

Nov • Dec 1996

CoLaborer

A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women



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VISION

SUZANNE FRANKS

Perspective



VOLUME 36

NUMBER 6

NOV • DEC 1996

When I feel confused or mentally drained, I like to take a walk. Walking helps me regain proper perspective. How about putting down your shopping list and walking with me for a few minutes? Your holiday plans can wait.

Let's take a walk down the streets of America. The heavy air slows us down as we breathe the hot and humid evening air. It's July. You say, "Wait a minute! July?" Don't worry, I'll get you back to today in a moment. Glance at the windows of the homes as you pass by. What do you see? Oh, yes, the flickering lights are the Olympic games. Now imagine several family members with eyes glued to the TV set. What a spectacle!

Athletes dedicate years of their lives to achieve fit bodies and skill to be the best in the world in their categories. Those men and women deserve our recognition and admiration. Does this admiration get out of hand and become adoration? I suppose that's a question every sports fan should ask.

Earlier today, a walk through the Scriptures brought me to a couple of verses in Psalm 147 and I was reminded of the Olympics. "His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man; the Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love." (NIV) Physical fitness is a good goal in its proper place. After all, God gave us our bodies. A higher goal and one more pleasing to God, however, would be to fear the Lord and put our hope in his unfailing (certain and inexhaustible) love.

See the next block? Better put on a jacket and pick up your pace since it's cooler in November. Catch a glimpse of these windows. Through the slightly foggy windows can you see that same flicker? This time families are either watching the unraveling of the latest murder investigation or the progress of the 1996 presidential elections.

In spite of the mud slinging, lies, and disagreement among politicians, American citizens should be glad to live in a country that allows the common man and woman to participate in the democratic process. Yet we all get discouraged when we consider the problems our political leaders face.

A short walk through Psalm 146 should give anyone a better perspective on today's political situation. "Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing." Presidents (and campaign promises) come and go but our Maker remains faithful forever.

Down the street it's already December 24. We see blinking lights of all colors in and outside the houses. Without looking inside, we know presents climb up the tree and spill over onto the carpet filling at least one corner of the living room. In some homes this time of joy has become a time of jealousy. Greed and gluttony replace generosity.

The best prescription for these days approaching Christmas would be a walk through Luke's account of the nativity. Mary's astonishing attitude of trust and submission in the midst of her entirely unconventional situation reveals plenty about her character.

Listen to part of Mary's song from Luke 1. "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant." Let's sharpen our perspective at Christmas time. Why? So we will rejoice in our redeemer's birthday. And so all may see the true purpose for God's gift to all the world. ❖

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**WHEN WE LIVE
IN GRATEFUL
SUBMISSION
TO GOD'S PLAN
FOR OUR LIVES,
HE SINGS
A SONG OF JOY
OVER US!**

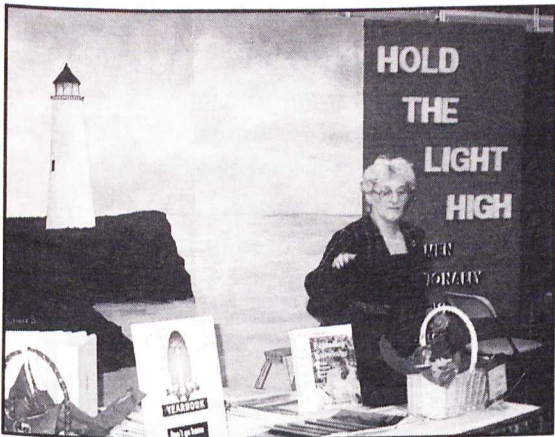
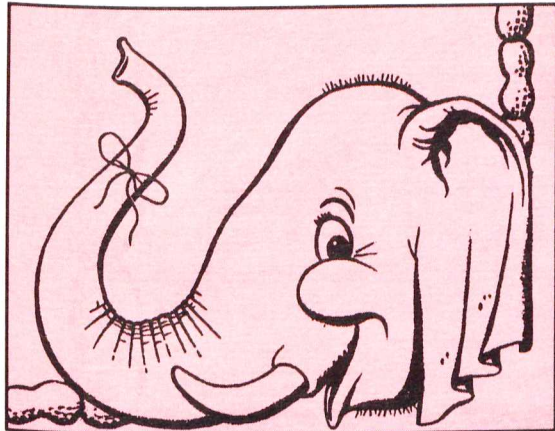
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**FREE WILL BAPTIST
WOMEN ARE SHINING
THE LIGHT
OF THE GOSPEL
IN THEIR HOMES,
CHURCHES,
COMMUNITIES
AND AROUND
THE WORLD.**

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**HE TOLD HIS WIFE,
"YOU HAVE TO
COME
AND EXPERIENCE
THEIR JOY!"**

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The Light of Gratitude

Forget Not All His Benefits

by Debbie Anderson

"**M**any dangers exist when a person becomes unhappy with his or her place in life. Discontented-

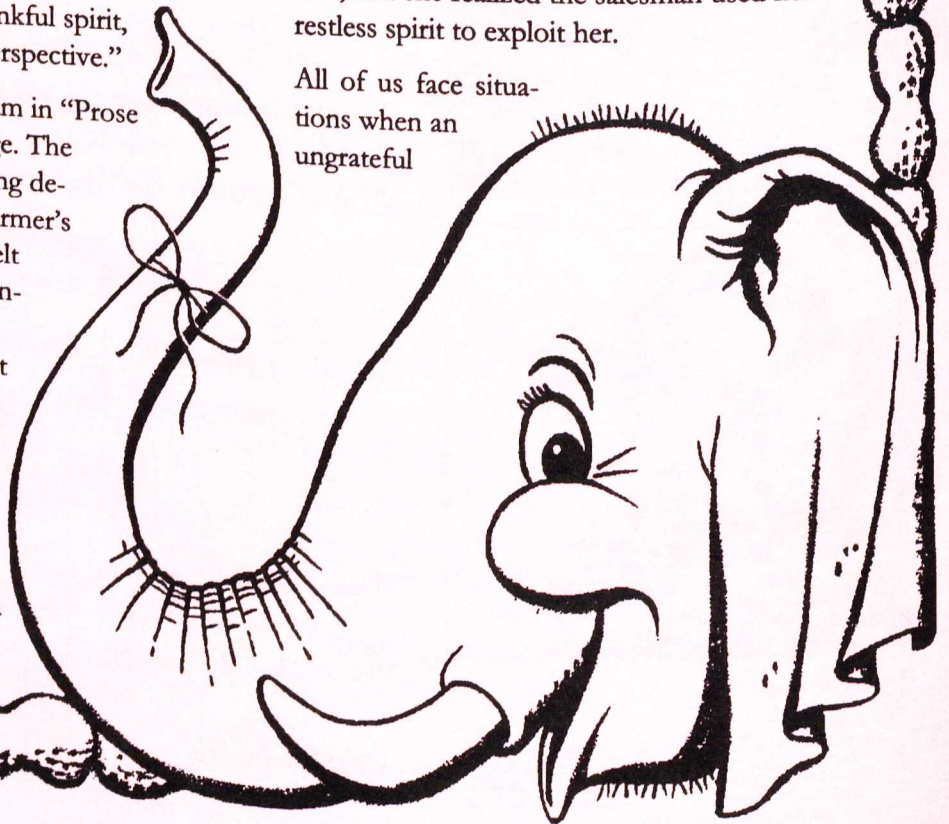
ness can lead to an insatiable restlessness, an unthankful spirit, and a self-centered perspective."

So began my final exam in "Prose Fiction" during college. The story we were analyzing described the life of a farmer's wife, a woman who felt smothered by her mundane existence. She yearned for a different husband than the one who always described their life as "good."

In her general malaise at the world, she was easy prey to a traveling salesman

who agreed to take a pot of her prized flowers with him to the "outside world," in exchange for her buying some of his wares. Later on a trip to town, she was devastated to find her flowers discarded at the roadside, and she realized the salesman used her restless spirit to exploit her.

All of us face situations when an ungrateful



Purpose: To cultivate a grateful heart, pleasing to the Lord, preeminent at home and church, and attractive to unsaved friends and family.

Songs: *Count Your Blessings* or *Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart*

Scripture: Philippians 2:14–16, Psalm 103

spirit overwhelms us. We forget God's benefits and focus on the negatives in our lives. What we promise will be a short winter of discontent turns into a year-round phenomenon. Yet somehow we must learn to choose an attitude of gratitude every day. God's pleasure, our personal well-being, and our ability to shine as lights in the universe depend upon it.

The Condition of a Grateful Heart

How, then, does Scripture describe a grateful heart? It is displayed in the life of Joseph as he tells his brothers that they meant evil by selling him into slavery, but God meant it for good (Genesis 50:20). It unfolds in the suffering of Job, as he responds to his wife's advice to curse God and die. "What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10). It rings from the prison cell of Paul as he proclaims, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content (Philippians 4:11–12).

We are commanded to "do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Philippians 2:14), to "rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4); and to "give thanks always for all things unto God" (Ephesians 5:20). James chapter one tells us to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations" because of the character it builds in our lives. Simply put, the life of gratitude consists in recognizing God's loving hand in our daily lives,

whether in good times or bad, and learning to be content with what we have. So easy to say, so hard to do.

Cultivation of a Grateful Heart

Psalm 103 gives us a great launching point to develop a thankful spirit. As we learn to "forget not all his benefits," we begin to see God's provision in every area of life: "who forgiveth all thine iniquities"—spiritual; "who healeth all thy diseases . . . who satisfieth thy mouth with good things"—physical; "who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies"—emotional. Just as God daily blesses us with these gifts, we actually bless Him by telling back to Him what we know of His character and provision.

Cultivating a grateful heart requires daily discipline. We must be able to look at every circumstance in the light of eternity, rather than its temporal effect on us. If we trust God's character, then we can learn to be thankful even in bad circumstances, knowing He can use them for His glory and to make us more like Jesus (Romans 8:28–29). In Nazi prison camp, Betsy and Corrie ten Boom could thank God for lice. Why? It kept the guards from strictly checking on their barracks, and they could share the gospel more freely.

Practically, we must learn to say "thank you" every day to God. If we have to post notes all over the house to remind us, so be it. If we

The life of gratitude
consists in recognizing God's loving hand
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need to turn off the television permanently and quit reading magazines and books that encourage us to want more "things," so be it.

Starting a prayer journal or becoming accountable to a friend may help develop the daily habit of giving thanks. Once we realize that ingratitude is a slap in the face to God, we will want to get rid of it.

Consequences of a Grateful Heart

God's commands are always for our good, as well as for His glory, and so what are the benefits of cultivating a grateful heart?

To God. When in thankfulness we give to God what He deserves, we open the door for something precious to occur. In the third chapter of Zephaniah, when the remnant of Israel is preparing to return to the Lord, a beautiful description is given of the Lord's response. It reads, "He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." What an amazing thought, that when we live in grateful submission to God's plan for our lives, He sings a song of joy over **us**! That we could make the Almighty God **sing** should be enough incentive to become grateful people.

To ourselves. Philippians 2:14-16 states that if we get rid of grumbling and complaining, we will be blameless and pure. Thankful people are happy, holy people.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in his book *Spiritual*

Depression says Paul's comment about being content in any circumstance means "My life, my happiness, my joy, and my experience are independent of the things that are going on round about me, and even of the things that may be happening to me." This is the heritage we can personally experience as grateful people.

To others. Gratitude is a distinctly Christian grace, and if it abides in us, we will "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Philippians 2:15-16) to our negative world. Our society is awash in a sea of complaints: the weather is never right; the government is corrupt; doctors are cheats; employers are disloyal; our young people are hopeless. Do we ever stop to thank the politicians, doctors, employers, and young people who do what is right?

For a Christian, being a blazing light may be as simple as telling a grocery clerk thank you, not complaining when your boss changes a policy, rejoicing in the success of a coworker (although it means you are passed up for a promotion), or finding something good to say about our country. Soon people will ask you about the hope, and joy, and gratitude that lives within you. When they do, what a message you can share! ❖

Debbie (Payne) Anderson lives in Nashville where she is a member of Donelson Free Will Baptist Church.

Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer

for
National Home Missions

November 18–22, 1996

*This Thanksgiving give to the
Lizzie McAdams Sacrificial Offering
for National Home Missions.*



Monday

Pray for new ministries: The newly-formed **Cross-Cultural Ministry** is now an integral part of National Home Missions. Pray for the Lord's guidance in the direction of this new ministry as we labor to win the lost to Christ.

Howard "Hap" Gwartney, Sr., **Missionary Builder** is now formally a part of National Home Missions. He, along with the Building Team of volunteers, spend many hours in labor for Jesus as they build churches throughout our denomination.

Pray for our **FWB chaplains**—Terry Austin, James Bishop, Doyle Coffman, Robert Cooper, Gerald Mangham, David Spears, Kerry Steedley, and Tim Sturgill.

Tuesday

Pray for the ministries in Mexico—the relocation and building expansion of the **Seminary of the Cross Bible Institute** in Reynosa, the 17 **Mexican national workers** who labor in the churches, Bud and Ruth Bivens who minister in many areas, and James and Mitzi Munsey, **Mexico Coordinators**.

Pray for the Miguel Vera family and church as they continue to work on the arrangements for their **building program** in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Pray for Ron and Barbara Dail and all the workers as they labor in the **church and school** in St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

Wednesday

Pray for **General Director**, Trymon Messer, as he works to implement a new program for planting and growing churches. Also, pray for the **Home Missions Executive Staff**—Richard Adams and David Crowe, along with the **Home Missions Board**—Richard Atwood, Don Guthrie, Earl Hendrix, J. D. Norris, Larry Russell, Glenn Thomas, Wendell Walley, Milburn Wilson, and Lynn Wood, as they all unite in the work to further the cause of Christ through Home Missions. Remember in prayer those participating in the **tentmaker and Aquila and Priscilla programs** throughout the United States.



Thursday

Pray for the families and church planting ministries of these missionaries: Sandy Adams, KY; Curtis Alligood, FL; Mark Barber, SC; Derek Bell, TN; Len Blanchard, NM; Ken Bozeman, MS; David Carlson, KY; James Childers, SC; Tim Coats, SD; Jeff Crabtree, CN; Mike Criswell, OR; Dwain Crosby, TX; Ken Doggett, IL; Cliff Donoho, IA; Jim Fairchild, MD; Gerald Fender, TN; Howard Gwartney, AZ; George Harvey, AZ; Dennis Haygood, AL; Levan Hubbard, AR; Tom Hunt, WA; Russell Johnson, WY; Fred Jones, AL.



Friday

Pray for the families and church planting ministries of these missionaries: Tommy Jones, PA; Danny Keen, SC; Bob Lewis, CO; Carlie Lloyd, WI; Ron MacMillan, MA; Vergel Maness, PA; Jim Nason, NH; Joel Nason, NH; Ron Parker, LA; Bill Phillips, UT; David Potete, IL; Roger Raper, CO; Bill Reagan, CN; Norman Richards, LA; José Rodriguez, FL; Jeff Sloan, IN; Darrell Smith, OR; John Smith, CA; Mark Thomas, CO; Robert Trimble, MI; Mark Vandivort, AZ; Terry VanWinkle, KS; Odis Whitehead, FL; Larry Williams, GA; Russell Wright, WV.

THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS



by Janero Stokes

My mind is racing and my list is growing as I surmise, "How will I get everything done?" Someone has to clean the house so that we can think about decorating for Christmas.

Then I pull out everything, boxes of wonderful tree ornaments, twinkling lights, snow globes, green garland, Christmas cards, beautiful angels, the nativity scene, Christmas dishes, stockings and leftover wrapping paper.

Oh-h-h-h, the cooking and the presents. This is the busiest time of the year. I panic as I realize how little time is left.

December brings a Christmas high that keeps us going, using every minute possible. It is a festive time that is filled with loving friends and family. 'Tis the season to be jolly and the world dazzles with the bright lights of Christmas. I love Christmas, the bright lights, the presents, the hustle-bustle of it all. But, is there more? Is this what Christmas is all about—the lights, the tinsel, the presents?

The Christmas story is so familiar to us. It is the foundation of the entire New Testament. Let us review some aspects of it now as we prepare to celebrate the birthday of Christ.

THE SERVING HANDMAID

An angel visited Mary and proclaimed that she was highly favored and that the Lord was with her (Luke 1:28, 31–33). The heavenly messenger told Mary that she would conceive and have a son. The angel told of the greatness of Jesus and assured Mary that with God nothing is impossible. Mary believed and gave herself to be used of God.

This was wonderful but startling news. She could not tell people. They would not have believed her. She was in a precarious position. We, on the other hand, think: Oh! How wonderful! How marvelous, to be used of God! Wouldn't we like the same opportunity?

Mary was a humble, young woman from an obscure village. She was not famous by any standard of the secular world. She would have been considered a plain, ordinary woman by most. What a woman Mary must have been to be chosen of God to be the mother of Jesus!

What was so special about Mary? She was highly favored with God because she loved Him. Mary lived in such a way that God chose her as a vessel that He would use.

She spoke of herself as being the handmaid of the Lord. This showed she was (of her own choice) a servant of God. This indicates humility and shows the meekness, modesty, and mildness of Mary's character.

Are we, like Mary, willing to say, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" (Luke 1:38)? "For with God nothing shall be impossible" is a promise that holds just as true today for us (Luke 1:37).

THE GREATEST GIFT

This is the gift-buying season! The stores tempt us with displays of things we just can't live without. We overcharge and overpay until *shop til we drop* becomes our way of life.

We look nonstop for the perfect present. We slip

THE GREATEST GIFT IS THE GIFT OF THE FATHER TO THE WORLD.

around trying to keep the best gifts a secret. Some gifts we give to surprise and please the people we love. Other presents we give because they are needful or desired. Some gifts are given to impress or gain favor in someone's eyes. The best presents are given freely and from the heart.

Gifts are a wonderful way to express ourselves as is clearly seen in the Christmas story. The time came for Mary to deliver her child (Luke 2:7–11). The angel of the Lord announces all this to a group of nearby shepherds.

This was one of the greatest days in history. This, the greatest gift, is the gift of the Father to the world. God loved the world—you and me—so

much that He gave us Jesus. Words cannot describe this gift. It demonstrates the loving character of our God. He knows our needs, our wants, our desires, and He bestows to us freely. The purpose for the gift is "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What a perfect gift! How wonderful to receive a gift that is just what we need.

THE PRAISING SHEPHERDS

In a field near Bethlehem, there were shepherds who were awake. They were keeping watch over their flocks so that no wolves or thieves would snatch away their sheep.

THE GREATEST RESPONSE WE CAN HAVE AFTER RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT IS TO GIVE A GIFT OF LOVE TO HIM.

Many believe that these were the shepherds who raised lambs to be sold for sacrifices in the Temple. Would they understand that they would soon see the Shepherd who would become the Lamb of God for all people everywhere?

All at once the sky was bright. And in this light an angel gave them the message of the Savior's birth. The light grew brighter, and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly beings. As the shepherds listened, they praised God.

When the angels left, the shepherds went with haste to find Mary, Joseph, and the newborn baby.

They told Mary about the angelic host that had come to them. In their wonder and excitement they told all they met about the awesome events of the night. The shepherds returned to their flock glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen.

Are we with haste about God's work or do we look for an escape route? Praising and glorifying God in adoration is an important part of our worship time. We can enter a plateau of intimacy that is very precious to the Christian. To gain this intimacy we must lay all our problems and worries at the feet of our Lord, knowing He is looking after us. Only when we worship Him with praise, devotion, and reverence, a closeness—a bond—formed that brings a sweetness to our lives.

DISCOVERY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Jesus is brought to the Temple to be dedicated to the Lord (Luke 2:22–32). According to the Old Testament, two offerings were to be brought. If the family were poor, God would accept two birds. Joseph and Mary offered the birds in the place of the lamb.

There was an old man named Simeon that was righteous and devout. The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would live to see God's Messiah. When Jesus was brought to the temple, Simeon recognized Him as the Messiah. Simeon took the baby in his arms and thanked God for what He had done. He foretold the Savior would be a **light** to the Gentiles.

The key to understanding and recognizing what God would have us be, or do, is having an ardent affection for Him. Living close to God gives us a great sense of awareness. If we are closely tied to God by faith and love, we will see more clearly. As we see more clearly we will give more of ourselves to be used of God.

THE GUIDING LIGHT

Light uncovers the darkness. It is opposed to darkness. Light makes it possible to see. Warm and inviting, it makes us feel better. We turn on the light and we're no longer afraid. Christmas lights are no exception. They brighten the house and

symbolize joy, celebration, and happiness.

One of my daughters likes to ride around with me to look at houses lit with Christmas splendor. The illumination fills us with pleasant and compassionate emotions warming our hearts with wonder. Christmas lights promise good things.

A light draws us to look and beckons us to come. The wise men saw the light, the star drew them to Jesus (Matthew 2:1-2).

The wise men belonged to the educated class of people. These were, perhaps, religious astronomers and advisers to kings. They knew that a new light appeared in the sky. It could have been a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn. Or a comet. Or a nova. It may have been a special light created by God. It was an unusual phenomenon in the sky and it uncovered the darkness as it led the wise men to Christ.

If I were a light, what kind would I be? Would I be a brilliant display—a winter wonderland, or a simple yet elegant light that burns steadily? Or would I be a dull, faint glow that sways right and left?

Some women are great winter wonderlands with their sparkling, vivacious personalities—always shining. Many have quiet personalities that speak volumes because of their constant, steady light everyone can count on. A guiding light led the wise men. This was an important light because it gave them direction and brought them ultimately to the Christ child. May we be guiding lights.

MY GIFT

The wise men, full of joy, worshipped the King (Matthew 2:11). When they were worshipping, they opened up their treasures and gave the Child gifts. Gold, sweet frankincense and myrrh—gifts worthy of a king.

What can I give Him, this child that was born to be my Savior? There is nothing I can buy that is worthy of a King. God gave me the greatest gift, eternal life, and what do I offer Him?

The greatest response we can have after receiv-

ing God's gift is to give a gift of love to Him. We saw many examples of how to accomplish this in our Christmas story. We began by looking at Mary's character. She was unpretentious, gentle, humble—a servant of God. We saw the shepherds respond in haste. Not only did they go quickly without procrastination, they went exalting and glorifying God. These were happy people. They didn't go around with gloomy expressions, mumbling excuses. They were filled with gladness and joy.

The gift of love involves giving of ourselves. It takes a real commitment to give of ourselves. If we shop so hard and long for some gifts, then can we give less than the best to our Lord?

It seems that giving of ourselves is often harder because our time is so valuable. This gift comes in many different forms. It may be as easy as giving a word of encouragement or a smile. It is reaching out and touching others. If love is in the heart, let it show. This will last much longer than any material gift we might give. It may not always be easy to give of ourselves; but it is much more generous—a gift more precious than gold. ♦

Janero Stokes lives in MacClesfield, North Carolina.

THE GIFT OF LOVE INVOLVES GIVING OF OURSELVES.

Sweeter Than Honey

by Teresa Sargent



*I*t began with a quick trip to the grocery store to buy goodies for a picnic. We were taking a Cuban missionary family, Juan Carlos, Maribel, and their young daughter Lizbet, to Camp Jacob for a fun-filled day.

Moving quickly through the store, my eyes fell upon a quart jar of fresh, orange blossom honey. In spite of the cost, I placed it in the cart. A few moments later, I decided I could not afford it and put it back on the shelf. That beautiful jar of honey was taken in and out of the grocery cart several times.

A couple of aisles later, I spotted a smaller jar of honey. Though not as enticing, it was more affordable. I placed it in the cart and hurried on.

As the final selection of groceries were packed in the trunk of the car, I made a sickening discovery. I had bought both jars of honey! How could I have made such a

careless mistake? After rebuking myself, I tried to put it out of mind. Wouldn't it be silly to ruin a wonderful day over an extra jar of honey?

The beauty of the camp and the overflowing love and faith of this Cuban family made for a special day. Sister Ruth Bivens came along as the interpreter for Juan Carlos and Maribel.

As they shared with the group of teens, Sister Bivens clearly communicated the words spoken, as well as the powerful emotion behind the message. Their burden and stories captivated the audience.

Many hugs and tears later, I watched this family row across the lake in a canoe. A thought entered my mind, "Give the jar of honey to them." What a foolish thought! Where could such a silly idea possibly have come from? I quickly pushed it aside.

Later in the day, there it was again, "Two jars of honey was no mistake. Give one away." I actually began to consider the idea this time, however, I reasoned it away. Surely God did not want me to embarrass myself. They would laugh at me. No, I decided this could not be from God.

Yet in my heart of hearts I knew otherwise. This thought was too strong and persistent. Ignoring was no longer an option. I had to make a choice between obedience to God or disobedience. The struggle continued in my mind until their departure in the evening. The wrong choice left a sickened feeling settling deep inside.

One of the privileges of belonging to God is His chastisement for our wrong choices, and in this case, His grace and mercy that afforded me a second chance. Through tears, I confessed to God my disobedience

and asked for another opportunity to give this simple gift to my newfound friends.

With a heavy heart, I shared the day's events with my husband. He reminded me that he would be with Juan Carlos and Maribel the following evening at a conference. He could deliver the honey for me.

Feeling a sense of relief I sat down and wrote a note explaining the simple gift. I shared that I did not understand why God wanted the honey given, but that I knew without question He did. That would be enough for me. His peace flowed through me as I acted in obedience. Understanding why was no longer important.

Many weeks later a letter came in the mail from Sister Bivens. I sat down in my husband's study and opened the letter. Tears of praise began to flow as I read how Maribel upended the honey and watched the bubble slowly rise to the surface and back down again.

Mrs. Bivens wrote how Maribel through tears shared of a time in Cuba when their daughter was very ill. The doctor had recommended that Lizbet be given honey on a daily basis to strengthen her blood. Honey was such an extravagant item, they could only afford to buy about three ounces. They gave it to Lizbet daily by the teaspoon while it lasted.

Maribel exclaimed in wonder, "What a precious gift! A whole quart of pure honey." I bowed my head and heart to a Holy God who knows all. Two jars of honey—no mistake. The best to be given away—His example. A simple act of obedience for

one—a precious gift to another. The end result—God's bountiful blessing. A blessing so sweet—laced with honey. ❖

Teresa Sargent lives in Wise, VA where she is a member of Glamorgan Chapel Free Will Baptist Church.

Letters to God

Dear God,

I like to go to your house. I go there more than anywhere else. You have lots of houses, don't you? We go in cars usually. Sometimes we go in airplanes. We always find your house.

I like to sing, too. As long as everyone is singing I am happy. When somebody gets up to talk, I'm not so happy. Mommy says my attention span is short. The people who know my Mommy don't mind if I sing, too. My voice may sound strange though.

One day we went to a new place; I was singing with the children who were up front. I was on the back row. The preacher thought my voice was an airplane. Mommy took me outside.

You understand what I am singing.

Love,

Ruth

Letters to God: A seven-part series of letters from a special needs child.



Food For Thought

Our theme this year has been "hold the light high." We have tried to place emphasis on witnessing. Before the year is over, let's take inventory.

Have we been the light of the world in every place, at every time, in every manner possible? Do others see what Christ has done for us through our words and actions? A witness cannot be effective without both our example and the right words spoken at the right time with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We are the light of the world. Where does our light come from? The psalmist says, "The **Lord** is my light and my salvation." "Thy **Word** is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

How much light are we letting into our lives? What is our attitude to our time spent with the Lord in prayer and in His Word? David declares, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!"

God's light needs to be continually pouring into our lives. Only then can we radiate pure and strong beams of light so that everyone will see the wonderful truth of God's salvation in our lives. ❖

Poet's Corner

Changed

Tere L. Turner, Pocahontas, AR

"Just as I am," I came that day,
So wrecked by sin and pain.
My life was nothing He could want
But still in hope I came.

When Jesus looked into my soul
He slowly shook His head.
He should have sent me straight to hell
But changed my life instead.

Oh the grace that heals and saves
And mends the broken heart!
Once there was only garbage here
He made a work of art.

For proof that Jesus changes lives
And sets the sinner free,
You only have to turn around
And take a look at me.

God Wants Our Days to Go Well

Ruby June Pickering, Dardanelle, AR
4th place in the 1996 Creative Arts Contest

Oh have you ever wondered why
Things never seem to go
The way that we would want them to
And we just worry so?

Perhaps we are not humble,
Perhaps our foolish pride
Distracts us from our praying,
"Dear Lord, please be my guide."

Why can't we see what's happening?
Satan works on this weak link
And he can cause much trouble . . .
Much more than we would think!

If we don't start our days with prayer
And yielding to the Lord,

Then we may have more stressfulness
Than our weak links afford.

God wants our days to go well.
He gives us loving care.
He'll send a sturdy life line
As we reach up in prayer.

The Gift

Teresa Sergent, Wise, VA

The miracle of birth
The gift of a child
A mother's love in bloom
From beating heart
And kicking feet
Resting safe within the womb
To the tiny hands
That grasp my own
And the eyes that light my soul
No wonder God chose
Such a perfect gift
Through which redemption
would unfold

From Mary and the virgin birth
To the manger
Where the Christ child lay
The only begotten Son of God
Our debt He came to pay
With outstretched arms
Upon the cross
Where the cleansing power flows free
The gift of God
Eternal life
For all who would believe

In the miracle of birth
The gift of His child
Our Father's Love in bloom
He beckons to all
Come unto Me
For you I still have room. ❖

A graphic of a springboard with a ribbon tied to it, looping around the word 'Springboard'.

Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

Coordinator

Plan a Pre-Thanksgiving week of prayer for National Home Missions. Page 7 lists requests to pray for Monday through Friday, November 18–22. Get the entire church involved in praying for home missionaries and giving to the Lizzie McAdams Offering for National Home Missions. You should receive a packet to help you prepare and promote this. Start assigning tasks well ahead of time. The person in charge of giving prayer requests, probably the prayer chairman, can research one or two missionary families to present each day of the week. Contact Home Missions for prayer cards and a directory if you do not have these yet.

WNAC's first national project was the purchase of an organ for Free Will Baptist Bible College. From the start WNAC has always supported FWBBC heavily. The month of December provides us with the best opportunity to support our college through the Paul Kettelman Christmas Drive. Encourage generous giving from your women and the whole church.

Assistant Coordinator

Both the November and the December programs in this issue are top quality. Promote your meetings and have something special to offer to those who attend. In December consider having a provision closet shower in place of exchanging gifts.

The December meeting is a good time to exchange names for prayer partners/secret pals for the next year. Set guidelines (for example a limit on how much money to spend during the year) or include a list of suggested things to do for your pal. Include a list of ways to pray for her.

Secretary

Things every secretary should know:

Your annual secretary's report is important to the history of WNAC; in 50 years, the statistics you have written may be all that

Provision Closet Needs:

Pillows

Flannel Sheet sets, all sizes

Sheet sets, all sizes

Mattress covers (full size)

Bedspreads

Electric blankets

Travel games

Table games

Speed cookers (pressure cookers)

Blenders

Baking pans

Cookware

Tupperware® except rolling pins, tumblers, and salt/pepper sets

Whenever possible, leave prices on items to help the office keep up with inventory.

is known about your organization. Strive for accuracy.

Secretary's report of actual membership should match with the number of women who have paid dues according to the Treasurer's report.

Treasurer

Things every Treasurer should know:

The Co-Laborer Fund is just a name for the General Fund, which is the general operating expense fund for WNAC. A good way to educate your women about this is by ordering the new video *Laborers Together: A Day at the WNAC Office*. The staff members at WNAC do their jobs to serve you.

Local treasurer's forms are available from WNAC, 12/\$1.

Checks sent directly to WNAC should be made out to WNAC, even if the funds are designated to various accounts, except for the Student Loan Fund—send separate checks for it.

The Provision Closet accepts monetary gifts which go in to a fund to purchase needed items out of stock in the Closet.

Local treasurers should send reports to District Treasurers **each month** so District Treasurers can report to State Treasurers each month, and State Treasurers can send in their reports monthly to the WNAC National Office.

Treasurers should send dues **once a year** to the district to pay district, state, and national dues for each member. National dues are \$10. Local, district, and state dues vary.

Money for *CoLaborer* subscriptions and literature go directly to the WNAC national office.

You are billed only once a year for *CoLaborer* Magazine, and subscriptions run continuously, unless you notify us of a change or cancellation.

Missions Chairman

Talk to your pastor about having a missionary on furlough speak at your church. When they come, shower them with your hospitality. You can plan special meals and even a personal shower for the wife or specifically for the children. See that they have time to rest and relax while they are in your town. Get to know them while they are there and learn as much as you can about the people they minister to.

Devotional Outline

Christmas in Heaven *Hebrews 1:6-14, 10:5-8*

Fanfare

☆Angels worship Jesus
Hebrews 1:6

Farewell

☆Christ speaks to the Father
Hebrews 10:5-8

Preparation
verse 5 (a body)

Prophecy
verse 7 (the volume of book)

Pleasure
verse 7, 9 (to do God's will)

☆Father speaks to the Son
Hebrews 1:6-14

Power
verse 8 (throne, scepter, kingdom)

Purpose
verse 9 (anointed to holiness)

Preeminence
verses 10-12 (above creation)
Verses 13-14 (above angels) ❖

HID IN MY HEART

Psalms 136:1-7

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good:

for his mercy endures for ever.

O give thanks unto the God of gods:

for his mercy endures for ever.

O give thanks to the Lord of lords:

for his mercy endures for ever.

To him who alone doth great wonders:

for his mercy endures for ever.

To him that by wisdom made the heavens:

for his mercy endures for ever.

To him that stretched out the earth above the waters:

for his mercy endures for ever.

To him that made great lights:

for his mercy endures for ever.

❖ (KJV)

Discuss the ways your women can make furlough easier for a missionary family. If a missionary family lives in your town or city you will have even more options. A mother with small children would appreciate help with child care once in a while. Sometimes husbands stay on the road and wives and children get lonely. Often the family longs to go "home" back to the field. Furlough provides a special opportunity to serve and let them know they are appreciated.

Prayer Chairman

You are a key person in planning the Pre-Thanksgiving week of prayer for National Home Missions. Recruit as much help as you need. Don't be shy.

Service Chairman

Check in your community for special Christmas drives your women can participate in. Angel Trees and Toys for Tots are just two of the many special Christmas drives to brighten the season for those in need. At your December meeting or at your Christmas banquet, ask each person to bring a canned good or dry good to donate to a local food drive. Or as a church adopt a family that is going through a hard time. Bring them all the traditional holiday foods and Christmas gifts for the family members. When well organized and discreetly done, this can come as a special blessing and witness to the family and their neighbors.

Study Chairman

Did you know you can call Randall House's toll free number to place an order or request a catalog? The number is 1-800-877-7030. Randall House sells books and materials prepared specifically for Free Will Baptists and other high quality Christian literature.

Christmas is a good time to give a subscription to *CoLaborer* Magazine to a friend, neighbor, or relative who is not involved in your local women's group.

As part of the executive committee, you can encourage your group to plan studies on prayer, missions and other relevant topics in 1997. Now is the time to start planning and looking for materials. *CoLaborer* occasionally publishes reviews of books that can be used for this purpose. ❖

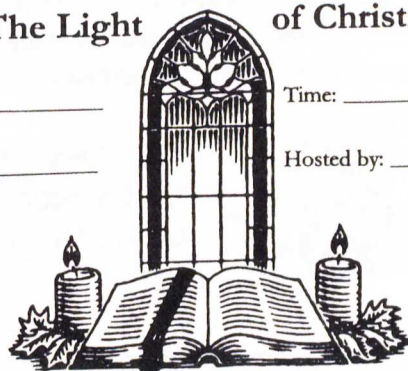
The Light of Christmas

Where: _____

Time: _____

When: _____

Hosted by: _____



Missionary Birthdays

November

- *1 Eddie Bowerman, PAN
- 1 Tommy Jones, Pennsylvania
- 1 Amanda Spears, NC
- 5 Danna Smith, California
- 6 MK, Tonya Blanchard, NM
- 6 David Carlson, Kentucky
- 6 MK, Bobbie Sue Jones, PA
- *7 MK, Camila Cowart, BR
- 9 MK, Douglas Bishop, JPN
- 10 Sandy Adams, Kentucky
- 13 MK, Brooke Cousineau, C'I
- *14 Marcia Ellison, UR
- 14 MK, Rebecca Nason, NH
- 14 Roger Raper, Alabama
- *14 Patsy Vanhook, FR
- 16 Kim Fairchild, Maryland
- 18 MK, Gabriel Nichols, C'I
- 19 Ruth Bivens, Mexico
- *19 MK, Elissa Holland, C'I
- 22 Jim Nason, New Hampshire
- *23 MK, Daniel Snow, JPN
- 24 MK, Emily Coats, SD
- 24 David Spears, NC
- *26 MK, Rachel Callaway, PAN
- 27 Bessie Richards, Louisiana
- 27 MK, Tracy Steedley, Georgia
- 28 Bobby Poole, BR
- 30 Bud Bivens, Mexico
- 30 Dwain Crosby, Texas
- 30 Kim Zegelian, C'I

December

- 1 Linda Blanchard, NM
- 3 Rhonda Sturgill, Florida
- 4 MK, Daniel Barber, SC
- 4 MK, Alicia Bunch, PAN
- 6 MK, Benjamin Crabtree, Canada
- 6 MK, Eric Crabtree, Canada
- 6 Vergel Maness, Pennsylvania
- 7 MK, Brian Lewis, Colorado
- 7 Russell Wright, West Virginia
- 8 Barbara Dail, VI

(continued on next page)

image of Christ by Arlene Branum

- 8 Russell Johnson, Wyoming
- *8 MK, Phillip Lytle, PAN
- *9 Debbie Griffin, JPN
- 11 Fred Jones, Alabama
- 13 MK, Robert Wright, WV
- *14 MK, Kelsey Holland, BR
- 14 Sherri Sloan, Indiana
- *16 MK, Stephanie McVay, SP
- 17 MK, Angela Bozeman, MS
- 18 Tom Hughes, BR
- 19 MK, Joshua Sloan, Indiana
- *19 Molly Barker, UR
- 23 Maj. James Bishop, GER
- 24 MK, Chris Haygood, AL
- 24 Mary Nell Whitehead, Florida
- 26 Darrell Smith, Oregon
- 26 Brenda Williams, Georgia
- *27 Dave Franks, Jr., UR
- 27 Patsy Gwartney, Arizona
- 27 MK, David Hunt, WA
- 27 Nancy Trimble, Michigan
- 29 Missy Bell, Tennessee
- 29 Mark Paschall, C'I
- 30 Patricia Collins, Nebraska

*Indicates missionary or MK is in the US on furlough or in college. Check with Foreign Missions office for current address.

When we received the new one hundred dollar bills at the bank where I am employed, they drew a lot of attention. Benjamin Franklin's picture is now larger and off center.

The bills have several new features and adding the fact that they were fresh, crisp, and unwrinkled, we had many customers remark that they indeed looked counterfeit. Some said they resembled play money. I showed them how they could hold the note up to let the light shine through it and then they could see yet another smaller picture of Benjamin Franklin off to the side and inside the bill. This would assure them that the currency was not counterfeit but indeed the real thing.

So it is with Christians. While there may be many false teachers and phony Christians out there, the light of God's love shining through us will reveal Jesus living inside. In Proverbs we read that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. A true Christian fills his heart to overflowing with the Word of God giving him the image of Christ.

And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. —Colossians 3:10

Arlene Branum lives in Purcell, OK where she attends the First Free Will Baptist Church of Purcell.

Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer for National Home Missions

Plan! Plan to have a successful Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer by planning early. Order all necessary free materials from WNAC and Home Missions. Publicize the dates and activities of the Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer on your church calendar so you can involve the entire church in the observance.

Pray and Give! Pray and give for a sacrificial Lizzie McAdams Memorial Offering for National Home Missions. Set a goal for your local women's group to reach in the special offering. Your group may designate your offering for National Home Missions General Fund. Send offerings through the WNAC channels designated for *Lizzie McAdams Memorial Offering for National Home Missions*.

Promote! Promote by ordering free prayer calendars and other materials. (See sample prayer calendar on page 7 in this issue of *CoLaborer*.) These prayer booklets are available in quantities upon request from the National Home Missions Department. Other free materials available to help you sponsor an effective Week of Prayer are: Missionary Maps, Prayer Cards, Directories, Prayer Booklets, Offering Envelopes, and Quarter Saver Folders. Order from



National Home Missions
P.O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

COMMUNICATOR

BY MARY RUTH WISEHART



Meet the WNAC President

Everyl Getz, elected president of WNAC in 1995, is a pastor's wife, the mother of five children and grandmother of five.

She serves with her husband at the Valley Community Church, McAllen, Texas. She has served there as director of the children's ministries, organist, choir director, and teacher.

Everyl grew up in a Christian home with her parents, the Rev. Everett and Ava Hellard. She testifies to her salvation experience. "I accepted the Lord as my Savior at the tender age of six in a revival service in the church my dad was pastoring in Cushing, Oklahoma. . . . Nothing is purer or stronger than a child's faith. Jesus kept His promise and upon confessing my sin and asking Him to come into my life, He did! I thank Him for His faithfulness."

In her local women's groups she has served as president, vice president, study chairman, and prayer chairman. For almost ten years Texas women elected her state president. Everyl became a member of the WNAC executive committee in 1991, serving until she was elected president.

If you have ever received a personal note from Everyl, you may have noticed her expertise in calligraphy. She enjoys doing calligraphy and various crafts.

If you visit her home, you may find one or two books lying around that she is currently reading. She loves books and finds the word of God more precious and meaningful with each reading.

Her occupation has been mother and homemaker. She has been at home with her children and also been intricately involved in the church work.

Everyl states that her desire is "to know the Lord better and to become more like Him, until He returns or until He takes me home to be with Him forever."

Observe Two Special Months

November is National Home Missions month. For years women have observed the pre-Thanksgiving week of prayer and given a sacrificial offering to home mission work.

The cross-cultural work being undertaken by the National Home Missions Department offers new areas of witness and service.

Support the total work here in the USA with prayer and with your offerings during November.

Check this issue for helps with the prayer time. Additional materials are available from the Home Missions Department.

December is Free Will Baptist Bible College month with the Paul Kettelman Memorial Offering. Remember to pray for students, faculty, and staff at the College. Prayer folders are available with requests for each day of the month.

You may send your contributions to the Paul Kettelman Memorial Offering through the regular WNAC channels.

The 1997 Yearbook Is Available

The 1997 Yearbook is improved and enlarged. You will appreciate having program themes ahead of time.

The Yearbook also contains the birthdays of home and foreign missionaries and their children. Use them for special birthday prayers, cards and gifts.

The WNAC supplies catalog is available in the Yearbook.

Be sure to order your copy at the price of \$5 plus postage and handling. ♦

Women In Action



A. Annual Retreat in Stillwater

The Oklahoma First Missions Woman's Auxiliary met August 9-10 at the Best Western Inn in Stillwater, OK for their annual retreat. The retreat committee (Robin Haskins, Louise Richmond, Nadine Hood) reported 53 women registered. "Called to Shine" was the theme. Marion Pilgrim was the special speaker. Louise Williams, Robin Haskins, and Angie Greer provided special music. Louise Richmond presented a skit—"The Shine Expert." A special missions update was given by Janice Banks with the prayer time led by Carolyn Glimp.

Pictured: Nadine Hood (left), Marion Pilgrim (right)



B. Special Treat for Garner Actionettes

The actionettes of Garner, NC were privileged to have Marcia Ellison (missionary to Uruguay) at their meeting. They had lunch together and Mrs. Ellison spent some time sharing.

Pictured: Back row (left to right): Becky Godwin (Actionette Director), Amy Forester, Marcia Ellison, Lori Shepherd.

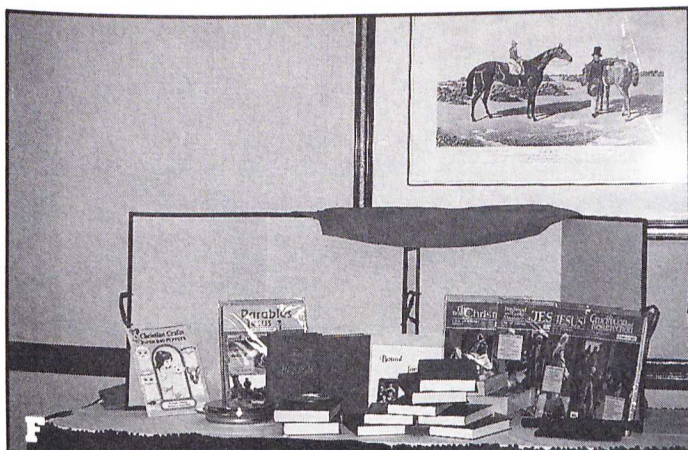
Front row: Serena Payne, Terra Forester.

C. Shut-ins Stay Warm at Christmas

The Piney Grove Free Will Baptist (Baxley, GA) women made lap quilts for the shut-ins for Christmas. The WNAC members of this church proudly display the quilts they stitched in love and compassion.

D. Cookville Women Buy Acre for FWBBC

The women of Cookville Free Will Baptist Auxiliary (TN) worked and raised money to buy an acre of ground for Free Will Baptist Bible College. The check was presented to Roy Harris, Director of Stewardship Development for FWBBC.



E-G Florida WAC State Meeting in May

The 46th Annual Session of Florida Women Active for Christ met on May 9-10, 1996. Mary R. Wischart gave the morning devotion and Diana Bryant presided over the business meeting. Amy Holland brought the special music and Ruth McDonald spoke.

Pictured: Ruth McDonald, missionary to Japan

Pictured: Display of materials given to the McDonalds to take back to Japan

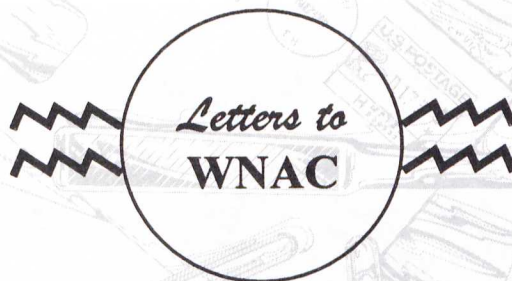
Pictured: (left to right) Marianne Waddell (Field Worker), Karen Owen (Secretary), Diana Bryant (President), Peggy Hutto (Vice-President), Thelma Wiggins (Treasurer)

First Women Active for Christ Retreat in Idaho (Not Pictured)

June 7-8, 1996 made history for Idaho Free Will Baptist women. A total of 15 women came from three Idaho churches (Nampa, Buhl, and Boise).

Friday evening Brenda Jenkins spoke on Psalm 93. Saturday morning Kay Phillips, missionary to Salt Lake City (UT), gave a report on the progress of their work.

Idaho women hope to make the retreat an annual event. The Buhl church will plan the next retreat in the summer of 1997. ❖



Dear WNAC,

Just a note to let you know how much I appreciate the sheets and supplies you let me get from the provision closet to use in Africa. Thanks also for the money you have put into my account. It means so much to me. God bless you as you serve Him.

Kim Zegalien, Côte d'Ivoire

Dear WNAC,

I want you to know how much we are enjoying the quality kitchen appliances from the provision closet. Trying to feed 20 hungry high school young men in the Free Will Baptist dorm is no easy task! These appliances will save hours of preparation time and improve the quality of food we can serve. I have bragged on WNAC to my friends here; so many were impressed with your generosity (as we were!) Thank you so much!

Paul and Rhoda Creech, House parents at the International Christian Academy, Côte d'Ivoire

Dear WNAC,

I want to thank you for the wonderful programs you are printing in our *CoLaborer*. The women here at Sutton Free Will Baptist Church enjoy them.

Erma Jones, Pocahontas, AR

Dear WNAC,

Our local group of Women Active for Christ really enjoy this magazine. It has lots of helpful and challenging information. We appreciate all the hard work of the office staff members that make it possible. We also appreciate other assistance provided to us through the WNAC National Office. Keep up the good work! You are in our prayers.

Shirley Lee, Clayton, NC❖

1996 WNAC Convention: Hold the Light High



A bundant warm weather and friendly people welcomed us to Fort Worth this July. Registration Committee Chairman Bettie Ferguson reported 951 women registered for the 1996 Women Nationally Active for Christ convention.

Since people came from all over, Brenda Doffing (TWAC Secretary) gave us some helpful hints. On behalf of Texas Women Active for Christ, she welcomed everyone with a short vocabulary and pronunciation lesson on Texas talk.

Inspiration

WNAC Missionary Message

"You sent us to be lights where there were no Christians." These were Carlisle Hanna's words as he delivered the missionary message. He was referring to Purnea, the district where Free Will Baptists sent them to be a light representing Jesus Christ over 40 years ago. There were no churches and no believers in the entire district when they arrived.

Using passages from Acts and Isaiah, Brother Hanna

spoke of God's call on his life to become "all things to all men." When the Hannas arrived in India, they were young American Christians. For the sake of the gospel, they have become very much Indian.

They set a goal to have 100 churches in this district by 1997. Presently, there are 84 churches. In spite of the darkness in India, the future for the gospel in India is brighter than ever before.

At Hanna's request his message ended with the congregation singing *He is Lord*.

Devotion—Spiritual Lights

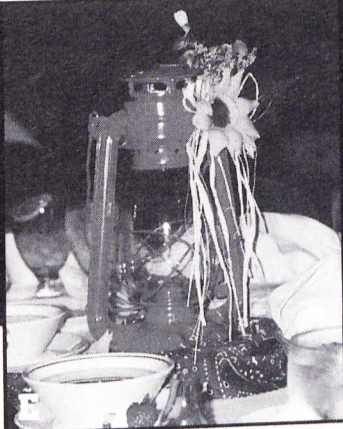
Marie Hanna spoke from Acts 13:44-49 and compared physical lights and spiritual lights. Physical lights and the light of Christ bring joy and warmth, protect from danger, give direction, reveal dirt (conviction), promote growth, produce beauty, can reflect through a mirror (lives), and draw people (to Christ). Whether the physical light comes from a kerosene lamp, an electric light, or a candle, all of these must have some source of power.

Sister Hanna challenged all of us to let our lives be mirrors for the Lord Jesus Christ reflecting His image in us so that day-by-day we may be more like Him.

Lights in 1996: Time Capsule

Marjorie Workman with the help of various missionaries disclosed the contents of a imaginary time capsule that WNAC could leave behind for the women of 2096 to open. Each object in the time capsule told a story of how women are holding the light high in 1996.

Elaine Holland (Côte d'Ivoire) told of how women



piano. Nancy Copeland and Elaine Holland sang appropriate solos.

WNAC Fellowship Dinner

Almost 650 people dined, laughed, and pondered thoughts from WNAC Fellowship Dinner speaker Marcia

Ellison. This veteran missionary to Brazil and Uruguay shared her experiences of witnessing.

One evening a woman pulled her aside to say, "I'd like to believe, but I don't think you understand the sins I've committed." As she started listing the sins she had committed, Marcia listened and replied, "Yes, exactly those are the sins for which He died."

sit on a stool or the ground and share around an open pot while they cook for their families. The pot and the stool teaches a lesson on getting with people on their level and getting close up where people can see even a small light.

Patsy Van Hook's (France) walking shoe is a reminder that an invitation to walk around a lake can give a chance to share the one and only hope for real life. Health walking opens opportunities for a ministry of listening and encouraging.

Mary Holland's (Brazil) Portuguese language book stands for the need to learn the Portuguese language and the language of love to shine the light of God's love for sad hearts to see.

Susan Turnbough's (Spain) coffee pot symbolizes hours and hours spent around cups of coffee sitting, sipping, and sowing the Truth.

Pam Jones' (Pittsburgh) brochure represents one person who came to church and found Christ after thousands of brochures had been distributed.

Hold the Light High Through Music

Debbie Burden led the congregational singing with Sharon Beam on the organ and Marian Pilgrim on the

A. Carlisle and Marie Hanna, missionaries to India

B. Martha Harris at the WNAC Booth

C. Mary R. Wisheart, WNAC Executive Secretary/Treasurer

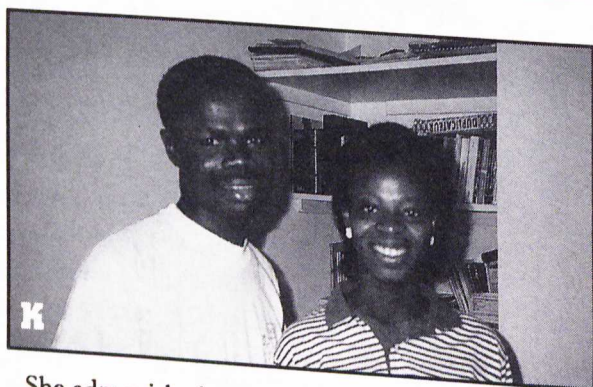
D. Marcia Ellison, WNAC Fellowship Dinner Speaker

E. Texas women prepared lanterns for centerpieces and various favors to decorate each table at the Fellowship Dinner.

F. WNAC Honored Mary Neal for her 12 years of service. Mary R. Wisheart presented her with a music box.

G. Seminar speakers Annette Aycock (standing), Christine Roysden, Sue Aycock, Ruth Mullen.

H. WNAC President Everyl Getz.



She admonished everyone to take advantage of opportunities that they have. "We need to get ourselves together, focused, and on our knees. Don't hang out with Christians all the time.... It's not at the table where evangelism is accomplished, it's down on our knees where the toe jam is . . ."

Lights in the Parsonage

At 1:30 on Monday afternoon, WNAC attendees had the choice of going to one of two seminars.

Seminar: "How can I help my pastor's wife?"

Annette Aycock presided over a panel of three pastors' wives. She asked Sue Aycock (Brazil), Ruth Mullen (IN), and Christine Roysden (KY) questions that produced answers designed to inform the audience on who a pastor's wife really is and what they appreciate.

Seminar for Pastors' Wives

WNAC President Everyl Getz (TX) spoke specifically to pastors' wives. Ruth Bivens prefaced Getz's speech with a little humor by reading a letter from an unappreciated pastor's wife to an imaginary friend.

Everyl Getz then spoke to pastor's wives about their jobs. She used information taken from a survey from among FWB pastors' wives and talked about the privileges and responsibilities of the pastor's wife's job.

About 100 people were present at each seminar.

Organization

State Officers Meeting

Mary R. Wischart presented the New Manual using transparencies and the Study Guide she compiled. Over 60 people attended the WNAC State Officer Meeting.

Business

WNAC President Everyl Getz presided over the business session. Delegates passed two resolutions. WNAC will publish materials for young girls (ages 9-12) and teen women when a writer for such material has been secured. The Foreign Student Scholarship of \$1,000 will go to Mr. Yao Kouassi N'Guettia (Silas) in Côte d'Ivoire.

Shining Light of Service

Holding the light high means service. Free Will Baptist women are shining the light of the gospel in their homes, churches, communities and around the world through the ministries of WNAC. ♦

I. WNAC Nominating Committee

J. Lottie Horton, chairman of the Nominating Committee

K. Mr. Yao Kouassi N'Guettia (Silas), the seminary student who is receiving the Foreign Student Scholarship given by WNAC

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"
Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV)

a column for young people

Life!Action. ... for everyday life

heart trouble

"Listen to your heart. Do what is right in your own mind." How many times have you heard phrases like these? They are popular sayings and they sound good.

In the last issue of *CoLaborer* I discussed the popular misconception that education is the key to success concluding that obedience to God's law is the real secret to success.

So what is wrong with the listen-to-your-heart philosophy?

What would you say to someone with the following attitude? "It's okay to goof off and get by without doing all my work because I'm grossly underpaid." This is what I would say, "The fact that you think you are underpaid does not change the fact that you agreed to do your job, whatever it may be, for whatever pay you are receiving. You need to either do your job to the best of your ability and be satisfied with your pay or find another job." Some people would give me a bloody nose for saying all that.

Sound harsh to you? Sure. But intentionally getting out of doing your job is the same as stealing from your boss or company. If your boss caught you taking 50

dollars out of the cash register, don't you think he would fire you? So, if you make five dollars per hour and goof off 15 minutes each day, how long would it take you to steal 50 dollars? About two months working five days per week.

So, the justification that someone is underpaid is simply an argument to soothe one's own conscience. And what is worse, my mind is easily convinced that I am right. Why? My natural heart wants to please me more than it wants to please God. Even if a person has been raised in a home where good morals are taught, the human heart has a way of twisting truth to justify a wrong action.

The cure

The natural human heart is beyond cure. The cure is to rely on God's Word and not our own heart to tell us what is right or wrong. This works for all the issues of today's world: abortion, assisted suicide, homosexuality, extramarital sex, lying, drug and alcohol abuse, murder, slander. These are not new issues. Check Galatians 5:19-21. ♦

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 ♦



*All school-age
children from the
home are enrolled
in public schools.
Pictured is a
second-grade class
some of the
children attended.*

Wounded lambs

School means uniforms, for state and private schools. Our children attend state schools and the color of their uniform varies depending on the age of the child. Some use red and white while others choose blue and white uniforms. Each school has emblems printed on the shirts.

Many times donations will arrive with the very size and color of the uniform needed for a new child!

Mountain of Jeans

At one time, however, comment was made in a staff meeting that the jean skirts and trousers used at some of the schools where our older children attended never appeared in the donations. They are expensive to purchase so we decided to put them on the prayer list.

A few days later, a business man

reported he was closing down his factory. He didn't make children's clothing but had a truckload of jeans remnants. One of our volunteers, Celina, was a seamstress with a serging machine (to overcast raw edges of material to prevent raveling) and was excited at this generous donation.

She made the needed jean skirts and pants. She also made book bags and backpacks, jean pencil holders with little zippers and drawstring bags for camps!

Out of the riches of His glory, He supplied.

Blessed Are the Feet of Them

Being below the equator, the seasons in Brazil are just the opposite of the seasons in the United States. The school year begins in March and ends in December, putting the summer vacation in January and

February. By the end of summer, we start checking on the shoes-for-school situation around the Children's Home.

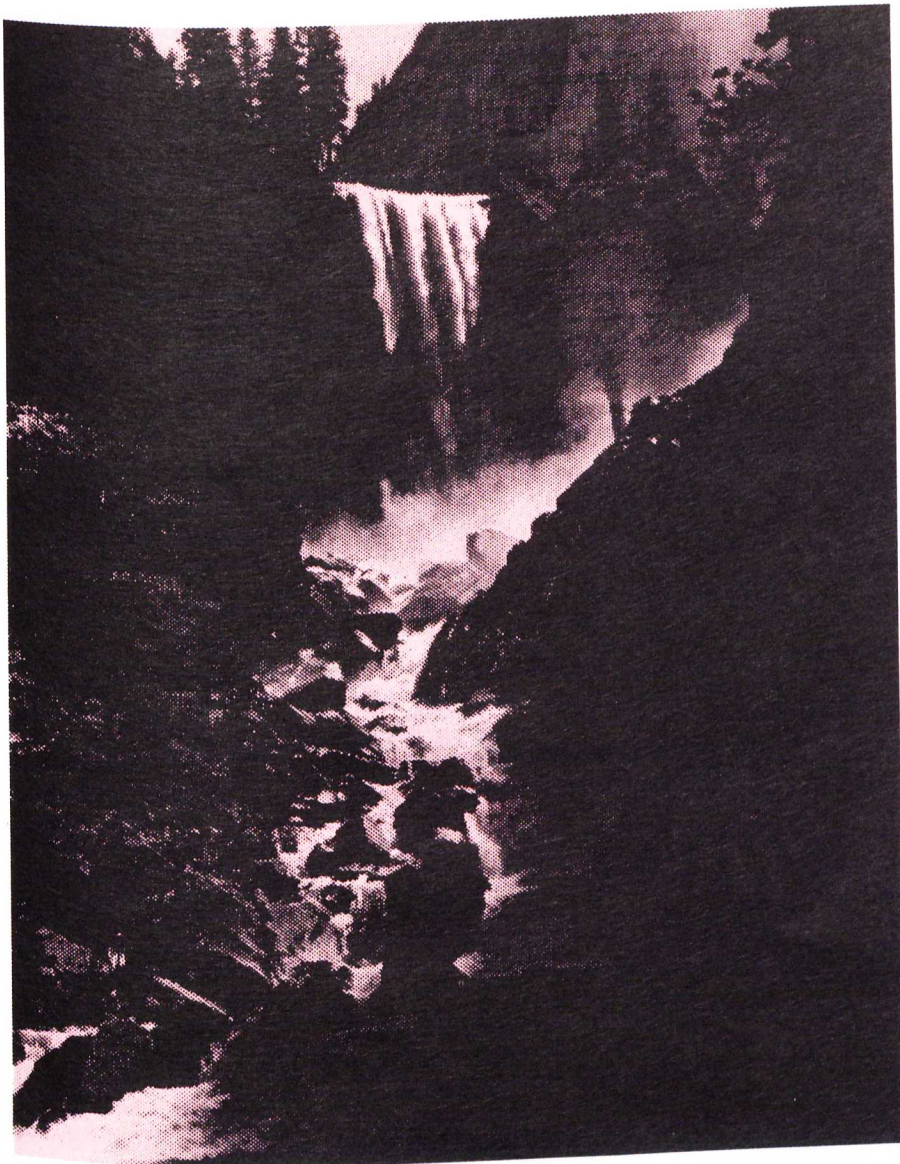
It used to be a battle to get the children to wear shoes, but now they appreciate being able to wear shoes to school like the other students. Each one stepped on a piece of cardboard and we drew around the foot and labeled the drawing with the child's name. They were to pray that their size would be donated in time for school to begin.

"That will take forever," the new children would complain.

"You had better put your footprint on the prayer list and just wait," older children would advise them.

Once, a huge box arrived at the home. It was from *Sonia's Calçados*—a shoe store in town. It was full of canvas slip-on shoes and they offered a discount if we needed to buy sizes that were not in the box!❖

This piece is taken from Shirley Combs' book, *They Deserve A Second Chance*. Used by permission. To order this book from WNAC, write P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002 or call (615)731-6812. The cost is \$6.50 + s&h. For more information about this work with street children in Brazil, write: Rejoice Ministries International, P.O. Box 50, Owasso, OK 74055.



Sparrow's Song

by Vicki Turner

The fragrant smell of honeysuckle drifted through the open window as she lay dreaming. She floated upon its sweet perfume and smiled.

It was the same dream, the one she often had. She walked across the meadow toward the cool mountain stream longing for the feel of the icy water upon her feet. Longing to bend and taste the sweet clear water as she cupped it within her hands. She could

never drink her fill as she let it trickle down her chin and onto the lush green grass.

She often lay beside the water, upon the cool tender blades of grass, and closed her eyes to catch the sounds around her. If she concentrated enough, she could see the water as it danced along the rocks beside her head and rushed in muffled whispers further along its way.

"This must be what heaven is like!" she sighed within her heart.

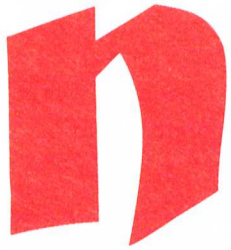
And still she listened. Overhead, within the branches of the willow tree, she could always hear the sparrows' song as they flitted around the leaves and talked amongst themselves. Sometimes she longed to know what their constant chatter was about.

She saw crickets playing melodies inside the hollow log beside the water's edge. She often fancied that each cricket living inside that log, ever so close to the dancing water, was intentionally teasing each trout that hovered near.

Here she lay, in silent contentment, shutting out the world. For here was where she longed to be. Here was where her heart soared on eagle's wings and mountain air smelled of honeysuckle. Here she was free to run through grasses tall and lush, and feel the tingling chill as she waded icy streams.

But all too soon dreams must end. For her, this was all too painful a reality. As she began to wake, the meadow became engulfed in fog and drifted out of

(continued on page 29)



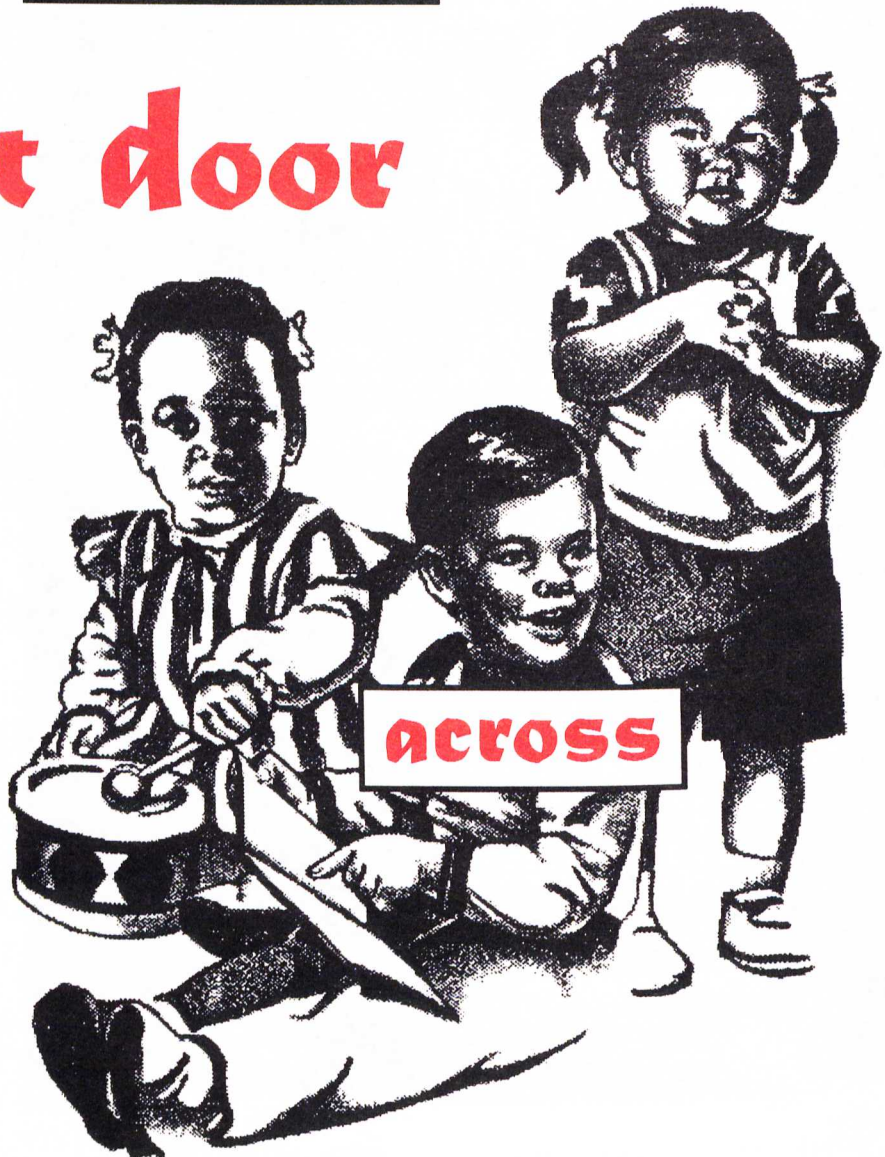
ext door



hen Jeff and I and the children

moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, we soon discovered that we had great neighbors—the Eric Murzyn Family.* Eric is American and his wife, Lon-ing, is Taiwanese. They have four children ranging in age from six months to eight years old.

Our children immediately began to play together, and that is how the friendship began. We



the language barrier

by Sherri Sloan

take turns watching the children, helping out on home projects, and just being there in times of need.

Once, when Jeff was gone, our baby fell and required stitches. My neighbors were there to calm me, watch our other two kids, and take me to the emergency room.

Jeff has had many opportunities to witness to Eric. (They are a Catholic family.) After a year, he

finally visited our church. He attended about three times and then brought his entire family. He told his wife, "You have to come and experience their joy!" Being Taiwanese and Catholic she naturally had many questions.

When she returned home, she asked Eric, "Why is Jeff so angry when he preaches?" She was not accustomed to loud and emotional preaching.

She also had difficulty understanding some of the terms that Jeff used in preaching. He was preaching about Paul, Silas, and the Philippian jailer. Lon-ing didn't understand the term "prisoner." Eric suggested that Jeff use more visual aids while he preached—such as putting his hands up as if they were around bars and he was in jail.

We have also learned that just because Lon-ing speaks a different language, that doesn't mean that she is "hard of hearing." We have a tendency to speak louder to help her understand. But Eric explained how that can be very frustrating to her and others who are trying to learn and understand the English language.

Eric and Lon-ing's children attend a Chinese school on Saturday to help them to retain the influence of both cultures. Fort Wayne has a large Asian community, and *if we can reach one family for Christ, it will open the door to reach so many more.*

In spite of the language barrier, Lon-ing told us that she enjoyed our service and would return. They now say that they have two pastors—their priest and Jeff. Please pray for their salvation. The Holy Spirit has been working in their lives.

Working with people from a different ethnic background takes a great deal of time and thought, but the results are worth it. It helps to become familiar with the customs of those with whom you are dealing. Showing them that you love them and that God loves them, too, is vitally important.

It is exciting to be a part of foreign and home missions right here in our own country, but isn't that what we are all supposed to do? God places us where He wants us and our neighbors are the fields white unto harvest. ❖

**Names used with permission.*

Sherri Sloan lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana where she and Jeff, her husband, work as home missionaries. They have three children, Caleb, Christian, and Joshua.

(continued from page 27)

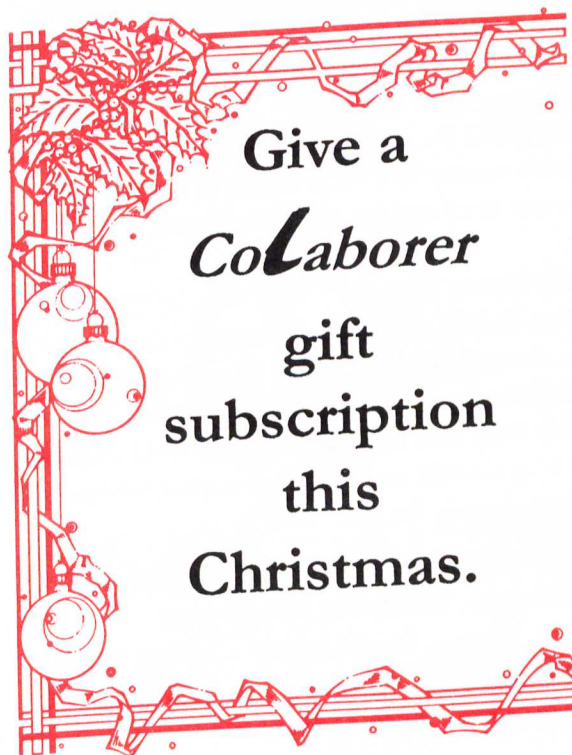
Sparrow's Song

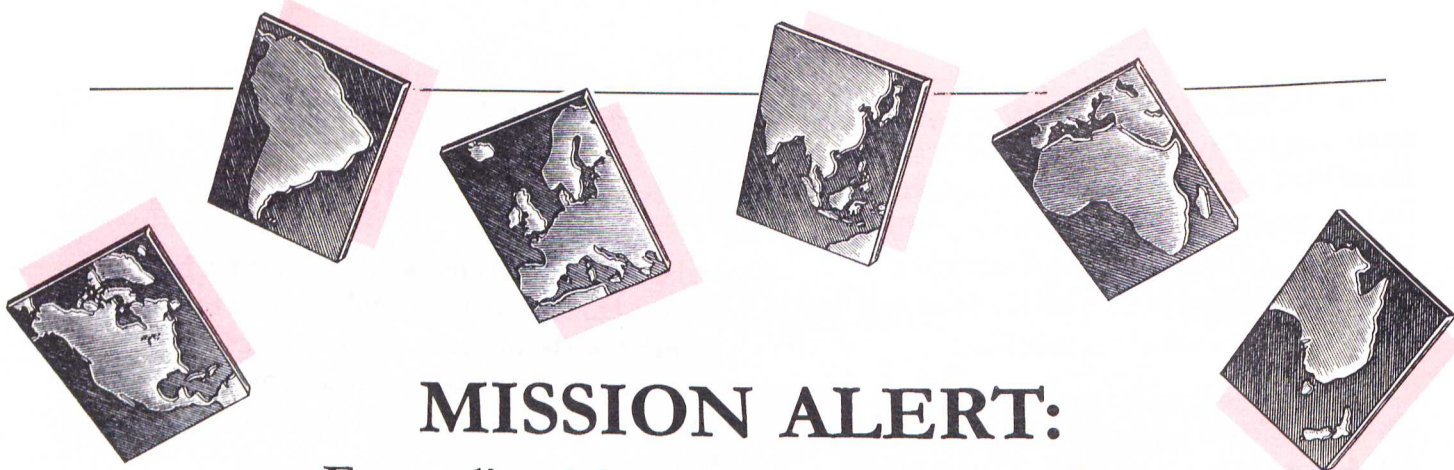
sight. She could feel the weight forcing her back as she tried to reach out and hold on to the dream. No matter how she tried, she could no longer hear the sparrows' song. The helpless feeling overtook her groggy thoughts as the weight pressed harder upon her.

She squeezed her eyes shut tighter as she tried to drift back to her dream. But no matter how she yearned for her meadow, the morning sounds brought her back to reality. She could smell the gloom that clung to the corridor walls. Soon an aid would come to brush her silver hair and lift her into the wheelchair.

Suddenly she heard the sparrows' song outside her window. She opened her eyes to watch as they flitted through the leaves. She sighed within her heart as the weight began to lift and her soul began to sing along. Soon she knew she would feel the sun upon her face and hear the waters laugh within the stream. Home was not so far away after all. ❖

Vicki Turner lives in Carterville, MO where she is a member of Carthage Free Will Baptist Church.





MISSION ALERT:

Evangelism News from Around the World

Iriso, Japan

Ken and Judy Bailey rejoice over the salvation of Mrs. Tochikura. She was saved at the Iriso church in Japan in March, is an enthusiastic witness to her family and friends. She has been an encouragement to the church because of her openness and desire to see others saved. A friend of hers, Mrs. Yabe, has recently started coming to church and Bible study and has expressed an interest in studying English and the Bible.

Some unsaved women in the neighborhood have asked Judy Bailey to teach an English class. Classes began August 29 and all the women agreed to study the Bible. Judy also had plans to start a cooking class in September. She requests prayer for wisdom as she continues teaching and witnessing.

Bondoukou, Côte d'Ivoire

Jerry and Carol Pinkerton celebrated 25 years of missionary service in Côte d'Ivoire in August 1996. They praise the Lord for His faithfulness.

Ribeirão Preto, Brazil

In August Bobby and Geneva Poole rejoiced over the salvation of two ringleaders of a group of rambunctious boys who attend services at Marincek. Pray that these boys, Israel and Paulinho, will grow spiritually and that they can be used to reach their friends for the Lord.

The Pooles also expressed thanksgiving for Vitorio's surgery which was miraculously successful. Tests indicated he had a benign tumor in the spinal column. Vitorio is a music teacher and is in charge of the music at Marincek.

Ft. Collins, Colorado

The home missions church at Ft. Collins and home missionary/pastor Roger Raper are excited about the new development growing up across the street from the church building. Ridgewood Hills will eventually encompass 1,100 dwelling units according to the write up in the local newspaper, the Fort Collins Coloradoan. This is a case where the Lord has brought the mission field right to the church.

Reynosa, Mexico

Bud and Ruth Bivens praise the Lord for the three vacation Bible schools conducted this summer. They are thankful for the excellent helpers this year, some of the helpers were from the Weslaco (TX) FWB church. VBS at Calvario and Bethel churches were held during the same week—one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. A busy week for all involved. The third VBS was held under some large shade trees along the road that goes to the new seminary property. On the last day they handed out 75 treats—probably a record for a roadside VBS!

Chesnee, South Carolina

At press time the First Free Will Baptist Church in Chesnee was scheduled to move into their new church building in October. The men of the church worked hard through the summer and even some men in the community who do not attend the church worked on the building for several days. Some of the helpers do not attend church anywhere and they are good prospects for the Chesnee church. The James Childers Family asks us to pray for the work and for these prospects. ❖



WORDS FOR WOMEN

JOY! "Joy to the world," we sing at Christmas. But what about 365 days a year? Do we feel a thrill of joy running through all the experiences of our lives?

The word of God is filled with instructions to rejoice. The word *rejoice* occurs 192 times. And the word *joy*, 165 times. Granted, not every mention is positive. Still most of them refer to the joy we have as believers and to the rejoicing we should be doing in God.

How can I feel joy, you say, with a stack of dirty dishes in the sink? A pile of laundry waiting? Supper to be fixed and a crying baby? And I'm exhausted!

Yet underneath all the circumstances we should have that current of joy. For really and truly, just as we sing, God brought a special joy to all people that day in Bethlehem of Judea.

A tiny babe in a mother's arms. He would bring joy. The angel said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:13). He prayed for us to have joy. "Now come I to thee: and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (John 17:13).

Look, we have the joy of salvation. Isaiah testified, "Behold, God is my salvation. . . . Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Rejoice! For salvation is freely given by grace through faith. It cost God a great deal, but costs us nothing but belief.

The joy of sins forgiven. When He said to the woman in Simon's house, "Thy sins are forgiven." Others questioned the very idea. The scribes thought it was blasphemy. They said, "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

Rejoice! For in the person of His son, He came to forgive our sins and clothe us with His righteousness.

The joy of hope for tomorrow. Romans 15:13, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Jesus said, "If I go, I will come again and receive you unto myself." Peter wrote, "In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8).

Rejoice! We know the future. That is, we know that one day He will return not as a babe, but as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And He will identify us with Him in His glory.

Psalm 27:6 has an interesting phrase. "Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy." One version puts it "with joyous shouting."

Say, we have something to shout about. In spite of dirty dishes, crying babies, financial problems, whatever comes our way, the joy of knowing God is a continuous current running through our hearts.

As you think of Christmas gifts this year (and one joy mentioned in the Bible is the joy of giving), think of what gift you can offer to God. How about a sacrifice of joy? It's all right to shout a little too. ♦



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