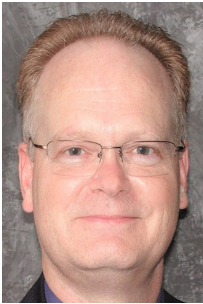


'Jesus Movement' brought young Southern Baptists to Christ

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) – The spiritual revival of the late 1960s and early 1970s known as the “Jesus Movement” that sparked the current hit movie, Jesus Revolution, profoundly affected tens of thousands around the U.S. including many Southern Baptists.



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“The reality is God reached a generation of disenfranchised youth starting with hippies, and as it moved across the country reaching me as a kid in a youth group in a Baptist church. It touched me and changed my eternity.

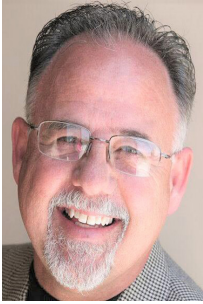
“There’s no question that God was moving, and the churches that embraced the Jesus Movement saw revival and awakening and those that did not in turn did not experience awakening,” he said.

Nix conceded that although there are skeptics about the validity of the movement, particularly regarding its more charismatic or sensational elements, several key features point to the movement’s legitimacy.

Southern Baptist Convention statistics from the era support Nix’s assertions, as the largest number of baptisms ever recorded in a single year was 445,725 in 1972 – the height of the Jesus Movement. Of those baptisms, 137,667 were people between ages 12 – 17.

The movement successfully united many believers from differing Christian traditions, including some older and more traditional and some younger, more charismatic “hippie” believers. It largely began in California and quickly spread throughout the country.

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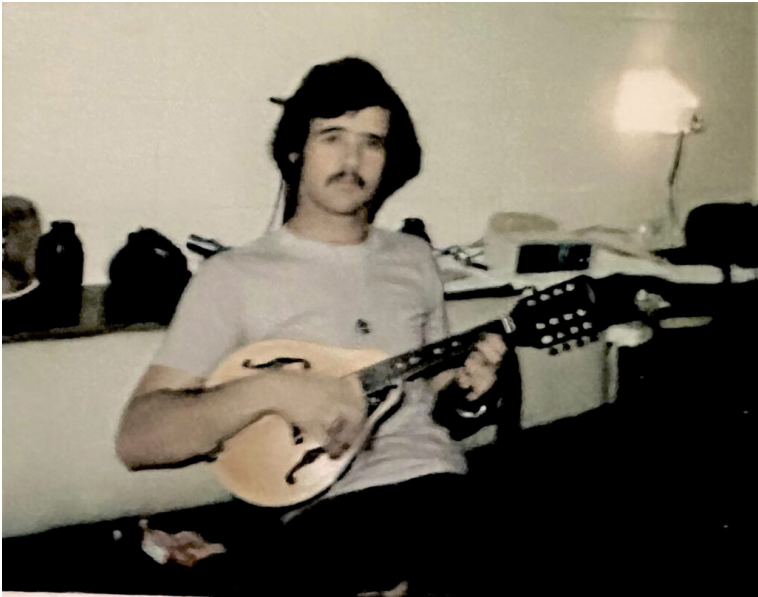
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Despite hearing the Gospel many times, he was not yet truly born again, he said. That was until an arrest for drug use put him on his knees. It was there in a jail cell that Patterson both “gave up and give in to Christ,” and felt “keenly” that he was called to preach the Gospel.

“I had been looking for something and needed something as a teenager,” he said “God had been drawing me all this time.”

Upon his release from prison, he began leading times of Bible Study and prayer in his school. The meetings were held in the library, and the teenage attendees quickly outgrew the room.



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TURNAROUND – It took a drug conviction and prison sentence to bring Tim Patterson, currently executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, to Christ and accept the call to preach the Gospel.

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The passionate worship, Bible studies, and emphasis on evangelism are elements from the movement that Patterson said he has carried on in his ministry. "It was genuinely a move of the Spirit of God in people. It was almost palpable, His presence in worship times.

"God would move in people's lives and you could not explain it. Sharing the Gospel and evangelism was absolutely imperative. It was not an option for a believer; that's what you did. It was a wonderful time."

Nix told Baptist Press he was able to "debrief" some of his thoughts from the recent film with a group of New Orleans

Seminary students who saw it with him. "I thought it was a great movie, and very well done," he said.

"In my research and knowledge of the time and partially living it, it's pretty true to the facts and accurate to what actually happened at that time. It touched my heart and it brings you to tears."

The film depicts the key stories and figures from the movement such as Chuck Smith, Greg Laurie, and Lonnie Frisbee. The film stars iconic actor Kelsey Grammer and Jonathan Roumie, who plays Jesus in the popular streaming series, The Chosen.

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Patterson told Baptist Press he was not completely aware of the full impact of the movement as it was happening. "I really didn't understand what was going on during that time when I was saved. I really didn't understand the enormity of what was happening across the country.

"It had an enormous impact on the leaders that we've had over

many decades in our conventions and how many came to know Christ during that time period.”

He said in order for a similar movement to spark today, the older generation must once again embrace and mentor a different, younger generation. “We just need to be ready to receive people as they are, and lead them to where they need to be [and] not try to make them conform to what they should be and then receive them.

“We can get it backwards and I think that’s one of the things that we’re doing in our churches today. We just can’t do that.”

Referencing the recent revival reports from Asbury University, Blue Mountain Christian University, and other colleges and churches, Nix said he continually prays for God to move in a way similar to what happened in his youth.

“Maybe He is doing it again and we’re seeing the beginnings of it. I hope and pray that is the case,” he said.

For information on theaters in Mississippi showing Jesus Revolution, rated PG-13 for some thematic elements and strong drug content, [click here](#).