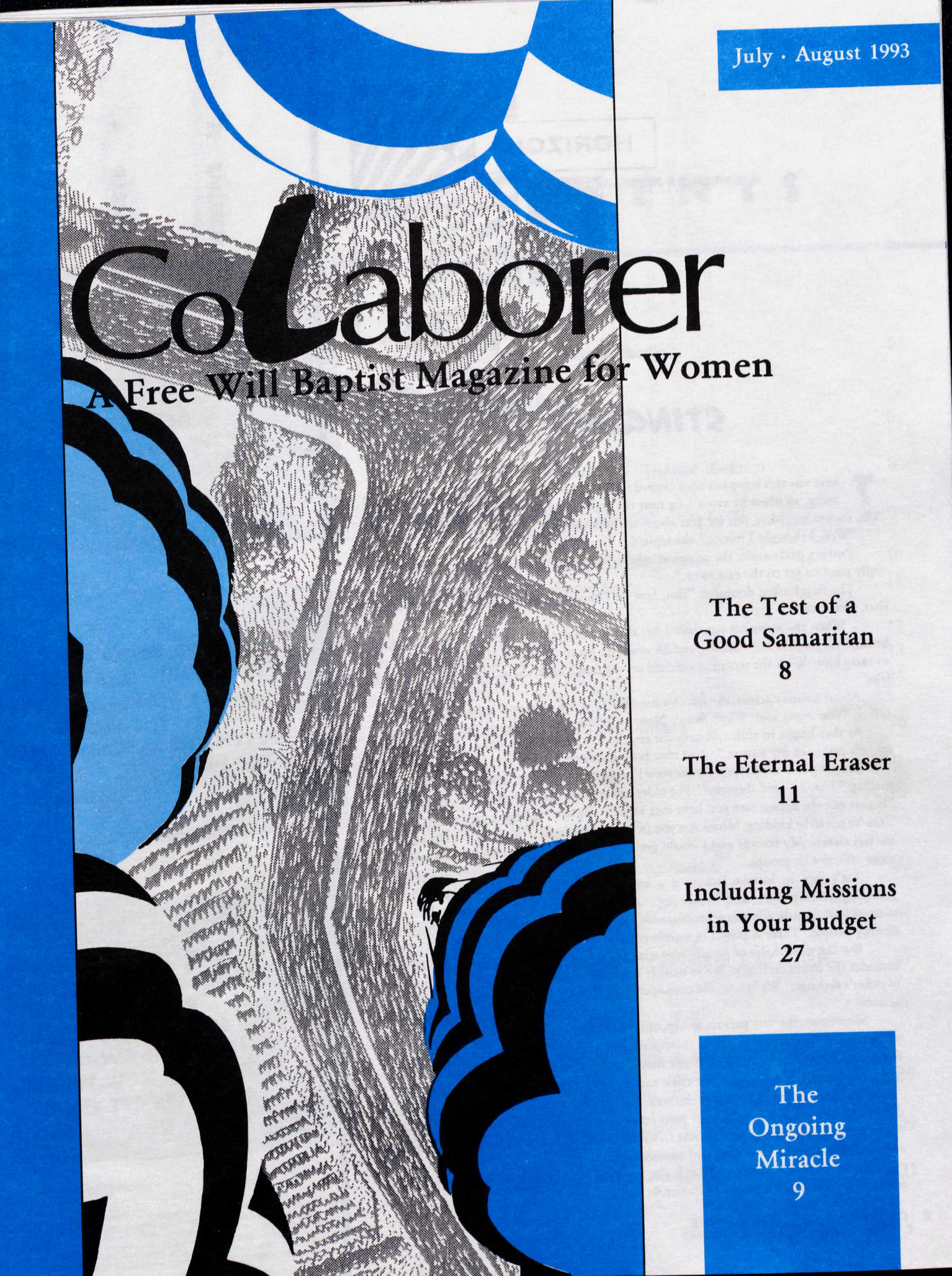




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A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

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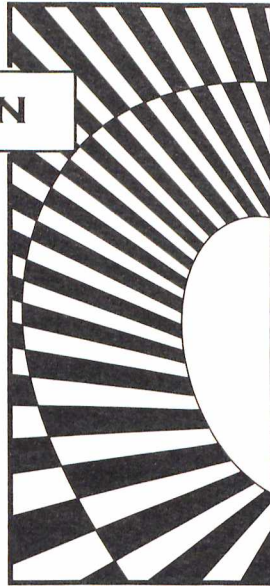
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HORIZON

MELISSA RIDDLE



STINGERS



VOLUME 33

NUMBER 4

JULY • AUG 1993

**“SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS
DIRECTLY
RELATED TO THE
DESIRE FOR IT AND
THE EFFORT PUT INTO
IT.”**

**“THE BLIND DO LEAD
THE BLIND. THE RICH, IN
MANY WAYS, ARE VERY
POOR. THE HAPPY ARE
OFTEN THE SADDEST. AND
THE WEAK ARE ACTUALLY
THE STRONG.”**

**“PART OF ME WANTED
TO GO. BUT THE OTHER
PART OF ME HAD
SEVERAL QUESTIONS.
HOW FAR AWAY WAS
THIS FIELD? HOW WOULD
WE GET THERE?”**

There was this scorpion who needed to get to the other side of a river. He couldn't swim, so when he saw a frog near the water's edge, he decided to ask her a favor. "Uh, excuse me, Miss, but are you about to cross the lake," he asked.

"Well, I thought I might," she replied.

Putting pride aside, the scorpion asked, "Would you give me a ride on your back? I really need to get to the east bank."

The frog looked doubtful: "But, how do I know you won't sting me? Scorpions do that, you know."

When the scorpion convinced her that it was not in his best interest to sting her because they would both drown, and he wouldn't get to the other side, the frog consented to carry him. With the scorpion perched on the frog's back, she gracefully swam into the lake.

About halfway across, she felt this horrible, burning sensation in her right flank. She yelled, "You stung me! Why? Why? Now we'll both die!"

As they began to sink and gasp for air, the scorpion said, "I didn't mean to, believe me, it's just. . . in my nature." And they both drowned.

Stinging is in my nature. By the time I began tripping sentences together, I knew how to sting: "That's stupid, dummy!" The older and smarter I grew, the better stinger I became: "Is that not the ugliest face you have ever seen!?" By age 14, I was a professional stinger: "You've got to be kidding, Mom! Are you from the stone age!?" Stinging was fun and made me feel clever. My friends and I would get together and practice stinging—it's easier and more effective in groups.

Let's face it, human nature is a well-worn excuse for complaining, criticizing, gossiping, tearing-down, and backbiting. And Christians are no exception. Individual stingers hurt friends, alienate acquaintances, and ruin reputations. Groups of stingers can destroy people. There is power in numbers.

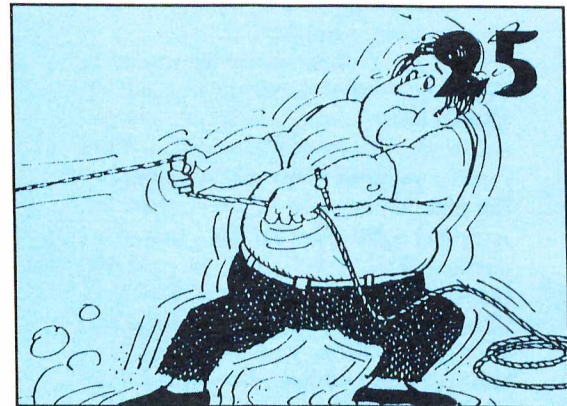
But the worst habit of people who sting is that we do it without thinking. We don't consider the issues carefully. We're neither objective about our attitudes, nor considerate of other's feelings. We ignore the consequences. And we seldom consider the sin of our actions.

Sometimes, the very person, group, or idea we sting could have carried us to the place we need to be. Tragically, those motivated and resourceful enough to move forward frequently fall victim to stingers. Their innovative, inspired ideas and plans are not even given the benefit of a doubt. One critic can poison a thousand good intentions.

So, how do we rise above human nature and abstain from stinging? Sheer determination and (this is the hard part) constant surrender to the Holy Spirit's leading. As we give our hearts and minds over to Christ daily, we rid ourselves of the urge to be anything but upright, objective, and encouraging.

To sting or not to sting. That is the question. And even though "it's just in our nature," we do have the power of choice. ❖

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Co-Laborer, (ISSN 0896-0038), is published bimonthly by the Woman's National Auxiliary Convention of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, 5233 Mt. View Road, Antioch, TN 37011-5002, (615)-731-6812. Address all correspondence to P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Annual subscription rates: \$5.75 per year, single; \$5.00 per year, 5 or more to one address. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Co-Laborer, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Copyright privileges reserved © 1993 Member of the Evangelical Press Association.

FOCUS ON

FREEDOM

Hymn: "I'll Go Where You Want Me To Go" (page 498 in the Rejoice Hymnal)

Scripture: Galatians 5:13-15, Romans 14

Introduction: Glorious Freedom

Freedom is just a word to us, as common as loaf bread and electricity. We eat it daily, never thinking twice about its wonderful taste. We flip switches at

every turn, never amazed at its circuitry. We are filled and warmed by it. We are alive because it exists, yet we ignore it.

Then July rolls around. We dust off our flags and display them proudly while the aroma of grilled burgers wafts through the summer breeze. We sing America the Beautiful and honor our veterans. And perhaps we mention freedom, once or twice. Some people would risk dying in the desert, would cut off a limb to be filled and warmed by freedom. Women and children are tortured in the struggle for one ounce of it.

Let's concentrate on freedom tonight, so that we can better understand the critical nature of this God-given, life-sustaining gift.

Freedom is many good and wonderful things. In today's world, however, freedom is pushed to a dangerous precipice.

I. Destructive Freedom

Freedom, taken to its worst extreme, becomes a driving, self-centered, materialistic machine, justifying anything. In 1985, then Attorney General Edwin Meese announced the formation of a Commission on Pornography to determine its impact on society and recommend ways of containing it within the boundaries of the Constitution. This commission established, for the record, what many people knew already: that pornography degrades and violates women and children, destroys the family, promotes acceptance of violence, and negatively affects society.

However, attempts to prohibit the publication and sell of this material on the governmental level are thwarted by special interest groups' influence on key political figures. Pornography is often as

easily sold as the daily newspaper. As a result, child abuse, spouse abuse, divorce, and violent crimes have reached new heights in this country.

Another freedom that has been carried too far is reproductive freedom. A woman should have the right to decide if and when she would bear children. Unfortunately, many women have decided that their convenience supersedes any other consideration. Her plans and priorities are more important than life itself. Randy Alcorn's book *ProLife Answers for ProChoice Arguments* addresses this issue of reproductive freedom by saying: (1) Not all things done with a person's body are right, nor should they be legally protected; (2) Abortion itself assures that over 750,000 females (the number of aborted females) each year do not have the right to their own bodies; (3) Control over the body can be exercised to prevent pregnancy in the first place.¹

A woman should have reproductive freedom: she can decide to have or abstain from sexual intercourse. In most situations, that is the definition of reproductive freedom. Once a human life is in the picture, the right to life supercedes any other right. We have the freedom to choose whether we steal or rape or kill, but the law restricts these choices. "Freedom to choose" is an incomplete thought. We should always ask, "Freedom to choose what?" [Discussion Questions: Where does Scripture speak about the sanctity of life? How can we get involved in the pro-life movement?]

II. Diminishing Freedom

While some freedoms take liberty to destructive levels, some essential freedoms are being chipped away, little by little. One such freedom is freedom of religion. Over the past few decades, religious viewpoints, particularly Christian views, have been belittled, even denounced in what is supposed to be an open forum of learning. The educational system in this country has banned the reading and all reference to Scripture, as well as prohibited prayer in school and at school functions. Even The Gideons must stand off school property to offer Bibles to elementary school students. At the same time, eastern mysticism and new age philosophies are accepted, even encour-

BY M. RIDDLE

aged in schools.

Christian bashing has become a regular media event with newspapers and television slanting reports unfavorably against conservative religious groups. On February 1, 1993, *The Washington Post* printed a totally slanderous article about Christians who called the Capitol to protest President Clinton's lifting of the ban on homosexuals in the military. It referred to Christians as "poor, uneducated, and easy to command."²

Political cartoonist Pat Oliphant depicted Christians as rats dragging a Republican elephant into a mission with "Jesus Saves" above the door.³ Even the grandfatherly Hugh Downs of ABC's 20/20 suggests that fundamentalist "fanatics" of family values, are much like the KKK and Nazi Party continuing the tradition of fear and intolerance.⁴ Such biased misrepresentation would not be tolerated if leveled at a minority race, but when it is hurled at Christians, no one even blinks an eye.

III. Defending Freedom

More than any other time in history, this is a time for Christians to ACT. We can no longer afford to be nominal defenders of our faith, of our freedom and the freedom of others. Words without action accomplish nothing. No one else will defend the sanctity of our freedom.

A. Action Begins Individually.

We all have a sphere of influence, and as Christians, we are called to stand up for what we believe in, to verbalize unapologetically, our position regarding social issues. An intelligent, informed, scripturally-sound argument will be heard. Any other approach is detrimental. Be informed and share that information with others.

B. Freedom Includes All

It is impossible to defend our freedom as Christians and at the same time deny the same freedom to others. We've heard people say before, "I may not agree with what he says, but I'll defend to the death his right to say it." That principle applies to us.

C. The Political Arena Offers Opportunity

It should be so simple. We elect government officials to represent our viewpoints and vote the way we would. Unfortunately, this is not happening. Our congressmen and senators forget or ignore how we feel about social, economic, and moral issues.

There are four ways to curb this trend: (1) *Pray consistently* for the specific moral, economic, and social dilemmas facing our country and the world; (2) *Persistently write and call your elected officials*, as well as the media, to inform them of your opinion; (3) *Attend and/or participate* in open forum meetings, panel discussions, public hearings, and organized protests that give ear to your civil and religious liberties; (4) *And use your vote* and your influence to both elect and defeat those candidates who respectively represent and misrepresent our positions.

IV. Freedom Found

All the news about freedom is not horrible. In fact, freedom is beautiful. Beyond the dark tunnel of maintaining and curbing civil liberties, there is a glorious light—FREEDOM IN CHRIST. For the Christian, it is a precious privilege that can flourish in our hearts and lives, whether in America or in communist Cuba.

Romans 14 (and I Corinthians 8) presents Paul's concern over believers judging one another according to the traditions of Old Testament law. Here he outlines some guidelines for freedom:

- (1) Accept those who are weak in the faith.
- (2) Be fully convinced of your own standards without condemning believers who do not share them.
- (3) Do not offend or hinder another by your actions.
- (4) Make every effort to keep the peace.

As children of God, we are free to interpret and apply the scriptures differently as the Holy Spirit directs. In order to enjoy Christian liberty, however, it is important to understand the difference between Scriptural truth and simple opinion. Verse 17-18 sums up the dilemma faced by the Christians in Rome: "The kingdom of God is not about eating and drinking, but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men." (NIV) We, like them, are free from the ritual details of the Old Testament law.

In Christ, we are free to hold differing opinions. We should be careful, though, that our opinions do not blind us to the overall significance of righteousness, peace, and joy in our lives. [Questions for discussion: *How do you differ in opinion from other believers in your church? Does the difference of opinion affect your rela-*

tionship with those people? Should it?]

Galatians 5:13-14 explains freedom even more specifically: "You, my brothers were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in one single command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "It doesn't get any clearer than that.

We are free from the bondage of sin. This is a concept we've been taught all of our lives, but I have to wonder why it takes us so long to really believe it. Sin confessed is sin forgiven—gone forever. The guilt that plagues us year after year is not God's will for us. Guilt is Satan's tool used to cloud the truth of God's mercy and love toward us.

We are free from any claim of earning salvation. The idea that we could somehow be good enough or strong enough for salvation is ludicrous. We've always been taught that anything worth having is worth working for. God's grace makes that ethic null and void. Salvation is forever free. We need to stop trying to pay for it.

But our Christian liberty is not absolute. Because we have sinful natures, freedom in Christ, just like the civil liberties, must be kept in check. Exercising our rights as individual believers may be our prerogative, but it may not be the best course of action at that time.

We are free to reach out beyond our comfort zone to minister to the unsaved. In I Corinthians 9, Paul is willing to give up his rights to maintain his witness without offending others. He didn't compromise his morality, but he adapted his methodology to his audience. He became "all things to all people" without yielding to temptations.

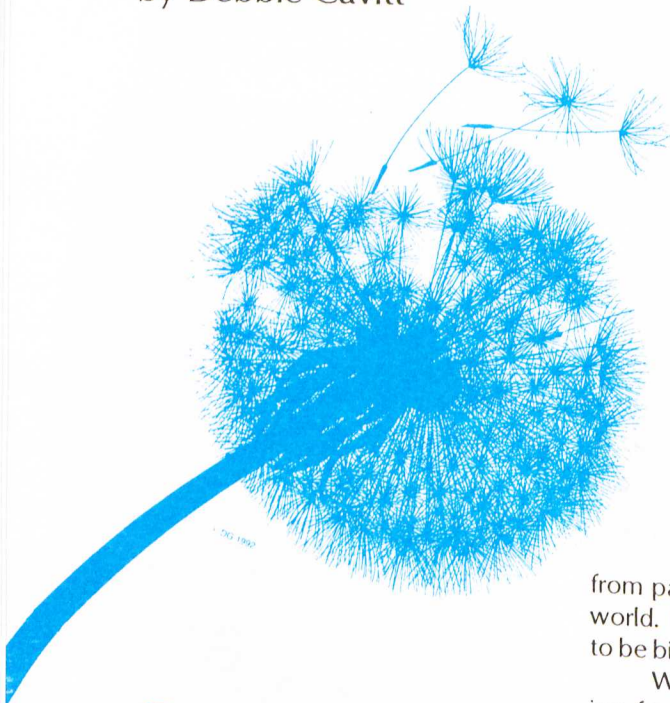
Conclusion

We have taken our freedoms for granted. We have allowed what once was glorious to become destructive and demoralizing. We have found what once was solid and sure to be tearing away, little by little. What can we do?

We need to shout and stomp and drag Civil Liberty back to what the Constitution meant for her to be before she spins out of control. We need to understand, cherish, and nourish Christian Liberty, so we can grow in Christ. "... Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (II Corinthians 3:17 NIV) ♦

GROWING PAINS

by Debbie Cavitt



Objective: To show that growing is a necessary, constant process in the life of every Christian

Scripture: Philippians 1:6-11

Hymn: "Since Jesus Came Into My Heart," 293 in Rejoice Hymnal

Suggestions: A spiritual growth chart will help the women visualize the stages of Christian growth (See Springboard). Ask the women ahead of time to talk about times of growth in their lives and what prompted them. At the end of the presentation, ask these four questions (or have them printed on cards to take home): Am I growing spiritually? What is the evidence of my growth? Where do I want to be in my Christian life? What are three things I plan to do to start/keep growing?

Introduction

"My goodness, just look at you! Those pants fit you perfectly a month ago, and now your ankles are showing. You certainly are growing up!"

This oh-so-familiar scene has echoed

from parent to child throughout the world. Healthy, active children grow to be bigger, healthy, active children.

We are in the process of growing from the moment we are conceived to the day we die. From our parents, we inherit a genetic pattern of mental, physical, and emotional growth. However, our spiritual growth and development is neither inherited nor genetic. It makes no difference how godly our parents are (or how ungodly, for that matter) because there is no pattern to inherit. Each of us decides to believe in God or not to believe, to accept Christ as Savior or not to accept Him.

When we believe in God and accept Christ, a new Christian is born, and the spiritual growth process begins. What a thrill! What excitement! There is such wonderful joy in the life of a new believer. What a change!

Whether young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, there are many changes awaiting the new Christian. Changes in lifestyle, changes in friends, a change of priorities, and changes in values. Many of these changes are drastic, some are subtle, but with each change, there is pain—growing pains.

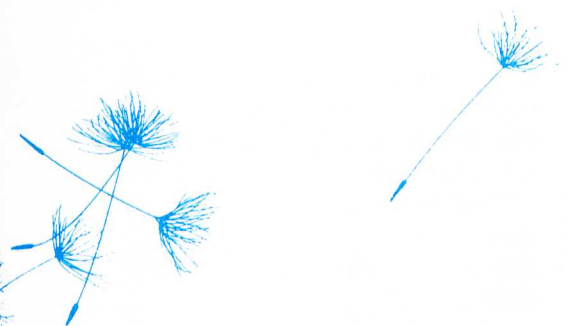
Growing Spurts

Once I saw the cartoon of Sleeping Beauty. Her hair was always combed, and her dress was never wrinkled. As she worked to clean her humble cottage (a job that took about two minutes), she never talked, but always sang.

I've had days when I felt like she must have. Everything was perfect from the time I woke up to the time I went to bed. However, I've also had my share of "days gone wrong," when even the most simple thing was a disaster. I doubt if even Sleeping Beauty could stay graceful on one of those kinds of days.

The life of the Christian is full of ups and downs. There are times when we feel the strength and presence of God in every breath we take. We see our prayers answered and our labor rewarded. We are growing. We are growing strong. We are growing fast. It's easy to sing, for there's a song in our hearts. We are Christians in motion.

But, alas! This is not always the case. We all experience times of sickness, times of doubt, times of frustration, and times of criticism. We get tired, and our prayers seemingly go unanswered as we cling to our faith. Our growing has stopped—completely, abruptly.



Wait, don't be deceived, for things are not as they seem to be. Growth has not stopped. The pain may have increased along with the frustration, but we are growing, even in the darkest of days. These are the times when we learn patience, perseverance, and temperance. These are times of refinement and learning. We can draw close to God, allowing Him to prepare us, once again, for "active duty."

I Samuel 30:6 says, "...But David encouraged himself in the Lord His God." Christian growth is often sporadic, often very slow, sometimes very fast. But regardless of what kind of growth we experience, growing itself is a constant.

The Remedy

As a child, I would often awaken in the night with my legs aching. My muscles were tight, having been exercised beyond their limit. My mother would always assure me these muscles pains were temporary and not serious. She would rub my rigid muscles and explain how the pains were just evidence of a growing body. Now the years have passed, and I am the mother who is often called in the middle of the night to rub aching legs and arms. I try to help ease their growing pains.

There is comfort knowing that although spiritual growth is painful, it is not terminal. There is comfort knowing that all Christians experience these pains.

In the Bible, young Timothy struggled with the growing pains of a

new ministry. He is frustrated, discouraged, even exhausted, trying to grow into the kind of man God wanted him to be. Timothy was comforted by the wise counsel of his Christian friend, Paul. Paul shared with Timothy how to endure and understand the necessity of growing pains. Paul's remedy for growing pains is: (1) Pray, pray, pray. I Timothy 2:1 (2) Study the Bible. II Timothy 3:14,15 (3) Christian counsel and fellowship—which Paul and others provided for Timothy.

Hundreds of years later, this remedy still works on growing pains minor and serious.

Growing Strong

Through various stages of Christian growth, we are building strength. We've read about people of strength in the Bible. I am often left in awe of these heroes of the faith and of the fact that God uses plain ol' humans to work wonders. They were not genetically different from modern day people. There was no superior race of Christians who possessed magical, mystical strength. They were ordinary people plagued with the same insecurities, fears, and doubts as we have. Their strength came from the same abundant source as ours does: God Himself.

He has told us, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And just like Paul, we can endure, and even see spiritual growth in, our weakness because Christ's power is upon us.

Unlimited Potential

There is unlimited potential for those who are struggling through the spiritual growth process. We should not compare ourselves to other Christians, neither be boastful of our growth nor envious of others' growth. Our growth patterns are as varied as our

fingerprints. Many of us grow old as Christians before ever really growing up. Many of us are able, through Christ's power, to grow despite the painfully hard times, in failures and successes. Some never fully realize the need to grow in Christ.

Just think of all the effort we put into growing physically. We spend millions of dollars and years of time taking vitamins, getting check-ups, brushing teeth, eating the right foods, exercising, gaining and losing weight, avoiding sunburns. Sometimes, despite our efforts, we are still physically unhealthy. All the money and time in the world does not guarantee that our children will reach their full potential, physically.

Spiritually, though, if we are assessing our growth in the past, setting goals for our future spiritual development, and actively pursuing those goals, we can reach our full potential as Christians. The rate of spiritual growth is directly related to the desire for growth and the effort put in to growing.

There will be pain. No pain, no gain. There will be times when there is no outward signs of growth. But if we are taking the remedy as recommended by Paul to Timothy, there is nothing we cannot accomplish in Christ. ♦



Debbie Cavitt is a freelance lyricist of gospel music from Tulsa, OK. She and husband Johnny have three children, Amy, Greg, and Tate. They attend the South East FWB Church.

THE TEST OF A GOOD SAMARITAN

BY LUANN MAGGARD

I knew the story of the "Good Samaritan" well from the countless times I had heard it in Sunday school as a child. As an adult, I've grown to hold the principles of that parable in my daily Christian walk. I've given freely to friends and loved ones in need. I've always believed that "all men are created equal." Little did I know that these values would be tested on a very real level. I was disappointed with my score.

The alarm clock by our bed read 2:30 AM. My husband had arrived home later than usual from his evening shift, and I heard him talking with someone in the living room. Assuming he had brought a co-worker home to talk, I drifted back off to sleep. The gentle touch of my husband's hand on my shoulder awakened me a few moments later.

"LuAnne, I'm moving Amber to Mariesa's room. I've brought someone home with me. He needs a place to sleep."

"Who is it, David?"

"He's a guy I picked up on the highway. He has nowhere to go. I'll tell you more about it in the morning." I could feel my husband's determination to have this man stay, despite my uncertainties.

From down the hall, I looked in the opened bedroom door to get a glance at him. There stood a tall, black man wearing a T-shirt and shorts. His unkempt appearance told me it had been some time since he'd showered or shaved. My uneasiness grew as I tiptoed back to my bed. I heard my husband orient him to the room he'd be staying in for the night. David then said goodnight to the man and came to bed. My husband said nothing as he crawled into bed next to me. He just kissed me goodnight. I had several questions that couldn't wait 'til morning.

"He's not a paranoid schizophrenic who's going to kill us all in the middle of the night, is he?"

David turned over and said, "LuAnne, don't be ridiculous. He's a

guy down on his luck. His mother and father are both dead, and when he came home from college to live with his sister, she moved her boyfriend in and her brother out. Now, go to sleep. It's going to be fine." With that and another kiss, he rolled over and went to sleep.

I tried to sleep, but it was no use, so at 5 AM, I got up and made a pot of coffee. Soon thereafter, I rounded the girls up, got them dressed and fed, and off we went into our day. My husband and the stranger slept soundly as I closed the door behind me.

When I returned home early, I expected to see them both gone: David to work, the stranger, forever. Instead, I found them sitting at the kitchen table talking. They both stood to their feet when I entered the room.

"LuAnne, I'd like for you to meet a friend of mine," David said. "Otis, this is my wife, LuAnne. LuAnne, this is Otis."

"Nice to meet you, Otis," I replied.

He shook my hand. "Nice to meet you, ma'am. I really appreciate you and your husband's generosity."

David then summoned me into the next room. He whispered, "I've made arrangements to send Otis to San Francisco by bus today at 4:00. You'll need to take him to the depot because I'll have to be at work. I've taken \$200 out of the bank to pay for the bus ticket. Also, you'll need to give him \$20 for food. The bus ride is 47 hours."

"Why is he going to San Francisco? Can't he find someone around here to move in with? How are we going to afford this?" I questioned.

"He's moving in with a close friend. There is no one here for him in Kansas City."

My emotions changed from uneasiness to anger. I fumed on the inside as my husband said his goodbyes and left for work. How could he leave me alone with some stranger off the street? Isn't he worried about me? Didn't I have enough to do without having to

take care of someone I didn't know from Adam? I made small conversation with Otis, hoping he wouldn't sense my anger and frustration. He told me that he had just completed his junior year at Northwest Missouri State, majoring in engineering.

When my girls returned from school to find Otis, they took to him immediately. They danced, sang, and played the piano for him. He joined right in gladly. My youngest asked Otis if he would like to play nintendo, and as they trailed off down the hall to her room, my heart sank with shame. A little child, untainted by the world's prejudice and cruelty, showed genuine hospitality for the stranger I had shunned.

The time came to take the stranger to the bus station. With mixed emotions, I said goodbye. There was a feeling of relief that my household would get back to normal, but even stronger were my feelings of guilt.

On the way back home, I had to ask myself, "How will I react to the next person in need? Will I, like the Levite, feel no common bond with the stranger and say it's not my responsibility? Will I cross the street to avoid him? Or will I take him in as did the good Samaritan?"

If I have learned from this experience, I will follow what the Bible teaches, "Let us not love with words or tongue but with action and in truth" (I John 3:18). ❖



LuAnne Maggard and her husband, David, are active in the Beacon FWB Church in Raytown, MO. She spends her time keeping up with two daughters and working as an Intensive Care Unit nurse.

The Ongoing Miracle

by Bea Wood

As a child, I was extremely fearful of the dark. Not of ghosts, madmen, or vicious animals prowling in the dark, but afraid of the dark. I guess one might say I had a phobia-lygophobia to be exact.

Neither maturing nor aging altered the situation. The older I grew, the more I knew I could never live alone. When darkness shrouded my house, the stress of being alone would be too great. I would tense up, listening for unusual noises but being too afraid to investigate if one were heard. If I would sleep at all, it would be a nervous sleep, lying quietly underneath mounds of blankets, trying not to move. Any movement might provoke disaster.

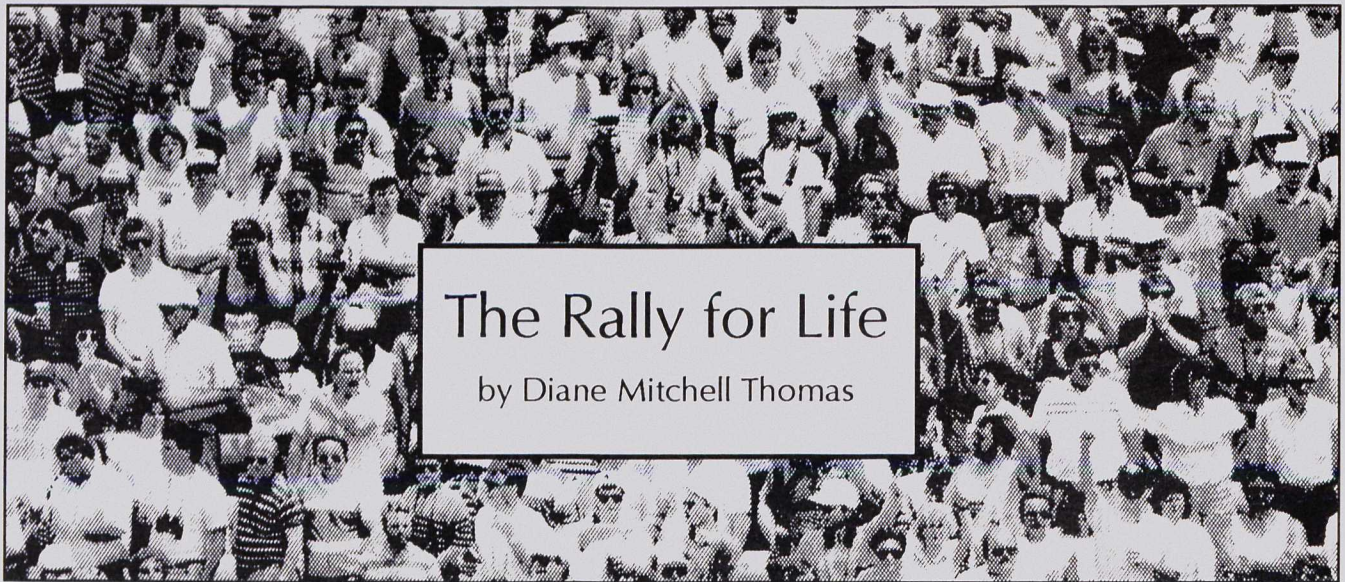
In May of 1991, my husband of sixty-four years slipped into eternity, and my worst fear became a reality. There was no one to live in the old farmhouse with me. We had lived here together for almost sixty years.

After the funeral, my daughter spent the first two nights with me. Friends stayed over the next night. The fourth day, I spent most of my time dreading nightfall. The hours seemed to fly--it was as if darkness knew of my fear.

Strangely enough, when darkness came, there was no fear. I was lonely, yes, but I roamed about the house without one ounce of anxiety. There was no flinching at every noise outside my window, no premonition of impending disaster.

After a few days and nights of peace, I shared with a friend how surprised I was at losing my phobia. Her response overwhelmed me. "I've been praying for you," she said. "Many are praying for you. That is why you feel safe and secure at night."

And she was right. Many months have passed since I began facing nightfall alone, and there have been no psychological stress, no nocturnal disturbances, no wide-eyed vigils, no panic-stricken moments, no sweaty nightmares. To this day, when dusk is settling over the hills outside of my farmhouse window, I feel nothing but His wonderful calm surrounding me. This is the ongoing miracle in my life. ❖



The Rally for Life

by Diane Mitchell Thomas

Iwalked from the shadow of the towering obelisk monument, pushed through the throng of protesters, wiped the sweat from my neck and raised my anti-abortion sign to shield me from the blazing sun. I had risen early to make the journey to Washington, D.C. and now chose a spot to sit my tired, aching body.

Thousands of people were still threading their way past the famous marble structures of the city to join the gathering on the National Mall. It was the Pro-Life Rally of 1990.

"What am I doing here?" I wondered. Weren't we as Christian women supposed to be meek and humble? Why get involved in so troubling an issue as abortion? Politicians avoid it, the liberal media supports it, the National Organization of Women push it with great force. Why was I there?

I listened to powerful words from famous people, even the voice of President Bush blared out from the amplifiers that long, hot Saturday. None touched my heart like the quiet story told to me by one woman who sat by my side.

In the early sixties, she was nineteen years old, pregnant with her third child, and her marriage was in trouble.

They were barely above poverty level, and she did not want the baby. She explained the situation to her doctor and asked for an abortion. "We won't be able to feed another mouth," she argued.

For a long time, the doctor tapped his pen against the desk, glaring at her. He grew red in the face, and his voice, filled with anger, scolded, "This is America. We don't kill our children, and we don't let them go hungry." He shook his finger in her face and said, "Now, go home and take care of that baby because I don't murder them!"

She took his advice, later became a Christian, and now shutters to think that she sought to end her son's life before it began.

As we sat there together, walls of people all around us, she said, "Thank God for a doctor that stood by his convictions. Where are his kind now?" We grew silent, lost in our thoughts as we looked over the great city. The dome of the Jefferson Memorial glistened in the sun, the Lincoln Memorial reflected in the pool that stretched before us, and we felt the ghosts of history. We were part of history.

Hadn't our silent voices silenced the heartbeat of millions of unborn children? Could we change paths? We

both raised our signs to the news helicopter flying overhead and joined the hundreds of thousands of protesters. "We will win! We will win!" we chanted.

We must win. The baby born to that nineteen-year-old mother grew up, surrendered his life to Christ, and never did go hungry. Today he pastors a Free Will Baptist Church.

How many missionaries, pastors, and gifted laypeople have been cruelly aborted, tossed in a trash bin behind an abortion clinic?

Why was I there, hundreds of miles from home, protesting abortion in the sweltering heat? I was there to save future generations of Free Will Baptists. I was there for the babies. ❖



Diane Mitchell Thomas and her husband, Ray, are members of Grifton FWB Church in Grifton, NC. Diane also serves on the WNAC Study Committee.

The Eternal Eraser

by Nancy Harris

The inventions of mankind continue to amaze and astound me. The human race is continually reaching for and hitting new heights in science, medicine, technology, and in every imaginable field. However, one of the few things man has not been able to improve upon is the human brain.

While attempting to operate my new word processor the other day, I was ready to concede that the human brain had been surpassed by science. I was in awe of the machine's capabilities. Frustration reared its ugly head when I discovered I didn't have the time to read and understand the instructions that came with this new brain. And as a result, I was soon quite amused to find myself not getting the responses from the machine that I thought I was asking for. It did work hard, though. The brain told me when I misspelled a word, how to spell it correctly, how to center a headline, how to justify margins, etc.

The one capability that amazed me the most was the editing function. At any given time in my writing, if I wanted to add or delete a word, a line, or even a complete paragraph, all I had to do was push some buttons, and ZIP! whatever I wanted erased is gone. Yes, I suppose it could be floating around in the memory bank, but it's no longer on my page.

After using this feature, I sat back and thought, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could press a button and have events or words from my past deleted? All those times I look back on now and wish I hadn't done or said what I did - I could make them all vanish in a wink!" Can you imagine, if in the middle of an argument or a harsh word, you could just press a button and erase the whole thing? What a revolutionary invention that would be! Just think of the implications for mankind.

Then reality hit. Cold chills raced up and down my spine. This capability

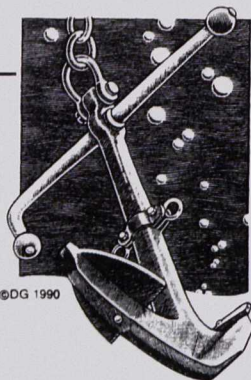
is already at my fingertips. And the amazing thing is that it doesn't have to be plugged into an electrical socket to function. I have access to it any time of the day or night. It comes with an instruction book so simply written that even a child could understand. There are no paper to manipulate, no buttons to push, and the results are beautiful. Wrong deeds and harmful words are swept from existence in the blink of an eye - swept away, never to be remembered!

How does this happen, you ask. Simple! God operates the control panel and is the only constant source of power necessary. The Bible is the instruction book, and sincere prayer activates its capabilities. Unlike with my word processor, anything I ask God to delete is gone forever. It is put in the "sea of forgiveness," never to be remembered or called to mind again (Micah 7:19). It is removed "as far as the East is from the West" (Psalm 103:12).

I use with gratefulness all the time saving inventions I own. But I've come to the conclusion that man, even at his most inventive, intellectual best, is simply no match for the abilities and power of God. He has the power not only to forgive and wipe from existence all of our past mistakes, but also to give and take life itself. To God belongs the ultimate in praise, honor, and glory for His marvelous works! ♦



Nancy Harris and her husband, Raymond, attend Shady Grove FWB in Whitesburg, TN, where Nancy is Auxiliary president. She has two grown children and two grandchildren. When she isn't busy as a school teacher, she loves watercolor painting.



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BIBLE STUDY

I Timothy 5: Part I

Caring for Those in Need

M.M. Daniel

Review: In the previous study, Paul referred to what we might call "the ageless factor" as it applies to Christian service. Being young, like Timothy, did not relieve him of being an "example of the believers." It would be helpful to review the six areas in the walk of a good minister as specified in 4:12. Aspiring to these high but attainable goals will enable one to deal more effectively with the work of a good minister, which follows in Chapter 5.

Senior Citizens I Timothy 5:1, 2

5:1—"Rebuke not an _____, but _____ him as a _____; and the _____ of men as _____; The Greek word for "rebuke" denotes a severe censuring of an older believer. Paul does not imply that an older person reaches a state of perfection due to his advanced years of experience and never needs rebuke. However, age is due respect. Timothy is counseled to "intreat" or exhort him as a father, or in the case of younger men, as a brother. Counsel delivered with due care and respect, as one family member to another, is more likely to be heeded and appreciated than if given from an elevated position with a tone of authority.

5:2—"The _____ women, as mothers; the _____, as _____ with all _____." The same type of familial approach is to be extended to both older and younger women in need of rebuke or counsel. However, in the case of the younger women, Paul adds a word of caution. A counseling session is to be kept pure, in thought, word, and action. Many a minister has been brought to disgrace when this caution went unheeded.

Widows In Need Indeed! 5:3, 4

5:3, 4—"Honor _____ that are widows indeed. But if any have _____ or nephews, let them learn first to show _____ (loyalty and devotion) at home, and to _____ (repay in return) their parents, for that is _____ and acceptable before God." Honor and due respect is to be extended especially to genuinely destitute widows. Their needs are not to be ignored, scoffed at or taken lightly, in Timothy's day or in the present church age. A widow without a living child or relative, financially incapable of contributing to her support, becomes the responsibility of her local church. She should not be allowed to fall through the cracks in lieu of other

church programs or ministries. On the other hand, if she has adult children or other relatives, they are charged with her support, relieving the church of the financial, though not the emotional, support needed. Obedience carries God's endorsement.

A Study in Contrasts 5:5-7

5:5, 6—"Now she that is a widow _____, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in _____ and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is _____ while she liveth." Widowhood and the adjustment to being without a partner is traumatic. But to be left without financial or emotional support is devastating. Most Christian widows fall back into the unfailing arms of the Father who never abandons. But God chooses to work through His family of believers to provide for them, rather than through miracles as He did with wandering Israel and frightened Elijah. In Paul's day, younger widows with no opportunity to earn a living otherwise were tempted to resort to immorality to earn money. This may be what Paul referred to when he pronounced them "dead" while they live. All who reject God's help through Christian fellowship and support are the walking dead.

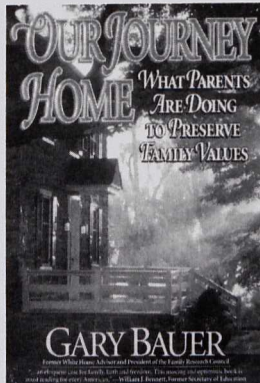
5:7—"And these things give in _____ that they may be _____." The responsibility of caring for widows should be realized before widowhood becomes a reality. And widows should be aware of the truth in verse five.

Discussion Questions

1. Is deference important when counseling one who is older? Why?
2. In 5:2, should the word "sisters" be interpreted to mean a literal sibling or (in the broader sense) simply a female believer?
3. With the social programs available today, is the church or family members relieved of their responsibilities toward widows? Why or why not?
4. Married women would prefer not to dwell on the possibility of sudden widowhood. Do you believe prior instruction, counsel, or sharing about this topic would help or hurt? ❖

Our Journey Home

by Gary Bauer



Reviewed by Patti Richards

From the time I was a small child, I have heard the phrase “you can’t go home again,” and I believed it. However, in the book, *Our Journey Home* by Gary Bauer, we as Christians and Americans are encouraged to do just that: take our families back home.

Of course, Bauer is not discussing a physical return. Many of us find it difficult to make it back to our birthplaces, even on special occasions. Bauer’s premise is that it is possible to lead our families back to the system of values and beliefs that made this country strong. I found his arguments and ideas not only encouraging, but extremely refreshing.

As a former White House advisor and president of the Family Research Council, Bauer has lived for many years in a city well-known for its values bashing. In these positions, he had the inside track on some startling and unfortunate statistics: one fourth of our children are born out of wedlock, and our schools do not adequately educate our young people—often they even misguide them, such as in handing out condoms in high schools in an effort to curb AIDS.

To my astonishment, however, there was some surprisingly good news in this book. For example, 92% of Americans want our children to have better manners and morals; marriage and faithfulness are “in” again; and the divorce rate that has long been skyrocketing is now leveling off. What exciting news for the family!

I never realized there were many of us left who wouldn’t mind sharing a glass of lemonade over the backyard fence, while our children played safely within hearing distance.

Bauer offers many practical suggestions on how to bring our families back to hearth and home. He emphasizes the importance of the family dinner hour (something my parents must have told him). He calls it a neutral zone, where the family comes together to talk about the events of the day, to share joys and work through difficulties. Another important time to redirect the family is the bedtime hour. Here, when lights are low and feelings are warm, communication is easier. Much can be learned about thoughts, hopes, and dreams during this tender time at the end of the day.

Bauer also advocates supplying children with good, value-based literature. Classics like *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Moby Dick* stress values, strength of character, tolerance, loyalty and patriotism.

Until I read *Our Journey Home*, I had all but placed the dream of a traditional family in my hope chest alongside a worn out baseball glove and my son’s first pair of shoes. But the honest wisdom of this book has prompted me to dust off the dream and make it a reality in my family. This information is essential, both for the Christian family and the non-Christian family. It is a good beginning for families who have forgotten or gotten away from what “home” means.

Maybe we can’t go home again, but we can bring our families and our country closer to its original value system, even if we do it one house at a time. ♦



Suicides among young people continue to rise at an alarming rate. And when we see the desperation in the eyes of adults in this world, is it any wonder our children are giving up? Grownups, even Christians, are running too fast, abusing their bodies with chemicals, stressed out, and self-absorbed. Young people look at adults and think, "that is all I have to look forward to: Life is hopeless." As Christians, our hope can be reaffirmed in times of crisis. II Corinthians 4 is a good place to start.

II Corinthians 4:7-10, 17:

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but we are not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed. We always carry in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." (NIV) ♦

Poet's Corner

My Neighbor by Barbara Jarvis Sapulpa, Oklahoma

My neighbor
Needs someone to talk to
About her fears, about her concerns.
A friend she can trust,
Who will not reveal a confidence.
Who will that someone be?
Will it be me?

Yes,
My neighbor is
My mission field,
Lord, let me never forget
Her soul is my responsibility.

Could I, Jesus? by Charlie Boyd

Could I wipe away your tears,
The ones you shed for me,
The sweat-drops of blood that fell.
Could I a little comfort be?

My heart aches, and my soul
cries in pain.
I turned my back on you,
Yet you willingly covered my shame.

The nights that sleep would not be
found,
Trembling and frightened,
On my knees, I prayed.

Forgive me, Jesus, I care, I do,
I want so much to be like you.
Teach me and mold me,
Use me, I pray.
Walk with me and strengthen me
each new day.
In Thee do I put my trust, my all,
I'm ready, Jesus, to answer your call.

The Mission by E.A. Dixon Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

A simple,
clay conduit
lay nicked
and scarred
amid the
arid expanse
of souls
A sturdy grid
through which
Living Water
must flow.

Life's Pathways by Rhonda Thacker Pikeville, Kentucky

Life's pathways are never what we
expect.
The turns are never when or where
we think.

To see our goals in life realized,
We would have taken a different
route.

We can make our plans, but God
plans the journey
From our first footsteps
To the last ones we'll ever make.

Friend, put all your faith and trust
In the God who prepares and guides
All our paths from beginning to
end. ♦



Springboard:

Innovative Ideas · Helps for Auxiliary Officers

DEVOTION OUTLINE

Shining, Shimmering Lights

This devotional is an object lesson which can be given by one or more women. You may want to add more Scripture verses, a song, and application ideas to enhance the thought.

Scripture: Matthew 5:14-16

I. Electric light bulb: Of all the lights in the world, this is the most common. The greatest problem with the light bulb is that it is not permanent. It shines brightly only for a while, then without warning, it burns out, leaving us in the dark.

Many Christians shine as long as everything is going well, but their light flickers out when the trials come. This happens when we rely on our own power and forget that the true Source of our light is Jesus Christ.

II. Lanterns: This light starts out slowly and is dim when compared to the electric light. Its flame is threatened by any little breeze that comes along.

Such unsteadiness is sometimes evident in Christians. Their witness is clouded by doubt and worry. They are "easily carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4:14). They are very vulnerable to Satan's attacks.

III. A Match: This small light lasts only a few seconds. Its bright flame quickly burns out. Some Christians have spurts of fire and enthusiasm but all too quickly lose their momentum.

IV. Oil Lamps: Today, we use this light mainly as a decorative piece or in an emergency. It is sometimes difficult to keep it burning, and it requires a lot of attention. The wick must be trimmed or it smokes, the globe must be kept clean, and the container must be refilled with oil.

Likewise, some Christians require special attention and seem never to outgrow their need for it. A closer walk with the Lord, who is our Source, will lessen our dependence upon others.

-adapted from Leader's Plan 11, July 1982.

PRESIDENT

July 19-20 is the WNAC National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. If you or your women have not reserved your hotel room or banquet seats, be sure to remind them (and yourself). This issue of *CoLaborer* includes a registration form, and *Contact* magazine has been running hotel reservation forms. Banquet tickets are limited, so get on the ball if you haven't already. We want to see you in Louisville!

August, of course, is Emphasis month. You'll notice the Emphasis program is not included in this issue. It will be mailed out no later than June 1st in a special packet to give you more information and resources. WNAC is at a critical point, financially, and the Emphasis offering is of particular importance this year. Please do all you can, talk to your pastor, plan ahead, and organize well for maximum results. Ours is a vital ministry. We need the cooperation and support of all our Auxiliaries and the churches they represent.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Copies of the resolutions passed at this year's WNAC Convention will be available at the WNAC booth. Be sure to stop by and get your copies to share with your Auxiliary.

Is your state having a Fall retreat, convention or special meeting? Announce it in advance and often, and encourage your women to attend.

MISSION STUDY CHAIRMAN

Because this month is a celebration of freedom and because abortion (some call it reproductive freedom) is one of the issues that should concern all Christian women, perhaps you might want to recommend a discussion group or panel discussion using *ProLife Answers to ProChoice Arguments* by Randy Alcorn (1992, Multnomah Press). It is a powerful tool to give us the answers/information we need to stand up against abortion in various situations. It is the most documented, organized, and thorough book available on the pro-life position. You may want to invite a crisis pregnancy representative or a Christian counselor to speak at your monthly meeting. Order the book through your local bookstore or write for more information on the pro-life movement: Eternal Perspectives Ministry, 2229 East Burnside #23, Gresham, Oregon 97030, (503) 663-6481.

Your Auxiliary can promote education (even missions) among our FWB college

students by underwriting the expense of a year's (or two year) subscription to any given periodical. Our college libraries pay thousands of dollars yearly to keep current information in stock. Your gift subscription could help them add to their supply or keep up what they already carry. All you have to do is: [1] write the college, requesting a list of the periodicals they would like to subscribe to but do not (you can ask about missions publications, too); [2] rates vary from \$5 to \$150, so let the librarian know how much your group is willing to contribute toward a subscription, so she can indicate which magazines fall in that price range; [3] select and order the one you want to purchase; [4] write or call the librarian to let her know which periodical your group ordered for the college and when she can expect it.

Our FWB college addresses are:

FWBBC

Carol Reid, Librarian
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205

Southeastern FWB College

Attn: Librarian
P.O. Box 1700
Wendell, NC 27591-1700.

Hillsdale FWB College

Attn: Librarian
P.O. Box 6343
Moore, OK 73060

California Christian College

Attn: Librarian
4881 East University
Fresno, CA 93703

MISSIONS/PRAYER CHAIRMAN

For prayer reminders in July, why not make miniature Uncle Sam hats out of small Dixie cups? Buy plain white ones and add red and blue construction paper strips. A brim can be attached with glue or a stapler. On the underside of the brim (when the hat is upside down), write "Today's Prayer for Freedom." Then for the inside, photocopy on little slips of paper different requests related to freedom, one for every day of the month.

There is information to help you in Missions Alert on page 28, the Missionary Prayer Calendar on page 18, as well as other articles/sections of this issue. Some good examples are: Pray for open doors and hearts in Waldorf, Maryland, that the Owens family will be able to freely witness for Christ; Pray for financial freedom--that we will be more willing to plan ahead to include missions in our family budgets; Pray for freedom from worries and fears, that we would be content where we are.

MISSION/ACTION CHAIRMAN

Summer is in full swing. The sun is hot, the breeze isn't cool, but there are plenty of reasons for Auxiliary to move full-steam ahead. July is the month when we celebrate freedom. The most perfect freedom is that we find as believers--freedom from the chains of sin. July is a wonderful time to work on our outreach because people are more interested in the concept of freedom. Encourage your women with ideas of how to share Christ during July.

A few to get you thinking are:

- ▢ a "get to know your neighbor" cookout--this could be done individually, or your Auxiliary could plan it, and each woman could invite her neighbor;
- ▢ make a consolidated effort to write letters to your Congressmen about issues of concern (see July Program);
- ▢ give a little freedom (babysitting, chauffeuring, an extra day off) to

The following may be given as a dramatic reading with the second voice taped and played from off-stage. It can be performed by two people.

Matthew 13:45-46 records a fascinating parable of a man who discovered a pearl. In order to obtain it, he had to sell everything he had. It cost him his all. Jesus is the Pearl of great price. To love Him is to want to serve Him. You are the buyer. How much does true discipleship cost?

- 1 What is the price of such a pearl?
- 2 Oh it is too dear, too costly.
- 1 But how much?
- 2 Well, it is very expensive.
- 1 Do you think I could buy it?
- 2 Oh, of course; anybody can.
- 1 But you say it is too expensive.
- How much is it?
- 2 It costs everything you have. No more. No less. So anyone can buy it.
- 1 I want to buy it then.
- 2 What do you have? Let's write it down.
- 1 I have \$1000 in the bank.
- 2 Good. . \$1000. What else?
- 1 What do you mean? That is all I have.
- 2 You have nothing else?
- 1 Well, I have a few dollars here in my purse.
- 2 How many?
- 1 I'll see. . uh, 10,15,16. . . and 75 cents.
- 2 I'll take that. What else do you have?
- 1 Nothing. I have nothing else.
- 2 Where do you live?
- 1 In a house.
- 2 Good, I'll take the house, too. And. . .everything in the house.
- 1 You mean I'll have to sleep in the garage!
- 2 Oh, you have a garage? Good. I'll take it.
- 1 But then I'll have to sleep in my car.
- 2 No. I'll take it too.
- 1 I actually have two cars.
- 2 Good. Both become mine--both cars. What else?
- 1 What else could there be? You have everything. The money, the house, the garage, the cars. I have nothing else.
- 2 Are you alone in the world?
- 1 Well, no, I have a husband and two children.
- 2 Your husband and children become mine also.
- 1 My husband and my children?
- 2 Yes, they also become mine.
- 1 Also?
- 2 Yes, everything you have. What else?
- 1 I have nothing else. Just what you see. I only have me.
- 2 Oh? You, too. You become mine. Everything becomes mine--husband, children, money, furniture, clothing, cars, and yes, even you. I'll let you use all of these things, but don't forget--they are mine, just as you are. When I want them, you must give them to me because I am now the owner.

someone who needs it--a single mother, a homebound senior citizen, or your pastor's family. These are things you can plan for, utilizing some or all of the Auxiliary women. Brainstorm for other ideas or ways to "get the ball rolling" on the ideas listed. ♦



RED, WHITE, AND BLUE TREAT

At your July meeting, why not try this star-spangled, fruity favorite. In a large, deep glass bowl, layer blueberries, whipped cream, and raspberries (or strawberries) for a colorful, creamy fruit salad. The frozen fruit should be thawed and drained before layering. The bottom and top layers should be whipped cream. Keep refrigerated until serving. Serve with or without angel food cake.

Spiritual Growth Chart: Where are you?

[adapted from Warren Wiersbe's *Be Mature*, Victor Books, 1979]

MATURE ADULT

Is **PATIENT** in trials and temptation
PRACTICES the truth of Scripture—faith, love,
and works
Has **POWER** over the tongue
Is a **PEACEMAKER**, not a troublemaker
Is **PRAYERFUL** in troubles
PLANS for the future—sharing Christ

INTERMEDIATE

Attempts to **PRAY REGULARLY**
Desires to **UNDERSTAND SCRIPTURE**
Chooses **FRIENDS** Carefully
Is **INVOLVED** in **CHURCH**
Attempts to **SHARE FAITH**

PRIMARY

Has the **DESIRE** but not always the **WILL TO OBEY**
Is **IMPATIENT**
Does not read the **WORD OFTEN OR WELL**
CRAVES ATTENTION more than **SPIRITUAL FOOD**

Springboard Illustrated: Stories to Grow By Volume 33/ No. 4 With Wings by Phyllis Garrett

I become as a bird, perhaps a seagull or a dove or even a mighty eagle. With wings of power, I climb on the air. I fly through the prince of the air's fortress. He fights me, but I am stronger. I soar above and look back. Down, down I look to see him defeated once again. I am weaker now than when I began my flight, but my strength increases as I feel the drawing power of mercy and goodness. I slow to feel my wings grow into hands clasped in reverence. My tiny, frail legs become flesh. I stand before the great and powerful One. The One who commands life and death. I am humbled beyond description, honored to be in His presence. The requests I bring are great, each one important to the ones who sent me. With these requests, I am brought into being. Out of the mouths of Christians, I am spoken, and I am. God in His infinite wisdom responds to each request. None is overlooked. The answers are given, hastily for some, slower for others. But each one is answered. I am an overcomer. I have power given by the Master. I am **PRAYER**. ♦

WHO SAID IT?

1. "I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT."

2. "I REGRET THAT I HAVE BUT ONE LIFE TO LIVE FOR MY COUNTRY."

3. "GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH!"

4. "PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD."

5. "I HAVE NOT YET BEGUN TO FIGHT."

Mission Action Project in Michigan Tremendous Blessing

Dear WNAC,

I just couldn't wait any longer to publicly applaud the kindness shown to me by our FWB Michigan Auxiliary women during the past year! As soon as word of my surgery and radiation therapy got out, I began receiving calls, cards, and letters, all with words of encouragement and promises of prayer. Then in February, a large box arrived with 28 gifts to be opened, one for each day of the month. It was from the North Warren FWB Auxiliary. On March 1st, Katy Taylor from First FWB in Pontiac brought another large box with 31 gifts, one for each day in March. When I began my chemotherapy, three women from Woodhaven FWB came to my hospital room with...you guessed it...one gift for each day in April. When May rolled around, a large basket filled with toiletries arrived from the Philadelphia FWB Auxiliary.

For four months in a row, I had a daily reminder of the support of Michigan women. I completed my final round of chemo in October of 1992, but it was decided I should have another surgery to remove another mass in my abdomen. Just last week, I received a manila envelope from Flint, Michigan that contained lots of encouragement. I thank the Lord for all of you dear ladies.

Patty McCullough
Berkeley, Michigan

Lucy and Marge and the Emphasis Sunday Dilemma

Lucy: So, are you excited about the upcoming Auxiliary Emphasis program?

Marge: Well, I could be if I wasn't having such a hard time getting the women involved. Everyone's willing to help...under one condition. Vernice, who does a lovely job speaking, absolutely refuses to in front of the whole congregation. And Carmen doesn't want to sing--says her vocal cords need time to breathe.

Lucy: Carmen does sing a lot at church. She must need a break sometime!

Marge: I guess so. But she sure picked a fine time to take it.

Lucy: Is Barbara in charge of the introductions?

Marge: Yes, but she asked me to assign the different parts of the play and find the special music. I've been on the phone for two days straight, and everyone has ten different reasons for saying no or backing out.

Lucy: I'm really surprised you're having trouble with this. Isn't Emphasis Sunday one of the most important days of the year for WNAC? I mean, I thought the women would be anxious to share what Auxiliaries around the country are doing for missions, churches, and for women in our communities!

Marge: Me, too. We rarely get a chance to share with the entire congregation. This is a wonderful opportunity to make the whole church aware of the importance of Auxiliary.

Lucy: No doubt some think we meet every month to knit and sew, eat cake, and catch the latest gossip.

Marge: Isn't that the truth. That is why this Emphasis Sunday is especially important. [Pause] Hey Lucy, you'd be perfect for the Emphasis play! You've been in programs before--why you even gave a mini-presentation by yourself...yes, about the Sunday school ministry. What do you say? I can't believe I didn't think of you sooner!

Lucy: Oh Marge, I don't know. This is such a busy time for me what with the garden in full bloom. And of course, Buck has been traveling so much, the whole weekend is practically taken up just doin' his laundry.

Marge: Oh come on, Lucy! You just said that women should be anxious to participate, and now you're backing out on me.

Lucy: Ok, ok, then. I'll do it.

Marge: Great! [Writes it down] I'll get your lines to you by tonight. [Leaves]

Lucy: I should've kept my big mouth shut. When will I learn?! ❖

BEFORE OPEN DOORS CLOSE

by Barbara Jarvis

It was a historical moment when the Berlin Wall came crashing down. Decades of physical and spiritual imprisonment came to an end. Christians can now take the gospel to those who for years had lived in utter darkness. There is a sense of urgency, though, for while we are given access to a lost generation of East Germans, false religions and cults are presently taking their messages of deception into the country. Many will believe them and face eternity thinking themselves prepared to meet God, only to discover, too late, the horrifying truth. We must act quickly to harvest those souls for Christ.

There are walls just as strong and seemingly unconquerable that keep us from sharing Christ with the lost around us. Only when we work, daily, at tearing those walls down, will the light of Christ shine brightly into the darkened hearts of the world. We must act before open doors close, before walls knocked down are built up again.

We must:

WITNESS BOLDLY--Live the Scriptures daily and share openly about your faith. Learn to recognize opportunities to witness.

GIVE GRACIOUSLY--Provide the financial support you can for missionaries at home and abroad.

Not all of us can give large amounts, but every effort and sacrifice is worthwhile. **ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO SERVE**--Take time to write, regularly, a missionary away from home. They need to hear that we care. Loneliness and discouragement can hinder the gospel of Christ.

PRAY FAITHFULLY--Pray specifically, systematically. Stay informed about the needs of missionaries. ❖



WHO SAID IT? ANSWERS: 1. THE APOSTLE PAUL 2. PATRICK HENRY 3. NATHAN HALE 4. THE APOSTLE PAUL 5. JOHN PAUL JONES

MISSIONARY PRAYER CALENDAR

Missionaries supported by both Foreign and Home Missions departments are listed here by birthdays in July and August. Brighten their special days with your cards and prayers.

JULY

- 2 David Burgess (IL)
- 6 Hope Nason (NH)
- 7 Wanda McClary (NE)
- 8 Mary Holland (Brazil)
- 9 Luther Burns (GA)
- 11 Barbara Jones (Mexico)
- 13 Dennis Heath (Germany)
- 19 Gail Fender (TN)
- 20 Robert Bryan (C'I)
- 20 Fred Hersey (Japan)*
- 22 Roy Roach (OH)
- 26 Sharon Ferguson (C'I)
- 27 Lynette Morgan (C'I)
- 27 Ron Callaway (Spain)
- 29 Dennis Teague (France)

AUGUST

- 1 Alyne Maness (NJ)
- 1 Deleen Cousineau (C'I)
- 2 Judy Bryan (C'I)*
- 3 Carlisle Hanna (India)
- 5 Dennis Owen (Uruguay)
- 6 Darrel Nichols (C'I)*
- 7 Vicki Sturgill (Brazil)*
- 7 Sandy Smith (OR)
- 7 Sandra Bishop (Japan)
- 10 James Munsey (Mexico)
- 12 Pat Nason (NH)
- 17 Jim Sturgill (Brazil)
- 29 Linda Callaway (Spain)
- 31 Curtis Alligood (FL)

*indicates furlough

PSALM 139: 9-12: "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."(KJV)

Communicator

by Mary Ruth Wischart

August Is Emphasis Month for WNAC

Foreign Missions has a special emphasis in April, Home Missions in November, and Free Will Baptist Bible College in December. In 1965 delegates at the Convention voted unanimously to designate August as emphasis month for WNAC.

During the month Auxiliaries should present the women's work to the whole church. Encourage the church to give a special offering to the national office general fund.

The office staff has prepared a program, information and suggestions for Emphasis Month, 1993. These packets have been mailed to each Auxiliary on the mailing list. If your Auxiliary does not have the packet, request one from the WNAC office.

Remember that 1993 is the last year women can promote the Emphasis Month in the whole church. When the "Together Way Plan" begins in January 1994, WNAC will still promote Emphasis Month among the women. The National Association is asking Auxiliaries to promote the September offering for the whole church. WNAC will receive a part of that offering for its operation.

The Together Way Plan

For years Free Will Baptists have complained about frequent and multiple requests for funds from national agencies. The Together Way Plan is a strategy for giving which can eliminate these appeals. This plan, however, depends on giving from willing hearts so that God's work may continue at the national level.

The Together Way calls for four large offerings a year. April is still Foreign Missions month with a world mission offering from our churches and the Laura Belle Barnard World Missions offering from Woman's Auxiliaries. November is the month for Home Missions with a special offering from the churches and the Lizzie McAdams offering from the women. December is the Paul Kettelman Memorial offering for Free Will Baptist Bible College. September is the time for "The Rest of the Family Offering." This month gives people the opportunity to give to the commissions, Master's Men, the Executive Office, Retirement and Insurance, the Foundation and WNAC.

Can the national agencies be supported adequately with this plan? If we work together, promote, and support the plan, it will work. Together we can do great things for God.

Women can do their part by informing their members and promoting the Together Way in their Auxiliaries and churches.

Provision Closet Helps Summer Missionaries

Ten young men and women will go to Ivory Coast this summer to work with students from the Bible Institute.

The six men and four women will be responsible for their own cooking and laundry.

From the Provision Closet, we have chosen sheets, light blankets, towels and wash cloths, kitchen towels and dishcloths, flatware and plastic dinnerware for the students' use.

When they return to the States, these items will stay in Ivory Coast for use by the Bible Institute students. WNAC has special interest in students at the Institute since \$3,000 from the Foreign Student Scholarship went to aid the ten students there now.

Prayer Reminder

Remember to pray for the Convention, July 19-20, in Louisville, Kentucky. Pray for the speakers and musicians. Remember Mary Neal as she presides.

Pray especially for the delegates as they make decisions about the Study Committee report and elect officers for the next two years. ♦

Provision Closet Needs:

Tupperware:
Pitchers (all sizes)
Salt/Pepper Shakers
Measuring spoons
Colored canister sets

Mattress covers: all sizes
Sheet sets: all sizes
Bedspreads: all sizes
Towel sets (no singles)
Hand towels (urgent need)

Flatware sets of 8
Corelle Ware® sets of 8
6-quart pressure cookers

Missionaries consistently tell us how much they appreciate the Provision Closet. It helps them set up housekeeping when on furlough, and it helps them prepare for four or more years abroad.

Our theme for 1993 is "The Grace of Giving" based on Acts 20:35. Each time you send a gift to the provision closet, you can imagine a missionary's smile because you cared enough to give.

Women In Action



A. Liberty Auxiliary Enjoy Mexican Fiesta

The Auxiliary women of the Liberty FWB Church in Sikeston, Missouri held a Mexican fiesta night during their February meeting to raise money for John and Paula McClure, missionaries to Mexico. Thirteen women attended and enjoyed the fellowship and fine Mexican cuisine. President Wanda Hale hosted.

B. Auxiliary Pies Net Over \$900 for Hillsdale College

Deborah Honeycutt, President of the Lafayette Woman's Auxiliary, reports that the women of the Eureka Association (OK) recently auctioned baked goods and raised \$900 for Hillsdale FWB College in Moore, OK. The Lafayette church hosted the pie supper, and members from Pioneer and McCurtain FWB churches attended. A wonderful time and a lot of pie was had by all. Deborah writes, "We are proud to support the future of our state's young people by donating to Hillsdale FWB College."

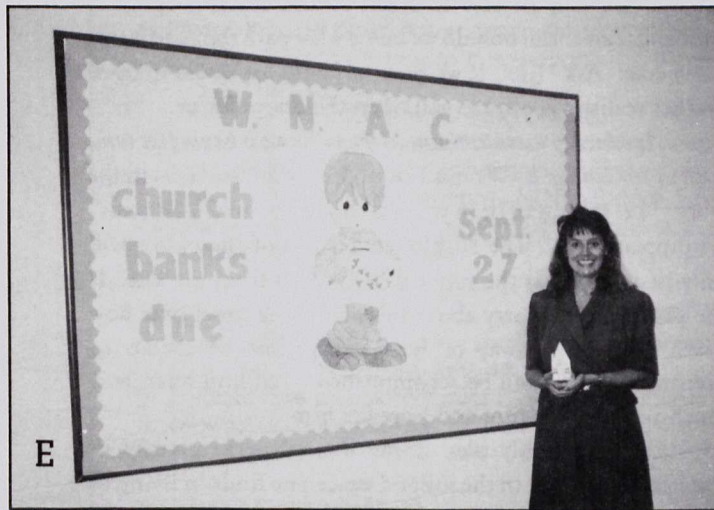
We Start 'Em Early in Virginia! (not pictured)

The Rudene Kennedy Auxiliary takes wonderful advantage of the talented young women in their church. Robin Campbell, a high school junior who attends the Chestnut Hill FWB Church in Big Island, VA, presented the "Parade of Hearts" program in February. Not only did she organize and present the program, she also prepared creative visual aids for the meeting. Everyone was impressed and blessed by her efforts. Nice job, Robin! *Young women are more willing than we might think to participate in Auxiliary activities. If we start including them when they are young, even elementary-age girls, we will see them still involved as adults.*



C. NE Missouri Women Share Recipe Secret

Auxiliary women of the Northeast Missouri District recently held their yearly installation program, the theme of which was "Baking an Auxiliary Cake." The program emphasized how different people, working together, can sweeten the recipe for success. The district officers are pictured here.



D. International Families Receive Love Basket

The First FWB Church of Russellville, AR has an Auxiliary that really knows how to package love. Recently, five different international families have received "Love Baskets" specially prepared for them by the Woman's Auxiliary. The baskets are filled with small gifts purchased or handmade by the women. Pictured is President Cindy Ellis presenting a basket to Ali Sarjahani from Iran. Ali, a new Christian, and his family attend First Church.

E. \$100 Raised for WNAC

The Auxiliary women of Faith FWB Church in Kannapolis, NC used the "Pandora's Box" presentation from the Nov/Dec issue of *CoLaborer* and saw wonderful results. Using church banks, the women raised over \$100 for WNAC. Auxiliary program chairman, Sharon McWaters, is shown here with one of the banks used and the bulletin board she prepared. ❖

Letters to **WNAC**

Dear WNAC,

I saw my first copy of *CoLaborer* in the beauty shop, and it is a wonderful magazine. Enclosed is a check for my subscription.

Sylvia Johnson
Marlow, OK

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so very much for the gift of \$664.02 during January and for the many ways you support us. Continue to remember us in your prayers.

Ron and Linda Moore
Missionaries to Ivory Coast
On Furlough, USA

Dear WNAC,

The new layout of the publication looks great. Keep up the good work! We love it.

Rachel Smith
Richmond, VA

Dear WNAC,

Our first winter as home missionaries has been wonderful. Our FWB Auxiliaries have kept the mailman busy delivering encouraging letters to us. Knowing you are praying helps us work harder and trust God for the harvest.

Margaret Lloyd
Madison, WI

Dear WNAC,

I enjoy the magazine very much and save them to look at from time to time to see if I missed anything or just to uplift me. Thanks.

Janice Parks
Marion, IL

Dear WNAC,

Thanks for all the great articles and helps in *CoLaborer*.

Your Sisters in Christ
Farmersville, CA



Contentment in the Parsonage

by Gwen Hendrix

I have often heard people say that "God calls a pastor—not his wife." But I don't believe that for a minute. *The pastor's wife* plays such a vital part in her husband's ministry. If a pastor's wife is not able to work with or support him in every area of his ministry, how successful can his ministry be? I'm not talking about being by his side at all times but about participating wholeheartedly in the ministries of the church—Auxiliary, Sunday school, choir, fellowship, visitation. The ministry takes a lot of energy and is often frustrating, but as pastor's wives, we have to learn to be content in God's will.

When my husband and I began this pastorate 25 years ago, we had a long struggle ahead. I had to work outside the home while my husband finished school and pastored at the church full-time. We were raising a child, and times were tough. But God never ceased to provide our needs. I shouldn't have been surprised. After all, did He not promise that all things would come to those who are faithful to His will?

It is hard to be content when you are lonely. The ministry of a pastor often means many hours of loneliness for his wife. He is called away in the middle of the night. Sometimes he has important meetings that last several days. Church business needs his immediate, personal attention. Counseling is an every day event.

When God calls a pastor, He prepares His servant for all of these elements, and I believe He also prepares the wife for the life ahead of her. Being content during times of loneliness requires that we accept the practicality of the pastorate—that time apart from our husbands is a part of God's will.

When you are able, accompany your husband when he travels. During times of bereavement, there are many ways a woman can minister to a grieving family. When you cannot

go with him, use the time apart to accomplish things that never seem to get done when he's around the house. It is easier to be content when we understand the nature of the pastorate and try to keep our emotional response to being alone under control.

Beyond coping with loneliness, *one of the most important essentials of contentment in the pastorate is knowing and loving our church families.* I have heard pastor's wives say, "don't get too close to the church members," and "don't get too involved." What a ludicrous philosophy for a pastor's wife! We cannot be the servants we should be without loving the church family. Church family means just that—family. In the family, we learn each other's attributes and weaknesses. We know each other's sorrows, and celebrate in each other's joys. We have fellowship together, we laugh, but most importantly, we should love each other unconditionally.

One of the duties of the pastor and his wife is to strengthen and love the church family. As pastor's wives, we have the opportunity to be involved in the ministry of encouragement, to make a real difference in the lives of our family. We may be able to relate to and reach people our husbands can't. But how do we know what path the Lord wants us to take? Ask Him! If we pray earnestly for doors to open and set realistic goals, He will open the doors for us.

Another key to contentment in the pastorate is having the same goals as our husbands. We must be of one mind, partners in the work. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). The faithful leadership of the pastor will only be as strong as the support he receives from his wife. If the pastor has to worry about his wife being upset over how much time he is away or how much time he spends in preparation, little will be accomplished. Tell him often how much you support him and pray for him.

God has richly blessed my life. Not necessarily in material things, but in the joy and peace one finds in living in God's will, being a servant, and loving His people. His strength is never failing, and we can never out give Him. If we give ourselves wholly to His will, He will supply not only our needs, but our wants as well. He will reward our faithfulness.

Be content in the ministry of the church? Most certainly I am. Just a housewife? Not by any means. A millstone around my husband's neck? Not now, not ever. I am essential to his ministry. ♦



Gwen (Mrs. Earl) Hendrix is a very busy woman. She is the mother of one son, Robbie, and grandmother of four. She is a Sunday school teacher, church pianist, President of the Beaver Creek District Auxiliary, SC State Auxiliary President, WNAC Executive Committee member, President of the Inman Chamber of Commerce, and Director of Inman Christian Academy's Day Care program. Whew! And she's also managed to be the pastor's wife at Inman First FWB, SC, for 26 years.

INSTRUCTIONS for Pre-Registration Form

By completing the Pre-Registration Form you will save **valuable** time at the convention. If you pre-register, proceed to a special registration area. There you receive a packet containing your name tag (pre-printed), meal tickets you have purchased, a *Digest of Reports* and a program.

Filling Out the Form

1. Fill out the top portion of the form. Please complete *all* of the information. You may register for one, two or all three conventions. You need to fill out only **one** form even if you register for more than one convention (National Association, WNAC, NYC). **Fill out one form for each person.**
2. Fill out the first block if you are registering for the **National Association**. Fill in your *District Association*. Check only *one* of the choices. Indicate the number of meal tickets you wish to purchase (Enclose check payable to **FWB Convention**).
3. Fill out the second block if you are registering for the **Woman's National Auxiliary Convention**. Check only *one* of the choices. Indicate the number of meal tickets you wish to purchase (Enclose check payable to **FWB Convention**).
4. Fill out the last block if you are registering for the **National Youth Conference**. *Only those in first grade up to age 24 need to complete this section!* The fees are:
\$11.00 per person, or
\$12.00 if registering on-site.
Adults over 24 do not pay NYC fees.

Indicate the number of meal tickets you wish to purchase (Enclose check for registration and tickets payable to **FWB Convention**). **NOTE:** Before July 19, Youth Banquet tickets will be sold only to those in grades seven to age 24 and youthworkers accompanying their group. Others may purchase tickets at the convention after this date.

Additional Information

1. Completed forms must be mailed to **Convention Registration~P.O. Box 5002~Antioch, TN~37011-5002** and received on or before **June 18, 1993**.
2. Enclose **one check** to cover all fees and tickets.
3. Make additional copies of the Pre-Registration Form if they are needed. **Only one person per form please.**
4. No refunds mailed after **June 18, 1993**.

Children's Banquet/\$7.00

Monday, July 19/5:00 PM
Convention Center/Room 117

Music Ministries Breakfast/\$9.50

Tuesday, July 20/7:00 AM
Convention Center/Room 208

WNAC Fellowship Dinner/\$15.00

Tuesday, July 20/5:00 PM
Hyatt Regency/Regency Ballroom

FWBBC Luncheon/\$13.00

Wednesday, July 21/12:00 Noon
Galt House East/Weatherby Room

Youth Workers Reception/\$5.00

Monday, July 19/9:00 PM
Convention Center/Room 116

Hillsdale FWB College Luncheon/\$12.00

Tuesday, July 20/12:00 Noon
Convention Center/Rooms 207-208

Youth Banquet/\$12.50

Tuesday, July 20/9:00 PM
Galt House East/Grand Ballroom

Master's Men Dinner/\$18.00 (\$20.00 on-site)

Wednesday, July 21/4:45 PM
Hyatt Regency/Regency Ballroom

Pre-Registration Form

for
National Association of Free Will Baptists
Woman's National Auxiliary Convention
National Youth Conference
Louisville, KY / July 18 - 22, 1993

Only one person per form.

Please Print

Name: _____ Phone #: ____/_____
FIRST or NAME DESIRED ON BADGE LAST
 Address: _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Church: _____ City: _____
 Hotel (if known): _____

You may register for all three conventions on this form.
 Check the appropriate boxes.

Completed form(s) must be mailed to
Convention Registration
P.O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002
 and received on or before **June 18, 1993.**

☐ Register me for the **National Association**. I have completed the following information.

DISTRICT ASSOCIATION: _____
(Check only one of the following:)
 MINISTER: ☐ Ordained(MIO) ☐ Licensed(MIL)
(I certify that I am a member in good standing with the above named church and association which belong to the National Association.)
 MISSIONARY: ☐ Foreign(MIF) (Country) _____
☐ Home(MIH)
 DELEGATE: ☐ Ordained Deacon(ORD)
☐ State(STD)
☐ Local Church (\$10.00)(LCD)
☐ National Board Member(NBM)
☐ National Officer(NTO)
 VISITOR: ☐ (VIS)

Meal Tickets:

	<i>Quantity</i>	
Youth Workers Reception	_____ x	\$5.00 = _____
Music Ministries Breakfast	_____ x	\$9.50 = _____
Hillsdale FWB College Luncheon	_____ x	\$12.00 = _____
FWBBC Alumni Luncheon	_____ x	\$13.00 = _____
Master's Men Dinner	_____ x	\$18.00 = _____

Delegate Fee
 Local Church Delegate 1 x \$10.00 = _____

SUBTOTAL _____

☐ Register me for **WNAC**. I have completed the following information.

(Check only one of the following:)
 DELEGATE: ☐ Local (\$3.00)(WLD)
☐ State(WSD)
☐ State President or Field Worker(WPF)
☐ National Officer(WNO)
 VISITOR: ☐ (WVI)

Meal Tickets:

	<i>Quantity</i>	
WNAC Fellowship Dinner	_____ x	\$15.00 = _____

Delegate Fee
 Local Delegate 1 x \$3.00 = _____

SUBTOTAL _____

☐ Register me for the **National Youth Conference**. I have completed the following information.

(Only those in 1st grade to age 24 need to register for NYC.)

Grade just completed: _____ Age: _____
 Birthdate: ____/____/____
 Parent's (or Guardian's) name: _____
 Youth Leader's name: _____
 Are you a youthworker? ☐ yes ☐ no

Registration Fee
 Pre-Registration Fee 1 x \$11.00 = _____
 On-site registration fee is \$12.00.
 Adults over 24 do not pay NYC fees.

You must register for NYC to purchase meal tickets (unless age 25 and up).

Meal Tickets:

	<i>Quantity</i>	
Children's Banquet (grades 1-6)	_____ x	\$7.00 = _____
Youth Banquet (must be in grade 7 to age 24 or an accompanying youthworker)	_____ x	\$12.50 = _____

SUBTOTAL _____

For Office Use Only
 Date _____
 Rec'd _____ CK/MO # _____ AMT \$ _____
 CK _____

Make Checks payable to
 FWB Convention.
**No refunds mailed after
 June 18, 1993.**

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____
Check/Money Order MUST accompany this form.

Life!Action

* a new column for Actionettes



The Power of Weakness

One of the best books I've ever read is John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. It goes something like this: During the depression, two men wander through California to find work as farmhands. The men are total opposites. Lenny is a big, strong ox of a man who is mentally "slow." He has no family. The other, George, is a smart, hardworking man with ambition. He watches out for Lenny. He makes sure Lenny has what he needs, even if it takes sacrifice. They are a team. More than anything else in the world, they want a place of their own, a place to call home. That is what they work for, what they dream of. When Lenny accidentally kills a woman, George is caught in a dilemma: will he let strangers hang Lenny, or will he kill Lenny himself?

Obviously, George is the strongest of the two. He is the only one capable of being responsible. He makes the decisions, and he never abandons or disregards Lenny in any decision he makes. Every job they get, every penny they save is George's doing. In the end, George kills Lenny because he doesn't want him to hang for something Lenny doesn't even understand.

Now you'd think that George, once he had grieved for his friend, would be happy to be free. Free of having to watch over a mentally handicapped child-man. Often in the story, when George was angry or frustrated, he wished aloud for that very thing--to be rid of Lenny.

Once Lenny is dead, though, George is shattered and confused. He no longer has a reason to exist, nothing to aim for, no one to share his life with. Lenny was George's motivator. He was the one thing in George's life that made him different from all of the other lonely people in the world. Lenny was the strong one.

In this life, there are many paradoxes. The blind do lead the blind. The rich, in many ways, are very poor. What looks white is often very black. The happy are, more often than not, the saddest. And **the weak are actually the strong.**

In II Corinthians 12, Paul talks about his "thorn in the flesh" and how he asked God three times to take it away. God didn't. This physical weakness could have, and probably did at times, hindered Paul's witness for Christ. But Paul saw his weakness as an opportunity for God's power to work through him. In other words, whatever was accomplished through Paul could only be attributed to God's power, not to human ability. Verse 9 says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." This was God's answer to Paul's physical problem.

There are many kinds of non-physical weaknesses: shyness, poor self-esteem, bad attitudes, pride, foul or cruel language, depression, etc. We try to hide them, disguise them, or ignore them, but God already knows *exactly* where we are weak and where we are strong. All He wants is for us to say, "Lord, use my weaknesses to show how powerful and perfect You are."

Little ones (that's us) to Him belong; [we] are weak, but He is strong. Remember?

A Note From the Editor: Hey Actionettes (or any teenage readers), this page is for you—to help you grow in Christ and to let readers of *CoLaborer* know about the great ways you serve God. I invite you to send in material or topics you want to see talked about on this page, and pictures—we love seeing your fabulous smiles! Mail your ideas, etc., to *CoLaborer Magazine*, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, Tennessee, 37011-5002 ♦

tender thoughts

by pearl mitchell

Forgiveness is a strange emotion. It invokes feelings that are hard to define. We think of forgiveness as an act of favor for another person--a sign of goodness on our part. We feel a sort of self-righteousness when we think we forgive someone, but pardon for another is really to our benefit.

Bitterness is like a rat in your attic. It chews away at your heart like a rat chews away at your insulation. Sooner or later, he'll chew through the insulation into a wire and short-out the circuit; bitterness will erode your heart the same way until eventually it shorts out--and you burn out for good.

Forgiving yourself is just as important as forgiving someone else. Are you mentally beating yourself over the head for something that happened ten years ago? A past sin or mistake that God has already forgiven you for? A falling-out with someone you love? If you've tried to make it right, done what you could to make amends, then there comes a time to forgive yourself. Your own pardon is necessary to a healthy state of mind.

So be free to forgive, even though you may not agree with the actions of others, or maybe even your own actions at the time.

Forgiveness is a salve to the soul, a soothing, balmy bath that immerses the mind and leaves a sweet-smelling freshness. The fragrance permeates the air and freely welcomes the Spirit of God.

"And be ye kind, one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). ♦



Pearl Mitchell is an elementary school teacher in Phenix City, Alabama and the mother of three grown children.

Over My Coffee Cup

by Eunice Edwards



The Proper Perspective Job 38: 4-11

Sometimes, even as Job, we over-estimate our importance. Job had asked God to "answer [him] now." He was determined to have his own way. Job had lived a good life, but now he wanted to boast of his integrity, as if it were exclusive of God's grace. God immediately rebuked his self-confidence. The question God asked of Job is a good question for all of us: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?" The presumptuous attitude that possessed Job is most revealing. Have we not all been guilty of this same thing at one time or another?

It is so easy to imagine the whole church program falling apart if we are removed from the scene. We like to feel important. That, in itself, is not wrong. But it is wrong to feel we are indispensable. God could get along without us. Not that He wants to, but He could.

Job was at a loss to answer God's question. I'm afraid we would be caught at an even greater disadvantage if asked the same thing. His question probes the very heart and soul of humanity. Where were we when God created the universe? How could we answer?

The plan, the foundations, and the superstructure of the world was and is all God's. He has given us His message for a dying world and the privilege of serving Him by sharing that message. When we fit into the place He has made for us, we are stripped of arrogance, pride, and sour attitudes.

Our values are in proper balance when we closely follow our blessed Lord. We realize more than at any other time that we are Christians because God loved us. ♦



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Including Missions in Your Budget

by Gladys Gragg



One of the most moving experiences I've ever had was in a commissioning service for a missionary. I have been to several, and I always come away reminded of the importance of sending out missionaries...and the importance of supporting them with our prayers and finances.

The trouble is that with the passing of time, the cares of the day fog our minds, and we forget to pray for our missionaries daily. We miss a day or two and then a week. Then extra expenses crop up, and our money is taken up with more pressing matters. We don't mean to renege on our missionaries, but too many important expenses keep cropping up.

What we fail to realize is that just like us, missionaries' expenses continue to pile up whether we give or not. Their utility bills and car payments need to be paid regularly just as ours do. There is a big difference, however. Most of their expenses are even greater than ours because overseas economies are less stable than ours. Food and clothing are more expensive overseas. Plus, we shouldn't forget expenses like travel and emergencies. These add up to more than the average American pays over a given time.

So how can we support our missionaries effectively and consistently? How can we ensure their stay on the field? It's easier than you think.

Webster defines "budget" as a "plan for the coordination of resources and expenditures" or "the amount of money available for, required for, or assigned to a particular purpose." And although we are aware of what missions is, I think Webster's definition is worth repeating: missions is "the act of sending; a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate faith, a calling or a vocation." When we consider these two terms together, there is no doubt if we Free Will Baptists send a missionary, we should make provisions for them to continue the work.

In a recent newspaper article from the *Tennessean*, "Devise a Budget Before Financial Crisis Hits Home," the writer emphasized the importance of "categorizing on paper" monthly fixed costs. These costs include everything one is expected to pay for regularly. If we write down a list of all our expenditures, they become permanent fixtures and will have funds allocated for

them. Whatever makes our list is considered "automatically paid." There is no planning to pay or intending to pay, or paying if I have the extra money: these items get paid.

We can include missions in our budgets, if we only will. I hear you saying, "But I don't have a budget." And you might not have one written down, but each of us operates on some kind of budget, even if it is only inside our heads. We know which bills come due and how often. We know that the electric, phone, mortgage and car payments have to be paid monthly. Similarly, we need to consider missions a regular expense to be paid out consistently.

If you have never included missions in your budget, it will seem awkward at first, but after a while, you will wonder why you didn't start earlier. Here are several tips on how to make missions a part of your family budget:

[1] Make it a family matter. Talk it over with your family, and work together. If a common goal is established, the whole family can participate and eventually reap the rewards of giving.

[2] Seek God's guidance. Once the decision is made to include missions in the budget, you must answer several questions. What missionary do we give to? What fields/countries do we want to include? Ask God for help in this decision. Ask Him to lay a burden for a particular country or missionary on your heart. When you seek His guidance, you will be surprised at how He leads.

[3] How Much? I suggest you set a realistic goal. Start with an amount you are sure you can give each month. As salaries increase, extra money comes in, or bills are paid in full, increase your giving to missions. The amount isn't as important as the effort. Your gifts, no matter how small, when put with other gifts add up to a lot of support. When I think of what we could do together for missions—with every Free Will Baptist involved—I get excited.

It's only natural to be interested in what kind of return our investments bring in. Money is hard to come by, and being a good steward requires that we be interested in where our money goes. There can be no greater assurance of a good investment than knowing we have obeyed the Great Commission in

[continued on page 28]



Mrs. Oma Fisher:
An Example of
Faithfulness

Ten years ago, women at the Holdenville FWB Church in Oklahoma sent in a tribute honoring Mrs. Oma Fisher, a 20-year member of the Auxiliary and a church member for 32 years. Due to an overwhelming backlog of submissions for "A Woman God Is Using," we are just now publishing their tribute.

Oma Fisher was saved at an early age, and since that time has been nothing but faithful to her family, to her church, and to the cause of Christ.

As a widowed mother of six, with three small grandchildren to raise, Mrs. Fisher had to work very hard to support her family. She worked as a cook at a local cafe and at the nursing home to make ends meet. At home, she worked diligently in her garden to make sure there was enough food for everyone. Throughout the hard times, she always trusted God to supply their needs and to help her raise her children.

Every Sunday would find Mrs. Fisher at church, praying, singing, and giving whatever she could. She was always dependable and eager to help in any way.

She was faithful to attend Woman's Auxiliary and still does when she is able. Working to help support missions is important to Mrs. Fisher. All year long for many years, she would make pillows, pillowcases, handmade crafts, and quilts for the Auxiliary to sell for missions. Many times, her daughter Lillie would buy the quilts she'd make, and Mrs. Fisher would donate all the money to missions, in spite of her own needs.

In April 1993, Mrs. Fisher celebrated her 91st birthday. She is homebound now but is still involved in Auxiliary and interested in the work of the church. Many stop by to share with her about the work she has contributed to for so long. She smiles brightly and speaks of how good God has been to her, how faithful He's been through the years.

And she should know. The faithful easily recognize true faithfulness. ❖

[Including Missions in Your Budget, *cont.*]

Matthew 28:19-20. When an African boy or an elderly Japanese woman comes to accept Jesus Christ, there is no greater or higher return for our investment. When our missionary is able to stay in Spain until a capable Spanish pastor takes over the church, we can see our investment growing. When young national men and women are attending the FWB Bible Institute to train to win others to Christ, we can see that our investment has a future.

Including missions in your budget isn't just a good idea. It is essential. Our missionaries are hardworking, loving, sacrificing people who deserve to be a high priority. They serve in an unknown culture, away from family and friends, for four years at a time, yet when they return home, they still have to work. They have to spend their vacation time—the time set aside for spiritual rejuvenation, sharing about their ministries, and family reunion—traveling from coast to coast raising money just to return to the fields. Wives and children are often left in one part of the country while husbands go from church to church seeking support. There is little to no time together. We send them back to the fields tired and weary, their accounts teetering on the edge of red.

I challenge you to try it. Include missions in your family budget for the next year. Set goals about giving to missions, and you will be amazed how it adds up by year's end. Along with your tithe, mortgage, utilities, food, clothing, car, and other regular expenses, write out MISSIONS. It's the best investment you can make. ❖



Gladys Gragg, an engineering clerk for South Central Bell, is a member of East Nashville FWB Church in Nashville, TN. She and husband Ed have two grown children and one grandson.

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CLIMBED ANY MOUNTAINS?
WANT TO HELP SHOW SOMEONE THE WAY?**

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I, White Woman, Went to the Field Today

by Carol Pinkerton

Bridgette, a young Christian bride of 15 months, invited me to go with her to the field. Yes, part of me wanted to go. But the other part of me had several questions: How far away was this field? How would we get there? Would we walk as Bridgette always does? Would we work using a daba, a hoe, or what? And just how long will this day last? I did not have the answers to these questions, but had made my mind up to do whatever was necessary. Bridgette told me to meet her at her house at 3 p.m. the next day, so I knew we would be traveling by car, and it would be a very short day.

We all climbed in the car: White woman, Bridgette with 3-month-old Yeo, a 17-year-old girl and a six-year-old. After traveling for several miles on a blacktop road, we turned off and followed what was little more than a well-worn path. We were about ten miles out of Bondoukou, away from enclosed bathrooms, away from water. Bridgette said it was necessary to have their fields so far from town so thieves would not steal their crops. We stopped the car and walked the single-file cow path the rest of the way.

The women took two large basins, one daba, and a machete from the car, and we began the final march to the field. We walked softly across rotted bridges, over and around enyam hills, fallen trees, and vines. Bridgette explained to me the different paths we had to walk, but in the sweltering heat, they all looked the same. My eyes shifted back and forth between

the sleeping Yeo in my arms and the ground--for snakes.

Finally, Bridgette stopped, took the basin from atop her head, turned it upside-down on the ground, and covered it with a rag. White woman sat on it in the shade as she was told, while the two women trailed off to gather enyams. When they had made four trips, they took my "chair" and filled it, and the other basin, with enyams. Even the six-year-old carried enyams tied to a vine placed across her head. White woman tied Yeo onto her back, holding his bottom with one hand and carrying an enyam in the other, but I knew I wasn't hauling my fair share.

When we returned to the car, Bridgette offered white woman the first drink of water. I should have waited to see Bridgette's method of drinking: she held the bottle over her tilted head and poured the liquid into her mouth. It wasn't so ladylike, but it was much more sanitary than white woman's method.

For me, white woman, the trip was an adventure, not a daily, necessary chore. I enjoyed my trip to the field, but once again, I realized how easy my life is in comparison with my dark-skinned sisters.

Once we were back at her house, Bridgette explained to me the reason for her invitation to the fields. She and her husband, Theophile, wanted to give their enyam tithe to "Pastor and white woman." How blessed I was, and am, to know these people! May I be faithful in teaching them as they continue to teach me.

Mrs. Carol Pinkerton is a Free Will Baptist missionary to Ivory Coast, West Africa.



MISSION ALERT:

Evangelism News from Around the World

Home Missions

Fayetteville, NC

Randy Stone, pastor of the Calvary FWB Mission, reports that the new church building has been completed, giving them over 5,000 interior square feet: "This is a miracle of the Lord and evidence of the tremendous sacrifice" of many people. The mission church has averaged 66 for Sunday worship and has seen two come to know Christ recently.

Waldorf, MD

The town of Waldorf is getting to know its neighbor. Home missionary Frank Owens recently spearheaded the effort to introduce Waldorf to the new FWB work there. A specially printed booklet, "This Was Your Life," is being distributed door-to-door to introduce the church and its message. The pastor writes, "We believe the gospel will begin to bring a harvest of souls to Christ" through our efforts. He also invites those who are in the Washington, D.C. area to visit the mission work and "see the fruits of your investment."

Chicago, IL

The news is good from Windy City. The Potetes report that they have finally found a meeting place on N. Harlem Avenue. It is an answer to much prayer. It will seat 35 and has a small room that can be used for a nursery. The cost is \$75 for three hours. Also, the church is seeing results from a recent seminar on personal finances. Many who attended requested a follow-up visit and more information. David writes, "We are finding we can help in many ways, but the most important thing we do is share Christ."

Greeley, CO

March 28 was "Friend Day" at the FWB Church in Greeley, and there were 90 people in attendance. A married couple rededicated their lives to Christ that day, after having visited off and on for over two years. Pastor Mark Thomas preached on "What it Means to be Saved," to a wonderful crowd, including Greeley's mayor and his wife. Pray for the Thomases as they follow-up on these visitors and as they begin building additional rooms onto the church. The Thomases also report that their toddler son, Jonathan, who has cerebral palsy, is recovering nicely from a recent eye surgery. Pray with them concerning Jonathan's speech development.

Foreign Missions

Bondoukou, Cote d'Ivoire

Jerry and Carol Pinkerton report that a Pastoral Committee has recently been formed to aid in church growth and development. Jerry has taken over as the pastor of the church temporarily while they search and pray for a new African pastor. Also, the Woman's Auxiliary elected a new president, Madame Jan Appia. March brought a three-day evangelistic campaign in a Moslem village where 500-600 people listened to Scripture, met Christians, and viewed the Jesus film.

Nantes, France

Averaging 65-70, the church in Nantes is experiencing growing pains. The Crowsons write, "People are learning lessons of brotherly love, grace, and forgiveness. They're hard lessons but well worth it. [We] may be on the verge of real revival. That is our prayer." At this printing, the Crowsons are on furlough. Pray for them during this time.

Nashville, TN

Evelyn Hersey, missionary to Japan, continues to undergo chemotherapy treatment for cancer. She and Fred write, "Your many letters, cards, telephone calls have been a real encouragement to us. Your continued prayers for our health needs is much appreciated." Fred (and Evelyn when she is able) is scheduling services to share about the work in Japan. Contact the Foreign Missions department for his schedule.

Montevideo, Uruguay

The Uruguayan work is moving full-steam-ahead, according to the Ellisons. Molly Barker is teaching women's extension Bible Institute courses, along with concentrating her efforts on the Melo work. The Owens are busy with the apartment ministry, Trena's cooking class, and are adding a formal Bible study group on Wednesdays. The Franks have just finished language school. Walter Ellison continues at the Bible Institute, while Marcia has been working on an Easter musical program. They have been spending one weekend a month at the Rivera church. Marcia adds, "Please pray for health and wisdom to attend to our responsibilities. We are trusting you to stand by us faithfully." ❖

Words for *W o m e n*

by Mary Ruth Wischart



*I*n my closet hangs a special robe. It is cut from patchwork fabric and hangs full and baggy. It is about twenty years old.

Once when I went home during summer vacation, my mother said, "I've made something for you." She made clothes for me when I was a child, but now her sight was dim. She no longer tried to make clothes for anyone. Still, she wanted to do one last garment for me. My father said, "It looks like Old Mother Hubbard's."

I put it on and wrapped it around me. She had selected special material for the collar and edged it with lace. The buttons were pink flowers; the buttonholes were handmade. And she remembered to make pockets. True, it does hang loose, but I like roomy things.

That was years ago, but I keep the wrapper. When I feel especially down, lonely, overlooked or unloved, I take out the wrapper and put it on. I feel warm and wrapped in love. I know my mother stitched it with love.

**"Love... Fashioned Especially for You
by Your Father."**

Our Heavenly Father has also furnished us with "wraps" to show His love for us.

When you are feeling unloved, try wrapping yourself in Isaiah 43:4, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."

Have a need to feel special to someone? Try Isaiah 43:1, "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O [Insert your name], and he that formed thee, ... Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Want some stress relief? Wrap Isaiah 26:3 around you. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Can't figure out the jumble your life is in just now? Select Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Maybe you already have a special wrap for the lonely times, the hurting experiences, the down times. Be an encourager. Share your wrap with someone else.

And when you need that special feeling, remember, God's closet always has that special wrap. He has labeled it Love, Fashioned Especially for You by Your Father. ❖



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PREVIEW

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