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Promise Keepers: Some women attended conference

Continued from Page 1
out the conference.
"How come so many men are coming together?" Phillips asked the crowd. "It is truly a demonstration — not of the wisdom of man, not of some great marketing strategy, but because of the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Family matters
The issue of family was one of the important messages of the conference.

"[Marriage] is a good thing," said Dr. Bruce Fong of the Multnomah Biblical Seminary, one of the speakers at the Promise Keeper rally. "But sometimes when we enter a good thing, we do it the wrong way. Let's do it the right way," he challenged the men at Autzen.

"Honor our wives. Treat them with respect," Fong said. "Hitting is not an option for men of God. We, in our marriages, will never, ever use our bodies, our words to hurt the woman by our side."

Collapsing barriers
There were several lecturers on the issue of diversity, which was one of the topics addressed at this year's Promise Keepers conferences. The theme this year was "Break Down the Walls."

"We are here for one purpose and one purpose only ... What are we here for?" conference emcee Dr. Crawford Lorittis, Jr. asked the crowd.

"To break down the wall," the

crowd responded.
Walls of color continue to inhibit harmony in the church, speakers said.

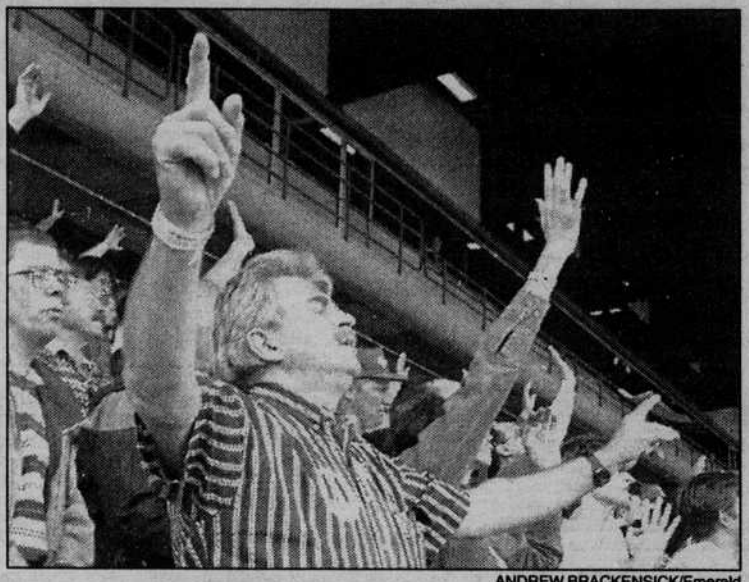
"Racism must end in America and it must end in the church," Dr. John Hagee said. "In the Bible there is no white church, there is no black church ... there is only the blood-born church of Jesus Christ."

Another viewpoint
Women were present at the Promise Keepers rally both as volunteers and food service workers. However, there were also women who attended the Promise Keepers conference. A group of women from Portland came to Eugene to see for themselves what happens at a Promise Keepers rally.

"We had no problems getting tickets," said Holly Pruett, who works as a consultant in Portland. "I came here for witness purposes ... to answer some of my own questions like how overt is the political agenda?"

The controversy surrounding some Promise Keepers' sentiments prompted the trip, some women said.

"I was really concerned because if men are the leaders at home and women can't [be], how is it going to affect the workplace?" asked Manju Kossy, an education assistant from Portland. "I felt like this was a world where men had value, men could end racism, but when it comes to women, women



Clifford Long joins over 33,000 others by singing along with the Promise Keeper Band between speakers Saturday afternoon.

can't have leadership, women can't help end sexism," she said.

When a man avoided holding Kossy's hand during prayer, she said, "It made me feel like there's something really problematic in that their actions don't agree with their words. They need to include all the members of the community. There's still a wall between men and women."

Having had this experience, Kossy said, "I learned a lot of interesting things, and I'm going to talk about it when I get home to Portland."

The future
"Well, what a time, huh? I don't want to see you guys go," announced emcee Lorittis at the end of the conference.

"Oh man this was awesome!" exclaimed Jackson. "I can't believe that there are this many people that are into God the way they are. It makes me feel good."

As for the Promise Keepers organization, Phillips said, "Wherever I go, I always get asked this question: 'Where is this thing going?' This is going toward Jesus Christ."

Protest: Promise Keepers' view of homosexuality questioned

Continued from Page 1
Promise Keepers' official position on homosexuality and views of a correct family structure.

The Promise Keepers official written position on homosexuality states, "We believe that the Bible clearly teaches that homosexuality violates God's creative design for a husband and a wife, and that it is a sin."

Elise R. Self, president of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, said she was struck with the thought that she has a lot in common with the Promise Keepers' values on family and integrity. But as a mother whose daughter is a lesbian, Self said she has a prob-

lem with the group's official position on homosexuality. Self was met with applause when she said, "I have a lesbian daughter and she is not a sin, and she is not against God's design."

Rev. Stephen Mathison-Bowie, of the Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene, said the Promise Keepers meet a "glaring need for men in our culture."

"I pray that the men at this gathering will have their hearts touched to take up the kind of leadership that leads only in giving of itself to the other," Mathison-Bowie said. "Not in domination. Not in intimidation."

Rev. Tiare L. Mathison-Bowie, director of the

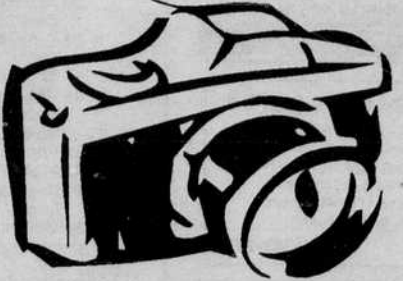
Koinonia Center, asked, "Would it be possible to have a gathering for men where they are asked to repent, not only of their racism, but also their sexism, homophobia, classism, anti-semitism?"

Bonnie Kanter, interim organizer of the ASUO Women's Center expressed concern over the limiting picture of what defines a family. She noted that students are interested in discussing alternative family structures and exploring a broader dialogue on these issues.

ASUO President Matthew Scotten called for a more inclusive dialogue that would "advocate a movement in an alternative direction."

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