the degree that the Son would leave His eternal abode, enter His own creation, take on a human nature, live the sinless life that we could not and then offer that life for us on the cross of Calvary.

God is the Lord of time and its creator; He stands above it yet enters it to do His will. Consider that He has no beginning or end; He does not change; He is equally conscious of the past, present and future and He is not limited by the passage of time in what He can accomplish. The Bible first teaches that God is *a se* (from himself) by showing that everything belongs to Him as in Gen 14:19 *He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth* and Gen 14:22 *Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the Yahweh God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.* He owns everything because he created everything, Exodus 20:11 *"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.* God owes nothing to any of us, Romans 11:36-36 *Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.* As creatures we do not have anything that inherently belongs to us, only what our God has given us. James 1:17 *Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.*

It is true that God puts Himself under obligation to us when He has entered into the various Biblical covenants we see in the Bible (Abrahamic, Noahic, Davidic, etc.) but these are self-imposed obligations not forced on Him by anyone or anything outside of Himself. Our worship of the Lord is not to meet His needs but to express our gratitude for all He has done for us. We acknowledge in our worship that Yahweh is entirely sufficient unto Himself and sufficient to meet our needs. We utterly depend on Him. He does not depend on us at all. That is the doctrine of aseity. Aseity shows the vast difference between Yahweh and the world. In Colossians 1:16-17 we read, *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things have been created through Him and for Him He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.*

God's love for every believer is one that is not demanded, but one freely given by His grace. Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* What the Lord does both in saving some sinners and judging others comes from the nature of who He is. For our God is just and merciful at the same time. Even His justice is tempered by His mercy since He could at the moment of anyone's first sin send them to the lake of fire. Instead both Christians and unbelievers experience His benefits Matt 5:45b *for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.* His saving of anyone is not because He needs to but entirely of His salvific grace. Eph. 2:8-9 *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.* May we evermore praise our God.

## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES AT FSBC

- 4 Pot Luck Fellowship (12:30 p.m.)**
- 5 Labor Day - No MDO - Offices Closed**
- 6 Women's Ministry Team Meeting (6:30 p.m.)**
- 10 Air Force Appreciation Day**
- 12 Church Council (6:30 p.m.)**
- 13 Deacons' Meeting (7:00 p.m.)**
- 19 Bible Recap Meeting (6:30 p.m.)**
- 27 Sunday School Teachers' Training (6:30 p.m.)**
- 29 Nominating Committee Meeting (6:30 p.m.)**

### Meet your deacons - John and Michele Ring

My wife, Michele and I moved to Mountain Home with the USAF in the fall of 1992, from which I retired after nearly 22 years in aircraft maintenance. Our daughters, Andrea and Lisa, completed grade school here at North Elementary and are both grown with families of their own, giving us four grandchildren. They both completed junior and senior high attending Shiloh Christian School, which initially met in our church. Michele was the school's first teacher and principal for 14 years. She now works from home as the administrative assistant for the nearly 30 churches of the Treasure Valley Southern Baptist Association. I served on staff here at FSBC from July of 1996 through March of 2017 as Administrative Assistant and Minister of Music. I've been working as an education advisor at MHAFB for five years now. Michele and I currently minister to 3-5 year olds in Awana and 3rd-6th graders in Sunday school. I also serve on the maintenance committee and sing with the praise team. Michele works with the hostess and ladies' ministry committee and arranges the flowers at church. We were both saved in our teens and married in August of 1975. Our passion has been to serve wherever the Lord wants us to serve in His church. We also like camping, playing games and shopping at garage sales, flea markets and thrift stores.

## Finance Committee Report

If you have been attending congregational meetings then you know of the excellent progress that has been made in the reduction of the loan for the remodel of our facilities. In just a few years almost forty per cent of the loan has been paid. Indeed God has been blessing First Southern beyond our expectations. Certainly it is individuals who have donated the funds but that is all part of the providence of our Lord.

While it is true that there has been much special giving it is the faithfulness of our members in meeting their pledges each month that is the backbone of the loan repayment. Pledges are made by individuals at the beginning of each year so no one is obligated for more than one year. Sometimes we may think of those pledges as being made to First Southern and they are but they are also being made to Yahweh. We enjoy the comfort of our building but that comfort is there to better enable us to worship. Our worship includes our prayers, our singing, the preaching of God's word and our giving.

In addition, First Southern's regular giving has been very good and will enable us to meet our budget without difficulty. As a committee we are grateful since it shows our members faithfulness and because it makes the committee's work easier.

Bob Neubauer, Chairman



## Children's Ministries

Every summer, our church attendance goes down. Vacations and PCS, being the culprits. We have also lost some workers because of moves, illness and other situations. But the Lord is graciously providing new teachers. We had 2 new teachers volunteer in the past 3 months. Thank you Lord! Please pray with me that the Lord will continue to provide the workers as He grows His field at First Southern Baptist Church.

Jessica Nagel  
Team Leader



## Joke of the Month (Comedy) Corner



1. There is going to be a return to a price of twenty six cents a gallon for gasoline. Unfortunately it won't be until after the second coming.
2. A man is talking to God. "God, how long is a million years?" God answers, "To me, it's about a minute." "God, how much is a million dollars?" "To me, it's a penny." "God, may I have a penny?" "Wait a minute."
3. A teacher asked her students to use the word "beans" in a sentence. "My father grows beans," said one girl. "My mother cooks beans," said a boy. A third student spoke up, "We are all human beans."
4. Q. Why couldn't the leopard play hide & seek. A. Because he was always spotted.

## September Birthdays and Anniversaries

3 John Harper  
4 Allen Keillor  
8 Donald Hampton  
9 Bob Neubauer  
13 Katie Blalock  
15 Anna Sisson



*Happy Birthday*

22 Carol Ellis  
24 Keith Sisson  
26 Hannah Brown  
28 Adeline Bates  
28 Sophie Thompson  
29 Harold Southwick

2 Jonathan & Sarah Sanchez  
4 Garry & Julie Harper

25 Larry & Liz Sears



## Early October Birthdays

2 Jim Clark

4 Jane Jacome