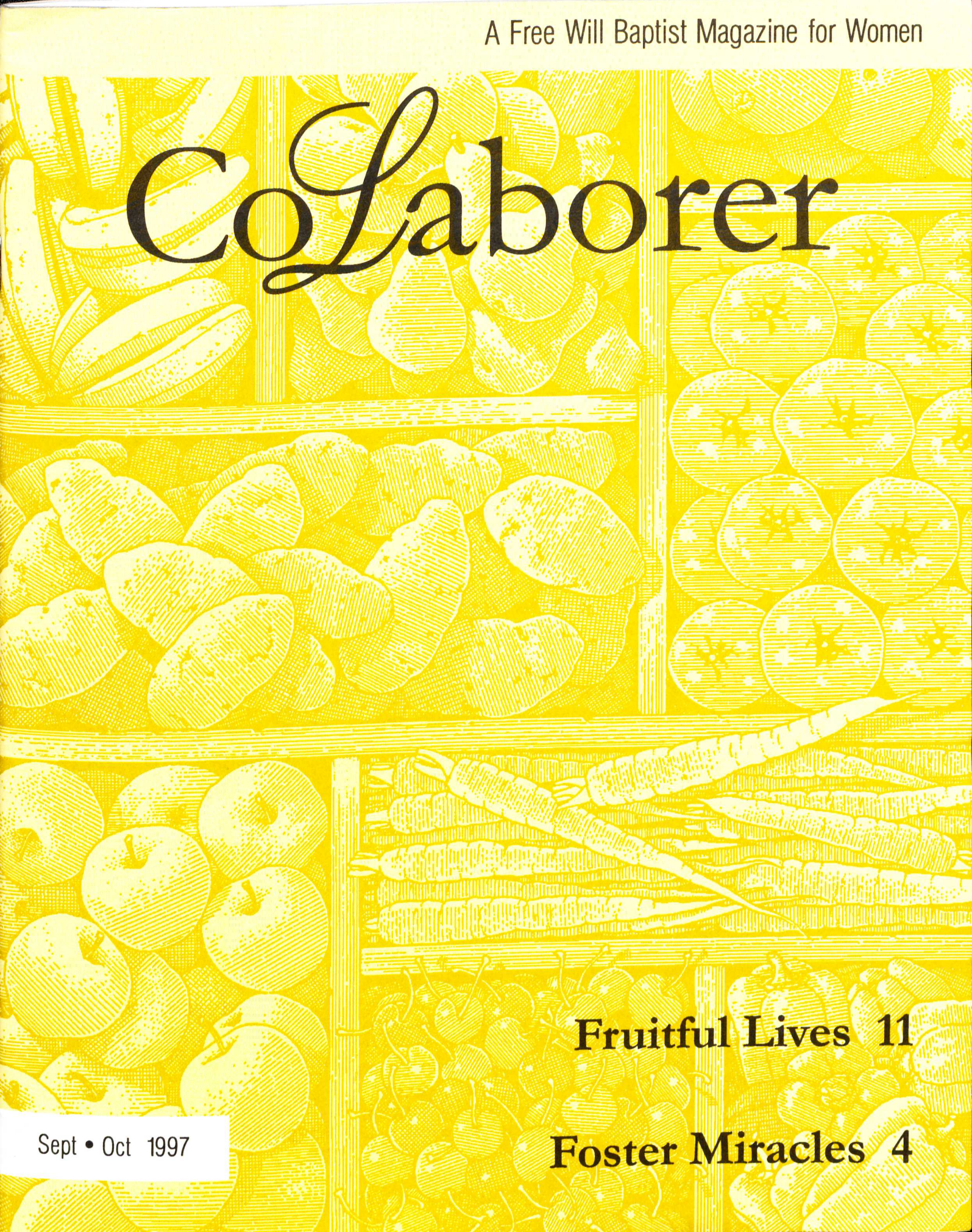


A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

# CoLaborer



Fruitful Lives 11

Foster Miracles 4

Sept • Oct 1997

# VISION

Suzanne Franks



## Why a Women's Ministry?

**W**hen I was younger I didn't understand why women would want to go to a meeting with only women. I knew of the wonderful work Free Will Baptist women did for missionaries. I felt the warmth of their love and quilts they made with their hands. But I always wondered, why is WNAC just for women? It took me years to grasp the significance of women joining together to fellowship, disciple, and work. Women have unique needs. Women bond when they discuss house cleaning, cooking, or how they feel when their husbands don't notice a new hairdo.

Who knows what to say to a woman in tears? Women understand and know how to give a silent hug. Women can pray for each other with a better understanding of what they are going through. Someone who has gone through a similar experience will often know how to offer comfort to a hurting sister.

Today many women feel alone because they live far away from their extended families. Women in the church need to pool their knowledge and energies to fill in the gap where biological families are missing.

Women have unique ways of learning. We are more verbal. Some are more visual. Have you listened to a woman and a man tell the same story? Which one was more vivid? Women often teach in parables that relate to their life experiences. These parables help other women grasp important biblical truths. The model of a godly woman helps other women apply these truths.

A Sunday school class reaches men and women alike. Some topics, however, interest women exclusively. For example: How to juggle responsibilities as wife, mother, daughter, daughter-in-law, employee. Or how to be submissive to an unbelieving husband and bring him to the Lord.

Relationships between women are some of the closest in the world. Women need a place where it is safe to bare their souls.

Women have unique talents and interests. They can find creative ways to use them to further God's kingdom. Whether it's cooking for a bereaved family or organizing a shower for the local rescue mission, women, through their incredible energy and organizational skills, accomplish tremendous tasks.

In your church, who notices the carpet becoming ragged? Who thinks about the details involved in planning a homecoming?

A woman from Georgia, Laura Belle Barnard, rekindled the missionary spirit among Free Will Baptists in 1935.

These are only a few reasons why Free Will Baptists have a flourishing women's ministry. Women are unique. Many jobs wouldn't get done without us. Why not join us? There's room for more! ❖

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# 4

**"THESE WERE  
PRECIOUS  
BABIES WHO  
NEEDED PARENTS.  
WE WERE PARENTS  
WHO NEEDED  
CHILDREN."**

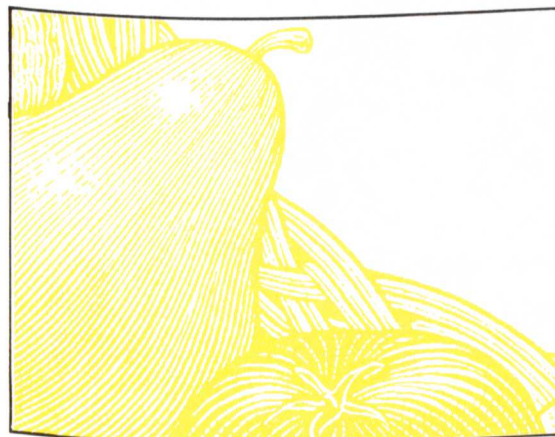
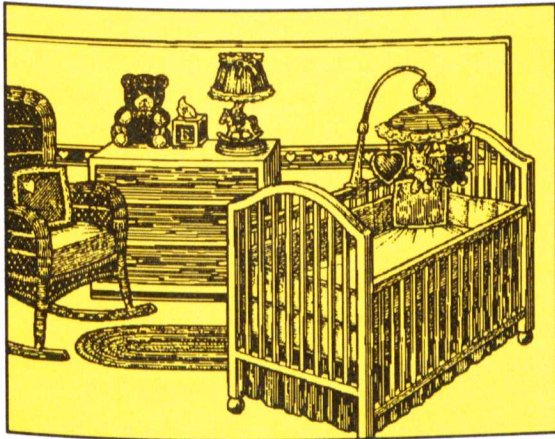
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**SCHOOL TEACHER  
RACHEL BESS  
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AND SHE POSES WAYS  
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CAN HELP.**

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**LAURA THIGPEN  
SHOWS HOW  
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YIELDS  
ABUNDANT FRUIT**

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As a little girl, my friends wanted to be nurses and policemen, I wanted to be a mommy when I grew up.

# Foster Miracles

by Judy Brinkley

A First place winner in the 1997 Creative Arts Contest!

**F**or as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a mother. I wanted to, partly because I had such great role models. My mother and both of my grandmothers were wonderful examples of what a Christian mother should be.

I believe there is no more important career than parenting. Ephesians 6:4 must apply to mothers and fathers when it says to "... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

## My Heart's Desire

In 1988 the Lord sent me a wonderful man to be my husband, and—I believed—the father of my children. Can you imagine my surprise and even shock when I did not conceive a



child the first year we tried? Or the second?

The next few years tried my faith as never before. We entered the fascinating and frustrating world of infertility. With each new test or treatment, we honestly sought God's will and asked for His blessing. Nothing worked. James 1:2-3 says, "My brethern, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." It became difficult to count anything joy, but we did develop patience.

We especially needed patience with well-meaning friends and family who said, "Just relax, you're trying too hard." Generally, stress doesn't cause infertility. Infertility is a medical condition that causes stress!

We began to question what God wanted for us. Was motherhood God's will for me, or just my desire and dream? In time God seemed to answer, "Not your way, child, but My will." We surrendered to that unknown will, knowing it would be perfect. We prayed and waited—claiming Isaiah 40:31.

## New Possibilities

We began to consider adoption as the way for us to become parents. We talked to different agencies, and waited on the Lord to show us what to do. And He did. We began at our local Department of Social Services.

Part of the adoption application process was to attend meetings and parenting classes. In our area, prospective adoptive parents are grouped with prospective foster parents for these classes.

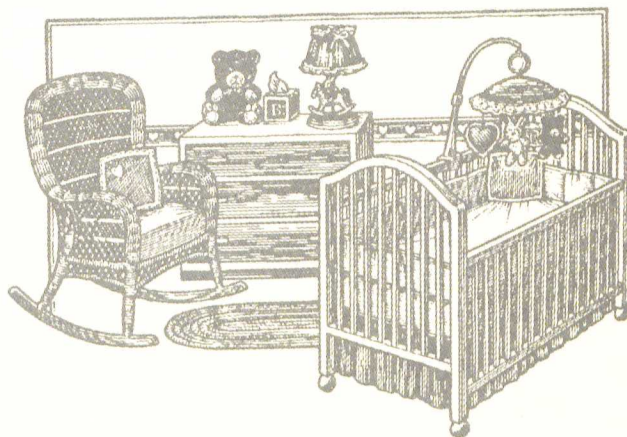
We learned a lot about foster care. The goal is to provide a safe environment for children of all races and economic backgrounds until they can be reunited with their families. They need this special nurturing because of abuse, neglect, specific medical or developmental problems. Others just need a safe, temporary home.

The more we learned about foster care, the more we admired those people who provide it. The Lord began to tug at my heart. "But, I don't want to be a temporary parent. I want my own child," I protested. My husband began to share his fear of letting go if we were blessed with a foster child. We learned

as much about ourselves as we learned about parenting. We really felt the Lord leading us to be foster parents.

## Clear Answers

We prayed that the Lord would make His will clearly known. Suddenly, everything around us was foster care—people we met, places we went, even magazine articles we read. I don't remember God ever showing me anything so clearly. He was calling



We prepared a  
bedroom for a child  
and waited.  
We prayed  
that the Lord  
would use us  
to make a real  
difference  
in a child's life,  
and waited some  
more.

us to become parents. We asked and God answered (Matthew 7:7).

We applied and received our license October 1995. We prepared a bedroom for a child and waited. Together, we prayed that the Lord would use us to make a real difference in a child's life, and waited some more.

## Bundles of Joy

The first call came in January 1996. We were blessed with a beautiful newborn baby girl. We expected to keep her at least six weeks. The feeling of finally being a mother was almost overwhelming. Just one month later, we got another call, and took another infant. Praise the Lord! God had honored our request and given us the desire of our hearts.

Two babies—one girl, one boy—in two months. What more could we ask for! Nothing but maybe a little more sleep. We have no doubts this was what God wanted for us. These were precious babies who needed parents. We were parents who needed children.

Over the next few months, we had other children stay with us. These children ranged from age 4 years to 15 years, and none stayed more than a week. We felt each child provided joy and education for us. We continued to pray for each of them and their families. We began to believe that our babies would be with us forever. In September 1996, we gained a beautiful teenage daughter.

## Storms

The Lord kept us safe during Hurricane Fran, and we found interesting things to do without electricity. Then another storm came that tested our faith and our calling. The Lord and the court decided that our baby girl, then almost 9 months old, should leave us and live somewhere else. We didn't understand this decision.

From the day we became foster parents, we prayed that the Lord would do what was best for our children and their families. Now, this was not what we believed was in her best interest! We were sad and a little angry, but we had prayed for months.

We wanted God's perfect will for her life.

I had always claimed Philippians 4:6–7, but now I was living it. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." The loss was real, we grieved, but God kept His promise and gave us that peace.

## Life Goes on

Our work continues. The crib was not empty for long. We still have our little boy (almost 1 year old) and in November, we were blessed with another newborn baby boy. We have two teenage daughters now instead of one. We've been parents for one year and privileged with eight children. Some only stayed for two days.

When I heard,  
"Can I call you  
Mama?"  
for the first time,  
it brought tears  
to my eyes.

Some days we question God's will concerning a child, and He always answers. Sometimes the answer comes in a still small voice and sometimes in more obvious ways. (It's hard to be still to hear that small voice in our house.)

So, what about having my own child? We're still waiting for that answer. Occasionally, children already in foster care become available for adoption. We are praying that the Lord will send us a child to adopt that way. But, whether legally or not, I feel that all these children are mine. I don't usually tell people that I'm a foster parent when they ask, "Do you have children?" I smile, answer, "Yes, I have four," and take out the pictures.

## **Awesome Task**

All children are special blessings from God, and I believe they should be treated as such.

Ask yourself, Can I help? Sure. What can I do? Maybe you can be a foster parent. Everyone has different talents and interests. Being a foster parent or any kind of parent is not easy.

The most important thing you can do for any parent is pray for them. God has given parents such an awesome responsibility. If you know a parent or child who is having a difficult time, encourage them. Offer a pat on the back or a listening ear. (Hugs are always welcome in our family.) I cannot imagine doing this without the support and encouragement of my family and friends.

Do you remember your first year as a mother? I'll never forget mine. The sheer joy of cradling newborn babies and singing them to sleep is a feeling like nothing else. When I heard, "Can I call you Mama?" for the first time, it brought tears to my eyes.

I thought my heart would stop beating when I had to kiss my little girl good-bye and let her go, but it didn't. I claimed Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." His strength is perfect. I relied completely on God's promises and He completely met my needs. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

"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" (Romans 8:28). We believe we have been called to serve these children. Every day we claim God's promise, and every day He blesses abundantly.

---

*Judy Brinkley and Mark, her husband, live in Smithfield, North Carolina. She is a member of the WAC group at West Calvary Free Will Baptist Church.*

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**Ten Ministries  
that provide resource  
and services for us all.**



# PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THE WORLD

BY RACHEL BESS

**J**ohn Chapman, better known as Johnny Applesseed, was a man who went about helping others by planting apple seeds. The apple became a priceless product to him.

As we think of “Back to School,” apples always pop up in classrooms at church and school. Every teacher sees that little child who enters his/her room as a priceless product. Johnny Applesseed met the

**Scripture:** Romans 8:28

**Purpose:** To equip Christian adults with the tools necessary to help children face today’s pressures and temptations.

**Song:** *Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World*

challenge of planting the seed and his reward came as the trees began to grow. Teachers meet the challenge of teaching the children and their reward comes when they see children grow.

As parents, grandparents, children’s workers, and friends we have a tremendous responsibility to help every child whose lives we touch face the future. James 1:2 states that we are to count everything as joy when we fall into various trials. If children are to experience this joy, they will need some dedicated Christian adults to lead them to know the person of Jesus Christ.

Children today face incredible pressures and all are bombarded with temptations. The following are a few questions young children may ask you as a Christian adult.

## **1. "WHY DON'T MY PARENTS STOP USING DRUGS?"**

Children are exposed to drug abuse in elementary school. By third grade they usually have a pretty clear understanding of what an illicit drug is, why it is illegal, and what harm it can do. Children with parents who are addicted to drugs often are neglected and experience emotional abandonment. They feel lonely and scared. They are embarrassed because they know drug abuse is against the law. They don't want anybody to know what is going on in their families. This is where Christian adults need to step in as surrogate parents and care for these children.

### **Conversation starters:**

1. What do you wish would happen in your family?
2. What have you learned about drug abuse?
3. Your parents deny they are addicted to drugs. They say they can stop anytime, but are only kidding themselves. Let's pray that they will face the truth and accept help.

### **Suggestions on how you can help:**

1. Teach the children who live with family members who abuse drugs what to do in an emergency. Tell them how to call the police, fire department, pastor and you.
2. Provide warm affection. Fun, involvement in sports, music, and games. Children who feel good about themselves will be less likely to use drugs.
3. Contact drug treatment centers to learn factual information on specific drug problems.
4. Tell the children about addiction and how addicts cannot stop without professional help.
5. Meet weekly and pray with the children.
6. Teach and memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13

## **2. "IS IT OKAY TO LOVE A PERSON WHO IS HOMOSEXUAL?"**

Children are exposed to homosexuality in many different ways. They may live with a parent or an older sibling who is homosexual or possibly know a

neighbor who is a homosexual. They learn about it from television, reading about it, listening to parents discuss the political issues, and talk with classmates about it. Children who love a homosexual may feel angry, ashamed, and embarrassed.

Sometimes the family is touched by divorce because one parent embraces the homosexual lifestyle. These children feel sad and betrayed. They need Christian adults to give guidance and support in understanding the Christian perspective of loving sinners and hating their sin.

### **Conversation starters:**

1. Some people think sexual sin is worse than other sins. What do you think?
2. What did you think or feel about the discussion at school today about gay rights?
3. Would you like to read some books that present the Christian view of homosexuality?

### **Suggestions on how you can help:**

1. Teach children that homosexuality is not worse than other sins and that we are all sinners in need of a Savior.
2. Explain that homosexuality is not contagious.
3. Show children from God's Word that homosexuality is wrong, but we should still love them, seek to help them, and pray for them.
4. Teach children to never call the homosexual queer or other slang expressions.
5. Teach and memorize 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4.

## **3. AIDS—WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?**

Children are given information about HIV disease in elementary school and how to protect themselves from acquiring the Aids virus. It is difficult for children to understand why people participate in such an activity that could result in this terrible disease. Children who live with a family member who has Aids are told to keep it secret and not talk about it. This causes lots of fear and tension in their lives. Children are afraid to tell their friends because the friends would be afraid they would catch Aids by

coming to play. Therefore, who can they talk to about what is happening and what will happen in their family? Here is where we can help.

#### **Conversation Starters:**

1. Let's talk about some ways you could respond when others ask you about your family members with Aids.
2. I feel sad about this, too. How do you feel?
3. If someone asked you to do something that would not please God, what would you say?

#### **Suggestions on how you can help:**

1. Answer the children's questions in the simplest way possible.
2. Explain clearly how the virus is spread and what the child should and should not do.
3. Model loving and accepting attitudes toward the person with Aids.
4. Teach and memorize Isaiah 53:6.

### **4. "IS IT RIGHT OR WRONG?"**

Children today are very confused about exactly what choices they should make. They sometimes make a choice by simply the way they feel. Children often think about how their choices will help them be accepted by their peers. They make a choice by what they have seen others do or what they have seen on television. They simply are not sure about what is the truth.

If children are going to learn right from wrong, they must understand what is the absolute truth for every person yesterday, today, and tomorrow. They must know why it is the truth. Christian adults must help children understand that the absolute truth is learned through knowing the person of Jesus Christ.

#### **Conversation starters:**

1. What are some choices you had to make today? How did you arrive at this choice?
2. Do you understand how you can decide what is right or wrong?
3. Have you prayed and asked God to help you make the right choice?

#### **Suggestions on how you can help:**

1. Be sensitive to what you see the children communicating to their parents, siblings, other adults and friends.
2. Show acceptance of the children and be honest with them. If children feel safe with you and know they are not in trouble for the choice they make, they will be more likely to share openly with you.
3. Take the Word of God and help them to see just how Jesus would handle the situation.
4. Help them understand that making the right choices are based on what are God's ideas, not on how they feel or what other people think.
5. Help them to understand what it means to fear God and have respect for God.
6. Pray for them daily.
7. Teach and memorize Proverbs 1:7.

Just as Johnny Appleseed went about sharing love and helping others so must the Christian adult. We must be alert to the temptations and pressures children encounter. We need to read and keep informed on the present issues. Take time to listen to children. Study the Bible to know how Jesus handled these problems and teach the children these truths. Be a good model and pray daily for these children. Help them know that all things do work together for good to those who love Jesus and are called according to His purpose. ❖

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*Rachel Bess has taught first grade in the public school for nineteen years. She has been in children's ministry since she taught her first Sunday school class as a sixth grader. She and her husband, Jack, have three children and one grandchild. They live in Tulsa, Oklahoma.*

# FRUITFUL LIVES

BY LAURA THIGPEN

**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 55:10–11; Psalm 19:7–11; 119:9, 11, 105, 165

**PURPOSE:** To convince each woman that diligent Bible study does produce spiritual growth in a woman's life.

**SONG:** *Standing On The Promises*

## ABUNDANT FRUIT

**H**arvest is the golden time of the year. It is a time of reaping what has been sown and gathering the fruit of hours of labor. At harvest, the farmer sees the results of hours of hard work. Has it been worth the cost of time and energy? Will there be an abundant harvest? Will there be fruit?

What about hours spent in diligent Bible study? Does this pursuit bring forth fruit in the life of a woman?

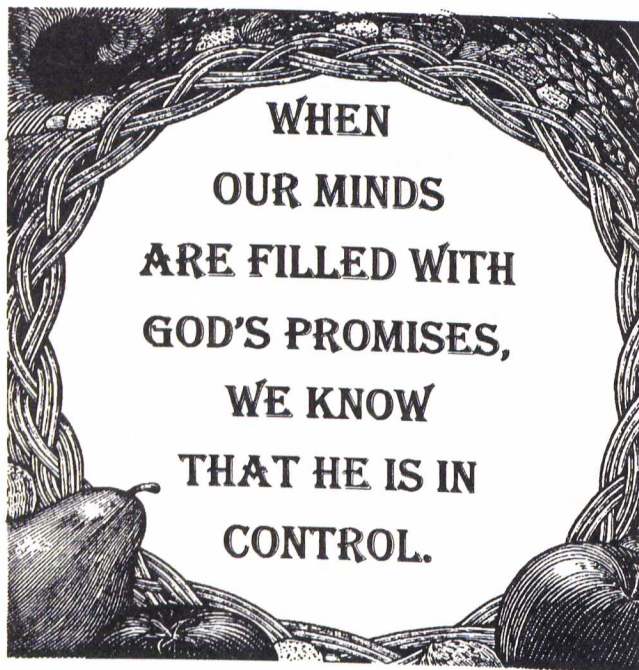
The Bible gives a resounding **yes!** Bible study does yield abundant fruit. God promises in Isaiah 55:10–11 that there will be fruit.

**For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but**

**watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and breath to the eater. So shall *my word* be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.**

His Word will have an effect on the soul and life of the believer, as surely as rain and snow causes the earth to bear fruit. God guarantees it! In the first Psalm we read that the person who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates in it day and night will be like a tree by the water, bringing forth fruit in her season.

The woman who is a persistent student of God's Word will grow and mature spiritually. God will



bring about changes in her life so that she will become more Christ-like. This is His purpose for her life (Romans 8:28).

## THE FRUIT OF STRENGTH

One of the greatest needs of the "new creature in Christ" is to begin a systematic study of the Bible. If she is to grow spiritually, she must feed upon God's Word. This is His way of nourishing our souls.

In the wilderness, Jesus said to Satan, "... Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

Peter refers to the "milk of the Word" that enables us to grow (1 Peter 2:2). Then, as we mature, we are ready for the "meat of the Word" (Hebrews 5:12).

Just as we are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, the **living** Word, we grow in grace by feeding upon the **written** Word, the Bible. In its pages more and more about Jesus Christ is revealed to us. As we get to know Him, our faith in Him and our love for Him grow stronger.

Studying God's Word also imparts strength to face the trials and problems that life brings. In times of sorrow, the Bible gives comfort (Psalm 119:50). In the midst of life's storms, God's Word brings peace (Psalm 119:165). Loneliness is dispelled

by meditating on God's Word. When our minds are filled with God's promises, we know that He is in control. We have emotional stability and strength, keeping us faithful to God through all the circumstances of life.

Evelyn Christenson, well-known author and speaker, in her book *Lord, Change Me* gives this testimony:

## MONOLOGUE

### Testimony of Evelyn Christenson\*

*(An attractive, middle-aged woman)*

It was the fall of 1953. The doctor told us our baby, Judy, could not live. I remember taking her to the hospital, coming home with aching, empty arms and a horrible rebellion in my heart—stubbornly hanging on to my right to keep her.

I struggled alone in my bedroom for hours over a statement our former pastor had made, "God must love Harold and Evelyn a lot to give them all that sorrow." He was referring to Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." I became more and more angry at the man for saying such a terrible thing.

But as I fought with God in my solitude, He seemed to say to me, "Read on." So I opened my Bible and read to Hebrews 12:10 where it says that our earthly fathers "chastened us after their own pleasure; but [God] for our profit." God seemed to be whispering to me that, if I were going to be a pastor's wife, I would have to understand some of these things. I would need compassion when I was called upon to stand beside a crib in a hospital or by a little casket. I could only be all He wanted me to be as a pastor's wife as I experienced this chastening. Verse 11 explained it all: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless **afterward** it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

I felt my stubborn will go limp within me. At the same moment my tense, rebelling body crumpled on the bed beside which I was kneeling. I had surrendered to His will, whatever that might be. My battle was over. My rebellion ceased. From that point on there was no struggle. I was filled with grief on the day Judy died—but no rebellion. He had prepared

me for those difficult days—but even more so for all the years ahead.

## THE FRUIT OF VICTORY

Spiritual growth is hindered when there is unrecognized or ignored sin in a Christian's life. When we daily study the Bible, we give God an opportunity to search our hearts. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). If we neglect looking into God's Word, we become calloused and indifferent to the sin in our lives.

James says the Word is like a mirror (James 1:23). In it we see the moral and spiritual blemishes and defects in our hearts and lives. When we confess and repent of our sins, God can begin to work in us, replacing the negative attitudes and sinful habits with the fruits of righteousness. After confession of sin, "... He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We do not understand how the Word cleanses us, but we know the joy of feeling clean and spotless as the Word passes through our souls. The pollution of sin is washed away. The water of God's Word has cleansed us from the impurities deposited in the soul by the world.

In addition to convicting and cleansing us of sin, studying and memorizing the Scriptures makes it possible for us to keep **from** sinning. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). When the Word is stored in the mind, the Holy Spirit reminds us of a portion of Scripture, a verse or phrase that enables us to overcome temptation (John 14:26b). Having our minds and hearts filled with His Word, we can use the Sword of the Spirit to live a holy life, one that is victorious over sin and Satan (Ephesians 6:17).

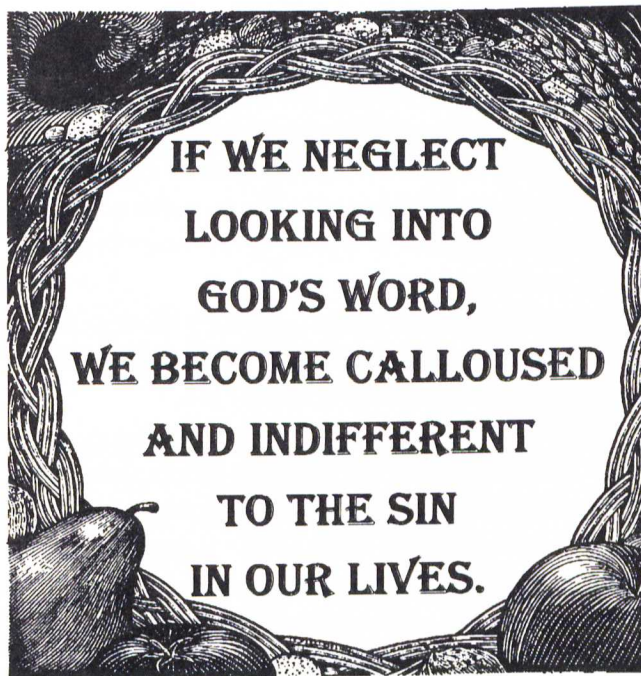
During World War II, Corrie Ten Boom spent many months in a Nazi concentration camp in Germany. Her beloved sister died in prison, but Corrie was released. At the end of the war, she returned to Germany to tell the people of God's love and forgiveness. In her book, *He Cares, He Comforts* she tells the following story:

## MONOLOGUE

### Testimony of Corrie Ten Boom\*\*

*(Elderly woman with thick Dutch accent)*

It happened in Germany. One day I saw a lady in a meeting who did not look into my eyes. Suddenly I recognized her. She was a nurse who had been very cruel to my dying sister when we were in Ravensbruck Concentration camp during the war. When I saw her, a feeling of bitterness, almost



hatred, came into my heart. How my dying sister had suffered because of her! The moment I felt that hatred in my heart, I knew that I myself had no forgiveness.

Later at home I had a good talk with the Lord about it. "Lord, I know that I must forgive, but I cannot." Then the Lord gave me this verse: "... the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5b).

Then I could pray, "Thank you, Lord, for Romans 5:5. Thank you that Your love in me is stronger than my hatred and bitterness." That same moment I knew I could forgive.

I told a friend about my experience and she knew the woman worked in a nearby hospital. She called the nurse and I had a talk with her over the telephone, telling her I would very much like her to come to my meeting that evening.

She did come, and during the entire evening she looked into my eyes while I spoke. After the meeting, I had a talk with her. I told her that I had been bitter, but that God's Holy Spirit in me had brought His love instead of hatred and now I loved her. I told her that it was through Jesus Christ who bore our sins on the cross. He forgave us, and that was why I could forgive her. At the end of our talk, that nurse accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Savior and Lord.

## THE FRUIT OF WISDOM

The woman who studies the Bible has a source of wisdom that enables her to think straight, make wise decisions, and follow the right course of action. The Bible contains everything we need to make us wise (2 Timothy 3:15, 17). The Bible gives us truth that cannot be found anywhere else.

Bible study gives us answers to life's most perplexing questions and gives us wisdom to discern the truth about the crucial issues of life.

Bible study transforms us by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). We discover God's thoughts, values, and plans for us. As we immerse ourselves in Scriptures, we begin to think God's thoughts after Him, to see all of life from His perspective. The foundation of our philosophy of life is God's absolute truth. The guidelines found in the Bible enable us to build Christian homes, develop Christian lifestyles, and teach our children moral and spiritual values.

Through consistent Bible study, God's wisdom keeps us true to Him in a complex pagan culture. Contrariwise, ignorance of God's Word could bring tragic consequences. This is illustrated by the following story told me by a Christian medical doctor.

## STORY

### We Just Didn't Know

A woman in her early forties was very upset when she learned that she was pregnant. The next day she talked with her doctor. "Doctor, I want an abortion. My husband and I feel this is best. We are too old to rear another child. Our two girls will soon be in college. There's the great possibility, at my age, of

having a child with birth defects."

"Are you a Christian?" the doctor gently asked.

"Of course, my husband and I were saved in our teens."

"Do you believe the Bible is the Word of God?" continued the doctor.

"Yes, I don't see what that has to do with it."

"But," the doctor asked, "do you believe the Bible is really true?"

Indignant, the woman replied, "Of course, we're not heathen!"

The doctor picked up his Bible from his desk and began to write \*Scripture references on a prescription pad. He gave it to the woman with these instructions:

"I want you and your husband to read these Scripture passages, discuss them, and pray about them. Then come back tomorrow."

The next morning, the woman was tearful as she told the doctor, "My husband and I are ashamed that we ever considered aborting our baby. We just didn't know what the Bible says. We didn't realize that our baby is already a real person. We could never have an abortion now—never!"

In due time, a healthy nine-pound boy was born—bringing joy to his parents and sisters!

\*Exodus 20:13; Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13-16

## THE FRUIT OF JOY

Diligent Bible study is a little like digging for hidden treasure. What a joy to discover a new gem of truth, claim it for your own, and apply it to your life. It causes the soul to rejoice (Psalm 19:8). Lorene Miley, former editor of *CoLaborer*, has faithfully studied God's Word for over 50 years. She says, "God's Word has kept me focused, kept me on the path, kept me accountable, and most of all, created an insatiable appetite to know more about its Author." Yes, Bible study does produce abundant fruit in a woman's life.

---

*Laura Thigpen lives in Nashville, Tennessee, and is a member of Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church.*

\*Reprint permission requested from Victor Books, © 1979.

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A graphic of a springboard with a coiled spring and a curved board, with an arrow pointing upwards from the end of the board.

# Springboard:

## Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

### Coordinator

Pastor Appreciation Sunday is September 7. Remember to show appreciation to your pastor, his family, and other pastoral staff in your church.

Because of this year's emphasis on study, you can make a special appeal for the Memorial Student Loan offering in September. This loan, which is administered by WNAC, provides low interest (simple interest) on loans for Free Will Baptist youth to get a Christian education.

The 1995 retreat at Glorieta, New Mexico, was a special treat. We will be back at Glorieta October 10-12 this year. If anyone in your group plans to fly to New Mexico and she hasn't made reservations, she should call her travel agent today! A balloon festival will be taking place in Albuquerque on the same weekend, so the flights are already running over. The travel agent may also help arrange transportation from Albuquerque to Glorieta. For a retreat reservation form see the March/April *CoLaborer* or contact WNAC.

### Assistant Coordinator (Program Chairman)

The 1997 *Yearbook* is still for sale. You can still benefit from the ideas and suggestions in this book. The 1998 *Yearbook* is on it's way to the press. In addition to ideas for each month, this book includes ready-made posters for each monthly program in 1998. The yearbook consists of 80 pages filled with ideas for invitations, enlistment, ways to present the program, and many, many more useful tools. You'll get a lot for only \$6.

### Secretary/Treasurer

We are all in the ministry together. The Treasurer's job includes teaching stewardship and informing the women about the financial needs of the Free Will Baptist denomination. Giving to an individual ministry is commendable and brings the giver special gratification to see her money at work. But who supports the work behind the scenes? The Together Way plan helps us do that. September 28 was chosen as the date to raise money for the "Rest of the Family" See page 7 in this

### Provision Closet Needs:

Queen size sheet sets

Twin size sheet sets  
(especially extra-long  
fitted sheets)

Bedspreads

Electric blankets

Flatware

Tupperware®  
(especially large  
storage containers  
and large pitchers)

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

# Bible Study

## THE HARVEST LUKE 8:5-8

### Introduction

A farmer must follow the proper steps to reap a bountiful harvest in the fall. Look at the three "P's" of growing a crop of grain or of souls.

### Preparation

Seeds that fall on unprepared ground cannot penetrate the crusted soil. Before planting the seed, we must turn the topsoil. This purging can be compared to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. See Psalm 51:7.

### Planting

We plant seeds of witness every day. Are they seeds of anticipation or seeds planted blindly without thought of the harvest they will reap? See Luke 8:15.

### Plowing

Seeds sprout and so do the weeds. It's time to plow or cultivate to give the plants air, stir the moisture and eliminate harmful weeds. Plowing also encourages the plants to grow deeper roots. The chastening referred to in Hebrews 12:6 removes the weeds from our lives and causes spiritual roots to grow deeper.

### Harvest

Harvest is a time of praise. The farmer has been a good steward of the soil. From 300 bushels of seed to 10,000 bushels of grain. Only God can give those returns. See Galatians 6:8-9 and Matthew 9:37-38. ♦

*Submitted by Denise Taylor, Slaty Crossing Free Will Baptist Church, Dardanelle, AR.*

issue for a list of the agencies that benefit from the Rest of the Family offering. (In case you didn't notice, WNAC is on this list.) Also, contact the Executive Offices for a copy of the new brochure written by William Evans on the Together Way plan of giving.

### Missions Chairman

We should be thankful that the Lord is still sending out men and women to work in His vineyard. New appointees need our support and prayers as they take many leaps of faith to reach their new fields. At one of your meetings, introduce these new missionaries to your women. The following families have been appointed and are at various stages of preparation for service.

- Spain:** Sam and June McVay (language school)  
Anthony and Lea Edgmon  
Tim and Kristi Johnson
- Japan:** Nathan and Linda Snow (language school)
- Panama:** Eddie and LaRhonda Bowerman (language school)
- Brazil:** David and Annette Aycock
- Côte d'Ivoire:** Traci Epps  
Ginger Harrison  
Verlin and Debbie Anderson
- Central Asia:** Kevin Stacy
- Alaska:** Ronald and Janice Wallace
- Alabama:** Dennis and Judy Haygood
- California:** John and Donna Smith

Check with the Home and Foreign Missions Departments, because the boards have appointed more missionaries after this issue went to press. Everyone's prayer cards may not be ready, but you can still make a poster or display to remind everyone in the church to pray for them.

### Prayer Chairman

For the September prayer reminders, include prayer requests related to students and schools. You may want to make prayer reminders and include the names of missionary appointees listed in the Missions Chairman's section above. Use a title such as, New Kids on the Block. List ways to pray: 1. for travel safety 2. for financial needs to be met 3. that they will adapt quickly to their new environment, 4. for patience and sharp minds in learning a new language, 5. that they will have opportunities for Christian fellowship, 6. maturity in coping with distance from extended family. You can think of many more ways to pray.

### Service Chairman

With school starting back, now is the time to investigate ways to minister to students in your community. The September program focuses on ministry to students who may not come

from a Christian home. Here are some places you can check for opportunities:

- ♦ Check with city or county agencies about joining a mentoring (buddy) program for disadvantaged youths.
- ♦ Volunteer at Christian or public schools.
- ♦ If you live near a college, check with the Student Affairs office or contact an International Student, Inc., representative. Possible ways to minister:
  - ♦ Be a conversation partner to help an international student with English.
  - ♦ Sponsor a monthly meeting for students. One thing you can do at these meetings is to feature someone's home country each month. Ask a student or students to teach about their culture. If a student is a Christian, he/she may talk about his/her country's need for the gospel.

### Study Chairman

The October program focuses on the benefits of Bible study. Your WAC group may want to sponsor a weekly Bible study for about two months. Start a few months ahead with a survey of topics your women want to study. From the survey chose the most needed topic and start finding materials. You may be the person to lead the Bible study or you may ask someone else to lead. When you know the topic and who will lead, publicize inside and outside the church.

See also the review of the book *A Repentant Heart* on page 22. ❖



## Lucy & Marge

(Lucy and Marge seated with copies of *CoLaborer*.)

**Marge:** What are you looking so glum about, Lucy?

**Lucy:** Oh, Marge, I don't think anyone really appreciates us.

**Marge:** What do you mean? No one appreciates you and me?

**Lucy:** Right, Marge. I don't think anyone cares whether we appear or not.

**Marge:** Lucy, has someone said something to offend you?

**Lucy:** No, not recently anyway, not that I can think of right now. Oh, well, that Mrs. Claphorn is forever talking about my odd looking clothes.

**Marge:** Lucy, Lucy, you know that's not what I meant. Has someone said something about you and me?

**Lucy:** No, that's just the trouble. I'd rather they say something to offend me than just ignore me.

**Marge:** Actually, Lucy, you're a little hard to ignore.

**Lucy:** Thanks for those encouraging words, Marge. I mean what we try to do for the women's group. Does anyone really appreciate us?

**Marge:** Now, you know the world couldn't operate without us women and certainly not the women's group.

**Lucy:** Well, sometimes they act as though they don't really care whether you and I exist. I just want some kind of reaction. Is anyone out there listening?

**Marge:** You mean reading, Lucy. Yes, I'm sure someone is reading and we're not totally ignored.

**Lucy:** How do you know unless someone takes the time to tell us?

**Marge:** That's true. We don't really know what the women think if they don't let us know.

**Lucy:** You know, it takes a lot of effort to think up ideas that will encourage the women to come to our meetings. And we take up some space in the magazine. Is it worth it? That's what I want to know.

**Marge:** Well, maybe we should just ask.

**Lucy:** I'm for that. Hey, anybody out there, would you miss us if we never appeared again?

**Marge:** Is there anyone who uses our chatter?

**Lucy:** Remember, I'd rather be offended than ignored.

**Marge:** We can always call on Mrs. Clapshorn.

**Lucy:** Forget it, Marge.

**Marge:** Listen, folks, I think Lucy is ready to quit if we don't get some positive response soon.

**Lucy:** I just want to know if we are important to anyone.

**Marge:** Maybe someone will let us know right away.

**Lucy:** Yes, before we have to come out in our wheelchairs. Now that would be a scene, wouldn't it?

**Marge:** Well, Lucy, I hope I'll still be pushing Women Active for Christ, even if I have to do it in a wheelchair.

**Lucy:** I'm sure you would, Marge. And I'll be glad to join you here, if even one person sends us a positive word.

**Marge and Lucy:** Anybody out there? We're waiting to hear from you. ❖

## Springboard Illustrated: Stories to Grow By *Volume 37/ No.5*

### **colorful change** by Dale Edwards

Just a few minutes ago, I viewed a sky painted in several shades of gray. That scene brought feelings of gloom, no comfort or light into a long day. Now I gazed out my window to behold golden streaks brushed against a sky of blue. Was visual imagery playing tricks on me or was what I saw really true?

The hues in the sky changed, moved across the horizon with such ease That the glow of the sun's rays all my tattered emotions did appease. I gazed whimsically at this visible transformation that seemed to come quickly. Do changes in the sky and in a life only appear to come swiftly?

Light and color flooded my soul as shadow was replaced by sunshine. The scene was real, not just a figment of this imagination of mine. Weather patterns altered the skyscape as they traveled from a faraway place. Did God do this just in time to splash the sky with color and put a smile on my face?

Just as changes brought vivid hues and cleared the drab, late afternoon sky, So God transforms lives, brings out beauty, clears lives of Christians by and by. God brings various tints of color to warm our hearts and ease the pain. Can we accept that God can do anything He chooses in our lives, for His glory and our gain?

---

*Dale Edwards lives in Timmonsville, South Carolina and is a member of Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church in Florence.*

# NEW!

## Get a head start on 1998.

## Order the 1998 Yearbook now.

**\$6 + shipping and handling**

**Order from:**

**WNAC**

**P.O. Box 5002**

**Antioch, TN 37011-5002**

**Telephone: 615-731-4950 ext. 211**

# COMMUNICATOR

by MARY RUTH WISEHART



## Meet Diana Bryant

Diana Bryant, Vero Beach, Florida, became a member of the WNAC Executive Committee in 1995. Earlier she served, 1990-1993, on the Study Committee, which presented the changes approved by the convention in 1993.

Her term as coordinator of her local group stretches from 1986 to the present. She has also served as treasurer of the district and is currently president of Florida Women Active for Christ.

Born into the Christian family of Lois and Paul Barker in Alton, Illinois, she early recognized her need for a savior. She was ten years old when she attended a revival service with her grandmother. Returning home that night, she felt the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and accepted Jesus Christ as her own Savior and Lord. Since then she has served Him faithfully.

After graduation from Roxana High School, Roxana, Illinois, she earned a B.A. degree in Bible and Christian Education from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1980.

Presently she is a member of Ryanwood Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church, where her husband, Randy, is the pastor. At the church she has served as pianist, Sunday school teacher, and supervisor of children's church.

Randy and Diana have two children: Paul, fifteen, and Rachel, thirteen.

Diana is a music teacher at Indian River Christian School and has twenty private piano students.

Reading, playing the piano, quilting, and doing crafts furnish relaxing times for Diana.

Since South Florida is a favorite place to visit, the Bryants often have house guests. Diana says she loves having them, loves to cook and bake and practice hospitality. Watch out, Diana, here we come!

## Support the Memorial Student Loan Fund

For a few years WNAC had no requests for loans from our Memorial Student Loan Fund.

This past school year students received loans totaling \$3,000 from the fund.

The fund has helped students at Free Will Baptist Bible College since 1957. The fund continues to grow as students pay back the loans with interest.

September is the month for special gifts to the Memorial Student Loan Fund.

## Financial Report for April and May 1997

For the months of April and May, WNAC received \$46,023.47. Expenses for these two months amounted to \$35,991.23. Women sent through WNAC \$75,465.98 designated for other causes.

The following states contributed toward the WNAC office expenses during April and May.

|                |                    |                |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Alabama        | \$4,270.00         | (\$4,180 dues) |
| Arizona        | 260.00             | (dues)         |
| Arkansas       | 40.00              |                |
| California     | 235.61             |                |
| Georgia        | 627.00             |                |
| Illinois       | 2,518.80           | (\$2060 dues)  |
| Indiana        | 450.00             | (dues)         |
| Kansas         | 225.00             | (\$220 dues)   |
| Kentucky       | 2,140.00           | (\$1,960 dues) |
| Michigan       | 2,620.00           | (\$2,490 dues) |
| Mississippi    | 20.00              |                |
| Missouri       | 1,302.93           | (\$650 dues)   |
| New Mexico     | 132.10             | (\$120 dues)   |
| North Carolina | 8,056.44           | (\$6,740 dues) |
| Ohio           | 1,945.57           | (\$1,840 dues) |
| Oklahoma       | 257.00             |                |
| South Carolina | 9,081.50           | (\$5,670 dues) |
| Tennessee      | 694.13             | (\$170 dues)   |
| Virginia       | 2,359.15           | (\$1,450 dues) |
| West Virginia  | 1,760.00           | (dues)         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$38,995.23</b> |                |

If your state is not listed above, the treasurer did not report or the report showed nothing contributed to WNAC expense. The additional income is from magazine subscriptions, literature sales, and miscellaneous sources.

You may remember that the first quarter of the year, expenses exceeded income by \$13,740.84. For these two months we have \$10,032.24 over expenses. Monthly income for WNAC is not consistent, but through the years the Lord has provided through Free Will Baptist women. Before the year ends, you will have provided funds to equal or surpass the budgeted amount of \$219,100.

At the WNAC office, we have confidence in you, and we are grateful for your support. ❖

# Women In Action

## **Japanese Style Mother-Daughter Banquet in Thomaston, Georgia**

The Thomaston First Auxiliary held their annual Mother-Daughter Banquet May 9, 1997. Missionary Debbie Griffin moved the audience with her account of the Japanese people's need for Christ. A \$220 gift went to Debbie Griffin's missions account.

Of the 50 women who attended, 25 were guests from Turner's Chapel and Mt. Olive Churches of the Chattahoochee District. Geraldine Taunton is President of the Chattahoochee District Auxiliary.



**Banquet featured Japanese style decorations and meal**



**Elaine McHargue, President of Thomaston First Auxiliary**

## **Uruguay Day at Alabama WAC Convention**

Alabama Free Will Baptist Women Active for Christ met for their fifty-first session on May 3, 1997, at Liberty FWB church near Guin. Missionary candidate to Uruguay Tammy Lancaster introduced Dave Franks Jr. (Uruguay) as the keynote speaker. Becky Franks (Uruguay) and Cathy Corley (missionary candidate to Russia) brought devotionals.

The Shirley Kennedy Memorial LAMP offering totalled \$2694. The Franks Jr. family was given a love offering of \$582 and \$109 was donated to *The Alabama Digest*. Gifts for the Missionary Provision Closet were collected and sent to Nashville.

Vaudine Lancaster conducted the Installation Service for the following 1997-1999 officers: Ann Kennedy (President); Carolyn Hendrix (Vice-President); Jane Brazil (Secretary); Elwanda Oakes (Treasurer); Dot Reeves (Field Worker); Nancy Mayhall, Alice Hood, Lucy Cox (Members at Large)



**Pictured: (left to right) Dave Franks Jr. (missionary to Uruguay), Becky Franks (missionary to Uruguay), Ann Kennedy (President), Carolyn Hendrix (Vice President), Tammy Lancaster (President, Mt. Moriah District and missionary candidate), Cathy Corley (Member, Madison Auxiliary and missionary candidate)**

### Bright Light Women Active for Christ Install Officers

Bright Light Free Will Baptist Church in College Station, Texas, celebrated their 111<sup>th</sup> birthday. Pastor's wife Margaret Richards presented an Installation Service and charged the 1997 officers with their duties. The church has always had an active group of women.

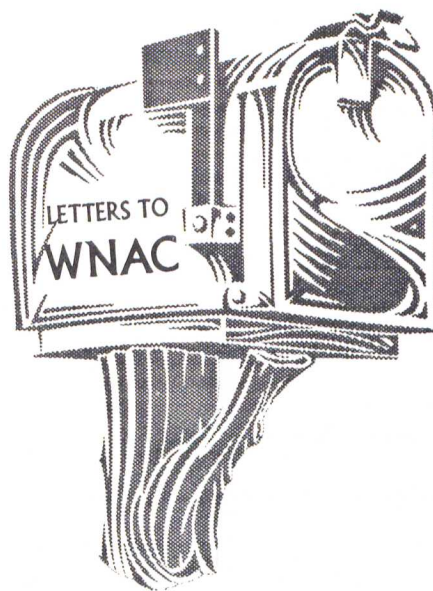


**Pictured:** (left to right) Kathy Halbrook (Coordinator), Gail Hyden (Assistant Coordinator), Shelly Burnet (Secretary-Treasurer), Anita Harper (Missions Chairman), Lynette Brown (Study Chairman), Jimmie Norris standing in for Cathie Topping (Service Correspondent), Genia Goen (Service Chairman), Margaret Richards (Pastor's wife).



### Alabama Progressive District Elects Officers

(left to right) Louise Haynes (Assistant Field Worker), Annie Lois Burnett (Field Worker), Betty Sargent (Assistant Secretary-Treasurer), Barbara South (Secretary-Treasurer), Alecia Phenicie (Vice President), Louise Jones (President)



### Our Missionaries Write

Greetings from the beautiful Salt Lake Valley of Utah. First of all, I want to thank all the women that have made it possible for our family to serve as National Home Missionaries.

We just had our first state retreat with 43 women in attendance. (We belong to the Idaho state association.)

Please send me information on the Western Retreat at Glorieta, New Mexico. Lord willing, I hope to attend this year.

*Kay Phillips, Missionary to Salt Lake City, Utah*

Thanks for the beautiful cover on the July/August issue. I can't put it down. It's such a visual treat! The magazine just keeps getting better and better—articles, artwork, everything! God bless you for keeping us informed.

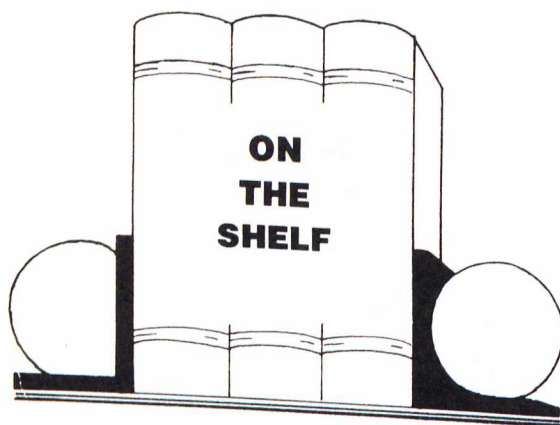
*Judy Bailey, Missionary to Japan*

### Thank You Note

Thank you for thinking of the Sibling Cottage. We will use the money wisely for the girls. Please remember our home in your prayers. God bless each of you for all you do.

*Margaret Widener, House Parent, Sibling Cottage, Trula Cronk Home for Children, Greeneville, TN*

**Editor's Note:** Letter was also signed by six girls.



## *A Repentant Heart:*

### *The Joy of Restoring Intimacy with God*

Dudley J. Delffs  
NavPress, 1995

Reviewed by Vicki Sturgill

## What relationship do we have or want to have with God?

Dudley J. Delffs pictures most Christians in this way: We create formulas to control our lives, spend time in Scripture out of obligation and not passion, seek counseling to eliminate our problems, and read theology to understand God. We end up not wanting to know and love and serve God for who He is, but rather wanting Him to help us get through this life as comfortably as possible. Our thinking goes something like this: Since He's good and He can take away life's hardships, then He should. Repentance, then, becomes a word to throw out at an old-fashioned revival, a historical term describing our way-back-when salvation decision.

With this relationship, the Christian still feels empty and deep down senses that his Christian life should be better. That true intimate relationship with Christ is still missing.

The discussion of temptation and addiction as presented in this book can certainly help those who face problems in these areas whether it be sins of overeating, pornography, overspending, worry, or any other addiction.

In *A Repentant Heart* Delffs shows us why repentance is essential to the development of a truly intimate relationship with the Father. His description of our position before God when we as Christians have sin in our lives is perhaps one of the most graphic pictures ever drawn. We tend to attempt to deal with our sin through denial, penance, guilt, shame, and ambivalence instead of suffering through the process of acknowledging and truly repenting of our sin.

The author reminds us that "repentance is ongoing, continual, progressive, reflective of our continual need and desire of our Abba's presence, guidance, and love."

Delffs uses *The Message*, a paraphrase of the Bible by Eugene H. Peterson, for many of his Scriptural passages, which might be objectionable to some readers. After reading Peterson's list of the deeds of the flesh, we might all join Delffs in saying, "When I read a modern paraphrase like Eugene Peterson's, I'm suddenly jolted by each one's applicability to my life. My point is not that I prefer a modern paraphrase over a traditional translation, but rather how often we lose sight of the personal conviction of Scripture because we callous ourselves to words that become little more than concepts."

Most of us want to seek God above all else, to remain diligently on His path day by day, but few realize that such a walk requires true daily repentance, the process of turning from our own selfish ways to a loving and forgiving Christ. ❖

# A Woman God Has Used

## A Tribute to the Loving Life of Mrs. Irene Purser

by Tanya Hart

Her sunrise into this earth came on June 16, 1920. That day marked the beginning of a life that would accept Christ. Mrs. Irene would place herself into the Master's hand to be molded into the person all came to love and respect. God became her archer and she became His bow so that together they would be strong enough to handle any situation.

She became the mother of three—Carolyn, Gerald, and Janis—who grew up under her spiritual and practical teachings. She taught them the timeless qualities of respect, competence, and character. Upon the marriage of her children, she gained three more beloved children—Sam, Patricia, and Charles. The family stood linked together because of a mother's love.

Four grandchildren came along to keep her life young. She gave them her unconditional love.

Whenever there was a prayer need, everyone knew that Mrs. Irene would stand in the gap for them. She sent prayer-arrows to the Lord for many. Her Bible and prayer list could always be seen in her house. I never once heard her tell me bye without the words, "I'll be praying for you!" I knew I could count on those words. Her familiar prayers will not fade from our memories.

Her smile, warmth, and joy brought comfort to family, friends, and church family. Members of Palmetto Chapel Free Will Baptist Church were fortunate to know this cheerful lady who could light up any room. Her love and happiness radiated to

those around her. Her positive attitude continues to shine as an example for all to follow.

Never complaining or selfish, she used the gifts God had given her. She spoke words full of kindness and wisdom. Always a servant, she took delicious food to the sick and needy.

We came to know the depth of her character and the raw courage it took for her to face the battles sent her way. This kind of character is the most sublime utterance of faith in the Bible. A trooper, she endured like a champ until the end. She left with many battle scars. Through her illness, we learned that God is a Restorer who offers healing in every aspect of our lives.

Mrs. Irene already knew His spiritual healing, and she has now experienced His physical healing. I'm sure she has heard those long-awaited words, "Well done my good and faithful servant." The angels in glory welcomed her home on May 11, 1997. Joining voices in the heavenly choir, she stands with the angels worshipping the King. She will never again experience pain and tears.

If we could ask her today, "Was it worth it?" Mrs. Irene's answer would be a resounding yes! She would say, "I fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I kept the faith." So my loved ones, I will be waiting for you by the river." ♦

---

*Tanya Hart lives in Ayden, North Carolina. She carries on a volunteer ministry for missionary kids.*

# Little Witness

by Pamela Ham

**W**hen Katelyn Ham was in kindergarten, she was the youngest in her class and the smallest. Through much prayer and thought, we decided she should go to pre-first the following year. Pre-first is not for slow children or children who can't cut first grade. It's for those who are bright and need a year for their bodies to catch up to their brains.

When we made the decision, I questioned if it was the right thing to do. I think all parents do this with decisions they make about their children. As the year progressed, we saw it was the best decision. She had a wonderful teacher. With patience and love, Mrs. Roberts showed these children that they can and will conquer the world. I think Katelyn already knew that. Her father has always told her, "We are CAN people and CANNOT is not in our vocabulary."

Katelyn has always been bold about her beliefs as a Christian. She became a Christian when she was three years old on December 17, 1993. She had some fears of the water so she waited until Easter 1995 to be baptized. Proud parents, we took pictures of this occasion.

Kate has tremendous faith. When she was almost three, we went to New York City. She lost her favorite blanket in a taxi cab and was quite unhappy about the situation. I explained to her that we would probably never see the blanket again. That did not satisfy her. So I told her that only God could bring it back to us. So she prayed, "Dear Jesus, please bring back my blue blankie and my pink baby. Thank you. Amen."

Two hours later the taxi cab driver came to our hotel holding a pink baby and a blue blanket. Katelyn looked at her dad and me and said, "See, I told you Jesus would bring it back to me."

When Katelyn began pre-first, she told us that Christopher, a boy in her class, did not know anything about Jesus. As a family, we began praying for her friend.



In Katelyn's class each child had a turn to be Helper of the Week and share some of their life experiences through pictures. So she and I sat down one evening and picked out pictures to put on a poster for her special show-and-tell. One of the pictures we picked out was of her baptism.

The next day, she went to the front of the class to show her pictures. She talked about being born, turning one, and going to Niagara Falls. Then she got to the picture of her baptism. She said, "This is the one where I was babbitized."

The teacher told Katelyn she could explain to those who did not know what it meant to be baptized. She explained that before you go under the water you are showing that you are dead with Christ. Then you go under and you are being buried with Christ. When you come up, you are risen with Christ and become a new creature.

She came home that day and told me everything she said. I asked her, "What did the kids think?" They thought her whole show-and-tell was cool. She said, "Christopher now knows one more thing about Christ." Those pictures stayed up on the classroom wall for a week.

I have realized that sometimes we agonize over a decision we make about our children; but God has the whole situation mapped out already.

---

*Pamela Ham and her husband Greg live in Franklin, Tennessee and are members of Franklin Free Will Baptist Church. They have two daughters, Katelyn and Rachel. Pamela is the president of her local women's group.*

# Life!Action.

a column for young people for everyday life

## The PK

*Marcia Moran, Leesville, SC*

A preacher's kid—my second name  
I may be praised or get the blame  
Expected here and there on time  
Always perfect, always kind.

To leave our friends and move away  
Is not my choice, I must say.  
New church, new home, new friends, I find  
And hope I'll readjust in time.

It seems that life would be a breeze  
If I could sit and watch in ease  
The other kids go through the pain  
Of having PK for their name.

And, yet, how dull life might have been  
Had I not met the spiritual kin,  
And had the memories, good and bad  
If I had been another lad.

It seems we PK's have a place  
A special spot within the race  
We've learned that soldiers must be strong  
And stand with God, and God alone.

I have to stop and think how sad  
If on the side lines on my pad  
I sit and watch the world go by  
Not caring if they live or die.

Suppose in Heaven I'll have a seat  
Close to the throne at Jesus' feet?  
A special section we might see  
Marked "PK's only"—Wow! That's me!

*(Marcia Moran is a PK and her children are PK's too.)*

## MEET

### Charity VanWinkle

age 25

**college** BA in Bible, English, and Missions from Free Will Baptist Bible College; MA in English as a Second Language from Western Kentucky University

**job** Editorial Assistant at Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department

**other activities** Teach an English as a Second Language class

**How did you end up at FWBBC?** I had a scholarship for a school in Alabama but I decided to go to FWBBC at least a year to study the Bible. And I stayed. The missions exposure was great!

**Why did you go for a masters?** I felt I needed more practical training in a field I could use in a missions setting.

**Where did you live while you were growing up?** I lived in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and St. Louis, Missouri, then in 5<sup>th</sup> grade we moved to Fulton, Mississippi. I stayed there through high school.

**How did you end up in Fulton?** Dad went there to pastor a church.

**Did you feel like your friends treated you differently because you were a PK?** Because the town was so small, they knew my dad was a preacher. Once a friend from school said, "I appreciate your being different." That difference carried the price of not being totally in the "in" crowd.

**Did it bother you?** It didn't bother me because being "in" was not what I wanted.

**Do you have anything to say to other PK's?**

Be grateful you have parents whose job is more than bringing home a paycheck. Your life revolves around spiritual things more so than the average family.

**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 ❖

# Yes, Lord,

# I Hear You

by Glenna Price

**B**usy day! So much to do and to remember. "Lord, help me not to be so busy today that I keep the light of Your love hidden behind my anxious face. Help me not to rush through the day with no time for You or for a friend. Help me Lord, to be attentive today to Your Spirit."

With this prayer in my heart, I began my shopping day dashing out the door with all the day's responsibilities jotted neatly on a list. I wasn't aware that God would repeatedly answer my prayer throughout this day, nor that He would gently and often remind me of my attitude.

Upon reaching town I began to check off my list those things accomplished. On a run, a dear friend stopped me to ask how the family was and, as my husband is an evangelist, to inquire if we were scheduled for any revivals nearby. I politely answered her questions and moved on to complete my rounds.

Then a small voice whispered, "How valuable is a Christian friend?" And I began to think how precious indeed those who will pray with us and for us; those who offer encouragement in times of despair. I had not asked about her family or her needs. I said, "Yes, Lord, I hear you," and

offered up a prayer for this dear saint, asking God to forgive my insensitivity.

On to my last stop, the grocery store, midway through the store I met another friend. With the last encounter and lesson fresh on my mind, I carefully asked how everyone was. She informed me of a health problem her husband was having and that it could require surgery. I told her how sorry I was to hear that and offered my services if I could be of any help later on.

Feeling pleased with myself, I moved on down the aisle. Then a small voice whispered, "How valuable is a prayer?" I had not even offered my sister a promise to pray for her, nor her husband.

"Yes, Lord, I hear you," and I began a silent prayer on their behalf, asking again to be forgiven for my neglect.

Home at last! Now to unload the parcels and start supper. Oh, but there are many bags to carry inside. Feeling sorry for myself, I kept working until the last parcel was inside and ready to be put away.

Then a small voice whispered, "You had strength enough for the job. You didn't have to depend on anyone else to do it for you." In the midst of my groaning I failed to recognize the value of my physical well-being. Indeed, I was not confined to a corner or bed to watch someone else carry my load. "Yes, Lord, I hear You," I whispered as I continued working in greater awareness of the blessing of health.

Never dwelling on my blessings long enough, I began to put the groceries in the cabinets, grumbling about "my small kitchen" and "my crowded refrigerator" and "not enough room" and then I stopped! Being a child willing to learn from my Father, I felt a scolding coming! "Father, thank You that You've given me more blessings that my cabinets can hold!" Suddenly I saw my kitchen crowded with a storehouse of blessings. It felt so good to replace complaining with thanksgiving. The lessons learned earlier in the day were sinking

home. The great Teacher had succeeded in getting my attention.

In just a few minutes my family would be home and hungry. Busily I started making preparations for supper. I grabbed the sugar canister for the necessary ingredients to my recipe and found it empty. Why, on such a scheduled day, should this have to happen? As I shuffled in the cabinet to find the bag of sugar, time ticking away. I began to pour it into the canister, again my conscience was pricked by a merciful, patient Spirit. And again my attitude was corrected with this thought, "Be thankful for the refill." Tears filled by eyes as I continued to fill the canister to the brim.

As I worked I reflected upon the day; the lessons; the value of what the Lord was teaching me about myself. His lessons go a long way in making us aware of our blessings. He must work beyond our busy schedules, crowded minds and grumbling.

As my husband and two sons gathered around the table, my youngest remarked, "Dad, hurry and ask the blessing so we can eat. I'm starved!" Having been taught well this day, calmly I replied, "Let's be thankful that daddy cares enough to slow us down and give us an opportunity to thank God for our supper and for the storehouse of food in our cabinets."

Lessons learned well are passed on from generation to generation to the glory of the Father.

Recognizing our blessings above our complaints requires the proper focus. It's a matter of perspective. It's a matter of attitude adjustment. It's a matter of listening carefully to a small voice in the midst of a crowded world filled with distractions.

---

*Glenna Price lives in Leroy, West Virginia. She is a member of Evergreen Hill Free Will Baptist Church in Cottageville.*

**Writer's note:** All the events in this story are true but they did not all happen in the same day.

# 1997 Creative Arts Contest

## Winners

### Programs

1<sup>st</sup> place:

**"Woman of Attitude!"** Arlene Branum, Purcell, OK

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

**"Brighten Your Corner"** Barbara S. Chaffin, Orient, OH

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

**"How Defeat Became Victory"** Joan Warren, Oilton, OK

4<sup>th</sup> place:

**"Threaded Through Christ"** Janie Stone, Morehead, KY

### Articles

1<sup>st</sup> place:

**"Fostering Miracles"** Judy Brinkley, Smithfield, NC

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

**"Pray Hard"** Ruth Bivens, Pharr, TX

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

**"The Purple Bedspread"** Name withheld by writer's request

4<sup>th</sup> place:

**"Putting Christ into our Christmas Tree"**

Patricia Ann Peterson, Mt. Vernon, IL

### Poetry

1<sup>st</sup> place:

***God Knows Best*** Loretta Masters, Wise, VA

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

***My Love*** Freeda Lucas, Cromona, KY

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

***Letting Go*** Ruthann Hall, Nashville, TN

4<sup>th</sup> place:

***Today She's Not*** Darla Jacks Trimble, Dardanelle, AR

### Plays

1<sup>st</sup> place:

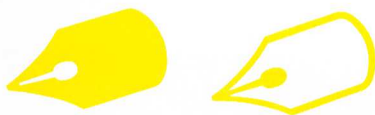
***The Shawl*** Ruth Bivens, Pharr, TX

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

***Call to God*** Judy Delong & Virginia Castle, Hager Hill, KY

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

***God's Armor*** Janie Stone, Morehead, KY



# Poet's Corner

Featuring

Three Winners

in the 1997

Creative Arts Contest

## First Place

### God Knows Best

*Loretta Masters, Wise, VA*

I always want the laughter,  
But sometimes the Lord sends  
pain,  
I hope each day brings sunshine,  
But God knows when we need  
rain.  
And as the night begins to fall,  
I long for light of day.  
When the time has come to work,  
My heart wants time to play.  
But where would be the flowers  
If the Lord held back the rain?  
If I never slept at night,  
How could I face the day?  
And if I never had to work,  
What joy would be in play?  
So always know that God knows best  
In everything He brings,  
For if we had no broken chords,  
We'd have no songs to sing.

## Second Place

### My Love

*Freedra Lucas, Cromona, KY*

My love is gentle as spring rain,  
Yet swifter than a hurricane  
To comfort me when I'm in pain.  
He is my Counselor.  
A Carpenter with plans divine,  
My love builds cities all the time,  
And everything He has is mine!  
His name is Wonderful.  
Who is this Love that lights my soul  
And keeps me warm when life is  
cold?  
The Great I AM of long ago.  
He is the Mighty God.  
Who is this Love who's standing by  
To wipe my tears before I cry?  
The One who made the Red Sea dry.  
His name is Jehovah.  
My Love can reach through  
mountains tall  
To catch me if I start to fall.  
He's always ready when I call.  
He is the Messiah.  
He changed my wicked ways to good;  
I'd never leave Him, if I could.  
If you don't know my Love,  
you should,  
His name is Jesus Christ.

## Third Place

### Letting Go

*Ruthann Hall, Nashville, TN*

I held my babies on my knee  
and gave each loving care.  
And as they nestled in my arms,  
To God I said this prayer.  
"Dear Lord, help me to teach them right  
And may Your way they know.  
Then, Lord, give me the wisdom  
To know when to let them go.  
For just as birds must learn to fly,  
And some day leave the nest,  
I have to let them try their wings  
And choose the way that's best."  
My little babes did grow so fast  
The years slipped quickly by  
Then God gave me the strength and love  
To let them learn to fly.  
And though they soar beyond my sight  
To places I can't see,  
On wings of love, when e're they can  
They fly back home to me. ❖



# MISSION ALERT:

## Evangelism News from Around the World

### Sierra Vista, Arizona

Tentmaker missionaries Jerry and Brenda Rayburn report that Desert Springs Free Will Baptist Church moved to a new location. Ray, an 18 year old new convert, helped the pastor with construction on the new meeting place. The church is meeting in rented facilities and they have set a goal of \$100,000 for their land fund.

### Salt Lake City, Utah

Valley Free Will Baptist Church in the Salt Lake City area is only a few months old and has already experienced growth. They started with three families and by the end of April they already had seven. Dottie learned about the church through a flier. Dave brought his family of 5 after seeing an advertisement in one of Utah's newspapers. Tana is missionaries Bill and Kay Phillips' neighbor. The first time she attended she played the keyboard.

In May 7,900 fliers went out to invite people to attend their special Mother's Day service. Also, members invited families and friends to attend the special service. The Lord is blessing their outreach.

### Miami, Florida

Missionaries José and Maday Rodriguez report on discipleship classes on Wednesday evenings. An average of 32 people attend classes which are divided according to their spiritual needs. Thirteen of these were attending membership classes in the spring.

### Conselheiro Lafaiete, Brazil

Missionaries Earnie and Jean Deeds visited Elza in her home after she attended a women's meeting in honor of Mother's Day. She began studying the Gospel of John and has made a decision to trust Christ as Savior. Her husband and two sons need the Lord. Three people were baptized in March and two others were preparing for baptism with discipleship classes.

As the Deeds plan to leave for stateside assignment in December, they hope to leave the church with Brazilian leadership. Some Bible institute students from the neighboring city of Barbacena have preached for them.

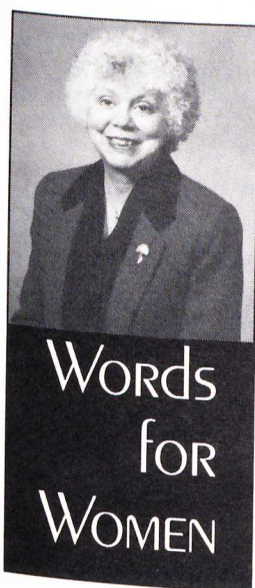
### Panama City, Panama

Missionaries Steve and Judy Lytle and Panamanian pastor Arsenio Gonzalez are starting a new church in Nueva Esperanza. They are reaching people through evangelistic and discipleship Bible studies in people's homes. The Lytles are also involved in ministries ranging from Bible institute classes to English speaking services.

### Tokyo, Japan

MK Benjamin Bailey took part in a summer missionary team that traveled in Japan to share their testimonies in high schools. Many made decisions. Pray that the seed will continue to produce much fruit.

The Baileys' son-in-law Jeremy Delamarter suffered a recurrence of Hodgkin's lymphoma after being in remission for several years. Pray for the family as they face this battle with cancer. ❖



*Mary Ruth  
Wischart*

*"I* think it's already too late," my friend said as we both said we'd like to be as sweet as the woman we visited in the nursing home.

The nurses all agreed that Miss Mary was a delight to care for. "Anything we do for her," they said, "she just looks up and says, 'Thank you, darling.'" This although she was a victim of multiple strokes and couldn't really communicate much anymore.

My friend was suggesting that if you are going to be sweet in old age, you must sow the seeds of sweetness when you are young.

Actually I had spoken to Miss Mary's friend who knew her in elementary school. I asked, "What was she like?"

"Oh, she was a darlin'," was the reply. So she had started early.

But maybe it isn't too late. Maybe we can start today to sow the right seeds for the harvest next year or years from now. Which seeds?

How about the seed of a positive outlook? Maybe negatives surround us, but look for the positive, the things you can rejoice about. Concentrate on those things.

Then there is the seed of gratitude. We have so many things to be thankful for. God has richly blessed us in this nation of ours. Maybe we aren't rich, but think of the many blessings that are ours. We have many reasons for giving thanks. Maybe we have troubles and sorrows, but think of the catastrophes God has protected us from and give thanks.

Look at the beauty around you. Ugliness, yes, but if you look, you will see the beauty in the people around you, in the face of a child, in the earth and sky, in the sunshine and the rain. Celebrate the beauty.

Don't forget to sow the seed of friendship. Be a friend. Maybe someone

*preview*

*nov/dec 97*

- Learning Gratitude
- In depth news on Free Will Baptists in Mexico
- The Gift from God's Heart

near you needs to know that she has a caring, listening friend. Be that friend to as many as you can. Of course it takes time and energy. Sowing and cultivating the seed always does.

Watch your face. Do you smile more often than you frown? Sow the seed of contentment and happy thoughts. Let them show in that smile or pleasant countenance. If your lips turn up most often in a smile, then even flat on your back in a nursing home, the smile may still be there.

We do indeed reap what we sow. Today you can choose the seeds that will bring tomorrow's harvest. ♦

missions update

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