

A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

CoLaborer

A woman with long dark hair is wearing a large, colorful, multi-patterned hat with a wide brim and a yellow short-sleeved shirt. She is leaning over a garden bed, tending to a variety of colorful flowers, including yellow and pink blooms. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage.

Opportunities:
A Legacy of
Faith

Unwritten
Letters

May • June 2000

VISION

Rhonda McReynolds



To Train up a Child

Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). This verse sounded loudly through the church. Sitting in the pew as a child, I didn't fully understand the meaning or importance of these words. I knew they must hold a lot of meaning. After all, pastors were preaching it. My parents often recited it. It even hung on the church wall in a beautiful frame. These words must be a rule to live by. However, as a child, the significance was not clear.

Looking back, I am so thankful that God thought these words were important enough to include in Life's Little Instruction Book. Most of all, I am thankful for two parents who hid these words in their hearts and lived them each day. Whether I was a baby climbing on the shelves or a teenager climbing the walls of discipline, my mom and dad used the Bible as their guide to point me in the right direction. From a small child, I knew about this man named Jesus and what He meant to the world. Mom and Dad taught the principles of the Bible to my sister, brother and me. Even more importantly, they walked daily by the Scripture. They were examples of how a child of God should live.

Now, more than ever, I realize the difficult task of parenting — the tough choices that must be made, the consistency that must be established, the firm hand that must be upheld and the loving heart that must get broken when a child is hurting. I can better understand the times that "no" seemed so harsh and why I was not "spared the rod" instead of being spoiled.

Ephesians 6:24 states, "Do not provoke your children to wrath but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." Moms and dads have one of the most difficult, important, life-long responsibilities given by God.

I am reminded by Mother's Day and Father's Day how blessed I am to have been brought up in a Christian home. My mom and dad taught me right from wrong, prayed with me through the years, helped me to find my place in this world — in God's hands.

Although I don't have children, I know when the time comes, I can only hope to instill the Christian principles and values that Mom and Dad permanently impressed upon my life. Without Christian training, where would I be.

Training up a child — Wow! What a privilege! What a joy! What a responsibility!

Happy Mother's Day! Happy Father's Day! to all who share the call of parenting. ❖

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Singles

by: Sue Smith



When I agreed to write about how the church can better minister to Christian single adults, my first thoughts were, "Well I was single longer than most, and I do work with the singles at our church...this should be a piece of cake!" However, nothing is ever that simple and singles certainly aren't simple either.

Single adults vary in ages, sizes, tastes, temperaments and careers — just like old married folks. If it's true that single adults share the same qualities as "normal" people, why is it that we treat them differently? Our attitudes and viewpoints of the single life reflect just how differently we view them.

Often we glamorize the single lifestyle. "Everyone knows that single adults are footloose and fancy-free. No cares; no woes; no worries; no problems! Just time and money to spare!" The single is confronted with these attitudes regularly.

The Single's Finances:

The first attitude I want to approach is how we perceive the single regarding finances and responsibilities.

"What do you do with all your money? What bills could a single person possibly have?" Have you heard that said to a single? Ever had such thoughts? These statements are frustrating since the implications are: (1) they always have surplus money, (2) they are wasteful, and (3) they are irresponsible. What a put down!

Without exception, the singles I interviewed said this was the number one misconception they face. This is both degrading and demeaning.

"Well, just what do these singles do with all their money anyway?"

How many people do you know (single or married) receive free housing and rent? Do you know anyone who gets groceries, gasoline, clothing, cars, laundry, and teeth fixed for free? Obviously, married people must think singles receive special rates or their money has magical powers. Think for a moment. If this were true, marriage would become extinct. Not very realistic is it?

The single does have bills and responsibilities. Their lives get just as "exciting" with life's little surprises -- car repairs, unexpected doctor's visits and appliance replacements as does the married—with only one paycheck to foot the bill. Ah, the glamour and excitement of the single life!

The church should take a more sensitive approach concerning finances and the single. We assume, without facts, that they are free spirits without responsibilities, cares or worries. The single, believe it or not, is under no obligation to share her financial matters with us. The single is accountable only to God for the way she manages her finances.

Be a real friend to the single. This will enable you to give direction and advice IF and when it is wanted. If you ever feel led to "help" a single, bear in mind, this does not give you the right to pry into her finances. Your helping does not make her accountable to you.

The Single's Time:

Another perception we have of singles is that they have an abundance of time and nothing to do. While it's true their calendar isn't full of PTA meetings, taking little David to soccer practice, or making cupcakes for Amy's homeroom, there are groceries to be bought, laundry to be done, toilets to be cleaned, and "someone" has to deal with the garbage. Not one single I know has a maid service or a personal valet. So much for that myth!

I believe everyone in the local church should be involved in some area of ministry. Singles offer knowledge, talent and time. However, we often take for granted their willingness and availability. After all, "What could they possibly have to do?"

Do people really think like this? You better believe it. Such an attitude portrays to singles that their time is not valued or respected. How would that make you feel?

We assume that because they don't have families, they can at a moment's notice fill in for the delinquent nursery worker or substitute for the children's church teacher. They never need a break, or they never need fellowship with other

adults. Instead, we often delegate them to a position that offers little or no interaction within the church body.

While singles' time IS more flexible, they do have a life, and they DO have things to occupy their time. They only wish they could spend all their time reading, watching movies or shopping at the mall. They are an integral part of the church today as never before. They direct plays, work in the nursery, participate in Women Active for Christ, and teach Sunday school and CTS classes. They do a great job, and they want to be part of the local church.

By being considerate of singles' time and schedule, you can avoid taking them for granted. Give someone else a chance to serve. Remember an ounce of consideration prevents a pound of resentment! (A new proverb from a former single.) No one likes to be taken for granted.

The Single's Singleness

Another prevailing attitude is that "It's just not normal to be unmarried at your age." And then we hit the single with, "What's wrong with you anyway?" "A nice person like you — I can't believe you're not married yet." "You must be too picky." "I know someone who is just perfect for you." We come on like gangbusters and cause them to feel as though they're weird, abnormal, or sinful because they're unmarried.

We take on the calling to "fix" them up. We operate on the idea that if two people are Christians, then they're perfect for one another.

We should be careful with matchmaking. First, check with the single. See if there is interest in meeting someone before inviting him or her to dinner to surprise them with "someone special." A few questions could prevent awkward and embarrassing moments.

Be careful not to point out a person's marital status at the onset of an introduction. Being the intelligent and astute adults they are, they've already guessed your motive.

What does the Bible say about marriage and a single person? In I Corinthians 7:1, 7-8, Paul states that it is good for man not to marry and that his wish is that everyone would remain single. In verses 32-35, Paul makes the point that as a single your primary concern is for the Lord's affairs and how to please God. The married person's interests are divided between God and pleasing their spouse. Being single, therefore, is not sinful or unnatural.

Now we know God is not against marriage. Later in this passage, Paul speaks to those who are married. He tells them that they should stay married. The Bible teaches that marriage is good, honorable and ordained of God. God uses not only those who are married, but also singles to accomplish His purpose. We only have to look at our own missionary roster to see that God has used singles to accomplish mighty things for Him.

Few are called to remain single, it's true, but some are chosen. Let's not make life harder by constantly pointing out singles' inability to find a mate. Love, appreciate and enjoy singles. Pray for them as they seek God's guidance and direction in the issue of marriage.

Today, young adults are choosing to stay single longer. One reason for this trend is that singles today is very career oriented. Also, singles have

witnessed friends who married early only to go through terrible divorces. Many experienced bad relationships and refuse to chance it again too quickly. Then, there are those who patiently wait for God's best.

In Summary:

In many churches today, single adults slip through the cracks. We do not meet their needs or give them a sense of belonging. We too often put up a wall of segregation by unwittingly planning adult activities geared only to couples, rather than for all the adults of the church. It has not been our intention to cause unmarried people to feel like displaced third class citizens, but I'm afraid we have.

I hope that you have been able to see more clearly the needs of today's singles. I hope that you have been challenged to take a new look and approach to singles. Seek opportunities to become acquainted with those who are unmarried in your church. You may be shocked to find you have much in common and how that your life will be blessed because you cared enough to take the time.

If your church doesn't have a single's ministry, start one. There are many benefits. The friendships are very meaningful and the fellowship—well, you just have to be there. ♦



Sue Smith resides in Nashville, Tennessee. She attends Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church.



Opportunities:

A Legacy of Faith

by: Brenda Britton

Introduction:

I became a Christian at age six and rededicated my life at thirteen. I desired to be a missionary, for I felt God had given me a wonderful message to share. It was as if God opened a door before me, and I had to walk through it. I later attended a

Bible college, married a minister, and settled into my Christian life, still carrying my faith through the mountains and valleys of life.

One hot August day, my life changed forever. My first daughter was born. As I looked at her for

the first time, I was overwhelmed with love, awe, and wonder. Tears flowed as I realized my great responsibility to this child. A desire to pass on a part of myself sprang up within me. A hope for the future rested in this child. How could I show her the open door?

Since that day, four more wonderful daughters and a son have entered my life. They bring much joy to my life; they are truly God's gift to my husband and me. While each child has been a unique challenge, there are some principles which have proven effective for all of them. My husband and I have used these Biblical concepts to open the door of faith to our children.

when thou sittest..." Once our salvation is sure and our convictions are strong, we are ready to teach, train, and instruct. This challenging task must begin at birth and continue throughout the teenage years. Good teaching involves much repetition. Just as the scripture's example shows, we must teach while sitting at the dinner table, riding in the car, lying down at night, and rising in the morning. We must take every opportunity to mold these young lives for the task ahead for Christ.

III. PERSEVERANCE

(Galatians 6:9) "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint

"Parents, we are given an open door to pass on the legacy of our faith and convictions."

I. PURPOSE

God gives clear instructions for establishing strong families. First, we must determine *our purpose*. Deuteronomy 6:5-6 states, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Before we can pass on the message of God's love and forgiveness, we must first take ownership of salvation. We must firmly establish our convictions and consistently practice them in our daily lives. Our children should see this purpose shining through in how we live each day.

II. PREPARATION

(Deuteronomy 6:7) "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them

not." The third quality needed to carry parents through the parenting years is *perseverance*. Parenting is not a short-term project. It is a lifetime commitment with no refunds or exchanges. At times, the job may be tiring and painful. Doubt arises about the job we are doing. Our children seem to make foolish choices in spite of our careful training, prayer, and sacrifices for them.

Remember, they are children and "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child" (Proverbs 22:15). Therefore do not ever, ever give up. If you feel you can't take another step, take another one anyway. Continue to persevere. Perseverance will help you do the important things for the right reasons when all the wrong things seem to be happening. Isaiah 41:13 says, "For I am the Lord thy God ... Fear not; I will help thee."

IV. PRAYER

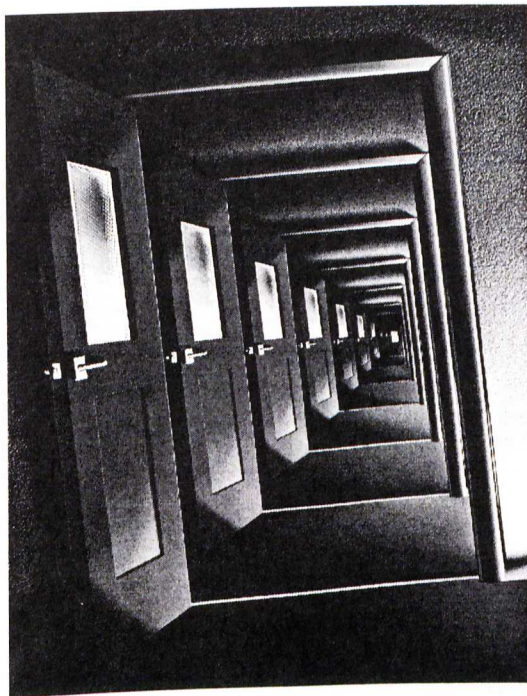
"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). Prayer may be listed last, but it is by no means the least important door we can open to our children. In fact, we should envelope our children in prayer. We should pray regularly for and with our children. Bring every dream, frustration, care, and desire for your child to God.

Ask for wisdom as you pray. Also pray for your child before she enters new stages of her life. Ask for protection and guidance for your child. Nothing is too small to pray for. Saturate the seeds you have planted in your child's life with prayer. Entrust each child to the love and protection of our Heavenly

Father, and, finally, recognize His sovereignty over each life.

Parents, we are given an open door to pass on the legacy of our faith and convictions. Being Godly

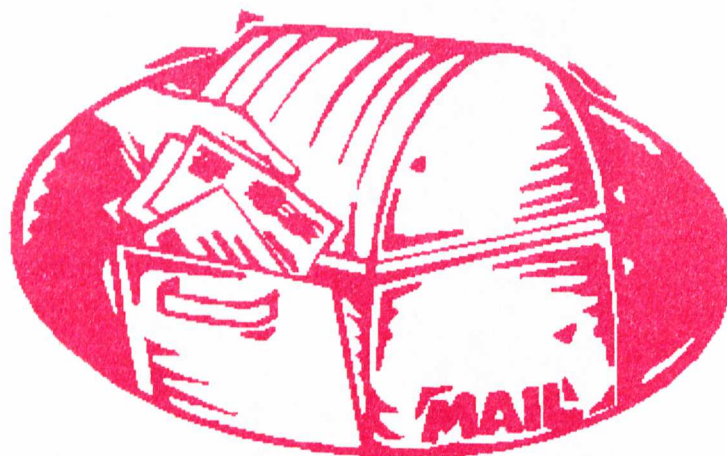
parents is hard work. It involves long hours, much prayer and great courage. Often there is no one to cheer us on, and it is a lonely task. But take heart, there are plenty of rewards. Nothing can compare to the joy of seeing your child step through the open door, run the race, and walk in truth. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth" (III John 1:4). ♦



Brenda Britton is a teacher at Woodbine Christian Academy in Nashville, TN.

Unwritten Letters

By: Joanne King



Scripture — *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you (Heb. 13:17).*

Song — *Saviour Like A Shepherd Lead Us*

Introduction:

How many times have you felt so burdened that you were compelled to write a letter to someone but never did? The following are some letters concerning the problems of teens that should have been written but probably never were! Are there any lessons for us as parents and grandparents to learn from them? (The Scripture text given has a two-fold message. It admonishes teens to obey their parents, while it warns parents that we will give an account to God one day.)

Dear Dad,

Do you love me? This may seem like a silly question because, even though you don't live in the house with us, you have given me everything I could possibly want—a new car, trendy clothes, and all the money I need. As I think of you tonight, my heart tells me you love me, however, love is not spelled t-h-i-n-g-s; it is spelled t-i-m-e. I need you more than I need the trinkets, treasures, and toys.

Of course, I'm not the only teen who is missing a father at home tonight. In 1960 there were fewer than six million children in single-parent families. Today, I'm one of eighteen million. Almost 40% of us live in homes where the biological father is absent, and for the first time in American history, the average child will live a significant period of time without a father in the home. Surely, I can make it without you.

Please don't tell mom, but I am in some trouble. That should not come as a surprise either. Statistics say that fatherless children are anywhere from 100 to 200% more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems. A child who comes from a fatherless home is twice as likely to use drugs or alcohol, far more likely to become sexually active at an early age, and three times as likely to commit a violent crime. Over 50% of teenagers who attempt suicide live in single family homes, and 70% of juveniles in long-term correctional facilities grew up without a father in the home.

Did you know that fatherless daughters are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers, 111% more likely to have children as teenagers, and 164% more likely to have a child out of wedlock? Fatherless daughters who marry have a 92% higher divorce rate, and fatherless sons are 35% more likely to experience marital failure.



I heard that living without a dad in the home is the most harmful trend of this generation.

Dad, I love you, and I need you in my life more than you can ever know. It is my prayer that God will light a candle in your heart to lead you to be the dad I need. Please ask God's help in making you not only a good dad, but also a godly dad.

Love, Your Teenager

Dear Teenage Daughter,

Sex education is our responsibility. Studies show that strong parental values and parental supervision have the most significant effect on a teen's sexual activity. Proverbs 5 tells us to instruct our children because they "die for lack of instruction and in the greatness of their folly they go astray."

We thank God that you are a virgin and pray that you will remain one until your wedding night. Purity is the one thing you had when you were born, and you don't lose it when you marry; you share it. Purity shared in marriage lasts forever, but if wasted before marriage, it is lost forever.

There are some pitfalls to avoid and some commitments to make if you are to remain pure. Solomon told a story in Proverbs about a young man who walked down the street and turned into the house of a harlot. His first mistake was that he was in the wrong place, at the wrong time, with the wrong person. You can't get hooked on cocaine if you never use it. You can't become an alcoholic if you never drink it. You can't commit sexual sin if you do not allow yourself to get into the wrong situation. We are all prone to wander, but God has laid down some boundaries we must not cross, certain places we should

never go, and certain people we should never accompany. Never is there a right time to be in the wrong place with the wrong people.

Sweetheart, sexual sin demands a payday. Friends may never know about the sin; families may never find out, but payday will come. The price for sexual sin is too high. The cost is too great. Six thousand teens contract a venereal disease every day. The risk of AIDS is phenomenal, and the disease kills 90% of its victims within five years. Fornication is a natural-born killer. It kills reputations, testimonies, and peace with God. It is a bad bargain to trade the birthright of a clear conscience for the pottage of temporary sexual satisfaction.

In Proverbs 5:15-19 Solomon asked, "Why would you drink from the polluted water that comes from the sewer of promiscuous sex when, if you wait, you can drink the clean water that comes from the well of a devoted spouse." In other words, true love waits, and true love is worth the wait.

Love, Mom & Dad

Dear Teenage Son,

For your sake I'm writing today about drinking. I know that alcohol use typically begins around the age of thirteen and that a full 35% of fourth graders (ages 9-10) have been pressured by classmates to drink. Seventy-five percent of all high school students drink, and by the twelfth grade, 93% of all boys and 87% of the girls will have taken at least one drink. I hope I have not waited too long to address this subject.

God has a wonderful plan for your life. We

do not want the after-effects of alcohol to short-circuit that plan and cause you unnecessary pain and destruction. Alcohol claims more addicts than any other drug in America. It kills more people than AIDS, heroin, cocaine, marijuana and crack combined. But because of its social acceptance, we've been conditioned to think that practically everybody drinks, and something's wrong with those who don't.

Solomon did not hesitate to say that "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). Alcohol is the fourth largest cause of death after heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Sixty-two people are killed every day in alcohol-related automobile accidents. One-half of all murders, fires, drownings, traffic fatalities and air plane crashes are related to alcohol. Ninety-three percent of all hit-and-run accidents and 80% of all crime is directly related to the influence of alcohol. Eighty-five percent of youngsters in children's homes are there because they had to leave homes that were broken by alcohol. What a price we pay for *drinking*.

We simply ask that you remember that you are not your own, but you've been bought at a great price. You are to honor God with your body. What does this mean? It means that because the body is His, and the Holy Spirit lives within, intentionally doing things which harm it violates God's command (I Cor. 6:19-20). God is not against pleasure. He wants you to enjoy life to the fullest. But He knows that sin's *pleasure for a season* eventually takes us further than we want to go and costs us more than we want to pay. In other words, the consequences

75%
of all
high school
students
drink

far outweigh the brief moments of pleasure. Guilt, addiction and separation from God is the way of alcohol.

If peers pressure you, or if life's hurts are severe, please don't turn to drinking. Draw nigh to God, and He will make you a better, happier person. Seek to know God as your best friend.

Love, Mom & Dad

Dear Parents,

The warning in Hosea 4:6 applies to us "...seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

Some of you think your family has really messed up— sexual sins, abortions, alcohol abuse, and more. When Israelites refused to repent, God sent a swarm of locust to devour their land. In Joel 2:25, however, God promised "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten..." The same promise is yours if you are true to His Word. God can take shattered pieces of your lives and rebuild new lives to His glory. Our teens are worth saving! ♦

Love, A Friend



Joanne King is an administrator at Cramerton Christian school. She serves as Vice President of WNAC.

WNAC local Delegate Form

This certifies that _____ is an authorized delegate

to the WNAC Convention of Free Will Baptists from the _____

(Group Name)

women's group of _____ Free Will Baptist Church,

(Church Name)

(Church Address)

Signed _____ or _____
(Local Coordinator) (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.

Reservation Form

Free Will Baptist WNAC National Retreat

Ridgecrest Conference Center
Ridgecrest, North Carolina

ACCOMMODATIONS

(per person for 2 nights plus 5 meals, including program fee):
Please indicate the # of rooms requested:

- ☐ 1 per room: \$172
☐ 2 per room: \$124
☐ 3 per room: \$112
☐ 4 per room: \$106

Please list all names and addresses of those staying in your room
(Make additional copies if needed):

Your Name: _____

Group/Church Name (if applicable): _____

Home Telephone: _____

Work Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Special Needs: ☐ Disabled access ☐ First floor

GROUP RESERVATIONS:

Total number of rooms needed _____

Number of persons in group _____

List all participants, grouped by roommates. Indicate special needs for each room (disabled access; first floor required). Group should plan to pay with one check, if possible; if not, please notify Ridgecrest in advance.

Theme: Keys to Growth
September 14-16, 2000

If planning to arrive or depart early, please indicate below:

Arrival date: _____ First meal: _____

Departure date: _____ Last meal: _____

HOW TO PAY: Enclose deposit of \$40.00 per person.
Reservations will not be processed without deposit. Deposit will be credited to your account at check-in.

SEND TO: Ridgecrest Conference Center, P.O. Box 128,
Ridgecrest, NC 28770. Fax (828) 669-9721;
Telephone 1-800-588-7222.

NO REFUNDS after August 31, 2000.

Daytime only participants: \$35.00 per adult plus meal costs. Breakfast: \$5.75; Lunch: \$7.00; Dinner: \$8.00.

Transportation:

Ridgecrest is located 17 miles east of Asheville, NC, on Interstate, 40, exit 66. At the top of the ramp, turn left. At the first junction, turn right onto Old U.S. 70. The Ridgecrest entrance is on the left.

The Asheville Regional Airport is serviced by the following airlines: Delta, American, US Air and United.

A Few Ridgecrest Guidelines:

Ridgecrest is a Christian conference center. Guests are expected to dress reflecting a Christian example.

Ridgecrest facilities and grounds are designated as a tobacco-free environment.

No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are permitted on the conference center campus.

We accept personal checks, Visa, MC, and Discover cards. If using a credit card, please complete the following information (credit card users may FAX or phone in reservations):

☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Discover

Signature: _____

Cardholder's Name (print clearly): _____

Card Acct #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

A graphic of a springboard with a stylized arrow pointing upwards and to the right, with a sunburst-like pattern at the base.

Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator

May and June are busy months, so begin your planning now. The National Convention is just a few short months away! You can fill out the Pre-Registration form in this issue on page 20. Also, the hotel room can be reserved by filling out the Housing Form on page 21. Please note that the forms must be sent to different addresses.

This is also a good time to encourage your women to attend this year's retreat in Ridgecrest, North Carolina. This is a wonderful opportunity for WAC's to have a weekend get-a-way full of great fellowship and spiritual growth. Fill out the reservation form on page 14. You may request additional copies from WNAC. We hope to see you at Ridgecrest!

Begin your planning now for a successful Mother/Daughter Banquet. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite all of the women in your church to be a part of WAC. Send a personal invitation to each woman. One suggestion is to take a white or lavender rose soap, wrap netting around the soap and tie with a piece of white or lavender ribbon. You can sprinkle a little glitter on the soap to add a nice touch. Then, attach a strip of paper to the soap with a reminder of the time and place of the Mother/Daughter banquet.

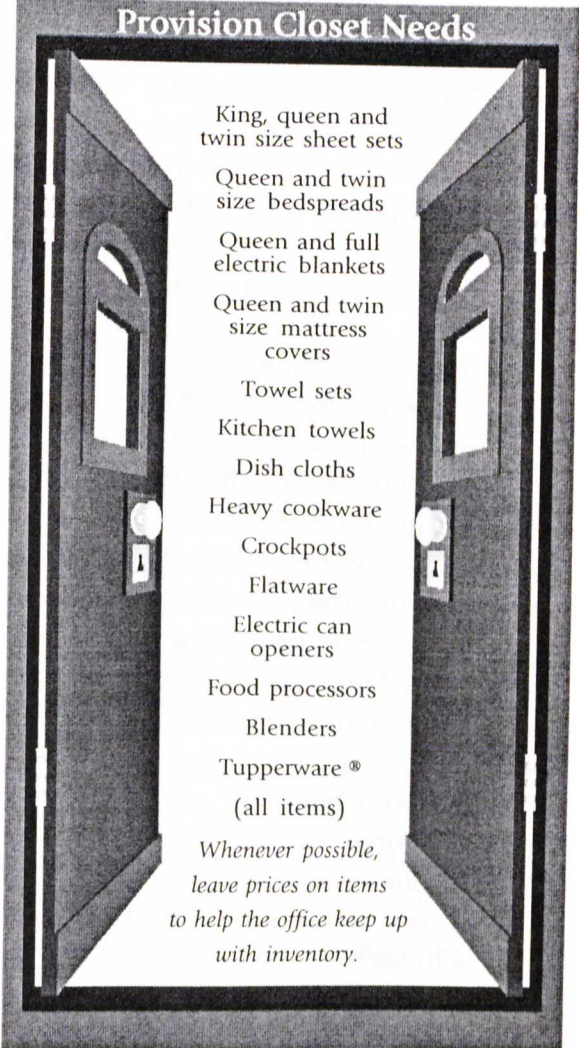
You can also order the playbook *Volume 13: Mother's Day Medley*. The book is \$4 and you can order it through WNAC. The book is a good resource to use in your banquet program.

Secretary/Treasurer

Reminders: It is time to get in annual reports and dues to District officers. Remind your women that dues are \$10 per person.

Also, fill out the delegate form in this issue, or in the March/April issue. Each local church may elect one delegate to register for voting privileges in the WNAC Convention. The form must be filled out and a \$5 registration fee is required.

Provision Closet Needs

A graphic of an open closet with a list of items needed for a provision closet. The list is centered between the two closet doors.

- King, queen and twin size sheet sets
- Queen and twin size bedspreads
- Queen and full electric blankets
- Queen and twin size mattress covers
- Towel sets
- Kitchen towels
- Dish cloths
- Heavy cookware
- Crockpots
- Flatware
- Electric can openers
- Food processors
- Blenders
- Tupperware®
- (all items)

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

Missions Chairman

May is a great month to support the youth in your church and the missionary kids. Cards, gift certificates, Bibles and devotional guides make wonderful gifts for those graduating from college or high school. Make them feel special!

June is a good month to plan an emphasis for state home missions. Encourage your women to support home missions through prayer and finances. Contact your state promotional office to get information about your state.

Prayer Chairman

Spring! All things are becoming fresh and new. Renew your group's prayer time through praise. In your monthly meeting, have each woman in your WAC to give a praise item during prayer. Sometimes we get so busy with "asking" that we forget the "praising."

Also remember the upcoming conventions. Many people need your prayers who are working to make the National Association of FWB Convention memorable.

Study Chairman

Look in the March/April issue for the book review on *How to be a World Class Christian* by Paul Borthwick. This book is a great tool for a group or a personal study.

You can buy the book from the WNAC office for \$10. The price includes shipping and handling. Send your requests to WNAC, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 3701, or call 1-877-767-7662. You can also e-mail us at WNAC@nafwb.org.

Service Chairman

Spring is a great time to collect needed items for the Provision Closet. Have a household shower where each member of your WAC brings a household item. You can plan refreshments, games, fellowship and fun while making a great contribution to our missionaries. ♦

Bible Study

This Bible study outline was adapted from Barbara S. Chafin

Expanding Knowledge

I Timothy 2:15

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Expanding knowledge can be compared to a balloon. It starts out small and empty, but expands as air is put into it. We as Christian women are all at different levels of knowledge in our education and experience, but we each have a need for growth. This happens when we devote time to study God's Word.

I. STRETCH THE BALLOON (*Study*) Read Psalms 25:4.

Study. Start by reading a verse, then a chapter, then a book of the Bible. Get an overview of what God's Word is saying. Take it into your mind, then your heart. Let the Bible change your thinking.

II. PUT AIR IN THE BALLOON (*to show thyself approved unto God*) Read II Cor. 6:1-10.

Seek God's Approval. God's word can point you to the exact spot where you need his touch. Your balloon will deflate when there's a tiny pin hole in it, perhaps made by pride or some other sin that no one but God sees.

III. COMMITTED TO EXPANSION (*a workman*) Read James 2:14-18

Work for God. Commit to using the air God gives you to work for His Kingdom. Women have the opportunity to show God's love to their family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, business associates, etc. Opportunities are open to expand the

Stories to Grow By

God's Faithfulness

by: Sonia Randall

knowledge of Christ in your world. It doesn't take much effort to bake a cake, send a card, or give a kind word. Workers are needed in our churches — choir singers, Sunday School teachers or people willing to visit others.

IV. DEFLATED OR INFLATED? (*that needeth not to be ashamed*) Read Psalms 25:2-3.

Are you ashamed? Did you start out like a big helium balloon that stood tall in the service of the Lord. Now you're deflated and have no interest in spiritual things. Start fresh in the service of God through your local church. You will increase your knowledge by taking in some new material through your local WAC. Prayer meeting can become a time of refreshment if you put forth the effort to attend.

V. INCREASING YOUR DIMENSIONS (*rightly dividing the word of truth*) Read Col. 4:4,8.

Tools for expansion. There are many methods used in proclaiming the Word of Truth. To reach the world, you will need to use all the tools. A woman witnessing to one, a small group reaching a community or the Internet reaching the world, you have a responsibility to give the Word to the world. Challenge: expand your knowledge of Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What can you do to increase your knowledge?
Does God give His approval of your daily activities?
How can you serve God in your community?
Are you ashamed of your testimony?
Can you discuss the Bible with the your friends?

A friend of mine has always wanted to be a missionary to a foreign country. Although she prayed for opportunities, somehow her dream never materialized. When she moved to a large city several years ago, she was fascinated to discover how many international students were attending a nearby university.

In order to meet them, she organized a conversation group for the wives of foreign students. She invites them to her home for meals and fellowship and helps them to improve their language skills. She also spends many hours helping them cope with our culture. Her goal is simply to let them sense God's love through her friendship with them.

Quite often they will ask why she does these things. Then, she shares her faith. The most useful Bible verse she found to share with them is Romans 2:19: "So then, you . . . are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now . . . members of the family of God."

She continues to correspond with many of these friends who have returned to their own countries. Recently she wrote to me: "God knew I would never be able to go abroad, so He brought the mission field to me. Isn't He wonderful!" ♦

Lucy & Marge

LUCY: Marge, here it is almost six months after the Y2K thing, and I still haven't gotten rid of all my stuff.

MARGE: Stuff? What stuff do you mean?

LUCY: Well, it was easy to get rid of the water in the bathtub...

MARGE: Lucy, you really stored water in the bath tub?

LUCY: Well, yes. What if we hadn't had water to flush the commode! And of course you could just as easily get rid of the water in the basins and sink.

MARGE: *(Shaking her head)* I can't believe this! Well then, what do you still have that's bothering you?

LUCY: Marge, don't tell me you didn't save up anything "just in case."

MARGE: We made sure we had candles, extra batteries, and a few gallons of water on hand. But everyone needs those things around all the time.

LUCY: You are so sensible, always, Marge. What I don't know what to do with is that 50-gallon drum of dried beans. Do you have a suggestion?

MARGE: Gracious, Lucy, you could feed the whole city for a week with that!

LUCY: I guess you're right, but I don't think everyone likes beans.

MARGE: I didn't mean that literally. Why not give it to the local rescue mission? I'm sure they can use it.

LUCY: That's right, they have a bean drive every year, don't they? Does our women's group do anything for the rescue mission?

MARGE: Yes, we do, sometimes. Why don't you bring it up at our next meeting (time and date). There may be others who have hoarded, I mean saved, some food also.

LUCY: That's a great idea. I guess I'd like to think there are others who were just as "practical" as I was.

MARGE: Of course you had your children in mind, Lucy. You wouldn't want them to go without food or water!

LUCY: But you know what, Marge, I couldn't help thinking, when there was no emergency, that I needed to have my children prepared for the next events in God's plan.

MARGE: We're going to talk about that at the next two meet-

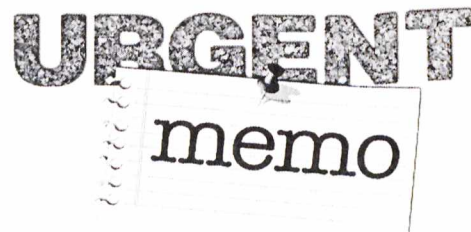
ings of our women's group. You don't want to miss either one of them.

LUCY: I plan to be there, Marge. Unless there's a tornado or a hurricane or an earthquake, that is!

MARGE: Well, Lucy, if there is, you already have your emergency supplies.

LUCY: Right. Maybe I should keep those beans for a little while longer. By the way, do you think the rescue mission would take the two dozen permanent waves and all the hair coloring I saved?

Lucy & Marge in this issue is written by Mary R. Wisehart and Yvonne Hampton of Nashville, TN.



Call
Missions Hotline

615-731-3839

e-mail:
carole@nafwb.org

God Can't Use Me!

by: Debe Taylor

God can't use me!" I could never begin to count the times those words have been said to me. Worse yet, I don't even think I can count the times I have said those words. The problem does not lie in our inability, but rather in the fact that we look at ourselves through "human" eyes. We can not and do not see the potential that God sees.

What are some of the "shortcoming" or "overqualified" excuses we offer God to justify our lack of participation in the ministry of the church?

"I don't have much to offer." Neither did the widow in Mark 12:41-44. Yet she gave what she had - two mites - knowing that if she gave it to the Lord, He would bless both the gift and the giver. True are the words of the song, "Little is much when God is in it." Yield what you have to the Master. Let Him take care of the increase.

"I'm too young." I am sure that Naaman, captain of the Syrian army (II Kings 5), was glad his wife's maidservant did not use this excuse. The young girl knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that the man of God could help Naaman. No matter her age, she couldn't keep silent! We have the answer for all of life's problems. Will we excuse ourselves from sharing the "good news" with others?

"I'm a nobody." A migrant farm worker, widowed, living with her mother-in-law in a strange land are not exactly great credentials. But God used Ruth despite the odds. She was the great grandmother of King David and thus, in the lineage of Christ. When God uses a "nobody," they become "somebody."

"I have a business to manage." So did Lydia, the seller of purple in Philippi (Acts 16:14,15). So did Priscilla, the tentmaker (Romans 16:3,4). Both ladies gave their life to the Lord. Both ladies were instrumental in the establishment of the New Testament Church. Both ladies were able to develop both their spiritual and business lives. They put their priorities in order - making time for God and business.

"I'm too busy." Back that one up all the way to Judges 4. There we meet a lady named Deborah. She was a judge, prophetess and wife. During judicial hours, she held court under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel. In her "spare time," she was a prophetess and a wife. Yet, when asked by Barak (the scaredy cat) if she would go with God's army into battle, she did not make excuses. She went! Busy? Deborah wrote the book on it, but she still served the God of Israel.

Ladies, we need to stop offering excuses. Instead of saying, "God can't use me," let's ask, "How can God use me today?" ♦

He saw not what I was; He saw what I could be.
When He reached His hand to where I was,
He made a change in me.
All He had to hope for was just a possibility,
Still He saw not what I was; He saw what I could be.

-Dan Dean-

Pre-Registration Form

for
National Association of Free Will Baptists
Women Nationally Active for Christ
National Youth Conference
Anaheim, California / July 16-20, 2000

DEADLINE:
Must be postmarked
on or before
June 9, 2000

Please Print: (Only one person per form—make copies if needed.)

Name: _____
Name desired on badge _____ Last Name _____

Home Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone #: (____) _____ - _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female

Church Name: _____ City _____ State _____

Pastor's Name: _____

Note: You may register for all three conventions on this form. (Badges required for convention events.)

National Association Registration Voting Delegates: All voting delegates must be members in good standing of a FWB church. Check only one: ☐ National Board/Commission Member (nbm) ☐ State Delegate (nsd) ☐ Local Church Delegate—\$50 (nld) ☐ Foreign Missionary (nfm) ☐ Home Missionary (nhm) ☐ Ordained Deacon (nde) ☐ Ordained Minister (nor) Non-Voting Attendees: ☐ Licensed Minister (nli) ☐ Visitor (nvi)	National Youth Conference Registration For identification purposes: all NYC participants and all spectators must wear a badge. You must pay \$22* Pre-Registration Fee if: • You are in Grades 1-12 and plan to attend NYC events. • You are Ages 3-6 and plan to attend Pre-School Worship. Check one: ☐ Grades 1-12/attending NYC events—\$22 (y12) ☐ Ages 3-6/attending Pre-School Worship—\$22 (y26) ☐ Visitor (yvi) Birthdate: _____ Age: _____ Grade completed Spring 2000: _____ Parent/Guardian: _____ Youth Leader: _____
WNAC Registration Voting Delegates: Check only one: ☐ National Officer (wof) ☐ State President (wsp) ☐ State Field Worker (wfw) ☐ State Delegate (wsd) ☐ Local WAC Delegate—\$5 (wld) Non-Voting Attendees: ☐ Visitor (wvi) ☐ Missionary (wmi)	

Payment enclosed for:

Tickets: Youth Workers Reception—\$15 WNAC Fellowship Luncheon—\$28 FWBBC Luncheon—\$25	Quantity _____ x \$15 \$ _____ Quantity _____ x \$28 \$ _____ Quantity _____ x \$25 \$ _____
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Delegate Fees:
Local Church Delegate—\$50 (Must enclose signed delegate card; see Contact, page _____ or www.nafwb.org)
Local WAC Delegate—\$5 (Must enclose signed WNAC delegate card; see Contact, page _____ or www.nafwb.org)
Youth Registration Fee:
Pre-Registration Fee—\$22
*On-Site Registration Fee—\$25 **Total \$** _____

Send one check for total amount — payable to FWB Convention.
No refunds after June 9, 2000.

Mail to:
Convention Registration
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

Confirmation letters will be mailed.
→ **(Contact us if you do not receive one.)**
1-877/767-7659

For Office Use Only

Date Rcv'd _____
Clk/MO# _____ Amt _____
From _____

Housing Form

National Association of Free Will Baptists / National Convention

Anaheim, California • July 16-20, 2000

Print or type all information requested and phone, mail or FAX form to the hotel of your choice by **June 16, 2000**. If form is faxed, keep your transaction report as proof of transmittal. You will receive acknowledgment of your hotel assignment by mail within two weeks of the time the form is received by the hotel. All reservations, changes and cancellations should be made directly with the hotels.

DEPOSIT REQUIRED: An advance deposit of **\$135 per room** is required. Your deposit will be charged to your credit card by providing the information requested below. Deposits being made by check should be for **\$135 per room** payable to the hotel of your choice and mailed to the address below. Forms received without credit card information or a check for the deposit will be returned and reservations will not be processed. Hotel refund policies vary. The hotels *prefer* credit cards rather than checks.

Changes or cancellations should be made directly with the hotel. Check your hotel confirmation for instructions regarding cancellation policies and check-in times. Reservations received after June 16, 2000 (or once block is full) will be on a space and rate available basis.

◆ ◆ CIRCLE ROOM TYPE REQUESTED BELOW ◆ ◆

(Rooms with two beds are limited. Please utilize rooms with one bed whenever possible.)

Check Hotel choice ↓	HOTELS	SINGLE 1 bed / 1 person	DOUBLE 1 bed / 2 persons	DBL/DBL 2 beds / 2 persons	TRIPLE 2 beds / 3 persons	QUAD 2 beds / 4 persons	SELF PARKING
	Hilton Anaheim (Headquarters)	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$9 day in/out
	Anaheim Marriott	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$119	\$10 day max

Rates do not include **tax** which is currently 15% in California, plus 15¢ commerce tax per room per night and other applicable taxes.

Indicate Special Requests: ☐ Wheelchair Accessible ☐ Non-Smoking ☐ Crib Other _____
☐ Rollaway (Upon availability at an additional charge.)
 [Only one rollaway per room]

Four ways to make reservations:	By Internet	By Phone	By FAX	By Mail
<i>Hilton Anaheim: (Headquarters Hotel)</i>	hilton.com Group Code --AFW	In CA: 1-800/233-6904 Outside CA: 1-800/222-9923	714/740-4737	Attn: Reservations 777 Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92802-3497
<i>Anaheim Marriott:</i>	(not available)	714/750-8000 or 1-800/228-9290	714/748-2449	Attn: Reservations 700 West Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92802-3483

ARRIVAL DATE / / TIME DEPARTURE DATE / /

APPLY DEPOSIT TO: MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ DISCOVER ☐ AMEx ☐ CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____ NAME ON CARD: _____ SIGNATURE _____
--

☐ CHECK ENCLOSED. CHECK # _____

ROOMMATES: (LIST ALL OCCUPANTS OF ROOM)

(1) _____ (3) _____
 (2) _____ (4) _____

PERSON TO WHOM CONFIRMATION SHOULD BE MAILED. (Please Print or Type Clearly.)

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY/STATE/ZIP _____
 PHONE () _____ FAX () _____

**Send only
one (1)
form per room.**

Women In Action

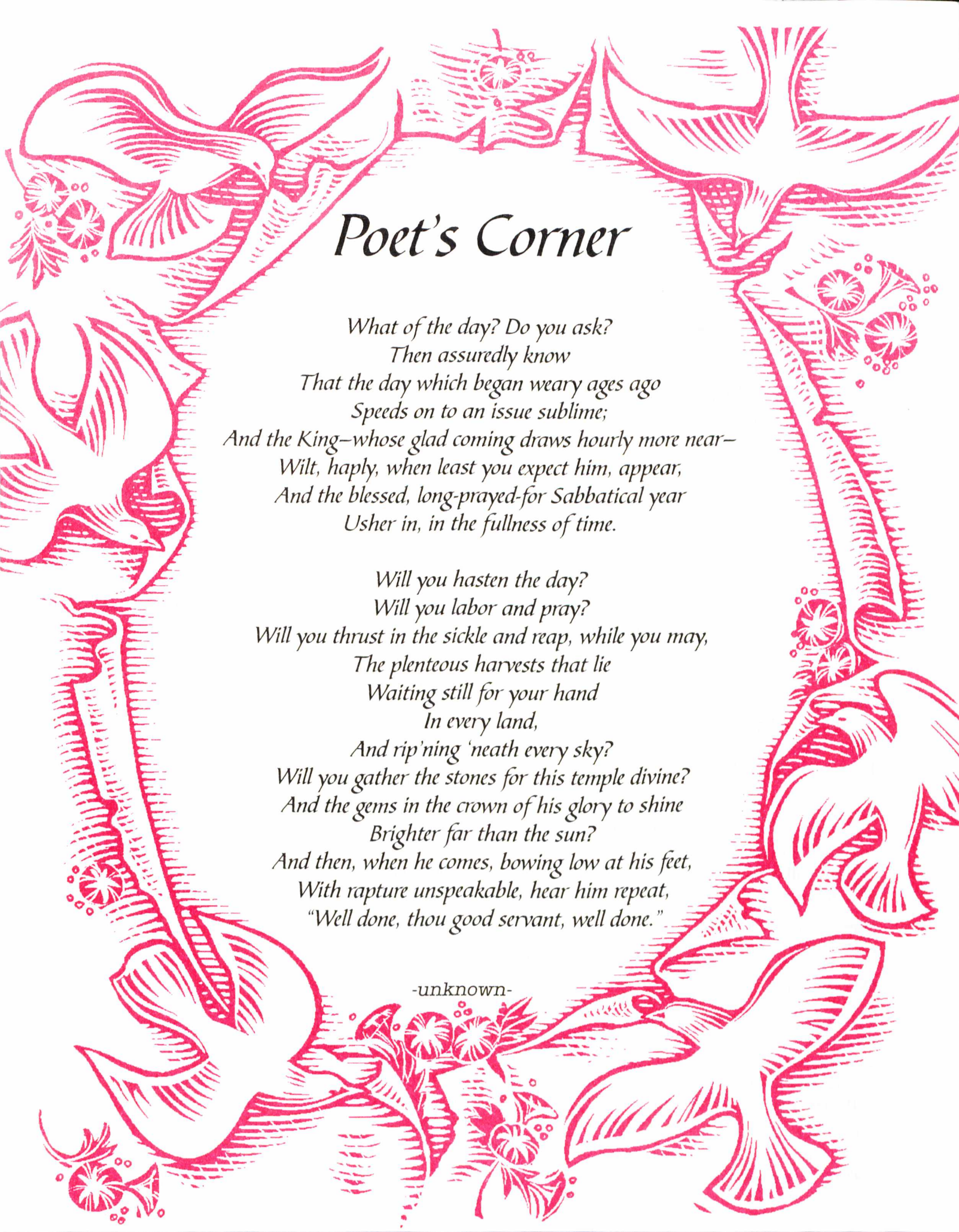


Members of the Abidjan WAC. Madame President Silas is on the front row, next to Carol Pinkerton.



The Central Ohio District Women Active for Christ held a baby shower for the Crisis Pregnancy Center. The shower took place at the children's home and was a big success. The women brought in about \$850 in gifts.



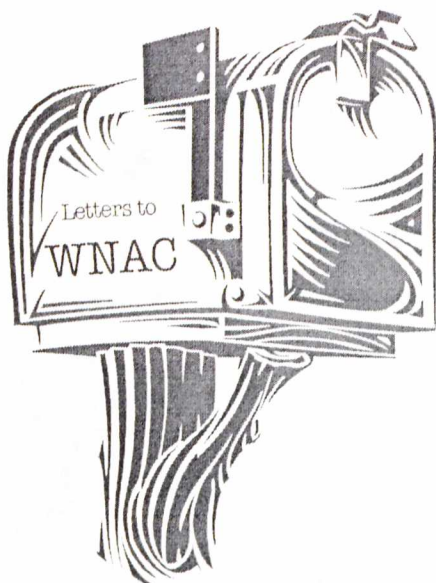


Poet's Corner

*What of the day? Do you ask?
Then assuredly know
That the day which began weary ages ago
Speeds on to an issue sublime;
And the King—whose glad coming draws hourly more near—
Wilt, haply, when least you expect him, appear,
And the blessed, long-prayed-for Sabbatical year
Usher in, in the fullness of time.*

*Will you hasten the day?
Will you labor and pray?
Will you thrust in the sickle and reap, while you may,
The plenteous harvests that lie
Waiting still for your hand
In every land,
And rip'ning 'neath every sky?
Will you gather the stones for this temple divine?
And the gems in the crown of his glory to shine
Brighter far than the sun?
And then, when he comes, bowing low at his feet,
With rapture unspeakable, hear him repeat,
"Well done, thou good servant, well done."*

-unknown-



Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the trip to the Provision Closet. It was a touch of home and Christmas all over again.

As I take these items back to Russia, it will remind me of ladies all across the states who faithfully support us. We appreciate your care and your prayers.

May God bless each one of you.

Cathy Corley

Missionary to Cheylabinsk, Russia

Dear WNAC/MK Ministry Ladies,

Thank you so much for the generous birthday present! It was very much appreciated and very useful (especially for a college student).

You are all very sweet to think of me!

Thanks again. God Bless.

Stephanie McVay

Nashville, TN — Bible College

Dear WNAC,

Thanks so much for the *CoLaborer* magazines you sent. We are Praying and trying to get more of our ladies interested in Missions and we believe that in reading our magazine it will kindle the flame.

Thanks Again and God bless!

Mildred McCray

North Carolina

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for the privelege and joy to go thru the Provision Closet. It is so much fun and excitement and so useful. We have lots of company and the items are really used. That is such a special highlight during our missionary retreat each year. Thank you for a good WNAC office and workers. We appreciate you and your work.

Linda Harvey

Phoenix, Arizona, North Valley FWB Mission

Dear WNAC,

Your September-October program (Come Grow With Me) was such a blessing to our women. The 14 women in our group throughly enjoyed it. Several of our women shared their own experiences when God answered prayer and helped them in troubled times.

Thank you for challenging us to keep on growing.

Elwanda Oakes

Vernon, Alabama

Ladies,

I hope things are going well. We enjoy the *CoLaborer* so much. Keep up the good work and may God bless all of you.

Pansy Cravens

Pomona, California

Left Behind

Tim LaHaye and
Jerry B. Jenkins

Reviewed by:
Lisa Davis

What will happen when the second coming occurs? What will it be like here on earth? Will anyone understand or realize what has happened? Are you as a Christian truly ready? Is there a chance you will be left behind with the unbelievers? *Left Behind* will either answer these questions for you or at least give you food for thought to draw your own conclusions.

Left Behind grabs your attention from the beginning. You dive into the lives of two people who are totally overwhelmed by the devastation after Christ returns. One character gives insight on how the church is affected by this great event. The other character surrounds the political arena with the upcoming arrival of the Antichrist.

The authors do a tremendous job creating a mental picture of events that simultaneously occur and the things that come to pass at His second coming. Some events that take place throughout the book may not surprise you, but other things will startle you. For example, as believers we know that God's children will be taken to heaven during the rapture. Have you ever wondered what will

become of their earthly garments at the moment they disappear? This phenomenon, as well as many others, is discussed in detail and will appeal to your imagination.

While reading *Left Behind*, your heart will not only be saddened for those who did not believe in Christ, but you will be burdened for those who thought they were believers. The authors give a glimpse of what it could be like to think that you were going to heaven only to be left because you did not really know Him.

The book concludes leaving you with a burden for those who are without Christ. You may also re-evaluate your own life to be sure that you are truly walking with the Lord and that you are sharing His truth with those around you. The ultimate lesson is that there is no greater time than the present to share the truth of God so that others will not be left behind.❖

Life!Action

a column/forteens

by: Becky Hale, site leader

When I arrived in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 18, 1999, I had no idea how the week ahead would impact my life. I agreed to be a Service Project Leader for *Reach That Guy*, the division of the National Youth Conference that organizes service projects for youth during the conference. The theme of *Reach That Guy* is "Serving Christ by Serving Others." It is our goal to show Christ's love. As servants, we open doors of opportunity to share the hope within us.

This year *Reach That Guy* had many exciting service opportunities. We served lunch at The Atlanta Union Mission, worked at the Atlanta Food Bank, gardened in the community food gardens, and helped prepare meals for AIDS patients with Project Open Hands. God really blessed all who worked on the service projects.

The main part of my week was spent working with a man named Fred Conrad. He is the Director of the Atlanta Community Food Bank Gardening. The goal of this project is to go into rough neighborhoods and convert empty lots into community food gardens. This benefits everyone by using empty lots for a good cause. It gets neighborhoods involved in something together. During the two days I spent with Mr. Conrad, we worked at the garden with two

different youth groups. We pulled weeds, shoveled compost, and cleaned the front gate area of the garden. During breaks, I had opportunities to speak with Mr. Conrad. Both days he was very impressed with the group of students we had. On the first days, one of the girls spoke with him. In casual

of time we spent with Mr. Conrad, he expressed his appreciation for our hard work and told me he could see we lived out our faith in our lives.

I was so proud of the groups I took out that week. It was not their intent to go and proclaim the plan of salvation on every street corner, but I believe the work they did with servants' hearts allowed them to share the love of Jesus more loudly than if they had shouted it from the

rooftops. As I thought about that week, I was so impressed with the individuals who worked for these agencies, but who were not Christians. They had virtually given their lives in service to others. I realized that I am to love these people as Jesus loves them.

I am certain that if Jesus still walked on the earth that these

are the types of things that He would be involved in. Because of that belief, I am challenged to do my part not only at the National Youth Conference, but also in the city where I live. ♦

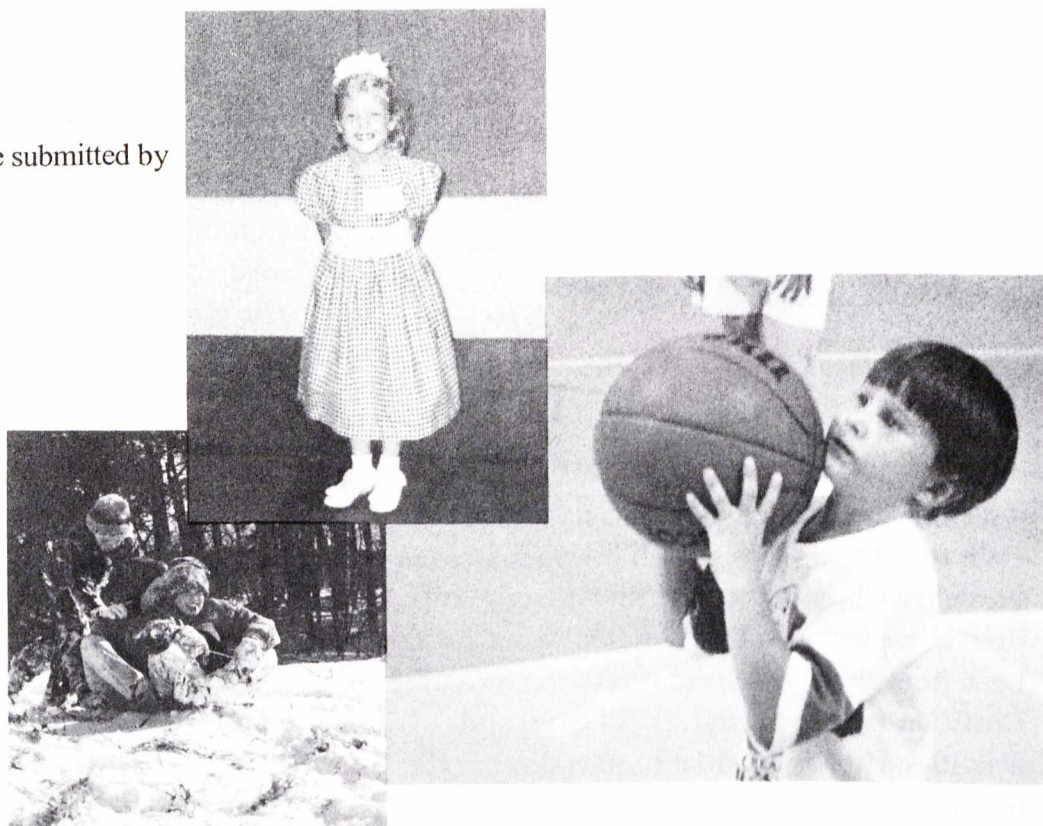


Fellowship FWB Church youth group — Park Hills, Missouri

conversation, she mentioned God and His importance in her life. Later, he commented to me that she was so young, but religion seemed to be very important to her. This presented the opportunity to talk about what place religion had in his life. He had been involved in church at some point in his life, but had become very disillusioned with all the hypocrisy that he found there. Over the course

Open Doors: Unconditional Love

Adapted from an article submitted by
Dawn Sweeney



Fact Sheet

Name: Free Will Baptist Family Ministries

Director: James Kilgore

Founded: 1940

Currently serving: 78 children

Address: 90 Stanley Lane, Greeneville, TN

Telephone: 423-639-5083

*W*ith the focus of caring for abused children and hurting families, Free Will Baptist Family Ministries is presently caring for 78 young people. This ministry has stepped through the door of service. They now have an opportunity to serve more children by receiving additional contracts to open two Assessment Centers. This step presents the chance to change the lives of even more abused or neglected children.



*The goal of this
entire ministry
is to bring
young people
into a right
relationship
with God.*

Family atmosphere is a primary concern for FWB Family Ministries. Each house strives to provide a Christian setting where many children come to know the name of Jesus Christ. Each household revolves around the idea of a Christian family. Meals, school work and activities, church attendance, vacations, etc., teaches and encourages living for Christ. Operating each home in this manner is the drive behind the primary goal of this ministry: to bring young people into a right relationship with God.

Unconditional love produces tremendous results. Instead of making decisions for a group of children, FWB Family Ministries now strives to make decisions for the individual child. What a difference this makes. Each child is given a commitment. Each child is given guidance in their physical, social, educational, and spiritual needs. Therefore, each child is given worth and value — something many of them have never felt before.

Presently, FWB Family Ministries provides ten homes for children. Although Satan battles, the children's home continues to grow because God continues to bless this ministry. "Suffer little children...for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

Aside from providing homes to children, FWB Family Ministries also helps women who are experiencing unplanned pregnancy. The Hope Center wants to save unborn children and give them the opportunity to live the life that God intended. This ministry opens a wide door to lead these young mothers and their family to a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Hope Center also functions as an Outpatient Mental Health Clinic, serving churches, communities, and families from all

I have learned through FWB Family Ministries that God works in many children's lives. God has truly worked in my life. I got saved when I was 12 years old. This was my first year at the home. Then, I started doing wrong — running away and disobeying. When I was sixteen, I rededicated my life. Now, I'm living at June Brown Cottage. Although life is a rough road to travel, I live for the Lord and try to make the best of it. My house parents, Mark and Shelly Wampler and Peter and Teresa Strobel, have shown me unconditional love. They have played a part in who I am today. Because of God, FWB Family Ministries and my house parents, I am a better person.

Kristen

over the country. FWB Family Ministries is licensed by the State of Tennessee since full-time counselors are now on staff.

As of November 1, 1999, FWB Family Ministries was blessed with the opportunity to open two Assessment Centers —the only Assessment Centers east of Nashville in the State of Tennessee.

Through these two centers, a door stands ajar for the opportunity to minister to hundreds of children each year. At the Assessment Centers each child undergoes evaluation to assess their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. These children will then be placed according to their needs.

What an opportunity to minister in Jesus' name to so many hurting children!

You may know someone in need of the services offered by FWBFM. For more information, contact the center at (423)639-9449 or send e-mail to family@mounet.com. Visit their website at www.fwb_fm.com. ❖

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Mission Alert

Evangelism News from Around the World



Côte d'Ivoire

Please continue to pray for the country of Côte d'Ivoire and the missionaries and Christians. A believer in the Abidjan church is a lieutenant with the highway patrol. He was guarding the ousted President at the time of the takeover. He gave testimony of God's protection as he was confronted by drunk military men coming after the President. The believer had been ordered to shoot, but he made a decision not to take the first shot. If shots had been fired, he would have been killed. Thankfully this did not happen, and the men left. Praise the Lord for His providential protection of this man.

Uruguay

Also, pray that Uruguay will get rain soon. Cattle are dying for lack of water, and city water sup-

plies are running out. Newscasters are reporting that there will be no rain until April. Pray that God will intervene.

Belgium

Verlin and Debbie Anderson recently arrived in Belgium where Verlin will study tropical medicine in Antwerp. They are living in Brussels and are rejoicing at the provision of an apartment at a rental rate much less than they had anticipated. Pray for them in this move to Europe to continue their training for ministry in Ivory Coast.

Spain

Many home Bible studies are being carried out in Spain. Jeff and Susan Turnbough, Sam and June McVay, and Lynn Midgett are teaching different people and groups. Pray that God will use these studies to draw people. Pray also for Tim and Kristi Johnson as they plan to assume this ministry when the Turnboughs and McVays leave for stateside assignment this summer.

U.S. — Nashville

Pray for Jimmy and Janie Aldridge who retired from Foreign Missions on January 31. The Aldridges served as missionaries in Ivory Coast for 22 years before Jimmy came on staff as Overseas Secretary in 1984. They plan to make their home in Alabama and will continue to minister as the Lord leads.

Pray for Steve Lytle who has been appointed Director of Field Operations for Foreign Missions. Steve and his wife, Judy, served as missionaries to Panama for over 20 years. Pray that God will bless and use them for His glory as they undertake this new ministry.

Please pray for Rob Conley, Director of Financial Operations for Foreign Missions, and his family. Rob's four-year-old son, Alan, has been diagnosed with leukemia. Doctors anticipate a complete course of treatment to last about three and one-half years and are optimistic about successfully treating the disease. Ask the Lord to give physical, emotional, and spiritual strength to Rob and his wife, Jennifer, and their seven-year-old son, Austin, during these days. ♦



Words for Women

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Gardens

I like gardens. All kinds of gardens—flower, spice, vegetable, orchard, and lush green parks. My favorite are flower gardens. In my backyard, my husband and I have a vegetable garden. Our purpose for the garden was never intended to save money on groceries. Our yard slopes and is rocky. Consequently, we had to buy railroad ties to bank the dirt. And we bought dirt to put over the rocks to get the depth needed for the seed. We needed more than a hoe to break the ground so we got a tiller. Next we purchased fertilizer, seeds, and plants. Now, there is the expense of watering when the rains don't come. My husband keeps repeating, "it's therapeutic." I agree, unless I'm in the garden doing a backbreaking task. When you sit all day at a desk or in a car, it is relaxing to go to the garden and physically work. It is also fun. We consider it an investment of time, energy, and money for a future payoff. The rewards are fresh vegetables and a healthier lifestyle. In addition, there is the feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment as a result of hours of toil and "sweat." We like our garden.

Jesus likes gardens, too. As Creator God, He planted the Garden of Eden, the only perfect garden. There He put man with whom He walked and fellowshiped. Ezekiel refers to Eden as the garden of God (Ezekiel 28:13). As God Incarnate, the Garden of Gethsemane was one of His favorite spots. He went there many times with His disciples. In fact, He went often enough that Judas, because he knew the place, was able to find Jesus to plant the fatal kiss on His cheek in John 18:1-2. That night the garden became a place of agony. Usually, though, we think of gardens as places for refreshment, solitude, and comfort. I'm glad to know that Jesus liked to get away—sometimes from the crowd, other times to pray, and frequently just to rest.

Not only are gardens enjoyable, they are used for comparisons in the Bible. In the Song of Solomon, Christ the Bridegroom compares the Church, the Bride of Christ, to a pleasant fruitful garden. The garden is enclosed, contains a fountain and lush plants of pomegranates, pleasant fruits and spices of spikenard, saffron, cinnamon, frankincense, myrrh and aloes (4:12-15). These fruits and spices represent the Saints of the church. The picture is one of sweet communion between the bride and groom.

Also, there is the comparison of the righteous to a watered garden. David said that a man who delights in the law of the Lord is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season (Psalm 1:3). The ungodly, on the other hand, are as a garden without water. God promised the godly in Isaiah's day that if they lived right, He would guide them, satisfy their soul in hard times, and they would flourish like a watered garden.

A garden is connected to a promise given to Israel that through her the nations of the earth would be blessed. God said that just as surely as the garden brings forth what has been sown in it, the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations (Isaiah 61:11).

How is your garden? Are we as Women Active for Christ flourishing like watered gardens? Are the seeds planted in our hearts springing forth with testimony to God's power and grace in our lives? Are we planting seeds in the barren gardens around us? Are we watering those seeds with prayer expecting them to burst into new plants? Check your garden to see if it is bearing fruit. ♦



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