



As I write this Concepts (safer at home, thanks to COVID-19), I have Pandora playing in the background. Silence may be golden, but I prefer the silver lining of music. Tinnitus (a ringing in the ears) has been a constant companion for years. Music is a nice counterbalance to the never ending noise. Hearing loss usually accompanies tinnitus — especially sounds with higher pitches. The key is to not have “listening” loss at any pitch. Too many of us have selective hearing, but we all have selective listening.

In the background on Pandora, Tracy Lawrence is singing “Time Marches On.” It caught my ear (yes, I do listen to some secular music). Tracy Lawrence broke onto the music scene 30 years ago. Time does march on. His song reminded me how Becky and I met, got acquainted, dated (long distance — East Texas), got engaged and married a little over 30 years ago — Sept. 2, 1989. Time doesn’t just “march” on, time “flies” when you are having fun. Three decades of adventure have truly flown by.

30 years sounds like a long time, but recently I celebrated 68 years on May 12 (1952). My, my — only two more years from three score and ten (Psalm 90:10). Where has it gone? I think I prefer the

Fiddy

Gettysburg Address — four score and seven — lol. I am grateful for every year, every day. This short life twill soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last.

It is true, the longer you live, the shorter life seems. The older you get, the faster time flies. My father, Eugene Digby, had a good explanation — I believe an original explanation why this is true. If someone is 10-years-old, one year is 10% of his total experience and an even greater % of his memory. When he is 50-years-old, that same year is only 2% of his total experience — not 10. When I graduated high school, my teenage years were one half of my life; today those teenage years are a distant one tenth of my life. The years get shorter because a year gets smaller.

Anniversaries are a big deal — whether wedding anniversary or life anniversary (birthday). For me, a third anniversary falls the day after my birthday. I surrendered to preach on May 13, 1970 — 50 years of preaching. God has been so good to me to give me 50 years of doing what I love to do. By His grace,

and only by His grace, I can enjoy this milestone that many of my seminary friends have missed.

I had wondered how I would celebrate my special day — the completion of my Year of Jubilee of Preaching. What irony, that 50 years of Preaching came up two months short. This Corona Break has been one of the longest gaps in my preaching. Hopefully, my calendar will recover from this virus.

There have been other gaps in my preaching. When I resigned my first church, Friendship, Baldwin, and moved to seminary (NOBTS) in 1974, there was a gap. Working in the truck lines wasn’t nearly as much fun as preaching. When I changed fellowships and became a Southern Baptist in 1986, there was a gap. Coming into the SBC and MBC as a full-time evangelist was not easy — the Blue Mountain Boys kept me from starving to death. When our family lived in Amsterdam in 2004, there was a gap.

These gaps stoked the fire in my belly to preach. This Corona Gap in 2020 has done the same. The hunger to preach

the Word grows. I can’t wait to begin the next fifty. The call to preach is real. Jeremiah was called. Paul was called. I am so thankful that in His Single Predestination, I was called to preach.

I understand every believer has a calling, but we need to reemphasize that God still calls a man to preach. We have lowered the bar and paid the price. When nearly every youth surrenders to the ministry at youth camp, but nothing changes in many of their lives — something is wrong. When I surrendered to preach as an 18-year-old graduating from Itawamba High School, nearly everything changed.

On Wednesday, May 13, our family got a new pet — a kitten. Our son Kaleb named him “Fiddy” in honor of my fifty years of preaching. Phonics has never been my strong suit — bad hearing — remember? Fiddy is loud and very energetic — sounds like someone’s preaching. I just hope the next “Fiddy” years of preaching will be as wonderful as these past “Fiddy.”

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SBC Advance to air convention entities reports online

NASHVILLE (BP) — While the 2020 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has been canceled for the first time since 1945, Southern Baptists will still be provided with an opportunity to hear from the entities of the SBC through an online event June 2 hosted by the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville.

SBC Advance, a two-hour event, is not designed to be a substitute for the annual meeting, but will provide ministry updates from and interviews with all SBC entity and auxiliary heads as well as SBC president J.D. Greear, pastor of multisite The Summit Church in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C. area.

The event will be livestreamed at SB-Cadvance.com starting at 2 p.m. CDT on June 2.

“SBC Advance is about telling the story of what God is doing through our churches and the work we are doing together regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally,” said SBC Executive Committee president and CEO Ronnie Floyd.

“This online gathering will not just be informational, but inspirational for all Southern Baptists. It will also lead us to have a greater commitment and sharper focus on sharing the Good News of Jesus with the whole world.

“This online experience is for all Southern Baptist laypeople, pastors,



church staff members, church leaders, denominational employees and missionaries here in America and across the world.”

Greear will provide a presidential update during the event as well. “Southern Baptists have always united around the need to see people come to saving faith

in Jesus,” he said. “While we may be apart right now, SBC Advance will allow us to hear about the great things God is doing and will call us to seek His face for the future.

While the times are challenging, this event will remind us of who we are: a convention of more than 47,500 churches that stand for the Gospel above all and the need to get the message of Jesus Christ to the nations.”

The 2020 SBC annual meeting was scheduled to be held in Orlando June 9-10, but the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic forced Southern Baptist leaders to cancel the event for the first time since World War II.