

September 1, 2015 ISSUE 54

# TEXAN MAGAZINE

## SHAKEN BUT NOT CRUSHED

SBTC DR TEAMS RESPOND TO EARTHQUAKES IN NEPAL

+ MOVIE REVIEW: 90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

+ 8 BIG MISTAKES I MADE AS A YOUNG PASTOR

# Josh Duggar, Ashley Madison, and the Rush to Judgment

**W**hen news broke out recently that former “19 Kids and Counting” star Josh Duggar had not one but two accounts with Ashley Madison, a website that promotes extramarital affairs, the finger-pointing began.

Some fingers appropriately pointed at Josh. Others blamed his parents and their “oppressively strict religious upbringing.” Some criticized his wife for being too submissive and wanting to stick it out in their marriage rather than divorce his sorry self. Still others blamed “culture” for creating an atmosphere of acceptance that would allow a website the likes of Ashley Madison even to exist.

Let’s be clear, the sole blame for this sad tale belongs to Josh, who succumbed to his sexual temptations and willingly sought out adulterous relationships under the assumption that he would never be caught. The “secret sin” of pornography chipped away at his resolve for years, and then he deliberately acted on those fantasies. ([James 1:14-15](#))

As the Scripture says, “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” ([Galatians 6:7-9](#))

It’s easy to rush to judgment. Many are gloat as Josh reaps what he’s sown—a confirmation of their distaste for his seemingly wholesome upbringing. Even Christians are tempted to self-

righteously wag their fingers. But our genuine response should be brokenness for him and his family. Even though he issued a public apology, life will never be the same for his family.

Yet, Josh Duggar is not alone. The Ashley Madison data leak is not just a distant, pop-culture story. More than 30 million accounts were exposed, sending shockwaves around the country, as chilling reports surfaced of some who chose to end their lives rather than face the guilt, shame and consequences of their sin.

Painfully, the embarrassing ripple effects have also splashed against our churches, as the accounts of self-professing Christians are brought to light. LifeWay Research Executive Director Ed Stetzer even [estimated](#) that at least 400 church leaders (pastors, deacons, staff, etc.) would be resigning on one Sunday as a result—some publicly, some quietly.

Families wrecked. Ministries ruined. Churches broken.

Actually, this could be a lot worse. What if it wasn’t just Ashley Madison accounts that were exposed? What if Internet browsing histories, Netflix viewing records, texting conversations and flirtatious work relationships were broadcast for the world to see? I fear that an exponentially larger number of church members and pastors would be implicated.

Sexual sin is a pervasive evil. Internet pornography and websites like Ashley Madison promise anonymity but those promises are empty. As the Scriptures [say](#), “your sin will find you out.” Any of us is susceptible to such sin. If you think

you’re impervious, you might be the most in danger.

So how should Christians respond? Here are at least five ways:

**1. Examination** – Scripture is clear that we must constantly be on guard against sin getting a foothold in our lives. Every one of us needs to ask the Lord to search our hearts and reveal any areas of sin.

**2. Repentance** – If you have an Ashley Madison account or are caught up in some other “secret sin,” you need to repent immediately. You also need to confess it to others—your spouse; your pastor; your church, as appropriate.

**3. Forgiveness** – You may find yourself on the other end, bearing the pain of a friend, a pastor, a spouse or a family member who has fallen to sexual sin. If they are truly repentant, you must forgive them as God forgives them. Yes, there are consequences. Yes, it will take time to rebuild trust. But Christlike love demands grace.

**4. Accountability** – Those who fall must be held accountable for their actions. At the same time, Christians must establish accountability relationships with one another, where we dig into one another’s lives, in order to encourage holiness and protect against sin.

**5. Prayer** – Pray diligently for yourself, your family, your friends, your pastor and your church. Satan is prowling around, seeking to take down believers. We must stand in the gap for one another and ask our Father to “deliver us from the evil one.” Prayer is our greatest tool against the lure of sin.

SBTC DISASTER RELIEF TEAMS  
MINISTER IN  
NEPAL, SEE FRUIT

08 Cover Story

A four-year-old girl who sustained severe head trauma during earthquakes that devastated Nepal in April and May is among many helped by Southern Baptists of Texas Convention disaster relief volunteers deployed overseas. The child's story is one of hundreds to emerge from Nepal.

AT THE MOVIES

Movie reviewer Michael Foust looks at the latest movie about visiting heaven in the forthcoming *90 Minutes in Heaven*. Surprisingly, he says, the majority of the movie isn't really story about heaven. Foust also gives brief reviews on the latest installment in the *Mission: Impossible* franchise as well as *Straight Outta Compton* and *Hitman: Agent 47*. 06

05 Suicide is epidemic but doesn't lead to hell, Americans say

A new LifeWay Research study finds that most Americans don't view suicide as a selfish choice or believe it sends people to hell. However, most agree that there appears to be a growing epidemic in the United States of people taking their own lives.

18 COLUMN:  
8 Big Mistakes I Made as a Young Pastor

Southeastern Seminary Vice President Chuck Lawless recounts what he considers the eight biggest mistakes he made in his first years as a full-time pastor, including his approach to preaching, relationships in the church and his leadership style.

TEXAN MAGAZINE

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Jim Richards, Executive Director



Gary Ledbetter, Editor  
Keith Collier, Managing Editor  
Sharayah Colter, Staff Writer  
Russell Lightner, Design & Layout  
Gayla Sullivan, Subscriptions

Contributing Writers  
Michael Foust, Lisa Cannon Green,  
Chuck Lawless, Garry McDugle,  
Jane Rodgers

To contact the TEXAN, visit [texanonline.net/contact](http://texanonline.net/contact) or call toll free 877.953.7282 (SBTC).



**COLORADO MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION TAKING A TOLL**

One Colorado “church” is pushing for its mountain town of 1,500 to become the nation’s first “sanctuary” for “therapeutic and spiritual users of cannabis.”

Calling itself “Closer to the Heart Ministry,” the so-called church in Nederland, Colo., celebrates cannabis—the plant that produces marijuana—as mankind’s “tree of life.”

Baptist pastors in Colorado, however, see no safe haven from recreational marijuana’s toll since its legalization on Jan. 1, 2014.

Charlie Jones, pastor of Fellowship of the Rockies in Pueblo, said legalization has spawned a heightened demand for social services in southern Colorado, including an 81 percent rise in marijuana-related calls to emergency response dispatchers in 2014.

*Read the story [here](#).*



**Hilton**

**HILTON REMOVES ALL PORN CHANNELS FROM HOTEL ROOMS**

After receiving upward of 1,000 emails a week from patrons asking them to remove porn from in-room televisions, the worldwide Hilton hotel chain did exactly that. They hope this move will draw business from those who seek family-friendly environments and especially large conventions who find the porn-free zone appealing. It is expected that the move may lead other chains to follow suit.

*Read the story [here](#).*

**IRS PROMISE TO CHRISTIANS MET WITH PRAISE, CAUTION**

The Internal Revenue Service will not revoke the tax-exempt status of religious organizations that object to same-sex marriage, IRS Commissioner John Koskinen has promised at least twice in recent weeks.

But some tax code experts say the commissioner’s commitments are not a guarantee of tax shelter for organizations with religious objections to the Supreme Court’s nationwide legalization of homosexual marriage this summer.

Michael Batts, a CPA who specializes in nonprofit organizations, told Baptist Press some types of tax exemptions could still be in jeopardy.

“It is helpful to have correspondence from the sitting IRS commissioner that provides some minimal

level of temporary assurance about the position of current IRS officials. But the commissioner’s comments on federal tax-exempt status for religious organizations do not establish legal authority on the matter, and they are not the end of the story,” Batts, managing partner of a national CPA firm that exclusively serves nonprofits, said in written comments.

“Leaders of religious organizations must also keep in mind that federal income tax exemption is only one front with respect to this issue,” Batts noted. “State and local tax exemptions of various types, as well as other areas of law like housing, zoning and land use are administered by countless agencies all over the country. Federal, state and local officials administering these other areas of law are not bound by the comments of the IRS commissioner or, for the most part, by federal tax law.”

*Read the story [here](#).*

**STUDY: GAY TEENS HAVE HIGHER PREGNANCY RATES**

A Minnesota study that found lesbian teens four times more likely to become pregnant than their heterosexual peers has been called a predictable reflection of the homosexual community’s apparent emphasis on sexual activity.

“Some people may be shocked by the high pregnancy rates among the lesbian and gay teens,” Evan Lenow, assistant professor of ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, told Baptist Press in written comments. “However, this confirms what studies have shown for years. Individuals who identify as lesbian

and gay are much more likely to experiment with sex and have many more sexual partners than their heterosexual counterparts. Some of these teens who identify as lesbian and gay may be simply experimenting with all types of sexual partnerships and thinking less about the ramifications of such experimentation.”

According to the 2015 Minnesota Adolescent Sexual Health Report, gay males and those questioning their sexual orientation are four times more likely than their heterosexual peers to report getting someone pregnant. Bisexual girls are more than five times more likely to get pregnant than heterosexual girls.

*Read the story [here](#).*

+ WORLD

**BOKO HARAM HEAD DISPELS RUMORS OF HIS DEATH**

An audio recording released Aug. 16 claiming Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau is still alive is believed to be authentic, dispelling rumors of his death and refuting Chad President Idriss Deby's claim to have "decapitated" the group.

"It is indeed all over the global media of infidels that I am dead or that I am sick and incapacitated and have lost influence in the affairs of religion," Shekau said in an eight-minute Hausa-language message, the French news agency AFP (Agence France-Presse) reported. "It should be understood that this is false. This is indeed a lie."

The Search for International Terrorist Entities (SITE) Intelligence Group, a watchdog organization that tracks the global threat posed by jihad, verified the authenticity of the recording, AFP said, as did an AFP correspondent who has reported extensively on Boko Haram.

Read the story [here](#).



**CHRISTIANS FINED FOR REFUSING TO BAKE CAKE FOR SAME-SEX WEDDING, SEND CAKE GIFTS**

Aaron and Melissa Klein, owners of Sweetcakes by Melissa, received an order, July 13, from Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Statistics that they must make a cake for a same-sex couple that requested the Kleins bake for their wedding. Refusing, the Kleins have now been fined \$135,000 in damages. Collaborating with Christian leader Ray Comfort, the couple has answered by baking and sending 10 cakes to gay rights groups, hoping to send a message of love. The white cakes were made with a red heart on top, reading "We really do love you!" in white icing.

Read the story [here](#).

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## + BAPTIST

**MISSIONARY REMEMBERED AS GODLY MOTHER, WIFE**

On the evening before she and her family had planned to return overseas, Kyra Lynn Karr, a Southern Baptist missionary to Italy, was killed in a traffic accident, Aug. 13.



News reports indicate a tractor-trailer driver exited his vehicle to conduct a safety inspection but the safety brake was not engaged and the truck began to roll. The vehicle hit the pickup in which Karr was traveling, crushing it against the highway guardrail on U.S. 41 in Bartow County, Ga. Karr, 30, died at the scene.

Her husband Reid and their two youngest children were transported to nearby hospitals, where they were treated and released. Their oldest child was not with them at the time.

The tractor-trailer driver, Ivan Delgado, 52, of Rome, N.Y., was arrested and charged with DUI, police said.

Tabernacle Baptist Church pastor Don Hattaway described Karr as "one of the most wonderful, godly young ladies you could know. She was energetic, kind, articulate, beautiful, and a great mother and wife."

*Read the story [here](#).*

**INJUNCTION EXTENDED WHILE GUIDESTONE AWAITS APPEAL**

The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Aug. 21 it would keep in place the preliminary injunction won by GuideStone earlier at the District Court level while GuideStone appeals its case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The preliminary injunction, which protects certain ministries from having to provide abortion-causing drugs or devices in their health plan, or face crippling fines, was first issued by a federal judge in December 2013. Upon the government's appeal, a three-judge panel of the Tenth Circuit of Appeals ruled 2-1 to end the injunction. GuideStone, along with co-plaintiffs Reaching Souls International, an Oklahoma-based missions-sending organization, and Truett-McConnell College, a Georgia Baptist institution, appealed the Tenth Circuit's ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court in July.

"What this means is for the next several weeks, the ministries affected by the mandate can continue to rest assured that they are at no risk of penalties," said Harold R. Loftin Jr., general counsel for GuideStone.

*Read the story [here](#).*

**SPURGEON'S 'PREACHING RAIL' NOW AT MIDWESTERN**

A preaching rail used by Charles H. Spurgeon during his 19th-century ministry has become the latest addition to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's new library dedicated to the British preacher.

President Jason Allen announced the acquisition of the preaching rail from First Baptist Church in Weaver, Ala., Aug. 10. The rail,

which is a piece of furniture that functioned much like a modern-day pulpit, is prominently featured near the front entrance of the library in Kansas City, Mo.

"The Spurgeon preaching rail makes a signature addition to Midwestern Seminary's Spurgeon Library," Allen said. "It complements over 6,000 books and artifacts of the great Victorian preacher. ... Many consider Spurgeon to be the greatest preacher of the English language; therefore, we consider this rail to be a tremendous addition to our collection."

*Read the story [here](#).*

**S.C. CHURCH'S STANCE ON HOMOSEXUALITY CHALLENGED**

The South Carolina Baptist Convention has asked a Greenville church to either reverse its decision to open marriage ceremonies, church membership and ordination to homosexuals or withdraw from the state convention.

First Baptist Church, whose pastor in 1845 was elected the Southern Baptist Convention's first president, voted to cease cooperation with the SBC in 1999, according to the church's website. But South Carolina's Baptist Courier newsjournal reported First Baptist still cooperates with the state convention but not with the local Greenville Baptist Association. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is listed among the church's affiliations on its website.

# Suicide is epidemic but doesn't lead to hell, Americans say

By Lisa Cannon Green | LifeWay

Most Americans believe they are seeing an epidemic in the United States of people taking their own lives.

But most Americans don't view suicide as a selfish choice, and they don't believe it sends people to hell, LifeWay Research finds.

"Americans are responding with compassion to a tragedy that touches many families," said Scott McConnell, LifeWay Research vice president. "For example, as researchers learn more about the effects of mental illness, people may be more likely to react to suicide with mercy."

In a phone survey of 1,000 Americans, LifeWay Research found more than a third (36 percent) have had a friend or relative commit suicide, and 56 percent describe suicide as an epidemic in the United States.

Concern is highest among the oldest half of the millennial generation, those 25 to 34 years old. This age group is more likely than others to perceive an epidemic of suicide (66 percent), say suicide is selfish (45 percent), and believe those who commit suicide go to hell (27 percent, matching 35- to 44-year-olds).

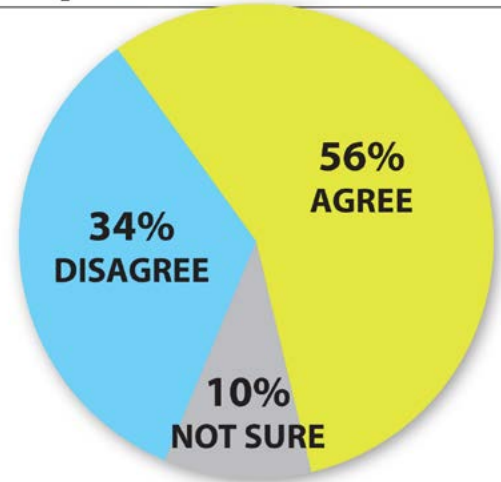
Federal data shows suicides have been on the rise since 2005. This is not unprecedented; suicide rates were almost as high in the mid-1980s. And globally, the United States isn't even in the top 50.

But among 25- to 34-year-olds, suicide is the second leading cause of death. "In a young and generally healthy population, it's understandable this would be a concern—many millennials will know of friends and acquaintances who have either committed suicide or been impacted by those who have," McConnell said.

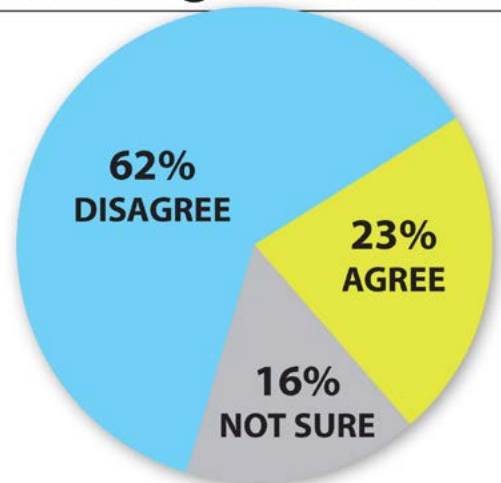
Read the full story [here](#).

AMONG AMERICANS

## Suicide has become an epidemic in the U.S.

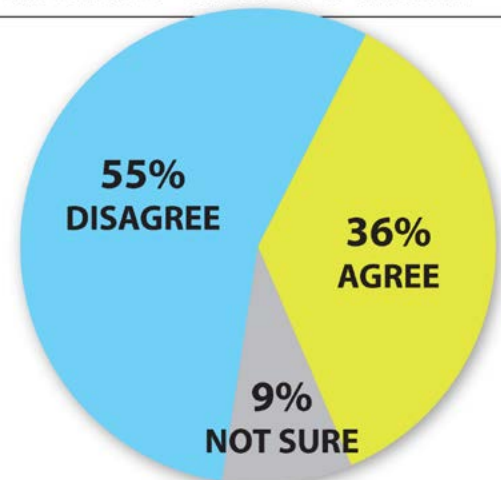


## People who commit suicide go to hell



Note: Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

## People who commit suicide are selfish



# ‘90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN’: SOLID MOVIE, BUT WHAT OF THE THEOLOGY?

ENTERTAINMENT RATING: ★★☆☆☆

FAMILY FRIENDLY RATING: ★★★★★

**A**mong life’s great questions—at least from a secular perspective—is this one: Is there a heaven? The reason this particular question remains so prevalent is simple: We want there to be a heaven. We want there to be something other than a world filled with sin and sorrow. And, well, if there’s a heaven, then there might be a hell, and we certainly want to end up in the right place.

This is one reason why movies about visits to heaven, such as 2014’s *Heaven Is For Real*, are often box office hits. We want evidence.

The latest visit-to-heaven movie hits theaters Sept. 11 with *90 Minutes In Heaven*, which is based on *The New York Times* bestselling book by Don Piper and stars some big-name talent: Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker in the most recent *Star Wars* trilogy) as Piper and Kate Bosworth (*Superman Returns*) as his wife Eva.

The book sold 6 million copies and recounts how Piper was involved in a horrific car wreck in 1989 that resulted in medical personnel at the scene pronouncing him dead. Following a grueling recovery, Piper claimed that he had visited heaven when his heart had stopped. In fact, he said the experience was so incredible that he *didn’t want to live*. Specifically, he claimed he had seen deceased family members and friends outside of heaven’s gates.

But *90 Minutes In Heaven*—the book and the movie—mostly isn’t a story about heaven. Most of the film spotlights Piper’s recovery, his



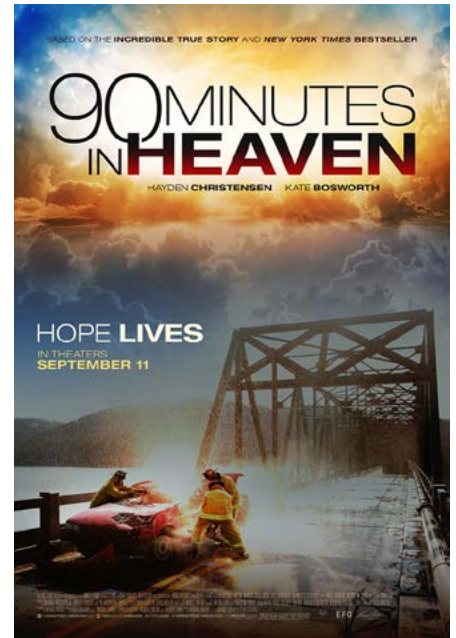
lack of will to live, and his family and friends begging him to stay positive.

As may be expected, acting is a strength, with Christensen particularly delivering a fine performance. And the movie, simply as entertainment, is very well done.

But what are we to make of Piper’s story? The movie is being released months after LifeWay Christians Stores pulled *90 Minutes In Heaven*, *Heaven Is For Real* and other “heaven visit” books from their shelves.

And the Southern Baptist Convention in 2014 passed a resolution urging Christians not to allow “the numerous books and movies purporting to explain or describe the afterlife experience” to “become their source and basis for an understanding of the afterlife.” That’s good advice. As Christians, we know heaven is real because Scripture *tells us* it is real. That’s all the evidence we need, and we don’t need another book.

There are good arguments against such stories. For example, why would God give us the Bible and then wait 2,000 years to give



us fresh details? Additionally, such stories are subjective. What are Christians to make of stories from, say, a Muslim?

Supporters of *90 Minutes In Heaven* will counter with their own questions, including: If Piper’s heart did stop beating, and if we believe that to die is to enter into God’s presence, then what’s wrong with believing Piper visited heaven?

Only God knows if Piper did, in fact, enter heaven. But even if he didn’t, heaven is still real. The Bible, after all, tells me so.

*90 Minutes In Heaven is rated PG-13 for intense accident and injury images. It contains no coarse language or sexuality. Post-move discussion topics: heaven and what the Bible says about it; the power of prayer.*





## MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: ROGUE NATION (PG-13)

With a plethora of R-rated films in theaters lately, the latest *Mission Impossible* PG-13 installment by Tom Cruise stands out, even if it does have some unnecessary content that prevents it from being considered fully family friendly. It is the fifth movie in

the spy film series, and in this one Ethan Hunt (Cruise) and his Impossible Missions Force (IMF) crew of spies have been disbanded by Congress due to supposedly reckless behavior. But that's not going to stop Hunt from going after a group of former spies that has banded together to form the Syndicate, a terrorist group. It sounds difficult

enough—even impossible—but then Hunt learns the CIA is after him. What will he do now? *Rogue Nation* includes plenty of action and violence, although mostly bloodless. It also has some sensuality and about 10 instances of objectionable language. **Post-movie topics:** Is it ever OK to defy orders?; Does bloodless violence desensitize us?



## STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON (R)

This biopic tells the story of five young men from Compton, Calif., who during the 1980s joined together to form N.W.A., one the most controversial rap groups of all time. They popularized the genre called “gangsta rap,” which they said simply mirrored the violent culture in which they lived,

but which critics said actually fueled violence. With lyrics that described the shooting of gang members, women, and police, too, the members of N.W.A. didn't get much radio time, but they still made millions. They definitely were talented and their tunes (musically, that is) certainly catchy, but it's sad that they wasted it on such abhorrent art. It's also sad when we consider what

actually caused the violence at the center of their songs: the breakdown of the family. This one, not surprisingly, includes nudity and hundreds of instances of foul language, and is not recommended. **Post-movie topics:** music's impact on culture; violent songs as art; objectification of women.



## HITMAN: AGENT 47 (R)

When I was young, video games were often spinoffs of movies. Today's world is different, though, and with *Hitman: Agent 47*, we have the second movie based on the fairly popular *Hitman* video game series, which has sold 8 million units. There have even been books based on the video game. So what's the story? Agent 47, as he's called,

is a genetically engineered clone who was “developed”—from conception with lots of special DNA—to be the ultimate assassin. He's faster, smarter and stronger than anyone, and he technically is a good guy. But in *Hitman: Agent 47*, a group of bad guys are trying to get their hands on the technology that created Agent 47 so they can develop an evil army. Sounds sort of interesting, but there's

lots of baggage: tons of bloody violence, a fair amount of sexuality, and plenty of F-words and other coarse language. Not family-friendly, and not recommended. **Post-movie topics:** violence and its impact on the culture; ethical limits of reproductive technology.

\*With information from Common Sense Media

## WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

August 21-23

Source: BoxOfficeMojo.com

Movie	Weekend Gross	Weeks in Theater
1. Straight Outta Compton (R)	\$26,364,020	2
2. Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation (PG-13)	\$11,451,746	4
3. Sinister 2 (R)	\$10,542,116	1
4. Hitman: Agent 47 (R)	\$8,326,530	1
5. The Man From U.N.C.L.E. (PG-13)	\$7,317,374	2
6. American Ultra (R)	\$5,454,284	1
7. The Gift (R)	\$4,282,360	3
8. Ant-Man (PG-13)	\$4,055,465	6
9. Minions (PG)	\$3,828,720	7
10. Fantastic Four (PG-13)	\$3,733,632	3

A scenic view of a city in Nepal, likely Kathmandu, with a dense cluster of multi-story buildings in the foreground. In the background, there are rolling green hills and a prominent, snow-capped mountain peak under a clear blue sky with light clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

SBTC DISASTER RELIEF TEAMS  
MINISTER IN  
NEPAL, SEE FRUIT



**A** four-year-old girl who sustained severe head trauma during earthquakes that devastated Nepal in April and May is among many helped by Southern Baptists of Texas Convention disaster relief volunteers deployed overseas. The child's story is one of hundreds to emerge from Nepal.

“We went to Nepal simply asking God to use our DR teams to meet needs and further his kingdom. God has already answered that prayer,” said Scottie Stice, SBTC director of disaster relief.

Four SBTC DR teams have deployed to the Sindhupalchowk district of Nepal to offer spiritual and humanitarian aid in the wake of the earthquakes. Garry and Sherry McDugle, SBTC DR coordinators in Nepal, accompanied the initial Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in June and are expected to stay through November.



**“WE WENT TO NEPAL SIMPLY ASKING GOD TO USE OUR DR TEAMS TO MEET NEEDS AND FURTHER HIS KINGDOM. GOD HAS ALREADY ANSWERED THAT PRAYER.”** —SCOTTIE STICE, SBTC DIRECTOR OF DISASTER RELIEF

Teams serve for approximately seven to ten days, returning to the United States as replacements arrive. Two additional teams are currently scheduled to rotate in, Stice said.

Teams in Nepal have encountered obstacles and God’s

grace thus far as they serve in a country more than 8,000 miles and a 24-hour plane ride from Texas. Landing in Kathmandu is only the start. Sindhupalchowk is 65 kilometers northeast of the Nepali capital,

accessible by driving along the Melamchi-Bhotang Road.

DR teams have battled illness, dehydration, rugged mountainous terrain, government regulations, even the beginnings of monsoon season. But God has been faithful.

Relief work is focused on two zones containing remote mountain villages, Garry McDugle said.

Describing the work to date, McDugle said initial assessments of “village after village of destruction” resulted in more than 270 work orders for family homes in five villages in one zone. While the building of temporary shelters is a top priority for DR workers, later teams may work in demolition, clean up, and the rebuilding of homes, schools, and a church. Teams have also put together hygiene kits for distribution to displaced villagers.

Even erecting temporary shelters necessitates government paperwork. For this reason, a father/daughter team of translators has been hired to help navigate Nepali culture and situations. The two are Nepali Christians who live a 12-hour bus ride away and who have come to live with and assist the McDugles for five months.





“They help us locate and source materials, acquire drivers and vehicles, negotiate prices, mobilize local churches, and serve as liaisons with local government officials,” McDugle explained.

The monsoon season in Nepal is bringing additional challenges, McDugle said, adding that the mountainous areas where DR work is underway are subject to landslides and washed out roads that can impede work.

The needs of Sindhupalchowk are great. “Imagine house after house built of rock, mud and timber lying in a pile of rubble.

Families piece together what they can as temporary shelter. Sometimes multiple families live together with their animals. Mental and emotional problems abound. Earthquake aftershocks occur every few days, causing panic again," McDugle said.

At times in their visits to remote villages, teams accompanied by nurses from India have helped identify and obtain medicine or treatment for physical maladies, from high blood pressure to emphysema to fractured limbs to anxiety issues.

DR teams are also presenting the hope of Jesus Christ in addition to physical help.

As one example, the McDugles have

befriended a local restaurant owner and his wife and regularly answer their many questions about Christianity.

The first SBTC team to rotate in consisted of six men, two of whom had lived in Nepal and spoke the language.

"This was a great blessing," McDugle said. "As we were setting up camp, everyone in the villages (and also a few curious goats), came out to watch the guys pitch their tents and move into the community."

This sign of commitment led to increased contact with villagers: from volleyball games to the hiring of cooks for the camp kitchen. The men assessed homes for seven days, asking permission to

pray with each family as they did. As a result, they found several believers and led a man to Christ.

During a village walk-through, this team also encountered the little girl with severe head trauma whose family lived an hour's hike up a mountain. Injuries sustained in the earthquake left the girl with a sunken and soft skull, but with SBTC help, she has undergone successful neurosurgery.

"She is out of ICU, doing well and anticipating four weeks of rehabilitation therapy," McDugle said.

Increasingly, teams are finding believers in remote villages.



## “WE MUST KEEP PRAYING FOR THE FUTURE TEAMS AND GARRY AND SHERRY AS THEY CONTINUE TO MINISTER. PRAYER IS OUR GREATEST TOOL IN MISSIONS.”



“Some are even wearing their cross necklaces, which can bring persecution to them for making the public stand among Hindu or Buddhist communities,” McDugle said. One DR team has held morning services with Bibles and hymnbooks.

A school principal in an affected village asked DR workers to help get the schools ready for August classes. The school buildings had been declared unsafe and condemned by the Nepali government, leaving the children without a place for school other than in temporary shelters. The principal connected volunteers with local contractors.

“It seems the work may start soon,” McDugle said, noting that the principal himself lives in a Salvation Army tent with 10 other family members.

“He never once brought attention to his dilemma but was more concerned about the dilemma of his students. That told us what kind of heart this man has, and we are more than pleased to be working with him,” McDugle added.

Even monsoon season has a silver lining, as rains clean away the smog and reveal snow-capped mountains. In the same way, in the wake of horrific natural disaster, DR volunteers a world away are making inroads in revealing the truth of the God they know and serve.

“We must keep praying for the future teams and Garry and Sherry as they continue to minister,” Stice added. “Prayer is our greatest tool in missions.”

For more information, go to [sbtexas.com/dr](http://sbtexas.com/dr) or follow “[SBTC Disaster Relief Ministry](#)” on Facebook.



# DEAF NEPALI WOMAN MIRACULOUSLY HEALED



By Garry McDugle & Jane Rodgers

Sindhupalchawk, NEPAL

SBTC disaster relief volunteers deployed to Nepal witnessed the miraculous healing of a deaf woman while assisting widows in need of shelter.

One widow, who had earlier received medical treatment, approached a DR team to ask for help in erecting a shelter.

“She had some tin and wanted to know if anyone could help her build,” Garry McDugle said. “She was ready to live outside with the animals because her daughter-in-law was being mean to her.”

During this conversation, another elderly woman appeared, revealing that her daughter-in-law was likewise exploiting her. SBTC volunteers counseled both women—one from a lower caste and the other from a higher caste in the

“THEN JASMINE ASKED THE LADY IF SHE COULD HEAR WHAT WAS BEING SAID. THE LADY EXCLAIMED, ‘YES!’”

rigid Nepali social structure.

“Through counseling and prayer we joined the two women together as friends,” McDugle noted.

At first, listening and understanding proved difficult for the second woman, who was deaf in one ear and had severe hearing loss in the other. She had been struck by lightning three years before, the incident knocking her unconscious and killing her buffalo. Jasmine [named changed], a Nepali translator, had to shout in the lady’s ear so the woman would understand that the team was asking to pray for her.

“Your God doesn’t know me, and he might not want to do anything for me,” the lady told Jasmine.

“We asked her to believe in her heart that God will hear

our prayers for her, and she gave us permission to pray,” McDugle recalled, noting that the woman was at first distraught. During and after the prayer, she relaxed.

“She remained calm with a glow to her face,” McDugle said.

Afterward, they posed for pictures. When Jasmine, at a distance with the camera, asked the lady to look at her and smile, the lady did so. The group realized the lady may have actually heard the instructions.

“Jasmine asked all of us to step away,” McDugle recalled. “Then Jasmine asked the lady if she could hear what was being said. The lady exclaimed, ‘Yes!’ We praise the Lord Almighty! She was healed!”

# NEPAL

## DISASTER RELIEF BY THE NUMBERS

### SPIRITUAL OUTREACH

**202** GOSPEL PRESENTATIONS

**2,036** SPIRITUAL CONTACTS

**15** SALVATIONS

**12** BAPTISMS

**15** BIBLES DISTRIBUTED

**8** BELIEVERS LOCATED

**DAILY CHURCH SERVICES  
ESTABLISHED**

### PHYSICAL OUTREACH

**345** PEOPLE HELPED  
THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

**6** MEDICAL NEEDS MET

**47** HYGIENE KITS DISTRIBUTED

### INFRASTRUCTURE HELP

**20** SITES CLEARED FOR SHELTERS

**18** SHELTERS BUILT

**274** HOMES AND FAMILIES ASSESSED

**3** SCHOOLS CLEARED OF RUBBLE  
AND CRUMBLING WALLS

**1** SCHOOL BUILDING COMPLETED WITH  
EARTHQUAKE-RESISTANT METAL WALLS

ONGOING WORK ON **7**  
OTHER SCHOOL BUILDINGS

FUNDS DONATED FOR SUPPORT OF A  
**CHURCH AND ORPHANAGE**

**WATER ENGINEER** HIRED TO  
MAP WATER SYSTEM FOR FUTURE OVERHAUL

# Q&A WITH A NEPALI BELIEVER

By Garry McDugle & Jane Rodgers

## Sindhupalchawk, NEPAL

SBTC disaster relief teams deployed to Nepal to aid earthquake victims have discovered Christians in the remote mountain villages of the Sindhupalchawk district, even though recent amendments to the Nepal Constitution may render Christianity illegal.

“We are met with the Christian greeting ‘Jaymacee’ [Jesus be praised] as we enter villages,” said Garry McDugle, SBTC DR coordinator in Nepal. “Some are even wearing their cross necklaces, which can bring persecution for making a public stand among Hindu or Buddhist communities.”

The following has been adapted from an interview Garry McDugle conducted with a former Buddhist who has trusted Jesus as savior. The man’s home was destroyed by the earthquake, and his family currently lives in a temporary shelter. Their church building also collapsed and now meets in a temporary bamboo and tarp structure.

## **Q: How did you become a follower of Christ?**

**A:** Several years ago, I was working overseas, away from my family. I was a Buddhist, but my roommate was a Christian who talked about Jesus. I thought he was out of his mind. I worked the night shift at a factory. I used to hide under a table and sleep, where the security camera could not see me. One night when I was half asleep, a voice in my mind told me I would become a preacher. My roommate gave me a Bible, showed me the “Jesus” film, and I trusted Christ as savior and Lord.

## **Q: Your family was Buddhist. What happened when you returned home?**

**A:** I believed God was telling me to go back to my hometown, but my family, including my wife, was Buddhist. I knew I must obey God. I went home. I prayed in secret under a blanket at night so my wife would not see, but of course she wondered what I was doing. My wife had Buddhist gods on a table in the living room, which gave me an idea. I had bought a TV while working overseas, so I told my wife that the table was the perfect place for the TV, and the gods would have to go to a back room. She continued to see a strange change in me, and our marriage struggled, so I told her about Jesus. This resulted in great conflict, and she wanted a divorce. I committed to pray for her, and after two months, she trusted Christ. Neither of our families knew. When they did learn of our new faith, the whole village found out and turned against us, telling us to “leave Jesus or leave the village.”

## **Q: What happened next?**

**A:** Two months later, after much turmoil in the village, I heard my mother was very sick. She had suffered for 30 years from an evil spirit, and now the village witch doctor told her she was going to die. I told the entire village I would pray for my mother’s healing in the name of Jesus. As I was praying, my mother stood up and asked for some soup to eat. I told everyone she had been healed by Jesus Christ. Two months later, she accepted Christ as savior, as did my father. This was about four years ago. Two years passed, and another two families came to know Jesus.

## **Q: What are you doing today?**

**A:** My Christian faith led me to help orphans and helpless children. I prayed about what to do. A friend told me to just start an orphanage. A pastor told me that if I were to “work” the orphanage, he would support me. I realized the Holy Spirit was directing me, so I started by bringing one needy child into my home. Now we care for six needy children and the government has authorized us as an official orphanage. A Buddhist girl who came to live with us recently trusted Christ. We teach them to excel in school so they will be leaders in Nepal and share Christ.



# 8 Big Mistakes I Made as a Young Pastor

**O**kay, this post is confession. To be honest, I'm not sure why I'm writing this one, since it can probably only embarrass me—but perhaps it might help a young leader not be as dumb as I've been. Here are eight big mistakes I made in my first years as a full-time pastor.

**1** I depended on too many other people and resources for sermon preparation. It was easy to do, actually—just go buy a sermon outline book and fill in the details with good stories. This is agonizing to put in print, but we really didn't even need to pray much about it.

**2** I learned how to preach for "amens." In my day, that's how you evaluated the worth of the sermon. The more, and the louder, amens you got, the better the sermon was. What I learned was that you earned "amens" by (a) preaching only against obvious sins that everyone detested; (b) determining the sin first and then going to find a Bible text to support your position; (c) screaming more loudly.

**3** I didn't realize how strong family lines are. I made a recommendation once that we secure a new leader for a position

that clearly (at least in my mind) needed a new leader. Nobody who was breathing could have missed that fact. What I didn't know then is that sometimes family members don't always see—or won't admit—what others see.

**4** I had no accountability in my life. I was the single staff member in a small church. As long as I showed up on Sunday and Wednesday night, no one knew how many hours I worked. Many were the hours when no one knew where I was. I look back now and realize how unwise that was.

**5** I led by conference more than by conviction. I allowed whatever was the trend for the day—that is, the topic of the last conference I attended—to govern what the church did. I was always excited about something, but my constant changing wore out my more seasoned leaders.

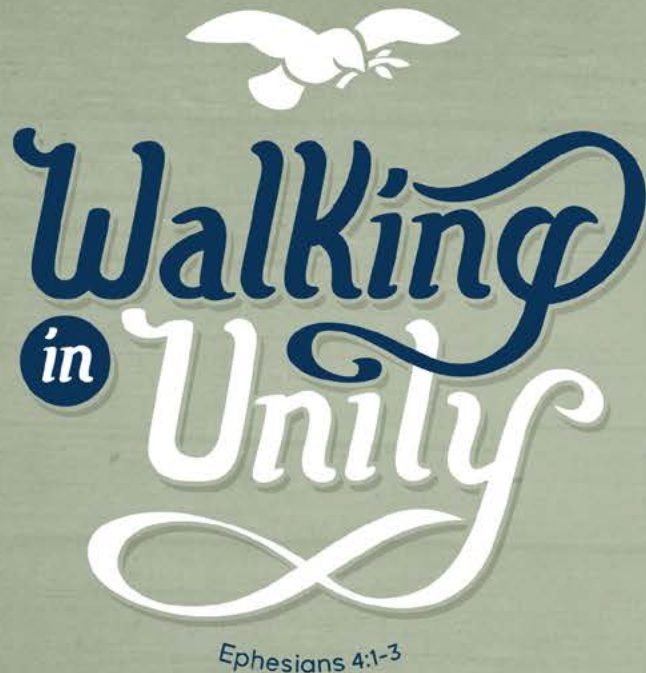
**6** I was far more legalistic than loving. That's another way to get "amens": declare almost everything a sin. I recall with pain my excitement one Sunday afternoon after I preached about the evil of Atari video games. Perhaps there was some point buried deep in my sermon, but I'm certain the gospel wasn't there.

**I COULD PREACH HARD, BUT I KNEW NOTHING ABOUT ACTUALLY HOLDING PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE TO HOLY LIVING.**

**7** I was also far more tolerant than loving. I had seen church discipline take place once in my life prior to pastoring, and then only from a distance. I could preach hard, but I knew nothing about actually holding people accountable to holy living.

**8** I bragged a lot about numbers. We did see a large number of non-believers turn to Christ the first few years of my ministry. I'm grateful for those changed lives, but I realize now how much credit I took for those changes. I was simply wrong.

*Chuck Lawless serves as Dean and Vice-President of Graduate Studies and Ministry Centers at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., where he also serves as professor of evangelism and missions. This article first appeared on his [blog](#).*



## Annual Meeting & Bible Conference

**November 8-10, 2015** Champion Forest Baptist Church

15555 Stuebner Airline Rd • Houston, TX 77069

### Meals

#### Ministry Cafe

Monday, November 9

#### Reach Houston Dinner

Monday, November 9

#### President's Luncheon

Tuesday, November 10

### Hotels

#### Comfort Inn

3555 FM 1960 W  
Houston, Tx 77068  
281.444.5800  
Rate: \$115  
Cut-Off: October 16

#### Residence Inn

7311 W Greens Road  
Houston, Tx 77064  
832.237.2002  
Rate: \$120  
Cut-Off: October 30

#### Holiday Inn Express

4434 FM 1960  
Houston, Tx 77068  
281.866.0500  
Rate: \$120  
Cut-Off: October 25

#### Candlewood Suites

8719 FM 1960 W  
Houston, Tx 77070  
832.237.7300  
Rate: \$130  
Cut-Off: October 9

Please specify SBTC for group rates when making any hotel reservations.

[sbtexas.com/am15](http://sbtexas.com/am15)

Questions? Contact Ashlee Garcia  
[agarcia@sbtexas.com](mailto:agarcia@sbtexas.com) or call 817.552.2500