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5-1984

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Recommended Citation

Hunt, Angela Elwell and Mitchell, Daniel R., "Dave Janney Stays True to his Calling" (1984). *LBTS Faculty Publications and Presentations*. 121.

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by Cal Thomas



Dave Janney Stays True to His Calling

by Angela Elwell Hunt
and Daniel R. Mitchell

“I’m a young pastor, and if I had to give advice to any other young pastor, I’d say, ‘Don’t let peer pressure from other pastors and movements affect you. Be sensitive, but be what God wants you to be. Don’t emulate others or allow yourself to be pulled off track. Just be who you are and what God wants you to be.’”

Those are Dave Janney’s words. Though similar to Shakespeare’s “To thine own self be true,” Janney would consider an amplification necessary. He has been true, not only to himself, but to his calling, his heritage, and his ministry.

Dave Janney is the pastor of Shiloh Hills Baptist Church, in the Marietta/Kennesaw area of Georgia. He assumed the pastorate after working with Tolbert Moore for two and a half years—Dr. Moore left to enter full-time evangelism, and Janney stepped into the position well prepared.

Shiloh Hills Baptist Church is 13 years old and experiencing a new surge in growth. In 1983 there were over 350 new members added to the church. More than 900 attend Sunday school and over 1,000 attend the morning worship service each Sunday. The church operates a successful bus ministry, a radio ministry, and a thriving Christian school. Why is Pastor Janney so well equipped to lead this prosperous group of believers?

Perhaps God has blessed this ministry because Janney’s long-term goal is not to build a personal reputation or Fundamentalist fame, but for his church to be an example ministry. “I’d like our church to shore up every area of our ministry, from how we spend every penny to how we minister and disciple, win souls, and teach and preach.” His method to obtain this goal involves saturating his entire area and getting



church members outside the four walls of the church building.

The church has achieved success in Christian education. The Shiloh Hills Christian School is only 4 years old but enrolls 540 students in grades K through 11. Next year they will add 12th grade and expect 700 students.

A product of Christian education himself, Janney has strong convictions about the quality of religious education. He says, “I am convinced that Christian education can change the course of history by educating leaders who can make decisions for our country.”

Much of Pastor Janney’s concern for Christian education is a result of his own upbringing and the influence of his father, Al Janney. Dr. Janney founded the New Testament Baptist Church and Dade Christian School in Hialeah, Florida. Proud to be a pastor’s son, Dave usually calls his father on Sunday evenings and they talk about their respective ministries. Dave admires his father and places a great deal of confidence in his wisdom.

“There are many things in Dad’s life that I have wanted to pattern after,” he relates. “My dad is a man of vision and he has always motivated me to have a vision and goals. Dad has always been an honest man, and I’ve seen that honesty pay off. He’s a man of character, and a gracious man. He’s told me time and time again, ‘I don’t want people to know you as Al Janney’s son, I want them to know you as Dave Janney.’ He’s a very supportive father and fellow preacher.”

Al Janney would be the first to admit that one thing is different in his son’s ministry. The elder Janney’s generation often heard “If you will take care of the Lord’s work, the Lord’ll take care of your children.” The younger Janney was advised to do the opposite. “Though we have a special relationship,” Dave Janney recalls, “I don’t remember going fishing with my dad or hunting or swimming, or anything that you think of dads doing. I have a boy, Dustin, and two little daughters, and I have decided to set aside a specific time with my family. I’ve found that when I ask advice of most great pastors today, they say, ‘Don’t do what I did. Spend time with your family as they grow up.’”

Not only is Dave Janney a preacher’s kid, but his wife, Donna, is too. Her father is Curtis Hutson, editor of *The Sword of the Lord*. Dave met Donna while he was a student at Baptist University of America, where her father was president. Curtis worked personally with the pastor’s majors. “He has had a big influence on my preaching,” Dave says. “In fact, I surrendered to preach during one of Dr. Hutson’s chapel messages. The message was entitled ‘God Looking for a Man’ and I prayed that I’d be that man.”

God has found a balanced man in Dave Janney. He realizes that the balance between soulwinning and discipleship is crucial for a healthy church. “When a

church ceases to be a soulwinning church, it will cease to be a great church. However, I believe many soulwinning churches are guilty of giving away new converts to other churches to be nurtured. Balance is the key."

Dave balances his church program by presenting an evangelistic sermon on Sunday morning, a challenge to Christians on Sunday evenings, and a lesson in Christian living on Wednesday evenings. Bible study is also emphasized in Sunday school and various discipleship programs are offered during the week. "Everybody ought to be in a stage of discipleship," says Janney. "When that ceases, we cease to see our need to grow."

Building Shiloh Hills Baptist Church is the task to which Dave Janney applies himself every day. But he also is concerned about the growth of Fundamentalism in our country. "We must declare what we are, where we are, and who we are," he believes. "We need to have unity, but a healthy separatism will always be a part of it. I think that has kept us pure because we have always been

able to say 'no' to whom we want and 'yes' to whom we want."

Dave Janney's vision is not limited to his own church; he realizes the necessity of Christian involvement in national affairs. "I believe churches ought to be active in letting our people know the issues

Don't be pulled off track. Be who you are and what God wants you to be.


at hand and the biblical mandate to be involved in government. Daniel Webster once said, 'Whatever makes a man a good Christian also makes him a good citizen.' I believe that's true. As Christians, we

ought to be good citizens and participate in government and do some flagwaving. We must keep our people alert to issues that we can change. We must participate in government; we almost gave our nation away because of nonparticipation. Of course a church platform is not the place to tell people who to vote for as much as to tell them to participate and tell them the biblical perspective by which to make a decision. On a federal level, we ought to find who is watchdogging our concerns and how we can be more actively involved."

Active is a good word to describe the ministry Dave Janney has undertaken at Shiloh Hills Baptist Church. The growing church, quality school, proposed youth camp, and planned children's home are more than enough to fill the days of this young man. In the fertile area just outside Atlanta, Georgia, his church faces a challenging but not impossible task. If he follows his own advice and settles for nothing less than what God has in store for him, Dave Janney cannot help but succeed.

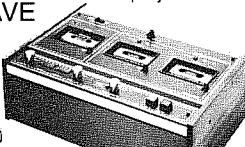
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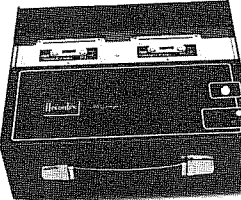
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