

CoLaborer

Financial Stewardship 4

The Way Out 11
Part 1 of a 2-Part Series on Depression

A Brand New Family 26
Highlighting Senior Adult Ministry

VISION

Suzanne Franks

Not hungry



VOLUME 38

NUMBER 4

JULY • AUG 1998

7

**CONSIDER
FIVE WAYS
GOD USES
TO DIRECT US
IN HIS PLAN**

11

**“REAL CHRISTIANS
DON'T GET
DEPRESSED—
DO THEY!”**

26

**“THEY HAD TO SEE
CHRIST
DEMONSTRATED
IN OUR LIVES
BEFORE
WE COULD WIN
THEIR CONFIDENCE.”**

Tara had a beautiful, healthy baby girl. She weighed almost nine pounds at birth and they named her Della.

When Tara took Della to the pediatrician for her one week check-up, he was concerned with her lack of weight gain. The doctor told Tara to feed her every three or four hours even if it meant waking her up to feed her.

The doctor explained that the baby would rather sleep than eat because she wasn't getting enough calories. Tara may not know when Della is hungry if she has no energy to cry like babies are supposed to.

That same thing can happen to anyone. If I do not get enough spiritual nourishment, I may not realize I am hungry. Maybe I'm too busy to feel the hunger pains.

Nevertheless, the Father invites me to sit at His feet and take in nourishment. If I ignore the invitation and skip a few meals, I've started the process of becoming spiritually malnourished. I become like the newborn baby who would rather sleep than eat. Anorexia or loss of appetite follows. At this point, I stop feeling hunger and, like baby Della, quit crying for life-sustaining milk.

Have you ever yearned like David for an intense thirst for God? Consider his prayer in Psalm 42. “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for Thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God” (NASB).

Della turned the corner. In less than a week of intense feeding, she gained more than enough weight to satisfy her doctor. Today she is a happy, healthy child with a pair of lungs to match her hunger.

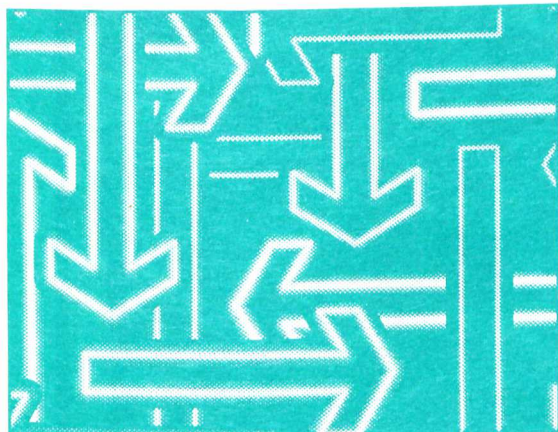
I can be like Della if I spend time feasting at the Father's table. That will kick-start my spiritual metabolism.

Is your craving for God as intense as a baby's cry for milk? Pull up a chair; the table is set. ❖

I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread. (Job 23:12, NIV)

And thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart, For I have been called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts. (Jeremiah 15:16, NASB)

C O N T E N T S



THEME ARTICLE:

Financial Stewardship —Sandra Atwood 4

JULY PROGRAM:

You Can Know God's Will —Mary Kay Joslin 7

AUGUST PROGRAM:

Be a CAN-DO Christian —Carol Reid 9

The Way Out: Part 1 of a 2-part series on depression —Genny Waddell 11

SPRINGBOARD: Ideas for Officers 15

A Stitch in Time —Bess Trammel 18

Communicator 19

Poet's Corner 20

A Woman God Has Used 21

Women In Action / Letters to WNAC 22

Stewardship of Time

Where Has the Summer Gone? —Shirley Lambert 24

Life!Action: The Attack of a Peacemaker

A Column for Teens Compiled by Patty McCullough and Charity VanWinkle 25

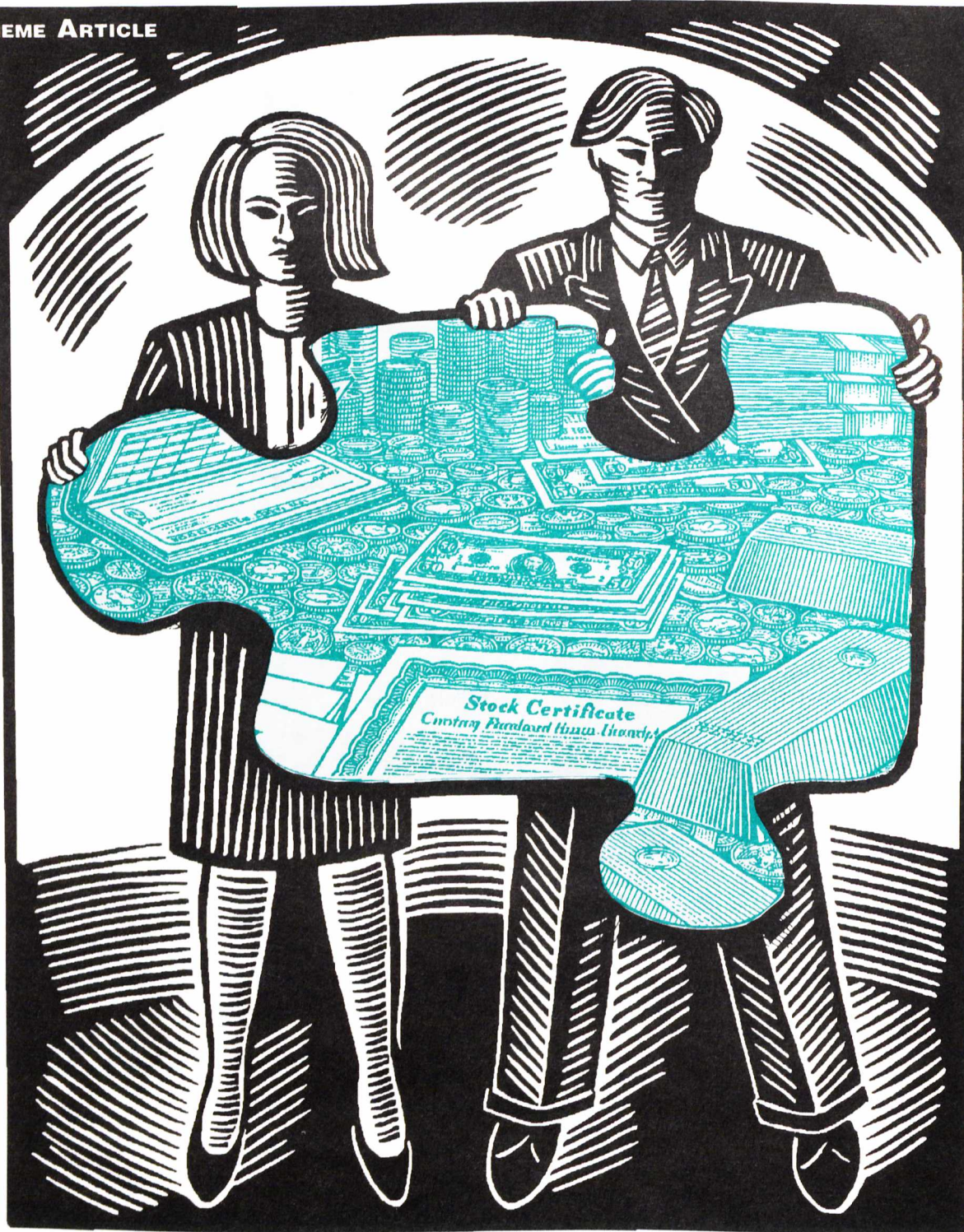
A Brand New Family: Senior Adult Ministry —Odessa Ledlow 26

WNAC National Retreat at Ridgecrest 29

Mission Alert: *Evangelism News from Around the World* 30

Words for Women —Mary Ruth Wischart 31

Executive Editor: Mary R. Wischart
 Editor: Suzanne Franks
 Circulation: Yvonne Hampton
 Co-Laborer, (ISSN 0896-0038), is published bimonthly by Women Nationally Active for Christ of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, 5233 Mt. View Road, Antioch, TN 37013-2306, (615) 731-6812. Address all correspondence to P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Annual subscription rates: \$6.75 per year, single; \$6.00 per year, 5 or more to one address.
 Periodical postage paid at Antioch, TN and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to CoLaborer, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Copyright privileges, reserved © 1998 Member of the Evangelical Press Association.



FINANCIAL STEWARDship

by SANDRA ATWOOD

They were a nice-looking couple who came to church every Sunday, but nobody knew that they had been arguing over money again. She wanted to give 10 percent to the church, but he wanted to give \$10. Yesterday they had an argument over what she spent on clothes.

Earlier in the week they had fought because the creditors were calling and they didn't know how they were going to pay them. Unfortunately there are probably several couples like this in your church.

Here are some biblical principles my husband and I learned at a financial seminar when we were first married that have saved us thousands of dollars and many arguments.

- Transfer ownership of all you own to God. Money and possessions are entrusted to us by God so that we may serve Him and have our needs met. We are stewards—not owners. Someday He will hold us accountable. You may want to gather your family and have an actual ceremony transferring all your possessions to God. It serves as a powerful reminder that “know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20)
- Get out of debt. According to CNN (January 15, 1998), more than 1.3 millions filed for personal bankruptcy in 1997. In fact, personal bankruptcies have nearly tripled over the last decade. Credit cards make it too easy for us to buy now (painlessly) and pay later with lots of interest.

There are many good books

available by people who have crawled out of debt. Mary Hunt, author of **The Financially Confident Woman*, was \$100,000 in debt and unemployed. She gives you the chance to learn from her mistakes.

- Establish a written plan. Where does all that money go? Write down every purchase for the next month. Spend some time calculating how you want to spend the money you have worked so hard to earn. According to financial consultant, Larry Burkett, “careful planning is the only road to financial freedom, yet only about five percent of couples follow a working budget.”
- Evaluate every purchase. First, Christians should distinguish between needs and wants. God has called us to pursue contentment, not money or possessions (Hebrews 13:5). Two of the best things my husband and I did when we were first married was to agree to discuss any purchases over \$30 and to put wanted items on a 30-day waiting list.

We actually wrote it on a list and prayed about it. We researched consumer magazines for information. We asked friends and family for their input. Often God supplied what we needed in a miraculous way. It has kept us from impulsive buying. Many times after 30 days we decided we didn't really need the item after all.

- Never pay full price for anything. Almost everything goes on sale. Make it a family project to save. You are paying yourself \$10 when you buy an item on sale for \$10 off.

I am always on the lookout for suitable gifts to stock my “gift box.” At the end of every season I stop in the baby department and

purchase baby outfits for 50–75 percent off the original cost. When I am invited to a baby shower, I go to my “gift box,” choose a suitable gift and wrap it.

Often you can purchase brand new gifts at a yard sale.

After Christmas and other holidays, I restock my “gift box” with half price toys and then my kids shop out of the “gift box” all year long. (It's also a great time saver as there aren't desperate last-minute runs to the store.)

I also keep assorted boxes of cards and wrapping supplies on hand (both bought on sale, of course).

The average family of four spends \$120 a week on groceries. (Dateline—January 11, 1996) See how well you can eat for less than the average. (See side bar on next page.)

- Save a percentage of your income. Emergencies come! The washer breaks down!

The car needs new brakes! Proverbs 21:20 says, “There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.” Your savings will allow you to purchase for cash instead of using credit. (Would you rather pay \$1000 for a new refrigerator or \$1210 for one that you put on a credit card with 21 percent interest?) Even saving a small amount each month will add up over time.

- Give generously. I believe most Christians want to give more to God, the church and Christian causes. There just never seems to be enough to go around. Many bounce from one crisis to another without really purposefully using their money for God's kingdom.

How to Feed Your Family Without Mortgaging The House

- Shop alone.
- Shop with a list and stick to it.
- Never go to the store hungry.
- Limit trips to the store. A research study found each person shopping for "just one thing" ended up spending an average of more than \$10 on unplanned purchases.
- Save money by buying the more economical family size packages of meat and repackaging in a serving size that fits your family when you get home.
- Eat what's on sale. Check the stores' circulars each week to find the best bargains.
- Keep a price book to record the best prices for items you use often.
- Check the per-ounce price of things and make comparisons. A good rule of thumb is to restrict the majority of your purchases to items costing less than 10 cents an ounce.
- Use coupons only for those items on the list or those items that are really good buys.
- Stock up when an item is on sale.
- Avoid junk food.
- Plan meatless meals.
- Take advantage of fresh fruit and vegetables when in season from local farm markets or go to a "pick-your-own farm."
- Buy in bulk. For example, Red Star yeast that cost \$29.65/lb. in packets, costs \$1.50/lb. at Sam's Warehouse.
- Limit eating out. "The average family of 4 spends \$192/month for meals away from home"
Tightwad Gazette.

Give to God off the top! If you wait to see what is left after the bills are paid, there may not be much left. God challenges us to try Him and see if He won't pour out blessings on us.

We need to build some sacrifice into our lives. Periodically our family has a rice and water dinner and we give the money saved to feed the hungry. It's a great lesson for children to learn that others don't have as much.

About two years ago, our church started a building program. Everyone was asked to give sacrificially during the coming year. We held a family meeting with our four children to discuss what we could do to be able to give to the church. We asked God to help us find ways to have more to give. After estimating how much we could cut from our regular budget, we made a list of what we could give up or what we could do to add some income.

Then we narrowed it to three choices: give up soda, give up cable TV service, or take our trash to the dump instead of having it picked up. Each one would give us about \$25 extra a month. We voted 4 to 2 to give up cable and take the trash to the dump. (Some may not consider giving up cable as a sacrifice, but it was for our crew.)

During the year we looked at extra income as gifts from the Lord. Each child made his own pledge. They gave part of their allowances, did extra chores, and even gave some of their birthday money. (One child gave all her birthday money much to our surprise!) It increased our faith as we saw God blessing us with money to give.

- Examine your priorities. Ron Blue, a Christian financial advisor, says, "More than 50 percent of the divorces in America are attributed to financial problems. In reality, there are no financial problems, but there are major disagreements about priorities."

Take a look at your checkbook—it will tell you a lot about your priorities. Our choices reveal what we value most. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:20–21).

There is no one "right" way. Each family must decide what is important to them and continue to find new ways to become better stewards of God's provisions.

As I write this, I am finally buying a dining room set that has been on the 30-day list for five years. It was listed in the classified advertisements and it is like new, but I'm only paying one-third of what it would cost at the store. It's a good thing since our oldest is starting college in the fall and we need all the money we can save. ♦

Sandra Atwood lives in Townsend, Delaware. Her husband Richard pastors the Townsend Free Will Baptist Church.

**The Financially Confident Woman is available from Randall Bookstore, (800)877-7030. Price \$9.99.*

You Can Know God's Will

by Mary Kay Joslin

Song: *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6

Objective: To help Christian women find God's will

For some questions we want answers in black and white. Examples: "What is God's will for me?" "What exactly does God want me to do?" We would like to face no uncertainty about God's plan for our lives.

Today we are encouraged to get everything in writing and signed even when dealing with small matters. Don't underestimate the importance of documenting situations in concrete terms. We must have birth/death certificates, deeds, license, and endless legal papers signed—notarized and filed or recorded.

If we are looking for a concrete blueprint telling us exactly where God wants us and exactly when He wants us there, we are most likely to be disappointed. We are not told in God's Word. "Pam Andrews must serve God at James Avenue FWB Church in Jamestown, Illinois from 1998 to 1999." We will not find "Joan Edwards must serve God in Cape Town, South Africa for the next 15 years."

However, God has given us an assignment to find His will for our lives with His guidelines and direction along the way. **Please** be assured that God does have a purpose and a plan for each of us (Proverbs 3:5-6).

How do we go about finding God's plan for our lives? Let's look at five ways God uses to direct us in His plan.

The Bible

Ephesians 5:17

To seek God's will for us we must know His Word. To know His

Word, we have to read and study our Bible. God uses our mind to speak to us through the Scriptures.

The answers to God's will in some areas of our lives have already been provided in His Word. For example, we know that we are to share the Gospel with everyone we meet.

We also know from 2 Corinthians 6:14 that Christian women should marry Christian men. This means that as Christian women we will not marry an unbeliever. We do **not** have to ask. The Bible has already made that clear.

However, we must seek God's guidance in finding the **right** Christian man. Use God's Word as a map—an atlas—to guide our steps.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit lives in us to direct us as we seek God's will in the smallest and the greatest matters we face. God's Spirit will never guide us to do anything or go anywhere that is contrary to God's map (the Bible) for our lives.

God does not reveal His plan for our entire lives all at once. He reveals His will daily, step by step. The door of our life may open a small bit at a time. This is probably best for us. We most likely could not handle the prospect of our entire life being projected to us all at once. God knows best! It is probably best that we discover only small steps day by day.

Daily Circumstances

God often uses circumstances along our daily path to help us distinguish the right road to follow.

Circumstances *per se* may not be a guide alone, but God may use them to show us where we are to be and when we are to be there.

An open door of opportunity may mean God wants us to walk through it. A closed door may be a sign that strongly says, **keep out**.

A negative open door, that is, one not in agreement with the Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit, is clearly one that we do not wish to enter (Romans 12:2). It does not matter how much success appears over the threshold, we **should not** enter. A door that would lead you away from God is definitely not His planning for Christians.

Consistent Prayer

Colossians 1:9

The key to finding God's will is prayer. Ask! And ask often. God will guide as you pray. Prayer means asking and listening as you talk to God the Father. As the Holy Spirit moves in your heart, you will sense the plan God has for you. Never forget the importance of listening and waiting for God's direction.

If you have an important decision to make and you are not yet sure of God's direction at that specific time, then it would be wise to wait. Postpone the decision until you feel assured of God's leading. Pray, wait and listen longer if needed.

Christian Counsel

God provides pastors, Christian friends or family with whom we can sincerely discuss our most sacred situations. Seek help from committed Christian friends. We may be

too near a situation emotionally to be objective. A trusted friend may be able to deliberate objectively so that we can be more realistic. Their perception of the situation may be shocking, but totally enlightening to us.

We should expect our friends to give their unbiased opinion even if we do not especially like their advice. If she is a true friend, she will say more than just what you want to hear. God may use trusted Christian counsel to guide us in the way He wishes us to follow.

Closure

When we follow the Word, are led by the Holy Spirit, go step by step with prayer and godly counsel, we will feel peace and happiness in God's plan for our lives. This does not mean that we will never have trouble or heartaches. We will! We must not expect roses and sunshine at all times. It does mean we can face unexpected trouble and heartaches knowing that we are in the will of God and that He will take care of us. ❖



Mary Kay Joslin and her husband David are members of Mt. Calvary FWB Church in Conway, AR.

Be a CAN-DO Christian

by Carol Reid

Songs

*His Strength is Perfect,
Is There Anything
I Can Do for You?*

Scripture

Philippians 4:13

That aisle may not be your favorite in the grocery store, but almost every kitchen cabinet stocks up from that aisle with everything from soup to nuts! Tomato paste, green beans, chili beans, cream of mushroom soup, fruit cocktail, evaporated milk, pineapple juice, and even beef stew and Spagettios® end up in shopping carts on a regular basis. A lot of our favorite recipes would go lacking without products from this aisle: the CANS!

The CANS are the staples of Christian work, too. They may not get a lot of attention; they may often be taken for granted. But those willing, consistent workers for the kingdom of God are CAN-DO people. They've claimed the truth of the promise, "I CAN DO all things

through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). Their YES to God allows Him to use them in His "favorite recipes" to accomplish much good in His work.

These CANS come in all flavors, all sizes, and all sorts of functions. The infinite variety (and sense of humor) of our magnificent Creator is demonstrated powerfully in His stock of CANS. Each functions in the role He intends; each is available and easy to use. Like canned foods, they are preserved, long-lasting and dependable—ready for the Master's use. So what kind of CAN are you?

Oh, you may say, I can't. God didn't give me any special gifts. I don't have any (fill in the blank with education/money/ability/gifts/personality) for His work.

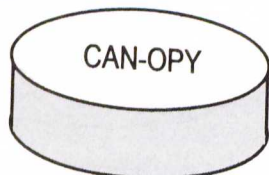
Hold on a minute! You too CAN be a CAN! Consider being one of those CANS!

CAN-TEEN

Are you a CAN-TEEN? Do you have a cool drink of Living Water for a thirsty world? Do you have a word of encouragement for hurting hearts, a healing touch for broken spirits? Do you accompany your friends and loved ones through times of desert testing to offer comfort and aid? No special education is required to be a CAN-TEEN—just a heart that cares and wants to meet needs.



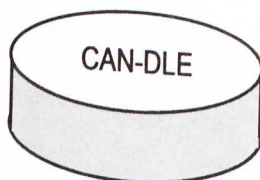
You don't even have to be able to sing to be a CAN-TATA! You can give a word of praise, you can lift your voice to honor the Lord, you can point others to His amazing grace even if you can't find middle C! Your testimony of God's goodness to you may be just the boost someone else needs to find joy and defeat the Devil in their difficult circumstances. You may be a solo CAN-TATA or you can join in a "choir" of others! Too often our choirs concentrate on criticism or self-centeredness instead of offering a song of joy. You can help lead your choir (in your home or Sunday school class or even in your WNAC group) in a CAN-TATA of praise!



A shelter in the time of storm, a hiding place, a CAN-OPY of protection is another CAN you CAN be. Are you a "safe place" for your family? Have you prayed God's protection for them? Can your children sense His peace and His guardianship of your home? What about your grandchildren or the students in your classroom or your Sunday school students? What about the troubled teens in your neighborhood or even in your church youth group? What about your husband? You CAN help to protect them from the storms of a tempest-tossed world with your gentle quiet spirit, your faithful prayers, and your consistent positive attitude.

You don't learn this in a book; but your CAN-OPY will allow those

you love to blossom and flourish in spite of the blazing sun or the merciless storm.



Are you bringing others to Christ? You CAN hold up His light in a dark world. The relationships you build with others, the seeds you plant, the example you uphold all shine brightly in our world. Every CAN-DLE makes a difference. You CAN keep yours burning brightly with careful attention to the Word and by keeping it out from under bushels! Anyone CAN if she remembers that Christ gives the strength to accomplish His plan!

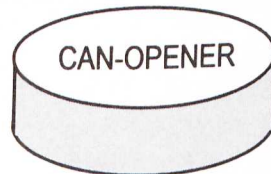


Holding your light high is vital, but you can extend that light to the far corners of the world—to the dark shadows of the regions beyond and the dismal alleys of the bad side of town—if you are a CAN-DELABRA.

Hold up someone else's light too! Pray. Pray for a clear witness for our home and foreign missionaries. Pray for consistency in their personal devotional lives and victory against temptation. Pray for opportunities and open doors to share the gospel. Pray that the Lord will lead them to receptive people who recognize their need for the gospel.

Pray for your pastor, your Sunday school teacher, and other leaders in your local church. Pray for our National offices and their staffs, our Bible College, our publishing house.

Pray specifically that the gospel will travel further and Christ will shine brighter because of their work. You CAN pray and hold up the CANDLES so that they CAN shine around the world.



Are you a CAN-OPENER? Do you help others see the possibilities of their contribution to the work of the Lord? The cookies that they take to the shut-ins, the babies they rock in the church nursery, the noses they wipe in Children's church, the cards they send to the absentees may seem insignificant until someone shows them the difference they CAN make in God's work.

Help others to find their gifts and their places of service. You CAN share their joy in learning to please God in all of the opportunities of our lives. Open someone else's eyes to the strength promised to them so they CAN serve the Lord effectively.

Put away your excuses. You may not be able to do all that someone else CAN, but you CAN do what God has planned for you. He promised. **HE** promised. You don't have to depend on your abilities or intelligence or social graces. Just depend on Him and get busy doing what you CAN. "I CAN DO all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." What CAN you say "Yes" to today? ♦

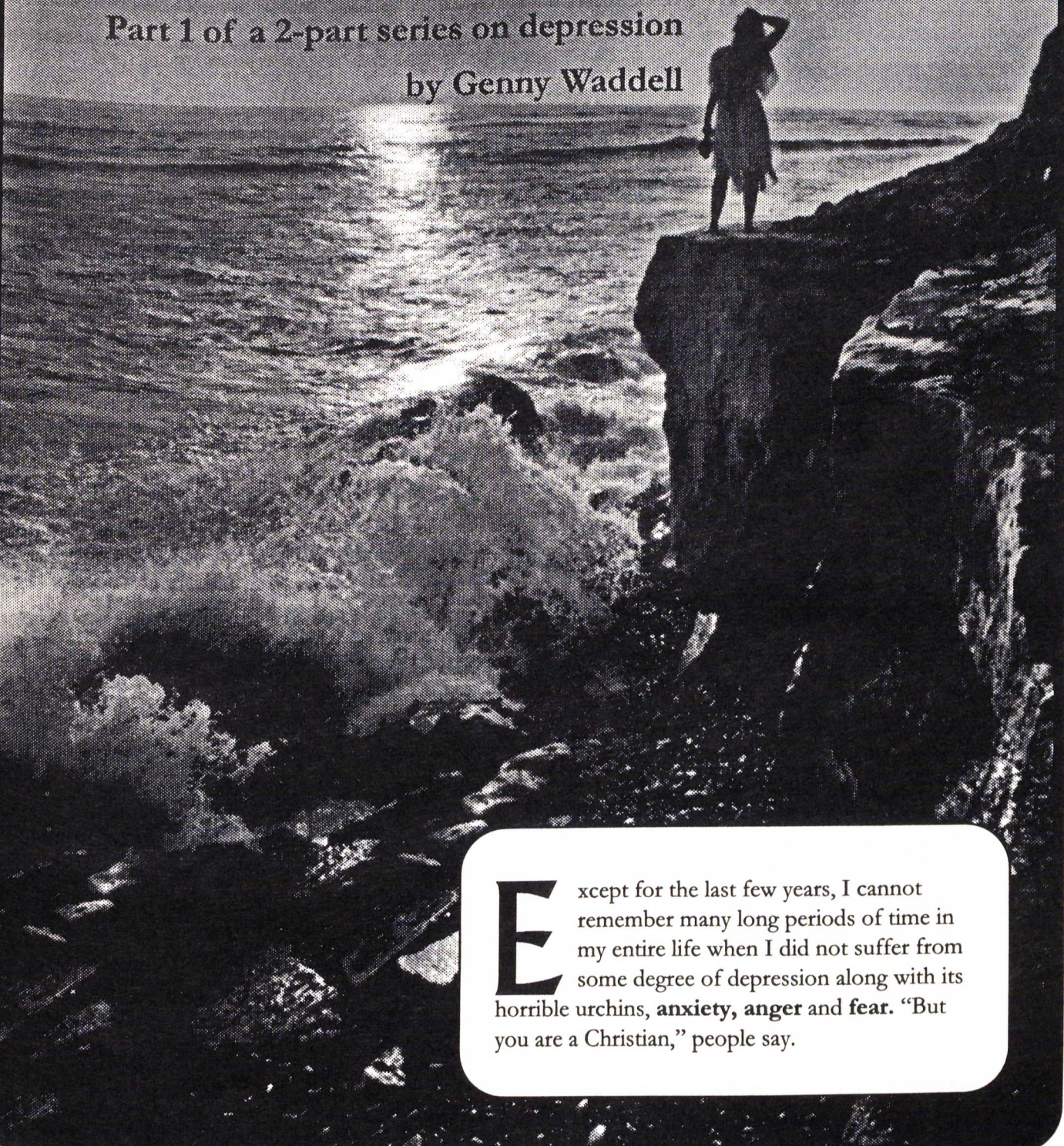


Carol Reid and her husband Garnett live in Nashville, TN. They are members of Cross Timbers FWB Church and Carol is librarian at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

THE WAY OUT

Part 1 of a 2-part series on depression

by Genny Waddell



Except for the last few years, I cannot remember many long periods of time in my entire life when I did not suffer from some degree of depression along with its horrible urchins, **anxiety, anger and fear.** "But you are a Christian," people say.

"REAL CHRISTIANS DON'T GET DEPRESSED—DO THEY?"

Yes we do. We are susceptible to depression or any other illness. Until recent years, my life often felt like the punch line from an old joke—"I don't know what it is, either, but here it comes again!" I just knew that I had an ongoing, nameless, inexplicable down feeling, accompanied by a sense of loss. I felt that not only was my life out of tune—it had no tune at all.

For many years I did not know that I was experiencing *dysthymia*, a chronic, often hidden depression, although I had many of the symptoms. At times I felt sad, fatigued, or disjointed. Sometimes I struggled to focus on specific projects; at other times I was an over-achiever. Never a sound sleeper, my sleep patterns became more erratic, as did my weight loss or gain. Mostly I was tired and felt that I could not "handle one more thing" or that I was "not going to make it."

Specific events—an unexpected bill—might precipitate a crisis, but mostly feelings of **helplessness** and **hopelessness** crept up on me like kudzu, choking the life out of me at times. Unlike several of my siblings, I never used alcohol, but I would drown myself in eating, reading or shopping.

And I would think, "I am saved and living for Christ. **Christians should not be depressed!**" That is the first misconception. Knowing that Jesus was my Savior did not prevent me from feeling utterly isolated from Him at times.

I know now that a lay person finds it almost impossible to decide where ordinary depression and spiritual depression divide. A journal entry several years ago reads, "Thy Word says that You made me, Lord, so why am I so horrible, so full of pain and terror? So disorganized and full of pride and in the dark?" As a believer, I personally find it impossible to deal with my own depression apart from the Word of God and my faith in Him.

IS IT TIME TO GET HELP?

Actually, I was basically not an unhappy person all of those years. I loved to laugh; I worked; I went places; I did things; and I **hid** my feelings of inadequacy and fear. I think, perhaps, my departmental

chairman at Free Will Baptist Bible College was the only non-relative who ever asked me during those years whether or not I was depressed.

Finally, after buying many pounds of books dealing with depression, I sought help for myself, especially because I could see my own symptoms beginning to sprout in the lives of my children. I also saw the devastation in the lives of many of my English students who did not yet know what had hit them. I wanted others to know that God can deliver Christians out of this darkness and even prevent some of it.

I AM NOT ALONE

Last year the Lord burdened me to share with Christian women at a retreat in Delaware how He had been delivering me from my fears. I believe I know why He allowed this.

I have met so many Christian women while traveling here and abroad whose experiences mirror mine. Like me, most have never voiced their own anxieties; instead, they, too, have harbored them, making them seem worse. Others have depressed family members whom they do not understand. And most feel that they will never be any better!

In recent years, as the Lord has enabled me to emerge from this long-term depression and its hideous offspring, **fear, anger** and **anxiety**. I have been able to grasp the reality of Psalm 28:28, "For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."

Because of what He has done for me, I would like to share with you some **misconceptions** about depression and some **suggestions** for overcoming it.

I first sought help by dragging my husband with me to a seminar sponsored by Christian medical doctors here in Nashville. That helped both of us to realize that I was not alone, that what I felt was real, and that I could get help. No one got down in the dumps with me, but they did offer hopeful, concrete suggestions for recovery. And it felt good to find people there who understood me, especially since one major attempt to share with a friend my feelings about depression through this poem ended when she said, "Oh, that's so cute!" Obviously, she knew nothing about depression.

Are there Black Holes?
In Space?
I don't know . . . ,
But in Real Life, I do know.

Because I live in one of them,
Part of the timeMuch of the timeA lot of the timeSome of the timeAll of the time.

Now and then the Hole will seem merely Grey or a cloudy blue
On a good day.

But some days the Hole is filled with a vacuumless pit that has no

Top

Center

Bottom

It just is and it is full of Me.
There is no room for God,
Although I hear Him trying to get in.

But if I let HIM in, where would I go? The Hole is not Big enough for Both of Us.
But it is too big for MeByMyselfAlone.

I just wish a Black Hole could be some other color

—Genevieve J. Waddell 1990s

MISCONCEPTIONS PARALYZE

Gradually, as I have begun to share my thoughts with our women, in retreats, I have discovered that our misconceptions about Christians and depression have paralyzed us into not getting help for ourselves or those around us. **And not getting help means that we will not be as effective in our ministry for Christ!**

As I share suggestions for getting help, I also share this warning. **If your depression or fear or anxiety is an all-consuming, continuing condition, you need something beyond self-help immediately. If you have recurring thoughts of a negative nature, or a fear that you might do something stupid or illegal or harmful, thoughts that are a part of depression, you need more than a self-help guide.**

Just talking to your pastor or a friend can help, but you may need medical and professional help if your depressed state lingers longer than a few weeks, especially if you have not experienced a loss. Sometimes you will find help by sharing with your brothers and sisters about depression that seems “to run in your family,” as it does mine.

But you should see your medical doctor who can decide whether you need treatment for a physical problem or for mild, moderate or severe depression. Some medications, such as Valium or Ativan or sleeping pills, might help anxiety or sleeplessness, but they are also addictive. Some delay healing by masking physical problems that cause depression, such as a chemical or hormonal imbalance or a glandular or genetic problem.

An endocrinologist convinced me that my diet, highly laced with chocolate and sugars, aided and

abetted my erratic sleep patterns which led to more depression. Later, a simple blood test also revealed a hormone insufficiency.

I have gone to Christian counselors on a short-term basis in times of crisis. I would go on a long-term basis if that were necessary. I personally would not be comfortable talking with one who is a friend

If you need professional help, you can call 1-800-New Life, a clinic founded by Dr. Paul Meier and Dr. Stephen Arterburn, and a counselor will refer you to someone in your own area. I hope that pastors will encourage their churches to make funds available to pay for counseling for people whose insurance or finances will not cover their expenses.

or one did not value confidentiality. **And I would never seek out any professional counselor or pastor or friend who does not base his or her advice on the Word of God, because there can be no true healing apart from a relationship with Jesus Christ and the power of His Word.**

ENABLED TO MOVE ON

Do not feel that by seeking help for your depression that you are saying that God's grace is insufficient! On the contrary, because God is sufficient for our every need, He will direct you to the right people for help, just as He leads you to a skilled physician when you need surgery.

I know that I am likely to experience episodes of depression again, but I also know that the Lord has enabled me to understand myself more fully in order to deal with factors that tend to make me depressed. Poems and journal entries in more recent years reveal that I am learning to rest upon the Lord, for He has "brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Psalm 40:2).

December 24, 1997

I have gotten through this Christmas with great joy & enjoyed taking care of Pa and family. I was thinking just a few days ago that these last 3 years, working so closely with my

husband, have been probably the happiest ones of my life and "the best is yet to be!"

And Christmas, usually a major cause of depression!, was one of best ever! Thank You!

Life will never be a chocolate ride down Krispy Kreme Lane! Actually, my healing has come one step at the time, although God does choose to heal some people instantly.

ON YOUR OWN

If you find yourself in a black hole of depression, your first step is an assignment to do a Bible study, using the word "light." Focus on Christ, the Light of your personal world. As a computer addict, I am asking you to write out these Scriptures by hand. For me, that makes each word, like a love note from my husband, seem to be more personally mine. I write verses in a journal, which is sometimes just a notebook. Read these verses as often as possible until the second part of this article appears in the next *CoLaborer* issue. And rejoice that Christ is your Light!

Don't be like the late Hank Williams. Before the era of fancy travel coaches, he and Minnie Pearl were riding together to do a show. Trying to coax Hank out of his usual morbid depression, Minnie said, "Hank, remember that you wrote 'I See the Light.' Just look at the Light!"

Hank replied, "Minnie, there ain't no light. Never has been."

Psalm 36:9 contradicts the late Williams with great authority and empowers us to shine as Christ's lights! "For with thee [God] is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

Feel free to share your feedback about her story with Genny Waddell at gwaddell@compuserve.com or at (615) 361-5137.

Self help

The writer cautions about reading just any self-help article or book. Stick with material that is Bible-centered. For further study, call 1-800-New Life or Focus on the Family at 1-800-A-FAMILY and ask for a list of their resources. For a list of recommended books available through Randall Bookstore, you may contact the *CoLaborer* Editor, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002.



Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator

Look for your WNAC Emphasis packets in the mail in July. The packet includes an attractive poster, an emphasis program, and other helpful items to make your WNAC Emphasis a success.

Always when preparing a program from *CoLaborer* for your meetings, remember to add your own examples. In the July program, you may want to give an example of how a circumstance helped lead you to the right place within God's will. Or in the August program, mention names of people in your church who have some of the CAN-DO abilities mentioned.

Secretary/Treasurer

Local treasurers should send a report to the District Treasurer every month. Even if an offering is small, the money is combined with other local reports which makes a big difference for WNAC.

Secretaries should help the Coordinator get the appropriate delegate cards filled out and signed to be sent in with Convention Pre-Registration. Perhaps someone has already pre-registered for the convention and she had been chosen to be a delegate. No problem. She can take the delegate card with her to the convention. See page 16 for a delegate card.

Missions Chairman

Stay informed in order to keep your women informed about missions around the world. Besides reading *MissionGrams*, *Heartbeat* and missionary prayer letters, look for articles about the country or state you are focusing on each month. If you have access to internet, look for home pages and articles pertaining to the particular country or city where a missionary is working. Ask the librarian at your local library to help you get started in your research. You can help everyone stay involved by keeping the missionaries and mission fields in the spotlight.

If your group has adopted a missionary family, remember to stay in touch through the Summer. Find out from your adopted family what would be most helpful and present these needs to your women for discussion.

Provision Closet Needs:

Dish towels

Wash cloths

Queen and twin size
sheet sets

Queen and twin size
bedspreads

Pillows

Drinking glasses

Irons

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

ON THE SHELF

Learning to Love the one you Marry

*Gary Kinnaman
Vine Books, 1997*

Reviewed by Arlene Branum

Price: \$10.99

Gary Kinnaman addresses letters of advice to his newly married son and daughter-in-law, David and Jill. His unique writing is filled with sound and loving messages backed by Scripture.

Kinnaman is bold enough to hold himself up an occasional "bad example." He hits on controversial subjects such as sex and tithing as well.

Although written basically for the newly and about-to-be married, "Learning to Love the One You Marry" can be informative to even us long-timers. I recommend this book to anyone who desires the best in their marital commitment. ❖

Prayer Chairman

In August, make prayer reminders with all or some of the following Emphasis Prayer Requests:

1. Local Officers
2. District Officers
3. State Officers
4. Georgia State officers as they prepare for the 1999 convention.
5. National Officers
6. WNAC members
7. Financial support for the WNAC national office and for a good Emphasis offering.
8. Mary R. Wisehart, upon her retirement as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of WNAC
9. The new Executive Secretary-Treasurer who is taking office in August
10. WNAC staff: Yvonne Hampton, Martha Harris, Suzanne Franks

Study Chairman

If you are planning on having a marriage enrichment study, check out the book review on the left column of this page.

Service Chairman

If you haven't already, you should read Odessa Ledlow's article on page 26-28. Here are some ideas the writer passed along to help you start a senior adult ministry in your church.

WNAC Local Delegate Credentials

This certifies that _____ is an authorized delegate to the
WNAC Convention of Free Will Baptists from the _____
women's group of _____ (Group Name)
(Church Name) Free Will Baptist Church,

(Church Address)
Signed _____
(Local Coordinator)
or _____
(Local Secretary)
Date _____

Important: This form properly signed and accompanied by a \$5 registration fee entitles a local delegate to register for voting privileges in the WNAC convention. Only one delegate allowed per church.

Clip and attach to Convention Pre-Registration on page 29 or bring to the WNAC Convention.

Obtain a list of senior adults in the church, including shut-ins. Make a card file on each one with name, address, telephone number, birthday, anniversary, hobbies and interests. You may also want to write the name and number of a relative or neighbor on the card.

Assign one or two senior adults to a WAC member and keep a copy of the assignment for referral.

Each member is responsible to keep in touch with her senior partner in as many of these ways as needed.

- ☐ personal visits
- ☐ take or mail items such as church bulletins
- ☐ personal favors
- ☐ book of postage stamps
- ☐ crochet thread
- ☐ read mail, write letters
- ☐ subscription to *CoLaborer* magazine and other good reading material
- ☐ assist in shopping—provide transportation, if needed
- ☐ send birthday, anniversary, or seasonal cards
- ☐ learn of their physical or mental needs
- ☐ help plan nutritious meals
- ☐ take a pie and enjoy pie and coffee with them
- ☐ if offered, drink a cup of tea
- ☐ accept home canned goods, candy or nuts
- ☐ let them do something for you (It's no fun always being on the receiving end.)
- ☐ invite them out for a meal—make your invitations personal
- ☐ make elderly people feel wanted (Some may feel they are shoved in the background.)
- ☐ learn to respect and value them
- ☐ be friendly and optimistic
- ☐ be patient and understanding (It's difficult for some older persons to lose their independence.)
- ☐ be a good listener

Telephone Ministry

- ☐ Call your senior partner at least once a week
 - ☐ If no answer, call relative or neighbor (name is on file card)
 - ☐ Realize the person being called will begin to expect your call
 - ☐ You may arrange for your senior partner to call you and report in
 - ☐ Make calls brief, unless you feel a need to listen
 - ☐ Remember, they may be lonely and the days seem long
- Your reward will be great (Matthew 25:34-40). ❖

Lucy & Marge

(Marge enters and finds Lucy seated at a table in the church library with her hands over her face, her shoulders heaving with sobs.)

Marge: *(quietly to herself)* What's this? Our Lucy crying? What's happened? *(Rushes forward)* Lucy, Lucy, what is it? Whatever has happened? I've never seen you like this.

Lucy: *(Looking up and speaking through tears)* Oh, Marge, I've just been filing the *CoLaborers* for 1997 in the notebook. I can't help noticing the pain and suffering women and children all over the world are experiencing. Look at this, "Victim of abuse." Here are stories about those poor street children in Brazil. The elderly in nursing homes. And look at all these beautiful women in Ivory Coast. Like Carol Pinkerton says, everything they do is hard.

Marge: I know, Lucy, I know. But—

Lucy: But, Marge, why should I be sitting so pretty? Why me? My family members are all Christians. I live in a luxurious home, compared to some of these. My husband wouldn't think of raising a hand against me—I can't deny I feel like socking him sometimes.

Marge: Oh, Lucy, you wouldn't.

Lucy: Of course not. With all that body training he'd knock me flat. Just kidding, Marge. You know he's a gentle giant.

Marge: I know.

Lucy: What I'm asking is why should I be so blessed? *(Tearing again)* And all these others with so much pain and suffering. And look, here's an article about women and teenagers in prison. And hungry children right here in the USA. What am I doing about it?

Marge: Of course we can't change the whole world just like that.

Lucy: Right now I'd like to. I just want to put my arms around all these women and children and love them to the Lord. But my arms are not long enough. All this just overwhelms me.

Marge: I know. It is overwhelming. Remember, Lucy, God doesn't expect you to preside over the whole world.

Lucy: Yeah, I guess not. That character at the seminar, remember? He said, "Resign from the management of the universe."

(They laugh together.)

Marge: God is still in control. He does expect us to do what we can where He has placed us right now.

Lucy: One child, one woman at a time.

Marge: Right. Our WAC has made a special effort this year to reach out to elderly women, to teens and children in our community. *(Mention some community services.)*

Lucy: You're right, Marge. Remember _____ *(Mention specific women or specific projects.)*

Marge: At our Emphasis Program _____ *(Give date and time)* we'll have a chance to review those things we have done this year. I think you will be surprised to hear how much our women have done.

Lucy: Yes, and maybe that will encourage others to join us so that we can do even more.

Marge: Let's think of some avenues of service for this coming year.

Lucy: And set some goals for our WAC. We can't all go to India, Africa or some other place like that.

Marge: God has placed us here, right now, Lucy. Our question should be, "What do you want me to do right here today?"

Lucy: I feel better already, Marge. I won't forget these women and children around the world, but I'll try to make a difference in someone's life right here where I am.

Marge: One woman, one child at time.

Lucy: You don't think He'll ask me to go to the prison, do you? He knows I have claustrophobia! ♦

Springboard Illustrated Stories to Grow By

Volume 38/ No. 4

a stitch in time by Bess Trammel

"A time to rend, and a time to sew" (Ecclesiastes 3:7).

My friend Nancy, a seamstress, has seen the truth of this verse many times. While much of her sewing time consists of the creative side of making new things, some time is also spent in mending. There have been times when mending has been a real challenge of her abilities.

When her son, Matt, was in his teens, he brought her a pair of jeans to mend. He wanted her to patch them. We both laughed as she held up the well-worn, raggedy jeans. "Matt, there's hardly enough jeans here to put a patch on."

He looked at her in dismay, "But, Mom, you gotta," he pleaded.

She chuckled again. "I will try, Matt, but there's not much here. Why don't you throw them away? You have other jeans."

"No way! These are my favorite jeans!" He went over, hugged her and coaxed, "Come on, Mom. You can do it! PLEASE?"

When he left the room, we both laughed again as she held up the jeans. She began by carefully taking off an old patch and cutting off the shredded parts of the knees and seat. She then stitched the edges to keep them from fraying.

After she had measured and cut patches, she tried to sew one of them on and the worn cloth pulled apart. She cut more patches and sewed patches on the patches, trying to salvage Matt's favorite jeans. Upon completion, he was elated, but both of us wondered if they would stay together long enough for him to wear. They did, but not for long.

Like a lot of things in life, taking care to mend things early makes a difference in the outcome. Sometimes, we wait too long to mend, and things become irreparable. In sewing, the failure to mend a tear will soon find the hole bigger, and if never mended would ruin the garment. In life, the failure to mend a hurt or an offense can ruin a marriage, a family, a business, or a church family.

"The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Proverbs 18:14)

It would benefit us all to take heed to Ephesians 4:32, and mend torn lives while we can. If we but sew with threads of love, the patches of forgiveness, kindness, grace and hope, many lives could be repaired. ♦

Bess Trammel lives in Harrison, MI.

COMMUNICATOR

by MARY RUTH WISEHART

It's Time for Good-byes and Hellos

The plan is that by the next issue of this magazine, a different executive secretary-treasurer will be in the WNAC office.

I have had thirteen happy years with the women of WNAC. Problems, lack of funds, stresses—none of those can dim the years for me. I have had the opportunity to meet some of our women all over the USA, in Panama, Cuba, Brazil, Uruguay, and Côte d'Ivoire. I have written on salary. I've traveled and met hoteliers, convention personnel. I've had the blessing of a dedicated staff, one that wants to make work easier for me.

One of the great blessings God has given me is the opportunity to know so many beautiful people. I've met them everywhere.

Now it's time to say good-bye, but for me it is just a beginning. I do not know what God plans for me next, but my times are in His hands.

Be prepared to say hello to the next person. Make the time she spends in the office as happy for her as it has been for me. Support her with your prayers, cards, letters and your financial support for WNAC. Don't let her worry about money to pay the bills! I know you will enjoy her tenure, and she will enjoy you.

"Make me Thereof a Little Cake First!"

You remember the words of Elijah to the widow at Zarephath when she complained that she had only a little oil and meal (I Kings 17).

Sometimes I feel like crying out to WNAC women, "Make WNAC a little cake **FIRST.**"

Women support all kinds of ministries, but often neglect their own organization. The needs of WNAC are not great, but money is needed to keep the office going, supervise the Provision Closet, plan conventions and retreats, attend meetings and keep learning as technology changes.

Who supports WNAC? Women should. WNAC does get a percentage of The Rest of the Family Offering in September, but so far that

percentage falls far short of what WNAC needs from the annual Emphasis Offering.

A little cake first! If each women's group would send a little to WNAC regularly each month, there would be enough to sustain the organization for years to come.

God supplied what the women, Elijah and her son needed to live for "many days." God will surely supply what the women's groups need as well as funds for all the other ministries WNAC supports.

Your Church Should Know and Contribute

August is emphasis month for WNAC.

The month gives women a chance to inform the church about the activities and contributions their women's group makes to the church, the community and around the world.

Emphasis packets and helps are available from the WNAC office.

Remember the offering represents "a little cake first" for WNAC. Your church may want to contribute to the offering, but the women should be the ones actively giving.

Contributions and Expenses for the First Quarter of 1998

Contributions

Alabama	\$ 354.00
Arkansas	1,487.71 (\$120 dues)
Arizona	560.00 (\$410 dues)
California	179.54
Florida	22.00
Georgia	301.00 (\$40 dues)
Illinois	331.13 (\$80 dues)
Kentucky	320.00 (\$230 dues)
Maryland	260.00
Michigan	110.00
Mississippi	120.00
Missouri	5,678.66 (\$4,640 dues)
New Mexico	17.00
North Carolina	2,630.16
Ohio	559.86
Oklahoma	1,028.62
Tennessee	1,531.60 (\$360 dues)
Texas	411.25
Virginia	94.88
West Virginia	40.00
Lit. & Subscripts	18,335.97
Interest Income	757.08
Rest of Family	1,406.02
Prov Closet Rent	810.00
Miscellaneous	1,355.79
TOTAL	\$38,702.27

Expenses

Salaries	\$ 23,608.82
Payroll Taxes	1,966.33
Employees' Retirement	994.62
Employees' Benefits	55.40
Legal & Accounting Fees	1,750.00
Convention Expense	977.55
Executive Committee Travel	1,153.06
Employees' Insurance	2,750.88
Literature Printing	192.85
Literature Refunds	64.00
Magazine Mailing	456.33
Magazine Printing	3,848.00
Magazine Refunds	86.00
Magazine Writers	60.00
Miscellaneous Expense	1,392.75
National Retreat Expense	1,508.75
Rent	6,150.00
Subscriptions	196.45
Office Supplies	303.01
General Postage	583.95
Provision Closet	207.60
Special Projects	140.25
Telephone	230.65
Travel	685.51
Continuing Education	968.22
Professional Fees	99.94
TOTAL	\$ 52,736.92

As you can see, expenses far outweigh income at this point. Of course, the months of the most income are in the fall. In the meantime, WNAC needs your support to pay the monthly bills. ♦

Poet's Corner

Morning Praise

Ruth Bivens, St. Just, Puerto Rico

I love to get up in the early morning
to a quiet house
And know that all my children
are sleeping safely at home.
The worry and rush of yesterday
has drifted away
In the peaceful rest of night.
Only bird songs from the woods
interrupt the dawn.

I feel the presence of your Spirit
as I slip down the dark hall
To begin my day's routine,
and my soul sings a quiet praise.
Lord, is this the joy you feel
when you look down
And know that those you love
are sleeping sweetly
Within the shelter of your arm?

But Father, I have felt this peace,
this quiet calm, a world away
From my house on the hill
When my family was scattered
to the four winds
And the fountains of our lives
were shaking.
I knew your presence and your care.

I feel your presence this morning, Lord,
as on those other mornings
Because wherever I wake up
You are there,
We are safe,
And I am home. ♦



A Woman God Has Used

A Tribute to Geneva Collins

by Sharyl Wynes

On February 2, 1922, a baby girl was born who would grow into a faithful servant of the Lord. Her name was Geneva.

I remember her when I first started attending the Bethel Free Will Baptist Church. When I came through the front door, there was the nicest, friendliest, and most sincere woman standing there waiting to greet me.

Every time you would see Geneva, she would give you a big hug and welcome you, making you feel so good and so glad that you had come to church. She never forgot to speak to anyone and always had something good to say.

Geneva praised the Lord every day for every part of her life, from the bed she slept in at night, to her chickens whose eggs she gathered each day.

She had such a kind and compassionate way about her and appreciated life and its simple pleasures. Geneva loved the Lord and always shared with others the testimony of her love for Him.

Her family was truly blessed to have had such a loving wife, mother and grandmother.

Geneva willingly shared her time, giving to others her special home-cooked dishes,

produce from her garden and words of wisdom and comfort in times of need.

At every dinner and special occasion, Geneva was always in the kitchen, working away with a smile on her face. At Christmas time she always read a poem or acted in the play. Always dramatic, she added her special humor to each part.

She enjoyed ladies auxiliary and never missed a meeting unless she was ill. Gladly volunteering for any job that needed to be done, she held almost every office at one time or another.

I remember one time in Sunday school, we were having a lesson about being a "saint." We wholeheartedly agreed that we would always remember Geneva as a saint in our church. Little did we know that only a few short weeks later on July 22, 1997, she would go to be with the Savior she loved so much.

Our church family now has an empty place since Geneva has gone to heaven. But as she said in one of her poems, "don't wish me back again."

Geneva leaves a legacy for her family and friends to always remember. I'm sure she looks forward to their reunion in Heaven someday.

We praise God for this special woman and the testimony her life was to us. ❖

Sharyl Wynes lives in Eldorado Springs, MO. She teaches Sunday school in the Bethel Free Will Baptist Church.

Women In Action



Luncheon at Dorothy Saul's House

Several of the women from Blue Bell Free Will Baptist Auxiliary take part in the weekly visitation program. They visit shut-ins, hospitals, new people in the community or Nursing Homes. Their visits are always a highlight of the week.

Recently some of the women took covered dishes and enjoyed a luncheon and visit with their shut-in friend Dorothy Saul.

Those visiting and the ones receiving the visit always wind up being blessed.

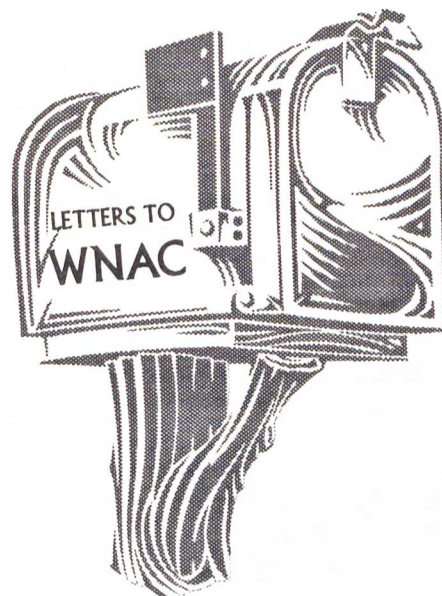
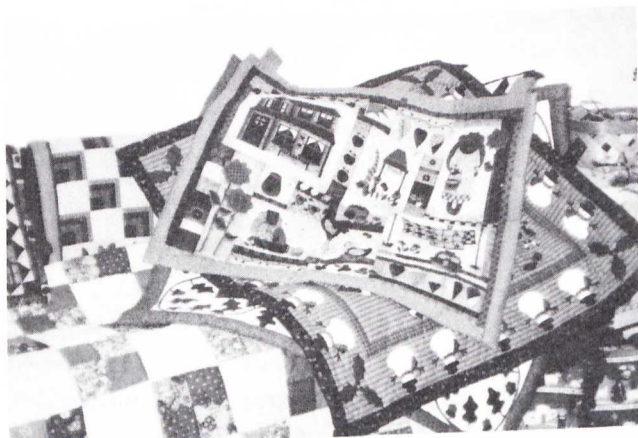


Three Quilts for Three Missionaries

The women of Madison Free Will Baptist Church, Alabama, made and donated three quilts to missionaries. The first quilt was given to Roger Raper (Ft. Collins, Colorado), the second quilt to Dennis Haygood (Huntsville, Alabama) and the third quilt was given to Mike and Cathy Corley (Russia).

Pictured: (above) Dennis and Judy Haygood

Pictured: (left) The quilt belonging to Roger Raper with officers (left to right): Shirley Clark (Missions and Prayer Chairman), Margaret Alexander (President), Gwen McCaffrey (Sunshine Lady), Carolyn Michael (Vice President), Charlotte McWhorter (Program Director)



Bethel Women Hold Bazaar

The women at Bethel Free Will Baptist Church in Cullman, AL, made crafts for a huge Christmas bazaar. They also baked homemade goodies for the sale. The proceeds of the sale purchased tables and chairs for the fellowship hall in the new addition to the church.



Actionettes Support Missionary to Spain

The Woodward, Oklahoma, Free Will Baptist Actionettes had a bake sale in February to raise money for Lynn Midgett, missionary to Spain. They raised \$140. The Actionettes range in ages from 8 to 15 years old.

Back Row: (left to right) Morgan Shelton, Ashley Blow, Kristy Parker, Lynn Midgett, Kendra Parker, Marissa Beavers, Miranda Elder
Middle Row: Kayla Beavers, Keesha Parker
Front Row: Eryn Brooks, Holly Beavers, Lacie Archer

Dear WNAC,

As I go through the Provision Closet treasure house collecting items we will need for our first term in Ivory Coast, it brings back such wonderful memories. I remember asking my mother when she took Laura and me there as children, "You mean we can choose any one of these pretty sheets we want?"

It was an amazing thought to me then and it still is today. Every room in our house has the loving touch of WNAC, and I rejoice in telling our three children where each item came from.

"Thank you" seems inadequate to express our gratitude.

Verlin, Debbie, Cason, Cara, and Corbin Anderson, Missionaries to Ivory Coast

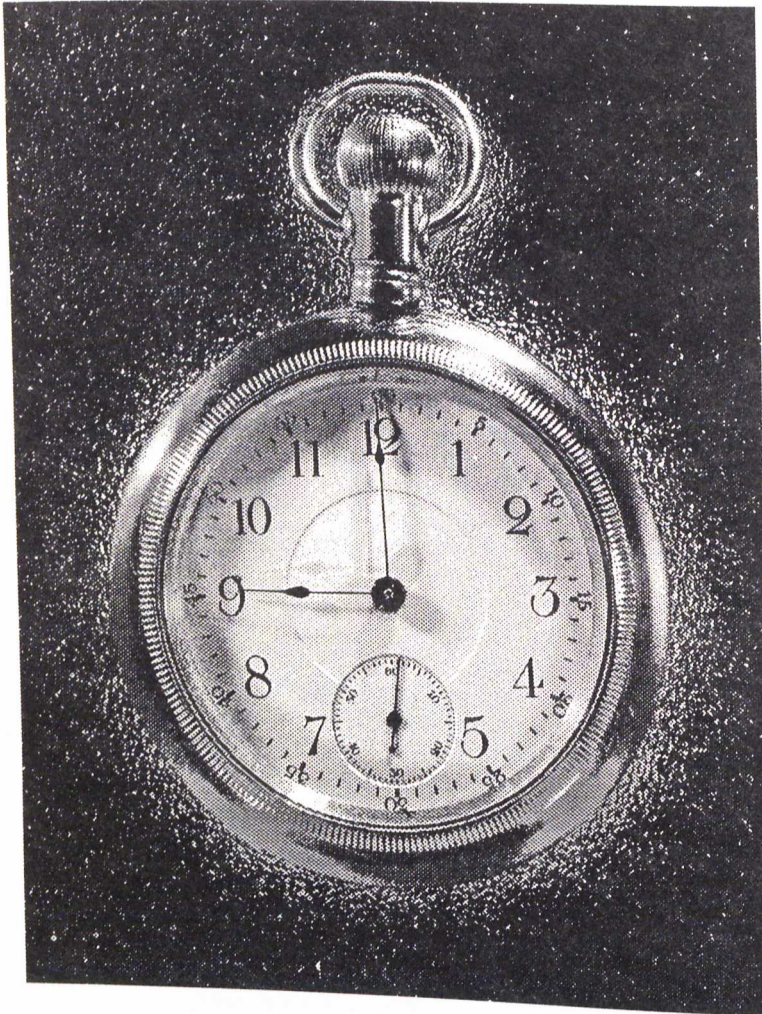
Dear WNAC,

I love the magazine. It's very up to date and informative.

Imogene Young, Hilliard, OH

Where has the Summer Gone?

By Shirley Lambert



The wind blew and the leaves fell. And as I watched the shower of beautiful leaves, I considered, "Where has the Summer gone?" Just yesterday it seems the spring rains fell after a long winter sleep. Summer must have followed because it is according to God's plan that one season follow the next.

Yet, how could the Summer have slipped by so quickly without my noticing it's rush? Surely it could not have been more than a heart beat long.

As I watched the leaves, I began to ponder the seasons of life and I had to ask, "Where has the Summer of life gone?" Could it possibly have been longer than a week ago when I rocked my child? Yet, the child I rock today is my grandchild.

Did I miss this Summer also? Did it pass in that thick fog of worry that surrounds everything? Could it have been swept into that vacuum created by endless time demands? How could I have let this happen, for God told us not to worry about tomorrow?

This theft of time is nothing if not a deception of the master deceiver to defeat God's children. For, you see, if Satan can deceive us and rob us of our time, then he has won. If he can cause us to waste even one irreplaceable season, he has gained countless souls for his kingdom. He who steals our time steals our service to God. ♦

—Ephesians 5:15-16

Shirley Lambert lives in Comanche, TX. She is a member of Liberty Free Will Baptist Church.



• know of a dog who personifies courage in his personal dealings with a mailbox.

This dog lives down the road from a friend of mine in a neighborhood near an airport. And every night his relationship with my friend's mailbox stands on shaky ground.

Late at night, when airplanes fly overhead, the vibrations shake and rattle the mailbox, greatly disturbing this German shepherd. But does the dog sulk warily nearby, pouting to himself, "I wish that mailbox would stop rattling"? Does he go over to his buddy, the black labrador, and—behind the mailbox's back—tear it down with snide remarks?

No! When this dog becomes perturbed, he clenches his jaw tightly, stares the culprit down, and confronts that mailbox head on. He leaps onto the box, turns it so it's facing the house, paws the lid down, and chews the metal object into submission. That dog knows how to pursue peace.

Peace? Peace with puppy pirouettes and airborne lunges? Peace

the attack of a peacemaker

by Charity VanWinkle

with dog drool and fang marks? Definitely! Sure, the dog's confrontation skills could use a little refining, but at least the mailbox knows where it stands. Someone must have taught that dog the importance of actively chasing after peace in relationships.

And he's so obedient. Good dog!

However, most of us don't obey quite so well. God's Word commands a proactive seeking of peace in all of our relationships. Although peace is not possible with all people, as much as possible, we must seek peace with others.

Active peacemaking fights against the way I sometimes live out my relationships.

It's so much easier to find faults in people and allow those picky findings to hinder real intimacy. I don't want to admit I struggle with petty emotions of anger, envy or impatience against someone. I want to be bigger than that. So instead of forgiving the trivial or confronting the evil in a sister's life, I choose to hide or avoid the issue. When lived this way, life begins to fill up with many lukewarm, how-can-I-avoid-her relationships. But God wants so much more for us.

Notice the emphases in the following passages:

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
—Romans 12:18

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
—Romans 14:19

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: —Hebrews 12:14

For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.
—1 Peter 3:10–12

Peace in our lives doesn't mean sitting quietly by, simply not causing disturbances. Real peacemaking involves a passionate seeking after healthy relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. So if you have to chase people down the street, slobber them upside their heads, or nip at their heels, do it. Pursue people; seek peace.

Charity VanWinkle is a twenty-six-year-old single gal who works at Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions as the editorial assistant for Heartbeat. She is planning to depart for cross-cultural service in Central Asia in 1999.

A note from Patty and Charity: We would like this column to be written about you, by you, and for you! To accomplish this goal, WE NEED YOUR HELP. Please send us your ideas and suggestions. (Tell us your suggestions for a different name for this column!) Perhaps you have written an article or poem that you would like to share with other girls your age. Maybe you would like to write a letter telling of your group's latest activity. Be sure to include photos!

Mail your ideas, etc., to CoLaborer Magazine, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, Tennessee, 37011-5002 ♦



A Brand New Family

Gain insight into senior adult ministry through the eyes of a pastor's wife.

by Odessa Ledlow

This October we will celebrate our golden wedding anniversary. Most of our years as husband and wife have been spent pastoring churches and mission projects.

These have been wonderful, rewarding years. I would not have had it any other way. The people God has given us to serve will always have a special place in our hearts.

Often life runs on fast forward and soon retirement comes into focus. In our last pastorate, we reached retirement age and thought it best not to accept another full-time work. We certainly didn't want to be inactive in God's service. Opportunities for ministry through special services, revivals and supply preaching would always arise. God knows our capabilities and resources and He controls our future.

Several years earlier, we bought a house in the city where we wanted to retire. While we pastored it stayed rented out until needed.

On several occasions, my husband commented that after retired, he would like to work with senior adults. He has always had a special love for the elderly. In all our pastorates, senior adults were included in our church plans—special days, trips, fellowships and other activities. However, our time with them was limited because of responsibilities to the entire church family.

Many Free Will Baptist churches hire youth pastors, but few have a pastor for senior adults. We did not know of any church available. God knew our heart's desire. If this was in His divine will, He would bring it to pass (Psalm 37:4).

Two years passed. We received a telephone call from the pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church in the city where we had our retirement home. He had heard that our

desire was to minister to senior adults when we retired. My husband assured him this was our sentiment. The pastor asked, "Are you ready to come on?" Wow! I just could not believe this! Could it really be happening? To think, God had been working in our behalf all the time. I had to thank Him and praise Him! I claimed Psalm 37:23.

My husband accepted the challenge. We stayed with our church another year and resigned. Leaving the people wasn't easy. Still, eager anticipation awaited us.

New Beginnings

We settled in our new home and started attending church regularly, becoming acquainted with many of the senior adults. In a short time, we began our ministry as pastor and pastor's wife to a brand new family.

A survey obtained essential information from every senior adult in our church and Sunday school membership. Then we began our visitation.

I had read that approximately one-fifth of the average congregation is made up of senior adults. We certainly had the average.

In our visits, we became more and more acquainted and our hearts began to interweave. We needed them and they needed us. Never had we had the sole responsibility of an age group. With God's help, we were determined to give it our best.

In visiting our seniors adults, we observe the uniqueness of each one. Some are physically strong, able to manage their own affairs, while others are not well. Some are

highly active, other more sedate. Some are independent, others need and accept help. This is why personal visits are so important. We learn of their physical needs and many times the spiritual needs in their lives.

Some are widows living alone with little opportunity of being with others. Some even doubt God's promises and their relationship to Him when life does not fulfill their expectation. There are those who incur economic loss or lose their independence. We offer them encouragement through the Word and prayers. Spirits are refreshed with the assurance that God is always near and He will not forsake them.

Rewards and Ministry

Phrases such as, "stay awhile longer," "You made my day," "It breaks the monotony," "Would you like something to drink?" makes our work seem all worthwhile.

We visit in homes where minor repairs are needed. My husband rolls up his sleeves and goes to work. He is neither a carpenter nor a plumber, but indeed he can be. We rake leaves, trim shrubbery, repair bird houses, help shell peas and even sit on a front porch in a rocking chair.

Sometimes our ministry means being available for shopping assistance, transportation to the doctor's office or hospital, a ride to church.

We are careful not to overlook opportunities for spiritual enrichment for our senior family. The church meets many of these needs and interests through the Sunday school, sermon topics that speak

to the need of the entire church, and other special services.

Church fellowship on Sunday night, banquets, church picnics and conferences provide spiritual and social enrichment. Both are vital to the aging person as he experiences retirement. No one ever reaches the state of perfection. Senior adults can continue to grow.

I suppose of all the activities and services we have with our senior adults, the monthly meeting is the highlight. This is **their** service. Everyone receives a warm greeting as he or she arrives. We enjoy a delicious meal prepared by the ladies.

The inspirational part of the service may vary. We sing, pray, testify. Occasionally, we are treated with a special song or recitation from someone in our group. The devotional message is presented either by the senior adult pastor or by one of the senior adults.

We recognize birthdays and anniversaries. Sometimes we play a Bible quiz game. The meeting lasts about two hours. Oh yes, sometimes we sing a special in our Sunday morning worship service. What an opportunity to uncover overlooked talent!

Who are Senior Adults?

They are God's creation. They were once busy, energetic, involved people. Now some have frail limbs, slowing minds and lack of energy, but God has a purpose for all His creation. His promises are not limited by age. Seniors are persons of worth, not only as God's creation,

also for what they have done, what they can do and for who they are. They are free to be themselves. Society needs the energetic enthusiasm, the freshness and new ideas of our younger generation. However, the maturity, wisdom and spiritual leadership of our senior adults strike a balance. Age yields spiritual maturity, wisdom, and balance (Job 12:12).

Common wisdom claims the mind of a senior adult would equal

*Four
great qualities
are needed
when working
with senior adults:
a listening ear,
a patient disposition,
a persevering spirit,
an encouraging
nature.*

the contents of a library. They deserve recognition and honor. Yes, they are God's creation, created in His image. Where would our country be without them?

Four great qualities are needed when working with senior adults: a listening ear, a patient disposition, a persevering spirit, an encouraging nature.

Listen intently to what they say. The best and most fruitful visit you will have is when you let them do the talking. They like to reminisce of days gone by, show you pictures in the photo album and talk of their heavenly home. Accept each one and look for the potential in him or her.

When we began working with seniors, we knew our lives were an open book before their eyes. We had to have a genuine love for and interest in them. They had to see Christ demonstrated in our lives before we could win their confidence. There had to be a trust.

Since we have been here, our love has grown and there is a bond which no one can break. They have become our family. Like Paul of old, "They are in our mind, prayers, and heart." (Philippians 1:3-7)

The Lord has given us real peace and fulfillment in our senior years. We thank God, our Father for this ministry—working with the senior adults! There's no other place we would rather be.

Actually, we have a group of people we can relate to. You see, we seniors are often referred to as the "over the hill gang." As some dear saint replied, "We'd rather be over it than under it." ♦

Odessa Ledlow lives in Sylacauga, AL where she and her husband Ed minister to senior adults through the First Free Will Baptist Church.

See Springboard (Service Chairman) for specific senior adult ministry ideas.

Order My Steps, Lord

PROGRAM

Women Nationally Active for Christ Eleventh National Retreat Ridgecrest, NC

September 24–26, 1998

About the Special Speaker

Glenda Revell
is the author
of *Glenda's
Story: Led by
Grace—*

her own eloquent
testimony of the Lord's
love and grace
throughout a hideously
abused childhood.
She never accepted the
"victimization" label,
and with her husband
has established
a Christian home with
four children.

See the March/April issue for reservation form or request one from WNAC.

September 24 / Thursday Afternoon

- 3:00–7:00 Registration and check-in
5:30 Supper
7:30 **General Session**
Welcome: Mary Wisehart
Speaker: Glenda Revell

September 25 / Friday Morning

- 7:30 Breakfast
8:30 **General Session**
9:00 Fun Time: Joanne King
10:00 Introducing the New WNAC Executive Secretary
11:00 Speaker: Glenda Revell

September 25 / Friday Afternoon

- 12:00 Lunch
1:00 **Your Choice**
Missionary Displays, WNAC literature room
Recreation
5:30 Supper
7:00 **General Session**
Missionary Offering
Missions Service

September 26 / Saturday Morning

- 7:30 Breakfast
8:30–9:15 **General Session**
Speaker: Glenda Revell



MISSION ALERT:

Evangelism News from Around the World

Nantes, France

The World Soccer Cup is happening in France during June and July this year. The Nantes evangelical community is hosting an Operation Mobilization team. This means that Christians from Brazil, England and other countries are descending on the area to do evangelism during the five World Cup games taking place in Nantes. Missionary Dennis Teague was chosen to coordinate these efforts.

The small evangelical community in the Nantes area needs prayer as they face the responsibility and privilege of sharing and helping others share the message of God's Good News during this time when thousands of people will be there for these matches.

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The Bryans and Pinkertons report progress and growth in the Abidjan mission work. They now have four Neighborhood Outreach Groups meeting in homes besides worship services meeting in rented facilities. Pray for the Pinkertons as they will be assuming greater responsibilities as the Bryans begin stateside assignment this Summer.

Montevideo, Uruguay

The Owen and Franks, Jr. families in Montevideo report that five new contacts have been made as a result of the first few cell group meetings.

The Malvin Alto church in Montevideo lost their rented facilities when the owner asked for the house for his son. They have divided into two cell groups so they won't be so crowded in the homes.

Including money from the Vision Project, a total

of \$84,500 was raised for the Pro-Building Fund in 1997. Pray for the missionary team in Uruguay and Uruguayan believers as they cooperate to build churches.

Jacksonville, Florida

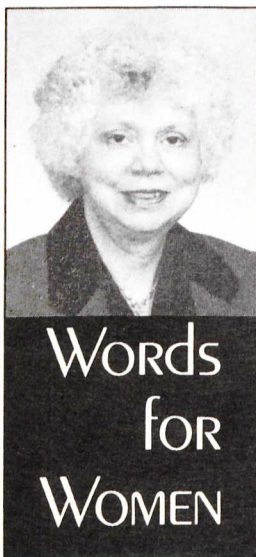
Missionary Odis Whitehead reports that the ministry at Faith Chapel Mission continues to expand. They now have three age groups in Children's Church. They also have three visitation times to offer different opportunities each week for folks to follow Christ's command to go and tell.

Weslaco, Texas

The church at Weslaco began having English services in January and the services have had a positive impact on the entire church. The English services meet a need for year-round residents and winter visitors. Missionary James Munsey pastors and Rigo Lumbreras serves as Associate Pastor for this mostly Spanish-speaking church. Luis Felipe Tijerina and Fred Pohler, both members of the Weslaco church, have announced their call to preach.

Chicago, Illinois

In February the church in Chicago set a new average attendance record of 35. Their Valentine's Outreach was a success with over 80 in attendance. Missionary David Potete requests prayer for more faithfulness in participation by attendees. Prayer also for the Chicago Property Fund Campaign. Property is costly in Chicago, but the Potetes believe the work would move faster if they could start meeting in a permanent facility. ♦



*Mary Ruth
Wischert*

*M*y red balloon. I can see it now, floating in the air at the end of the string.

I must have been four or five years old. Someone gave me a dime. In those days a dime was quite a sum, especially for a child.

I could have bought a pair of anklets—that's what we called socks in those days. Someone suggested I could buy a ticket to the theater, but that was not allowed in my family. I could have bought something to eat or something that would last.

But I had my eyes on that red balloon. Even though my advisors warned me that my purchase would not last and I'd probably be sorry, the dime was mine. I could choose how to spend it.

I bought the red balloon.

As I was playing with it in the yard, I noticed that the dog was afraid of it. He would run when I approached him with my red balloon. What fun! I chased the dog, laughing. Just then my balloon hit the low hanging branch of a shrub. Pouf! The balloon was just a small splattered piece of rubber.

How much that reminds me of us human beings at times.

What do we spend our energies, our strength for every day? What do we long for? Do we make having houses, lands, cars, clothes, luxuries of all kinds our goal in life? What do we value most? Riches? Proverbs 23:4–5 reminds us, "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

Just think. We could have the riches that are eternal and will not go pouf! will not fly away.

Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

What are these riches? Well, of course, He owns the whole universe. He made it bow down to answer David's prayer (Psalm 18). He reminds us that the cattle on a thousand hills are His (Psalm 50:10). He also says the gold and the silver are His (Haggai 2:8). Remember the words of the chorus we used to sing often, "He is my father so they're mine as well."

Even greater riches than these are ours. Just read Ephesians 1 to see what is ours, "according to the riches of his grace." Romans 11:33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We have an inheritance to anticipate. Colossians 1:12, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

So, which are you going to choose today? The red balloon that goes pouf! Or the riches that last right on into eternity? ♦

missions update

Missions Hotline

615•731•3839
e-mail:
carole@nafwb.org

*"I want
you, not
yours."*

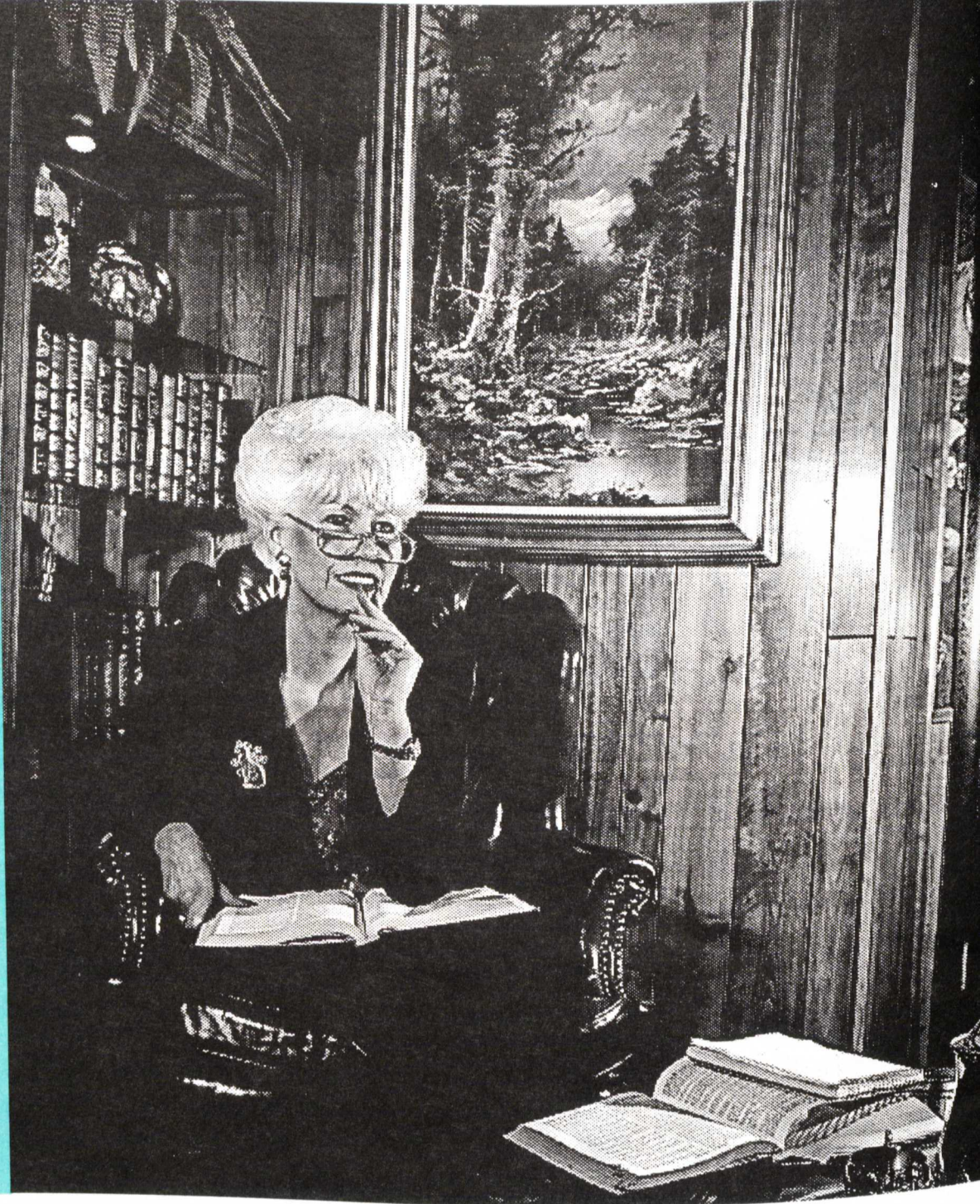
1998

WNAC

Emphasis

Month

is August



CoLaborer Magazine
P.O. Box 5002

Antioch, TN 37011-5002

*Periodical postage paid at Antioch, Tennessee
and additional mailing offices*

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to above address.