

On behalf of the Council of Seminary Presidents of The Southern Baptist Convention, I want to give you a report on what Southern Baptists are doing by means of Seminary Extension and of The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives. Back when Southern Baptists adopted the Covenant for a New Century at the end of the 20th Century, Southern Baptists entrusted to the six seminary presidents, as a governing board, the responsibility for the Seminary Extension program and for preserving the heritage and the history of The Southern Baptist Convention through its Historical Library and Archives.

When you think about the responsibility for these two programs, just remember that Seminary Extension ensures that there isn't a Southern Baptist anywhere who is outside of the reach of the theological education programs of this denomination. I'm thankful for Dr. Randy Williams and his leadership of that program and I'm thankful for the quality of that program that reaches wherever Seminary Extension is found.

The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives is one of the jewels of The Southern Baptist Convention. It's one of the best denominational libraries to be found anywhere amongst any Christian denomination. And the archive is a precious, very important repository of the memory, the history, and the heritage of The Southern Baptist Convention and its churches. When you think about Washington, D.C. and you think about the National Archives, when you think about going to a museum or you understand how important it is to maintain the memory of a civilization or a culture, just think of how important it is to maintain the heritage of The Southern Baptist Convention.

This is a denomination formed in 1845, and here we are in the 21st century. But we will not be who we must be as a denomination if we are not standing very proudly in a continuous line that goes back to 1845 and continues into the present. As the hymn reminds us, "We've been through many dangers, toils, and snares." The history and heritage of The Southern Baptist Convention is a grand story of some of the men and women who have been used of God to lead this denomination and so many of the institutions, churches, state conventions, and associations that have played a vital part in the history of this denomination.

The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives is now led by Dr. Taffey Hall. We're so glad she has come as the new Executive Director of this program, and we just want to remind Southern Baptists that our history is your history and your history is our history.

We hope that you will turn to The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives for assistance in helping your church or association or state convention or your Baptist institution or organization to maintain its history and its heritage. At The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, you'll find letters written in the hand of Lottie Moon. You'll find manuscripts that were written at the typewriter of Herschel Hobbs. You will find the minutes of Baptist associations, churches, and state conventions and you will find the documented history of this denomination of which we are so proud to be a part.

Thank you for supporting the work that's entrusted to the Council of Seminary Presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention. And on behalf of that council, I want to tell you thank you for your support and I want to reaffirm to you our faithfulness in this task.