

A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

CoLaborer

Pre-Easter
Prayer Calendar

5 ways
to quench
your thirst

Mar • Apr 2001

VISION



We Interrupt This Program. . .

I plopped down on my big comfy couch. A bag of chips and a cold Pepsi in one hand, the remote control in the other. I was eager to relax and watch some evening TV. (Amazing, isn't it, how quickly we lose ourselves in a talking box?) As the plot begins to thicken, I hear the words ". . . We now interrupt our regularly scheduled program to bring you this special report. . . ." How quickly plans can be thrown off track by such a few words.

Today, we plan every aspect of our lives. We plan our daily schedule. We plan months in advance for vacations. We plan for the children's education and future careers. We plan the weekly meals, the monthly budget and early retirement. But rarely do we plan for someone to interrupt our regularly scheduled program.

Recently, my family had such an interruption. The doctor diagnosed my Uncle Walter with cancer and said he didn't have much time to live. This kind of interruption turns life upside down. It certainly did in our family.

First, came the anger . . . and then the confusion — especially for Walter, his wife and sons. But, at second glance, this interruption clearly came with the thumbprint of God on it.

A few weeks before his death, Walter and his wife gave their lives to the Lord. Miraculously, the interruption that could have taken his life, instead gave him eternal life.

Sometimes it is easy to forget that we are only on this earth for a short while. Paul had the right attitude when he said, ". . . to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Walter lived for Christ a few days, then gained his reward. His family was left to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). What we all thought was an unbearable interruption for Walter turned out to be God's opportunity for him.

God does have a right to interrupt our lives. No, we may not get to finish the program that we schedule, but when God changes the agenda, He also sweetens the results.

The next time your schedule gets interrupted, don't get angry. Take a deep breath, look around and listen. You may see God work in one of His mysterious ways right before your eyes.❖

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Number 2

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Learn how to quench a thirsty soul in the article "Searching for Water in a Dry Land."

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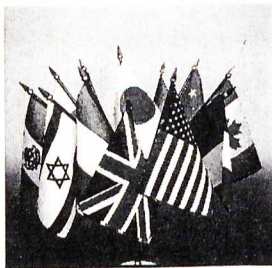
The April program tells how our hearts should be burdened for the people of the world.

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Alejandro Johnson takes a nap while Mom and Dad (Tim and Kristie Johnson) shop in the Provision Closet.

*Except where otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version.

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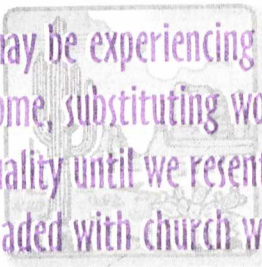
Searching for Water in a Dry Land

by Sandy Ritter



Growing up in a small Missouri town, my friends and I looked forward to Saturday afternoons at the Jeffries Theatre. Ten cents transported us into the world of Hopalong Cassidy, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

Sandy Ritter lives in Nashville, TN. She attends Woodbine FWB church.



"We may be experiencing 'burnout' syndrome, substituting works for spirituality until we resent being overloaded with church work."

Between the current Superman or Tarzan "serial" and the main feature—just after the "previews of coming attractions"—we were treated to the sight of a sand-encrusted man with swollen lips crawling across a scalding desert searching for some bit of moisture to slake his thirst. Suddenly he sees something. Is that an oasis ahead or is it just a mirage? He staggers to his feet, reaching excitedly for . . . a coke at the theater snack counter! Our nearly empty bag of salty popcorn reminded us that our thirst, too, had kicked in. As the lights came on for the intermission, we rushed to beat the other kids to the lobby and that five-cent coke!

Christians, too, may experience a kind of drought in their spiritual lives. We may not be facing spiritual death, but we do thirst for that close and familiar walk with God we previously enjoyed. Unlike the kids in the lobby, though, it takes more than a five-cent coke to do the job. This is the time to take a spiritual inventory to determine where we are in our relationship with Him? How did we drift to this dry point and what must we do so that we may once again greet each morning with this prayer on our hearts: "O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble" (Isaiah 33:2).

How do we recognize we are in the midst of spiritual drought?

One sign of a spiritual drought is a bad attitude. We become negative about everything at home, at work, at church. We develop a critical spirit, finding fault with the

pastor's sermons, the Sunday school literature and the way the church spends "our" money. Prayers become a gripe session to God, and Bible study time is increasingly difficult to schedule. We may begin missing services.

What causes a spiritual drought?

We may be suffering from the "mountain-valley" or "flood-drought" syndrome because we rely on our feelings rather than on the Bible as our spiritual barometer. We may be experiencing "burnout" syndrome, substituting works for spirituality until we resent being overloaded with church work. We may have developed the "co-dependency" syndrome and expect the pastor alone to create the desired level of spirituality in us. While it is true that inspired preaching will help keep us strong spiritually, we must take the responsibility for our own spiritual development.

Usually, though, a spiritual drought can be traced to our own disobedience: we fail to pray meaningfully, to study the Bible regularly and to search our hearts sincerely. In short, we have become self-centered rather than God-centered.

How can we maintain a fresh supply of living water?

Determine to begin every day with a personal visit with Christ. *And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart* (Jeremiah 29:13). Remember that no time spent in church work can substitute for time spent with Jesus.

Develop a good Bible study plan. Select a study guide that reflects sound doctrine and stay with it such as Beth Moore's *A Woman's Heart: God's*



"In short, we have become self-centered rather than God-centered."

Dwelling Place, To Live Is Christ, A Heart Like His, or Breaking Free. These studies offer weekly small-group discussion time following daily individual Bible study. Sharing your spiritual needs and successes with other women can be very helpful.

Begin a personal prayer journal. Any spiral notebook will do, but lovely bound journals are available at very nominal prices. Record your fears, your hopes, your needs and your joys. Sharing your conversations with the Lord makes it possible for you to re-read those prayers. The Lord may work through your written words to help you find answers or to help you see things from a different perspective—His! Date each entry for future reference. Tuck a prayer list into your journal and place your pastor at the top. Note the particular prayer need by each name and pray through the list before you begin your journal entries. Calling out the needs of others to God may make your requests seem less urgent. Leave room to note how God answered your prayers.

Initiate a personal ministry of encouragement to others. Send personal notes to the elderly, the ill, the heartbroken, letting them know you love

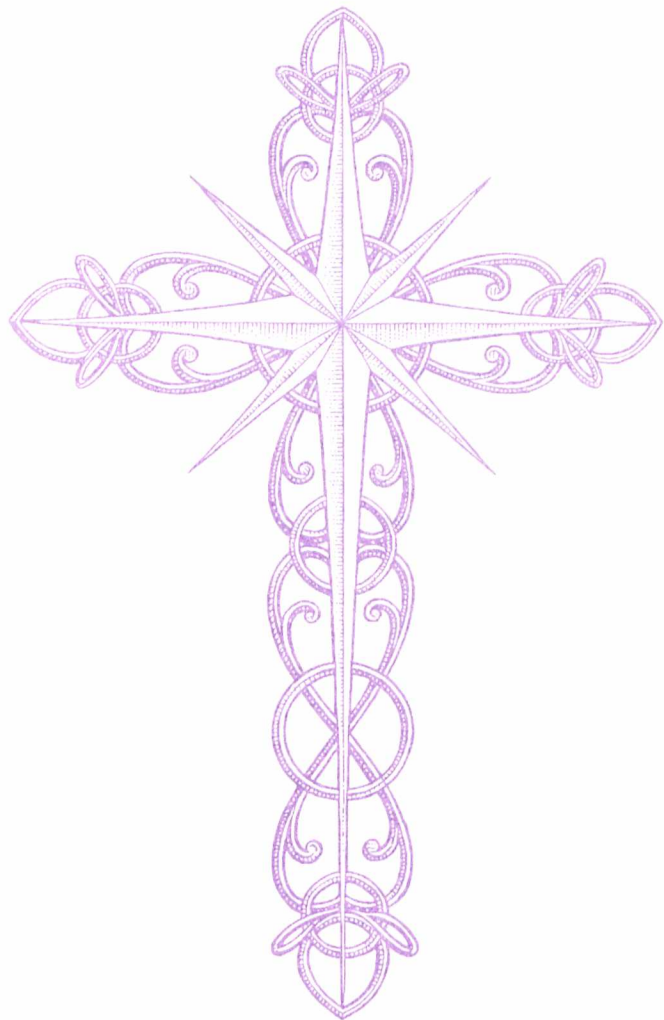
and appreciate them and that you are praying for them. Call shut-ins in your neighborhood, in nursing homes and in your church. They will love to hear your voice, and it is much more personal than a note. Of course, a visit is the most personal contact of all, and shut-ins really thrive on personal contacts. Check with local hospitals and nursing homes for ways you can volunteer your time. Offer to give respite to mothers of young children or caregivers of homebound patients. Be willing to give them an hour or two free of responsibility just to get away. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established* (Proverbs 16: 3).

Determine to maintain a cheerful heart, to do what is right, and you will not only quench your spiritual thirst, but you will also become *as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land* (Isaiah 32:2).❖

Don't Forget!

*March 1, 2001 is the deadline
for Creative Arts Entries.*

*Send your entry in
TODAY!*



Women Sharing Hope in the Resurrection

By Judy Combs Puckett

Background Information

Simon Greenleaf was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1783. He was one of the principle founders of the Harvard Law School. Greenleaf originally set out to disprove the biblical testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was certain that a careful examina-

tion of the internal witness of the Gospels would dispel all the myths at the heart of Christianity(<http://www.simongreenleaf.org/whowas.htm>). Instead, this legal scholar came to the conclusion that the witnesses were reliable and that the resurrection did, in fact, happen.

Author's note: Although the biographical information is true, the setting and plot of this play is fictional. Its purpose is to portray a historical person giving testimony to the truth of the resurrection. The letter by Greenleaf to the "council meeting" is also a fictional event.

Judy Puckett lives in Moore, Oklahoma and attends Harrah FWB church.

Characters

Simon Greenleaf, 19th Century Harvard Law professor

Mary, Mother of Jesus

Mary and Martha of Bethany

Mary Magdalene

Props	Helpful Ideas
Quill pen with inkwell	A long feather sharpened at the end; a baby food jar for ink bottle
Parchment paper	Cut an 11X14 section from a brown bag
Large Bible and books	Place family Bible open on desk
Desk and chair	A table may serve as a desk
Clerical collar	A white blouse worn backwards will serve as a collar.
Robe	Use a dark choir robe or coat over the blouse.
Lighting	Use spotlights to draw attention to the person speaking.
Women's costumes	Robes with a tie or belt and optional head coverings can be used for the Biblical characters

Select a man (or a tall woman dressed as a man) to play the role of Harvard Law Professor Simon Greenleaf. He may be on a stage or simply at the front of the room, sitting at his desk, studying and writing on a parchment-type document.

He should be dressed as an early 19th century preacher with a clerical collar and a robe or coat over the collar. Set the table at an angle so that Greenleaf's face can be seen, and the audience can see that he is writing a letter. As he writes, the actor should speak aloud the words he is writing in the letter.

Simon Greenleaf walks on stage carrying a large family Bible. He sits down at the desk, opens the Bible (other books are open), dips his quill in the "ink" and begins to write on the parchment. The actor should speak slowly and loud enough to be heard by all.

Greenleaf: Gentlemen, I greet you, my dear brethren, in the name of our Lord on this fifth day of February, 1852. I trust the council meeting goes well and that the blizzard has not denied others the pleasure of your company, which it denied to me.

I want to share some truths God has taught me in recent days concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and I trust they will refresh you.

As you know, my years on the faculty of Harvard Law School are numbered due to my advancing age and ill health. I have but a few years to complete my work here.

(Simon pauses briefly to open a book, flip a few pages and then writes again.)

It was a very pious student who staffed me on this search. He challenged me to either prove or disprove the resurrection using the principles of law and evidence from my own essay, "Treatise on the Law of Evidence."

As an agnostic, I had regularly criticized the "gullible public" who accepted teachings such as the Biblical miracles. Such happenings defied even scientific knowledge. No one could be raised from the dead! I told the young man I felt it unnecessary to squander my time away on some pursuit that makes no difference to anyone. Yet, the persistent young man's challenge stayed with me, until I could think of nothing else. The Spirit drove the question deeply into my soul.

Alas, after studying secular history and Scripture, and in



light of the laws of evidence, I have come to the realization that all truth rises or falls on this critical issue: Did Jesus Christ truly rise from the dead?

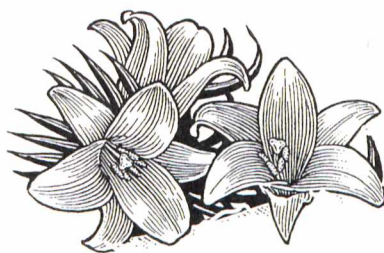
As you might suspect, I studied diligently the four gospels and can find no evidence to dispute the fact that Christ arose. But aside from the testimony of these four men, I would also suggest that women were very much involved in the resurrection story. First of all, let us consider Mary, Jesus' mother.

(On the opposite side of the stage, Mary stands and gives her story. While each woman is giving her testimony, Greenleaf is reading silently from the open Bible, his lips moving. This portrays that he is reading what the Biblical character is saying. As each finishes speaking, he dips his pen into the ink and begins to write and speak again.)

Mary: He was my firstborn and such a beautiful child. Not only did Joseph and I think so, but everyone who saw him. There was a special grace in his life—something that made people love him, and he always gave love back to them.

Imagine my anguish when I learned that our religious leaders wanted to bring him to trial as a blasphemer. Yes, he did claim to be God's son, but why not? I remember the song of the angels the night he was born, and that special star that led people to him. Only God could do those things.

I still don't know why people felt so threatened by him. He never tried to set up a kingdom, and, yet, Herod was afraid. He



wouldn't defend himself, but Pilate washed his hands of the matter. He went to the temple and synagogue and showed reverence to the high priest. Yet the religious leaders turned people into a mob against him.

Here was my little boy, all grown up, and I had to watch him die a prisoner's death. My heart was ripped to shreds, like the flesh on his back. My hope and joy were fading, until that beautiful daybreak. The angels at the tomb confirmed what he had told us! He lives again! They bade us to tell his disciples to meet him in Galilee.

(Mary bows her head, and closes her eyes. Back in Greenleaf's study, he continues to write, speaking aloud what he is writing. As he begins to speak, Mary leaves and Mary and Martha take their place on stage where Mary had been.)

Greenleaf: Women were very important in the life and ministry of Christ. Consider the sisters of Lazarus of Bethany, Mary and Martha, who were among his closest friends.

(MARY and MARTHA, the sisters, talk one after another with barely a pause between phrases.)

Mary: We have never had such a guest in our home as Jesus was!

Martha: Indeed...each time he came, we'd persuade him to stay longer.

Mary: Oh yes, I loved to sit at his feet and listen to the wonderful stories he told.

Martha: You certainly did! While I was doing all the work! I had to gather the crops, grind the wheat, prepare the meals, and feed the animals. Getting some help was harder than plowing with the mule!

Mary: *(not angry, but teasingly)* Oh, Martha, you know I can never please you when I do help! Everything has to be done your way. Remember what you always say, "If you want something done right, do it yourself!"

Martha: Well, I had hoped you'd learn to do it right someday!

Mary: Remember how crushed we were when Lazarus died? Our hearts were broken when the Lord came.

Martha: Yes. We ran out to meet him, and I just couldn't help but tell him we needed him earlier—not now!

Mary: Yes, we both said, "Master, if only you'd been here, our brother would not have died!"

Martha: And he said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." When we got to the tomb, Jesus began weeping.

Mary: That was so hard. I'd never seen Jesus cry. But it was wonderful to know he felt the same pain we felt.

Martha: He shared our heartache, and then he prayed ALOUD and Lazarus came forth! I can't describe the incredible joy we experienced. Oh, I get a chill just remembering it! We danced for joy, laughed and had a great celebration. *(Both pause, become quiet and somber.)*

Mary: When Jesus died, we just couldn't bear to go to his tomb. But we were not surprised when we heard the news that he had risen! What a wonderful Savior and Friend he's been to us!

Martha: Let's go to the garden now. I love to remember the story of the empty tomb.

(Both rush off the stage and the audience's attention is drawn back to Greenleaf. As he begins to talk, Mary Magdalene takes her place).

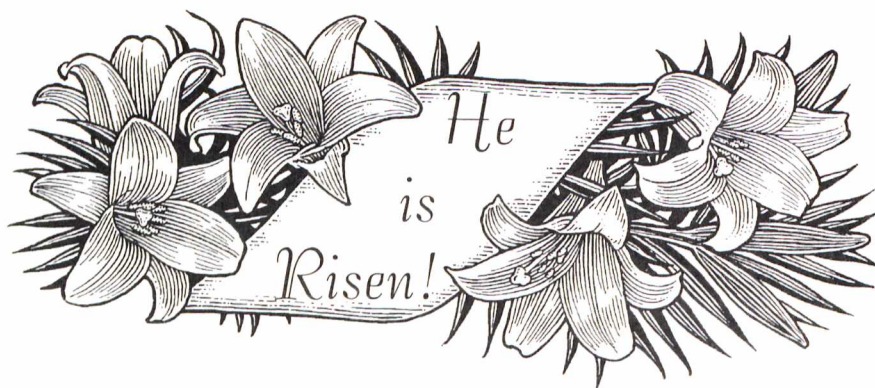
Greenleaf: Other than Jesus' mother, probably no one was as touched by his death as Mary of Magdala. When she met Jesus, Mary was possessed by seven demons. He delivered her, and Mary was filled with gratitude. So when she had an opportunity, she washed his feet with her tears and dried them with her hair in Simon's house. It's no wonder Christ used women like Mary Magdalene to proclaim the message of the resurrection.

(Greenleaf puts down his quill, opens his Bible again, and lowers his head to read silently, as Mary Magdalene begins to tell her story).

Mary Magdalene: I never really knew what love was until I met Jesus. People had always shunned me. When demons take control of your life, anger and hate fill you. They destroy your whole life.

But Jesus found me in that wretched condition and asked if I would be made whole. Of course! Who wouldn't want to be well when you are tormented day and night!

Jesus was the only one who had power over the demons. When he spoke to them and



commanded that they leave, a sweet peace came over me like I'd never known. Instantly, I was well. He gave me back my life. How could I do less than give my best for such a person?

When they crucified my Master, I was devastated. I was happy to go with the other women to his tomb. Along the way, we talked about how we could roll the stone away, but when we got there, it was done.

Angels were nearby to give us the good news, "He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you'" (Mark 16:1-11NIV).

The others ran away immediately, but I lingered. . .trying to make some sense of it all. I saw a gardener and asked him if he'd seen the Lord. Then I heard him speak my name, "Mary."

"Master, Rabboni!" I answered. It was true. He was alive and standing right in front of me!

Within days, Jesus had appeared to many people, so there was no question about it then. Jesus was alive and well! Praise be to God!

(With the last statement, Mary raises her hands toward heaven and holds them until the audience's attention is back on Greenleaf. She then exits the stage).

Greenleaf: *(begins to write again)* The Old Testament accepted that, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses," anything could be established as truth. My friends...there were more than a hundred people who testified of seeing Jesus at one time.

Time does not permit me to tell of Phoebe, Chloe, Dorcas, Priscilla, Lois and Eunice. All of these women played an integral part in the life and ministry of Christ and his church.

My brethren, women have many opportunities to make an impact upon others for Christ.

May the blessings of God be upon you all until we meet again.

I remain your servant,

*Simon Greenleaf
Royal Professorship of Law
Harvard Law School ♦*

Hope for the Nations

by Dr. Faye Forlines



A LOOK AT SCRIPTURE

Hope for the nations does not lie way up in the sky on the Beautiful Isle of Somewhere. Hope for the nations can be as close as your own heart, head and hands as God lives in you. All you can do lies within your reach. Energized by the power of God who is in you, God's speaking and your answering constitute God's plan for your part in reaching the world for Christ. God can enable you to receive the knowledge and to raise the consciousness of your entire being to know that the nations of the world will spend eternity in hell lost without God.

Dr. Faye Forlines is a retired teacher. She lives in Nashville, Tennessee and attends Cross Timbers FWB church.

Your heart can cherish the thought of and attach value to spending eternity with God. God can soften your heart to care about someone besides yourself—your own family, your own community and your own country. He can cause you, through prayer and reading the Bible, to feel responsible for reaching the world for Him.

God in your heart can also help you to long for nations of the world to join you in eternity. It can happen when Christians make themselves available to God to do the work cut out for them in this present generation: to pray, to pay, to proceed.

Colossians 1:27 tells me that God's people are to make known to the Gentiles how great it is to be a Christian in this life and in the life to come. This is the spirit of missions. "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

This, to me, means that God's plan for getting this good news delivered to the nations is to use those of us who are Christians. God is calling all of us to do one, two or maybe all of three things: PRAY, PAY OR PROCEED to give hope to the nations.

At the time God called Leroy and me to go to Russia and to India for two separate short term missions, He also called supporters to PRAY and/or PAY while we PROCEEDED to go. God laid it on the hearts of many, and the right number responded to become a part of our team.

When we went to Russia, He called about 330 people to pay. (I do not have a record of how many He called to pray for us. I think we had more than

"He can cause you, through prayer and reading the Bible, to feel responsible for reaching the world for Him."

300 in Michigan alone who were praying.) When we went to India, He called only about 30 people to pay. The number of people He called to pray is still unknown to us. Both times it was just right. Both times the giving was over the top to be used

for a subsequent project. We estimated that their paying was about \$3,000 over for the India mission. That amount went to the new Bible institute in South India.

God does everything just right. He calls the right number to pay. He calls the right number to pray. He calls the right number to proceed. (It seems to me that the biggest snafu occurs when those individuals who are called to proceed, fail to respond.) We need to make sure that we are available when He calls. He does not expect us to support all the missionaries we know. He will lay the right ones we should support on our hearts when we open our hearts to His leadership as we pray and read His Word.

Just imagine if all minds, hearts and wills were hardened to the call of God to carry hope to the nations of the world. Just imagine if all whom we see in heaven were from the United States of America. Imagine, if you will, all peoples outside the now Christian world suffering in hell because this generation of affluent Christians failed to heed the call of God to give hope to the nations.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

What a perfectly charming gathering of Free Will Baptist women who are active for Christ! Faces radiant. Hair perfectly coiffed. Clothes fashionably cut in fabrics, textures, hues most flattering to your coloring, size, station in life. Posture saying you are sure of yourself; you have it so together. Lips

set in sweet, self-confident smiles. Fingernails filed and finished.

I can HEAR you as you sing, speak, and move. Alto voices mellow, resonant, unforgettable; soprano voices clear as the ringing from the finest thin crystal collector's bell. Shuffles as you move gently to your seat for the meeting. Muffled polite coughs as you prepare to respond to the greeting of a friend sitting beside you.

I can SMELL wonderful, unnatural scents which embrace you. Irish Spring from the shower. Gain from the clothes washer. Raspberry from the hair conditioner bottle. Estee Lauder from the fragrance mister.

I can FEEL your feelings. Loving heart. Optimistic attitude. Joyful personality.

I can almost TASTE the cooking from your kitchen. Fresh corn-on-the-cob. Creamed, mashed, smashed, French fried, baked, scalloped, pan-fried potatoes. Brownies. Pineapple Up-side-down cake. Sugar cookies. Squash casserole. Coconut pie. Peach turnovers. Sea-food gumbo. Western steak. Hawaiian roasted boar. Chicken Kiev.

I can SENSE your spiritual and intellectual longing for something more to life than what can be detected by the five senses.

I can detect your THIRST for Coffee and Something More, as our missionaries to Spain often put it. For, you see, I am a dedicated, sincere Christian woman also, as you are. I attend church three times a week and then some. This FWB Everywoman even comes to the local chapter of Women Active for Christ.

So, here you sit, a captive audience. Sit back, relax. I think I have come up with that for which you have been searching. You want God's undeniable proclamation of GOOD News to sweep every corner of the Earth. Right?

"There is nothing I can do except wish the missionaries well," I hear your HEAD whisper. Yet your HEART screams to you that there must be something more.

"Every time someone like Lucille Steward or Marge Workman sends out the word, you give Tupperware, bread machines, bed linens, kitchen utensils to the Provision Closet." Yet you go on trying to silence the still, small voice speaking to the ear of your heart. You would stop and listen and hear if you understood His language. But the unfamiliar cadence which has been dwarfed by a brassy clamor from the world-system speaks a language you cannot readily unscramble.

If we have hope only in this life, then we are of all people most miserable. I will simply tell it like I see it. God wants you to put yourself on the altar for Him. He is interested in your availability instead of your capability. He wants you to commit your life to Him where you are. He wants you to bloom where you are planted.

The great Christian missionary to India, Marie Hanna, had been dead a year-and-a-half when my husband Leroy Forlines and I went to India as short term volunteer missionaries during December 1999 and January 2000. Carlisle Hanna, had requested of the FWB Foreign Mission Board that we come. The Board gra-



ciously allowed us to raise our support to go.

What a wonderful experience we had! First, we had two days of conference with the pastors of South India. Then we ministered in seven of our eight churches in South India.

Perhaps the most exciting happening in South India is the birth and infancy of a FWB Bible institute to train Christian workers situated in Kuniyamuthur in the state of Tamilnadu in Coimbatore District. The name is Marie Wright Hanna Memorial Free Will Baptist Bible Institute (so much for short-named institutions).

The director will be Rev. D. Carlisle Hanna; the principal will be D. Stanley RajKumar, M.A., B. D. (a seven-year degree beyond high school) from Union Theological Seminary in India.

After ministering in South India for two weeks, we went to North India where Brother Hanna is based. Free will Baptists have over 100 churches in North India. The North Indians, under the leadership of Brother Hanna, have established six FWB churches in a country which for many years was closed to the gospel, Nepal. We were privileged to minister in one church in that great country. Brother Hanna tells us that Christians in Nepal now have greater religious freedom than in India. It is his dream to see three couples who are on the altar for God for the long haul to be allowed to set up a base in Nepal to oversee the FWB work in North India. Yesterday is not too soon for this to have happened.

Everything in India was interesting to me. The people, the churches, the singing and the overall services were fascinating. They were neither better nor worse than those in the U. S. They were just different. With notable exceptions, churchgoers in India sit on floor mats. As we went into a church, we could expect to see women dressed in saris sit-

"God wants you to put yourself on the altar for Him. He is interested in your availability instead of your capability."

ting on the left side and men on the right side. Virtually all the worshippers left their sandals at the doorway and donned flip-flops or went barefoot.

Their singing of hymns and spiritual songs were accompanied by drums, reed instruments, a keyboard, a guitar, a sitar or any available instrument. Quaint, plaintive, happy wailings of primeval sounds issued from the mouths of worshippers of the One and Only True God.

We saw the Christian people of North India in the states of West Bengal and Behar enjoying the Hope of the Nations because Carlisle and Marie Hanna answered God's call to proceed to India in 1953. As he was calling them to proceed, He was calling their supporters to pray and pay, thus enabling Carlisle and Marie to proclaim His Word and give hope to their people group in North India. All Christians should desire that the world be given the opportunity to embrace that same hope for Time and Eternity. Oh that all would heed His call to pay, pray and proceed to claim the unclaimed millions of the world for Christ and eternity!❖

A graphic featuring a stylized springboard with a curved arrow pointing upwards and to the right, set against a background of overlapping, layered shapes that resemble a sunburst or a series of steps.

Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WAC Officers

Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator

The Creative Arts Deadline is only a few days away. March 1, 2001, is the last day to have your entries postmarked. Encourage the women in your group to enter.

The Pre-Easter Week of Prayer packets will be arriving soon. The dates for the week of prayer are April 9-13. Begin planning now for a successful week.

Foreign Missions is introducing a new four-part video series on world missions. Each video is 15 minutes long. This series is designed to use in four consecutive services. Foreign Missions Month is a great opportunity to introduce this series to the church. Meet with and encourage your pastor to order the series, free of charge, for your congregation. The videos are accompanied by a leader's guide for adults, teens, and children. You also receive four bulletin inserts, a banner, and a poster to use for advertising. Use the study in Sunday school, Sunday evening or Wednesday evening service. This is a wonderful opportunity to educate and inspire FWB people on their role in missions.

Secretary/Treasurer

It is a good time to begin promoting the Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering to be taken on April 30. Set a goal for your group.

Remind your women to pay their dues. In order to have voting privileges at the National Convention, dues must be accounted for on the national level. Also, dues are vital for the operational budget of the WNAC office.

Provision Closet Needs

King, queen and
full sheet sets

Queen and twin
bedspreads

Queen and full
electric blankets

Queen and twin
mattress covers

Small food
processors

Tupperware®
(all items)

**Send new items
only. No clothes,
please.*

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

Missions Chairman

Since the 2001 theme is "Sharing Hope and Healing," you could prepare a bulletin board using this title and the theme verse, Colossians 1:27. Distribute prayer cards and other missions materials to people in your church to promote both home and foreign missionaries.

Prayer Chairman

The Pre-Easter Week of Prayer Guide is located on pp. 21-22 of this issue. You may copy it or request free copies by writing to FWB Foreign Missions Department, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Allow two weeks for delivery.

Service Chairman

Missions begins on the local level. We can't touch the world unless we first begin in our home, in our community, in our town. Organize a community service activity for your group. One idea could be to visit people in an area nursing home.



MK Provision Closet

The Provision Closet at WNAC has designated some space to store school supplies and other items that missionary kids can use. MK Ministries Coordinator, Tanya Hart, explains that there is a need for items for older (teen-age) MKs especially. As needs vary, check with WNAC for current needs.



Local WNAC Delegate Card —2001—

This certifies that _____
(name)

is a duly authorized delegate to the Women Nationally Active for Christ Convention (Only one delegate allowed per church.)

Church Name _____

Church City State _____

Local Coordinator's or Local Secretary's signature

Important: This card properly signed and accompanied by a \$5 registration fee entitles a local delegate to register for voting privileges in the WNAC convention.

Only a Cup of Soup

by Debi Paramore

The day was like any other—a trip to the grocery store, homework to finish for a college course and standard household duties to perform. I had decided to prepare soup for my family's supper. It wasn't even cold outside—not even the right season for a hot bowl of soup! Yet, I followed through with my plan. After all, a pot of soup was nutritious, easy to prepare and quick clean up on a night when I had class to attend. Once the soup pot was full, I noticed I had prepared more than enough for my young family. I then decided to share part of the soup with a woman in our church who was undergoing cancer treatment. At first I thought, "This soup will not be very good. Secondly, it was not even soup season. She will think I'm crazy for offering her family soup on such a warm evening." Finally, I made a phone call and offered my pitiful pot of soup. Donna had been to St. Louis that day for cancer treatment. She was tired and had commented to her husband on the 70-mile trip home how much she would enjoy a bowl of homemade soup. I confirmed a time to drop off the meal and hung up the phone.

I put down the receiver, thanking God that He chose to use me to provide a small blessing to one of His children who was suffering. I was humbled by the reality that God speaks through small opportunities. I have often been reminded through the years of this incident. Something so insignificant, yet God knew a need and chose me to be His hands and His feet.

Not too many weeks later, my husband and I stood at Donna's bedside in the hospital. We were the last ones of her friends or family to speak with her. Her thoughts were turned to her sixteen-year-old daughter and college age son—a mother saying, "good-bye." Her breathing was labored and her temperature was climbing. She summed up our conversation, "God will give you what you need if you'll be happy with what God gives you." The next morning, Donna went to be with the Lord. God had given her all that she needed—a blessed hope now realized in the presence of a loving Savior. ♦

Debi is a pastor's wife of the Cookeville, FWB church in Cookeville, Tennessee.

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Communicator

by Marjorie Workman

Sharing Hope

MISSIONS CHALLENGE

What a wonderful opportunity Women Active for Christ have to share hope of the Good News with people around the world. April is World Missions Month for Free Will Baptists. On April 29, churches are receiving the Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering. Women Active for Christ are encouraged to give their offering during the Pre-Easter Week of Prayer. To help with your missions emphasis, a four-part video is available from Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions. This video makes it possible to have missions emphasis all month for the entire church. The video is a tool to help believers see their responsibility in fulfilling the Great Commission. The Great Commission was given to all believers—men, women, and children. Women Active for Christ has recognized this truth from the very beginning of the organization. In fact, missions has been the heartbeat of our work. Nevertheless, we still need a challenge and reminder of our personal responsibility. Use this tool to stir hearts for souls.

RETREATS 2002 and 2003

Plans are already being made for Retreat 2002 at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, September 19-21. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend. **There will not be a national WNAC Retreat this year (2001).** Plan to attend your state and district retreats.

A Midwest retreat is in the making for the spring of 2003 in Branson, Missouri, March 27-29. This will be the first Spring retreat for WNAC. Put these dates on your WAC calendar now. By announcing the dates early, we hope states and districts will be able to incorporate them into their plans also. Watch for details on these two retreats as they develop.

EACH MEMBER REACHING ONE IN 2001

I challenge each WAC member to reach one lady, young or old, this year and bring her into your Women

Active for Christ group. Less than 50 percent of our women are involved in WNAC. The key to any successful organization is the involvement of its members. Our membership could double very easily if each one reached one. A great encouragement for a new woman to begin attending would be for the recruiting member to pay the ten-dollar dues the first year.

Another way to encourage new participants is to subscribe to the *CoLaborer* magazine for them. Especially target the young women in your fellowship. We give gifts at Christmas, birthdays, Valentines Day, Mother's Day, and graduations. Why not make that gift a subscription to *CoLaborer*?

Most important, reach out and offer hope to someone who is hurting. Make WNAC's theme "Sharing Hope and Healing" real. Extend to others what has been extended to you. "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:5-6).

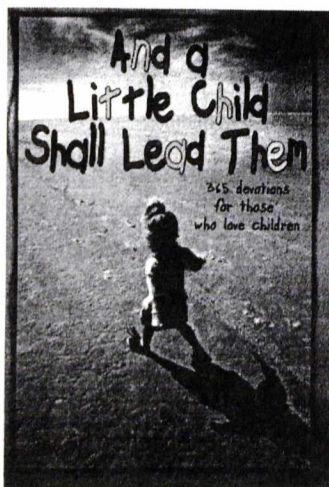
ORGAN FUND PROJECT

Soon we will be working on a new project—to furnish the mission house to be built by Foreign Missions and the Master's Men. With this project on the horizon, we need to complete the Organ Project. If you or your WAC group has not given to the Organ Fund, now is the time to make a contribution. Each group can and should do something. Many of you have responded already. We are two years into this project and less than halfway to our completion goal of \$32,00.00. Let's wrap it up in 2001.❖

And A Little Child Shall Lead Them

by Susan Henderson
Randall House Publications
Reviewed by Yvonne Hampton

"You will be renewed in your commitment to God, and your faith will become like that of a little child."



And A Little Child Shall Lead Them is a delightful new devotional book from Randall House Publications. Whether you're a parent, teacher, Sunday school worker, children's church leader, or just a kid at heart you'll be able to relate to these sometimes funny, sometimes heartbreaking but always thought-provoking devotions involving children.

Susan Henderson is adept at finding simple illustrations of deep spiritual truths in the everyday lives of children. She then skillfully applies these truths to the lives of her grownup readers.

Henderson, who has worked with children and youth in her local church for a number of years, is a gifted communica-

tor. While teaching, she's been learning. She shares the lessons she's learned in these 365 enlightening, encouraging, and entertaining devotions. Let God speak to you through this unique devotional. You will be renewed in your commitment to God, and your faith will become like that of a little child.

You may purchase *And A Little Child Shall Lead Them* from WNAC for \$13.99. ♦

This book may be ordered through WNAC by calling 1-877-767-7662.

Yvonne Hampton is the Executive Assistant at the WNAC National office.

new video series "Embracing the Vision," produced by the Department of Foreign Missions. Ask the Lord to use this series to speak to hearts of all ages and to direct individuals to find their place of service in God's plan to reach the world for Christ.

Pray for the church in Nantes, France, as they complete renovation of the building they purchased in November 2000. They had been searching for property or a building for four years, so praise the Lord for His provision. Pray that God will bless the outreach of the church in the years to come. Steve and Becky Riggs are working with the Nantes church.

Pray for Molly Barker in Uruguay as she works with the camp ministry, vacation Bible schools, and other special programs. Molly assists families when they have health problems and is loved and respected by the people with whom she works. Ask the Lord to give her daily strength for her ministry.

Friday

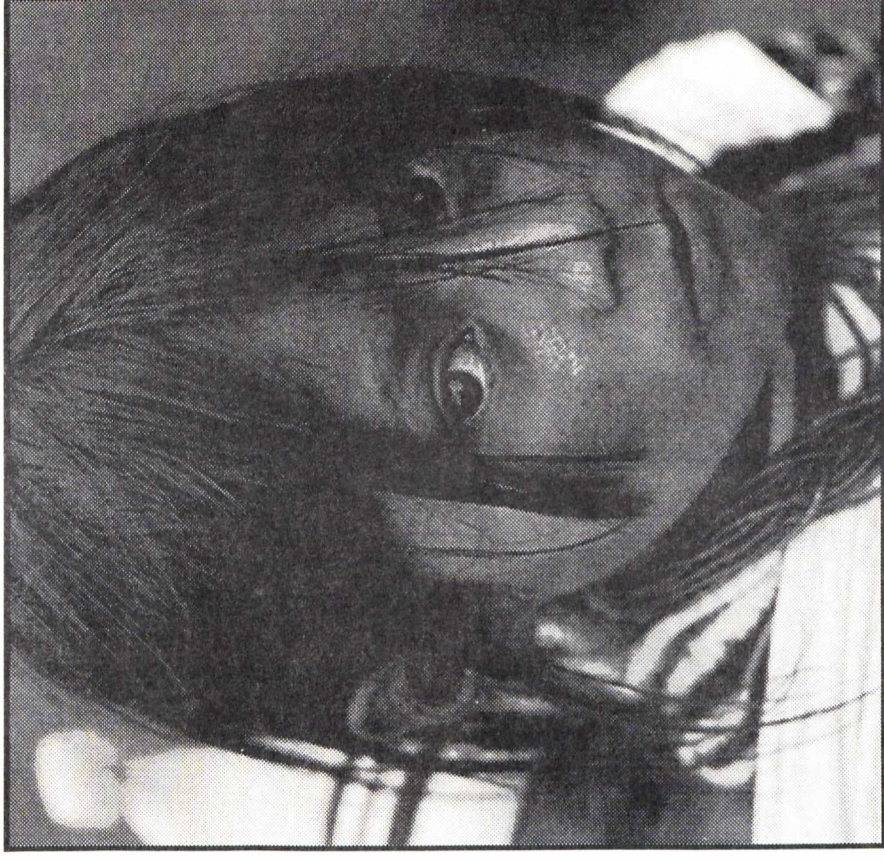
Pray for missionaries who are in language school. David and Annette Aycock and Andy and Andrea Moore are studying Portuguese in Campinas, Brazil. Kim Zegelian is studying French in Quebec, Canada, in preparation for her ministry in Ivory Coast.

Praise God for national leaders on each field. Pray that He will call more nationals into His service, for lay leadership positions as well as pastoral ministry.

During the summer of 2001 four groups of high school students will minister in four different locations under the TEAM program. Pray for the young people as they raise their funds and make preparations for their ministry experience. Pray also for the instructors who will participate in orientation and training in Nashville and for the leaders who will accompany the groups overseas.

Robert Conley, director of financial operations, works with missionaries and the entire office staff to fund foreign missions efforts on behalf of Free Will Baptists. Pray that many more people will become involved in providing the financial resources needed to share the gospel around the world. Ask the Lord to give Rob wisdom to keep costs to a minimum while trying to maximize foreign missions ministries.

WNAAC Embracing the Vision



through the

Pre-Easter Week of Prayer

April 9-13, 2001

Monday

Pray for Bobby and Sue Aycock in Brazil. They are working with three churches: the well-established Barbacena church and two newer works in the towns of Antonio Carlos and Carandai. The Antonio Carlos congregation has already built their church facility, and construction at Carandai will be completed this spring. Praise the Lord for the growth of the church in Brazil!

Pray for Charollette Tallent who has been reassigned to France to work with university students. Ask the Lord to give guidance as Charollette and the France field council develop methods for student outreach. Pray for the effectiveness of this ministry.

Praise the Lord for allowing Carlisle Hanna to minister in India for almost 50 years. In March of this year Free Will Baptists in India celebrated their Golden Jubilee in Sonapurhat. Special guests from the U.S. were present for this very special celebration. Pray for Carlisle as he continues to spend several months in India each year.

Pray for Foreign Missions General Director James Forlines and the Foreign Missions staff as they work to mobilize the entire denomination to respond to God's heartbeat to reach the world with the gospel. They seek to help every Free Will Baptist find and fulfill his or her role in world evangelism. Ask God to give the staff wisdom, strength, and the financial means for this ministry.

Tuesday

Pray for workers in restricted access countries. Ask the Lord to give them spiritual wisdom and physical safety. Pray that God will prepare hearts and provide many opportunities for these workers to share their faith in Christ.

Pray for Dale and Sandra Bishop, Nathan and Linda Snow, and Debbie Griffin in Sapporo, Japan, who are working to plant a church in the Ebetsu area. Ask God to guide them as they develop new methods of outreach.

Pray for the work in Uruguay. Dennis Owen, field chairman, has indicated the need for at least two more missionary families to help spread the gospel and disciple believers. Pray also for more national workers with a willingness to take on responsibilities in the churches.

Pray for Eddie Payne, director of mobilization and recruitment, as he helps churches and individuals participate and partner with missionary ministries in the States and around the world. Cameron Lane in Russellville, Ark., is assisting with coordinating professional volunteers. Pray that more men and women will volunteer to help meet the growing interest in short-term assignments.

Wednesday

As missionaries seek to develop and work out an effective strategy for outreach in their area, Steve Lytle, director of field operations, will be traveling to many fields to guide and consult with them. Pray for safety of travel and physical strength to accomplish this essential ministry.

Pray for Dr. Kenneth Eagleton and Verlin Anderson in Ivory Coast as they continue development of the Community Health Evangelism program. Pray that the program will fulfill its intent—to help people both physically and spiritually.

Pray for members of the missionary team in Spain who are currently on the field: Anthony and Lea Edgmon, Tim and Kristi Johnson, and Lynn Midgett. All have responsibilities at the Villalba church and also teach personal Bible studies. Pray that God will provide many opportunities for gospel witness and give the team members strength and wisdom as they continue to share His Word in Spain.

Pray for Eddie and LaRhonda Bowerman in Panama as they continue efforts to reach the Kuna Indians for Christ. Ask God to put a hedge of protection around them as they have encountered many obstacles to their ministry.

Thursday

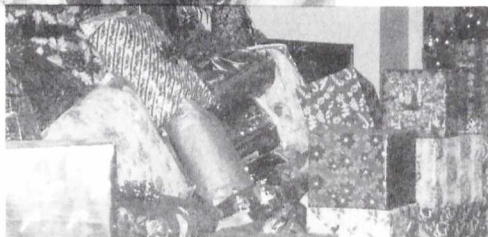
Bobby and Geneva Poole in Ribeirao Preto, Brazil, have been working with the Marincek congregation for several years. The church is in a high-crime area of town and attendance by men has been sporadic. However, the Pooles have been praying for 10 men—husbands, fathers, etc.—to be faithful in attendance. They rejoice at seeing answers to their prayers. Pray that God will bless this work and draw many people to Himself.

Pray that God will challenge hundreds of churches to take advantage of the

Women In Action



The Boldman Free Will Baptist WAC held their 14th annual Christmas Bazaar in Harold, Kentucky, on November 4, 2000. The home-made foods and crafts raised over \$4,500 for foreign missionaries.



Christmas in the Closet! North Carolina women brought in \$5000 worth of goods to the missionary Provision Closet. Pictured in the front is Bernice Hanna, Action Chairman of the North Carolina Coastal District.

The Alabama Free Will Baptist WAC held their mission banquet at the Florence FWB church. Ninety two were present. Missionary Dave Franks, Jr. spoke on "A Door Ajar" in missions.

Pictured from Left to Right (Visitor, James Harris, WNAC Bookkeeper, Martha Harris, WNAC Executive Secretary, Marjorie Workman, Missionary, Dave Franks, Jr., Foreign Missions Director, James Forlines, Missionaries Barbara Jones, and Fred Jones).



Baby Alejandro Johnson, son of Tim and Kristie Johnson, missionaries to Spain, takes a nap while Mom and Dad shop in the Provision Closet.





Poet's Corner

He is Worthy

Mary Overcash, Couch, Missouri

Behold the man. The crown of thorns on
His head has transformed into a dazzling,
bejeweled crown of gold.

The seamless robe, gambled for by

His executioners, is now a robe of light,
Flashing like lightning in its brilliance.

The crowd cried, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"
Voices of a multitude of thousands now fill
the air with shouts

Of praises to the one who alone is worthy
of all honor and glory.

The hands that are nail scarred, now hold
the book, by which every person who has
ever lived will be judged.

Behold the man. A vision of glory.

As all knees bow before him, He is the one
who is worthy.

He is Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the King
of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

The Struggle

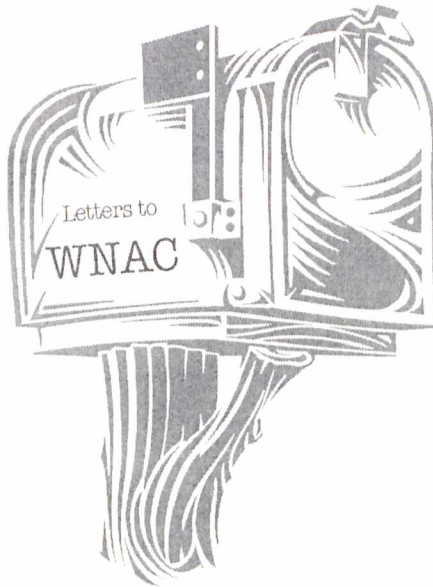
Freda Lucas, Cromona, Kentucky

So many are passing, while I'm left behind
To wonder and ponder the state of my mind.
Am I ready for death as I struggle through life?
A mother, grandmother, at one time, a wife.

My roles have been many, my triumphs so small;
the meant-to-do things, like a monstrous wall,
Remain in my path and deprive me of rest,
Till I whisper aloud, "Was that really my best?"

The struggle of spirit and flesh is a curse
Passed by the first Adam that daily grows worse.
The good I would do is fast losing its way,
As I struggle to juggle my faith, work and play.

Desires of the flesh and the struggle with time,
Will end very soon and leave someone behind.
Lord, help me be faithful and make choices wise,
That I might see others through your loving eyes.



Dear Ladies,

Thank you for this magazine! I enjoy it so much. Thanks for all the work each of you do in the office.

Paulette Scott, Red Bay, AL

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for your service to God and to all women of the world. You touch many hearts and lives through your service to God to further His kingdom.

May God's richest blessings be yours this very day and for the coming year.

Judith Goble, Pikeville, KY

Dear WNAC,

Our auxiliary really loves our new *CoLaborer*. God bless all the writers. We are really proud this year, for one of ours won in the Creative Arts Contest, Rachel Sekulich. Keep up the good work.

Joyce Taylor, Brunswick, GA

Dear Ladies,

We appreciate your love offerings so much and your prayers. Please continue to pray for our work here in Louisville. As we knock on the doors here we see so much evil. Seems as though they just don't care. We have a great work to do. Thanks again.

Billy and Freddie Maynard, Tentmakers, Louisville, KY

Dear Ladies,

Thank you very much. Once again you are there to give us just the things we need from the Provision Closet. It certainly makes the hard job of setting up a home after years overseas much simpler.

Dave Jr. and Becky Franks, Missionaries to Brazil

Dear WNAC staff,

I read your magazine in the shop where I get my hair done. I was thrilled with every word I read. There is so much filth in the world of news, I have to be careful what I leave out on my coffee table. This magazine, I will gladly let my great-grandchildren read.

Jennie Hall, Marion, NC

Dear Ladies,

Hello from Mongolia! I wanted to write and say how much we enjoy using the Tupperware cannister sets, cereal bowls and lids, and the terrific down sleeping bag. Every day we think of the many ladies who worked and saved to provide these necessary items for us. Each night as our oldest son, Joseph, slides into the sleeping bag, he is so thankful for its great warmth and terrific length—he is growing so tall!

Melissa Lunsford, Missionary to Mongolia

Michael B. resides at Free Will Baptist Family Ministries in Greeneville, Tennessee. Michael, age 17, has been at FWBFM since August 2, 2000. He wrote this poem shortly after his arrival.

As I sit in a sober daze
 Conviction consumes me, bitter stares shoot through me.
 My peers have passed judgment, I'm condemned to death.
 At a loss for words I sit in silence.
 My mind racing soulful contemplation.
 All balance has been thrown off.
 Justice has been served.
 Time seems to stand for days on end.
 Incoherent to my surroundings I sit in silence.
 I wander around aimlessly.
 Like an abandoned child
 I starve emotionally.
 This hunger is overwhelming,
 I feel exploited, but yet unexposed
 Held hostage by my own absence of faith
 I drift closer and closer to desolation.

On August 23, 2000, Michael B. gave his life to the Lord! These are the inspiring words that now dwell within his heart.

As I kneel one knee on the floor,
 I'm surrounded by those that love and care for me.
 Head bowed and eyes closed I repeat a prayer
 Spoken by a man overwhelmed with joy.
 Tears streaming down his face as I take my step
 Into the Grace and Salvation of the Lord.
 The desolation and emptiness I felt slowly fades
 Into relief, and freedom.
 The prayer is finished.
 I have been Saved.
 The Holy Spirit fills my heart and flows
 Through my veins.
 Already I realize I have much to learn.

Used by permission from Family News in Greeneville, Tennessee.

LOAD LIMIT: 1 TON

by Debe Taylor

Carrying a heavy load, a pedestrian was offered a ride by a motorist. He got in the automobile but kept his burden on his shoulders. The motorist asked him why he didn't lay the load down. "Well," he replied, "you are so kind to carry me. I didn't want to bother you with the extra weight."

What a perfect picture of how I sometimes am with my heavenly

Father. So often I am guilty of trusting the Lord in just that same way. I trusted Him to save me, but insist that I carry my own burdens. Sometimes I make the Christian life harder than it really is.

Leaving God out of the overall picture, I take far too much upon myself. I carry my fears, my doubts, my heartaches and my questions even though I have been invited to give all my burdens to Him. "Casting all your care upon Him for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7 NKJV).

When we would go to visit Poppa and Nanny, we traveled down the old country roads of Oklahoma. One of those roads had an old wooden bridge we had to cross. On the bridge was a sign that said, "Load Limit: 1 Ton." Just like that bridge, I have a load limit. The bridge has carried extreme weight, but not all at once.

God engineered me to carry great weight, but over a period of years. If I try to bear too much at one time, I would meet the same fate as the bridge under the weight of more than 1 ton—total collapse. When I have peri-

ods of spiritual, physical or emotional stress, and I reach my "load" capacity, I must turn to God who invites me to give my burdens to Him (Matthew 11:28-30).

One winter night in Philadelphia, a young boy walked through the snow-laden streets carrying a smaller boy. Their destination was the children's orphanage. Upon arriving at the home, the caretaker queried, "Isn't the little boy heavy?" To which the older boy replied, "He ain't heavy, he's my brother." The same opportunity is afforded to me. Paul wrote, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." I have Christian brothers and sisters who are willing and able to help bear my burdens. All I have to do is ask for their help.

There is no need for me to be bent beneath a load too heavy. God has invited me to bring everything to Him and has given the Christian "family" to share in the burden bearing. Will I test the "1-ton limit," or will I rest from the burdens I bear? The choice is mine.

"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved" (Psalm 55:22 NKJV).❖



The Green Green Grass

On the Other Side

by Lynn Bowen Walker



Not long ago as I stood rinsing dishes at the kitchen sink, I found myself thinking back to some old friends from my college days. In college I had been involved with the Campus Crusade for Christ ministry, and many of my fellow students went on to become full-time missionaries once they completed their education.

Their lives sounded so exciting! One friend was in China now. Another was in Austria. And here I was, living with my husband in a little duplex in California. Occupation: homemaker. "What good am I doing for the Lord? What glory

could I possibly bring Him here?" I asked myself, soaping up plates with my soggy, red hands.

Then from within, His still, small voice spoke to me. "You're here because I want you here," He seemed to say. "Stop looking at where I've put the others. I have something else in mind for you."

That experience and others like it have taught me that one of the harshest words in the English language is not a four-letter word but a seven-letter one—the word compare.

Often I am so intent on measuring myself and my circumstances against others that I lose sight

Lynn Bowen Walker is a stay at home mom of two sons. She has been published in Christian Parenting Today, Moody Magazine and Marriage Partnership. Lynn lives in Los Gatos, California.

of where God wants me to be. I peer at other people, my thoughts scrutinizing. *Is that person better looking than I am? Does that person have a more thoughtful spouse? More popular children? A nicer home? A more prestigious occupation? A more visible ministry?* It's as though I'm hoping to find areas where others are more accomplished than I am, reinforcing my suspicions that, yup, I really am lacking.

I've discovered that when I compare my position and path in life to what others have and are doing it can have devastating results.

Comparing destroys my contentment. Nothing propels me to dissatisfaction faster than peeking over the fence and seeing the green, green grass on the other side. I may have been perfectly happy with my little piece of a lawn before. But no more. Now I am petulant.

When I'm striving to have what others have or to be what others are, I will never be satisfied with my own life. As my brother Jack told me, contentment only comes when we stop comparing.

For the past ten years, Jack has lifted weights, trying to bulk up his 150-pound frame to match his ideal of a fine masculine physique. Recently he told me he's adjusted his goals. He is now training for the triathlon, an endurance sport that combines running, swimming, and bicycling.

In a triathlon Jack's small stature is an asset, not a handicap. "For me," he says, "entering a triathlon is a celebration of who God made me to be. I'm finally rejoicing in the body He gave me instead of trying to be like someone else." Such a wise brother.

Comparing blocks my view of the beautiful plan God has for me.

"God has something special for each of us, and I can easily miss the beauty of His plan if I'm scanning the scenery in someone else's backyard."

When I allow my eyes to wander from God and rest on other people, I lose sight of His will for my life. As a result I grow confused. And before I can say "Amazing grace," I'm faltering my way down someone else's path.

What God has planned for me may not be the same thing He has planned for my friend or my next-door neighbor or a co-worker. If I spend my time looking at my old college friends and longing to be out on the mission field doing what they're doing, I won't reap the blessings God has planned for me right where I am. God has something special for each of us, and I can easily miss the beauty of His plan if I'm scanning the scenery in someone else's backyard.

It is humbling to realize God wants us in the situation where we find ourselves. Quite often it is in the tough circumstances of life that He teaches us to rely completely on Him. Wherever He's put us, that's where we need to be.

And right now for me that includes being elbow-deep in dishwater.❖

Mission Alert

Evangelism News from Around the World



Panama

The Bunches are striving to establish a cell-based church in the town of Chitre. Three cells are in place, and four Christians are in training to be cell leaders in the near future. Pray that the Lord will build His church in Chitre through these cell groups.

Stan and Brenda also request prayer for Daniel, a man to whom they have witnessed for 13 years. They are praising the Lord that Daniel prayed to receive Christ on December 8. Pray that God will give him determination to remain steadfast, and pray for the salvation of his family.

Korea

Pray for Drs. John and Esther Chang in Seoul, South Korea. Through their efforts, the FWB Church for All Nations and the Asia FWB Seminary have been established. Also, the FWB National

Association of Korea was organized in March of 2000 with 34 ministers and 17 churches. Pray that more people will become prayer and financial partners with the Changs.

India

Reverend Carlisle Hanna, veteran missionary to India, received The Order of the Palmetto on November 17, in Columbia, South Carolina, at the state capitol. This is the highest civilian award given by the State of South Carolina. Pastor Floyd Seay and the men of the White Savannah FWB Church in Conway, South Carolina, nominated Carlisle for this award. Praise the Lord for this public recognition of Brother Hanna and his life of service to the Lord and to the people of India.

Spain

Anthony and Lea Edgmon request prayer for Carmen, a young woman who is studying the Bible with Lea. She knows the plan of salvation but is afraid of her family's rejection if she becomes a Christian. Pray that the Holy Spirit

will use the Scriptures to convict and convince her to make a decision for Christ.

France

Dennis and Carol Teague in France are grateful for prayers regarding the videotaping of Dennis' basketball team and a church service by a television reporter. A minute-long report was aired on a local branch of a national TV network, and the Teagues were very pleased with the presentation. The report was positive concerning Dennis and the church, with no hint of the church's being a sect. They request prayer for the reporter, Eric, who appeared to be impressed with what he discovered during the interviews.

Côte d'Ivoire

Dr. Kenneth Eagleton in Ivory Coast requests prayer as he and Verlin Anderson work to develop a community health and evangelism program. This will be the thrust of their ministry, and they hope to get started soon. Dr. Kenneth also assists with leadership training and has been helping two national Christians who prepare and distribute extension Bible courses. He requests prayer that God will call men in the Ivorian churches to prepare themselves for the ministry.



Words for Women

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Easy, But Difficult

I had been struggling for some time. My schedule was hectic. I had two children to get off to school every morning, a full-time job that demanded my attention at all hours, and a full schedule of school and church activities. In addition, I was a homemaker doing the necessary domestic tasks required to keep a household going. Sinking exhausted into my chair late in the evening, I would reach for my Bible. Easy? Late at night it isn't. Falling asleep with Bible in hand took no effort at all. Trying to stay awake and alert was very difficult. This daily frenzy continued until one day it dawned on me that I was allowing Satan, my enemy, to steal my peace and joy.

But what could I do? I knew my feeble attempts were inadequate. I made the excuse that I was getting my spiritual needs met through the daily chapel services I attended and from our family altar at night. I was only deluding myself. A. W. Tozer recognized the difficulty thirty-five years ago when he said, "Modern civilization is so complex as to make the devotional life all but impossible." His statement and my struggle took place long before E-mail, the Internet, and 500-channel TV.

One thing I knew. I desired communion with God. And God wanted me (Matthew 6:6). My heart was right, but, my priorities weren't. I struggled to have quality time left at the end of my busy day for God. My mornings certainly didn't provide time. The routine of cooking breakfast, packing school lunches, getting the children off to school, and, finally, rushing out the door myself consumed my mornings.

Why is it so hard to do something we know we should do and want to do?

When I fail to meet Him, I'm miserable, feel guilty, and my day doesn't go as well. When I came to the realization that my priorities were backwards, I was able to make a change. I had been kidding myself thinking that things were going to improve with time. My heart knew all along what my mind refused to acknowledge—decide the order of your priorities. Make up your mind and do it! Once you make that decision, do what you have to do to accomplish your goal.

I knew what I had to do. Get up earlier. Tough decision. I was already getting up early. How could I knock off another thirty minutes from my already short nights? I remembered the old adage, "people do what they really want to do." I made up my mind that my spiritual well-being was the most important event of the day. From that day to the present, I set my clock thirty minutes earlier than is necessary for my normal routine.

Prayer and Bible reading are not hard. Finding time is. Is it really essential for a Christian who goes to church faithfully and has family devotions to have a private time with God? Emphatically, yes! Prayer is communing with the One we love and the One who loves us. It is understanding the Father's heart, the pouring out of our heart. Without Him we are nothing the song says. We go to Him seeking His presence. I like E. M. Bounds' description of prayer, "Without prayer the Christian life, robbed of its sweetness and its beauty, becomes cold and formal and dead; but rooted in the secret place where God meets and walks and talks with His own, it grows into such a testimony of divine power that all men will feel its influence and be touched by the warmth of its love." ❖

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