

Southern Baptist Conv. president suggests ways to prepare for Jan. 31 day of prayer

By Staff, Jan 6, 2010

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt has suggested eight steps churches can take to prepare for the Jan. 31 day of prayer, fasting and repentance for the SBC. "We have forgotten our first love [Revelation 2:4] and need revival in SBC," Hunt said in a Jan. 5 statement to Baptist Press. "There are many decisions being made, including the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force, GPS: God's Plan for Sharing, Across North America, search committees for three SBC entities, etc. We need God's direction."

The goal is for the day of prayer is "for all of us to 'Be still and know that God is God' as a sign of our humility and desire to wholeheartedly return to Him," Hunt said. "By our being still before Him (see Psalm 46:10), we exalt our God and position ourselves to obey the Great Commission our Lord commanded in Matthew 28:18-20."

Hunt suggested eight ways congregations can prepare for and participate in the emphasis:

- Distribute personal preparation guides for cleansing and restoration and instruct every church member on how to use it through the day.
- Plan a solemn assembly or a concert of prayer for the whole congregation or the entire association.
- Hold prayer gatherings by Sunday School classes or Bible study groups.
- Encourage families to have a focused prayer time acknowledging God alone is God. For example, a family may hold an extended prayer before the evening meal, or a prayerwalk through the home, asking for cleansing and God's presence.
- Challenge every Sunday School class or Bible study group to tithe their time in contrite prayer for spiritual awakening.
- Extend the pastoral prayer and invite several to read scriptural prayers and admonitions.
- Preach a sermon on prayer, stopping at each point to lead the congregation in application praying.
- On Sunday, Jan. 24, ask members to pray daily for tens of thousands of SBC congregations to participate in the Jan. 31 urgent call to prayer for the Southern Baptist Convention.

Information to support the above ideas and more are being added daily to the GPS website, www.GPS2020.net, Hunt said. In a Dec. 9 Baptist Press column calling for the day of prayer, Hunt listed five specific concerns churches and individuals could focus on:

- A spirit of repentance to fall on churches corporately and personally for individuals, and for genuine revival of first love for Jesus. (See Matthew 4:17; Revelation 2:4.)
- A great spiritual awakening across our land so that the lost will be drawn to a personal relationship with Jesus. (See John 6:44; Romans 1:19; 2 Corinthians 2:14.)
- A sweet spirit of reconciliation among any Southern Baptists who are at odds with each other, or other works of God. Love for one another in the body of Christ to grow and blossom. (See Proverbs 28:13; 1 Corinthians 13:25-27; John 13:34-35.)
- Wisdom for the members of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force as they prepare their report in February. (See Jeremiah 33:3; James 1:5.)
- Guidance for the search committees for presidents of the Executive Committee, the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board. (See Prov. 3:5-6, 13, 15:22, 27:17; Acts 1:21-26.)

Hunt is pastor of the Atlanta-area First Baptist Church in Woodstock.

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