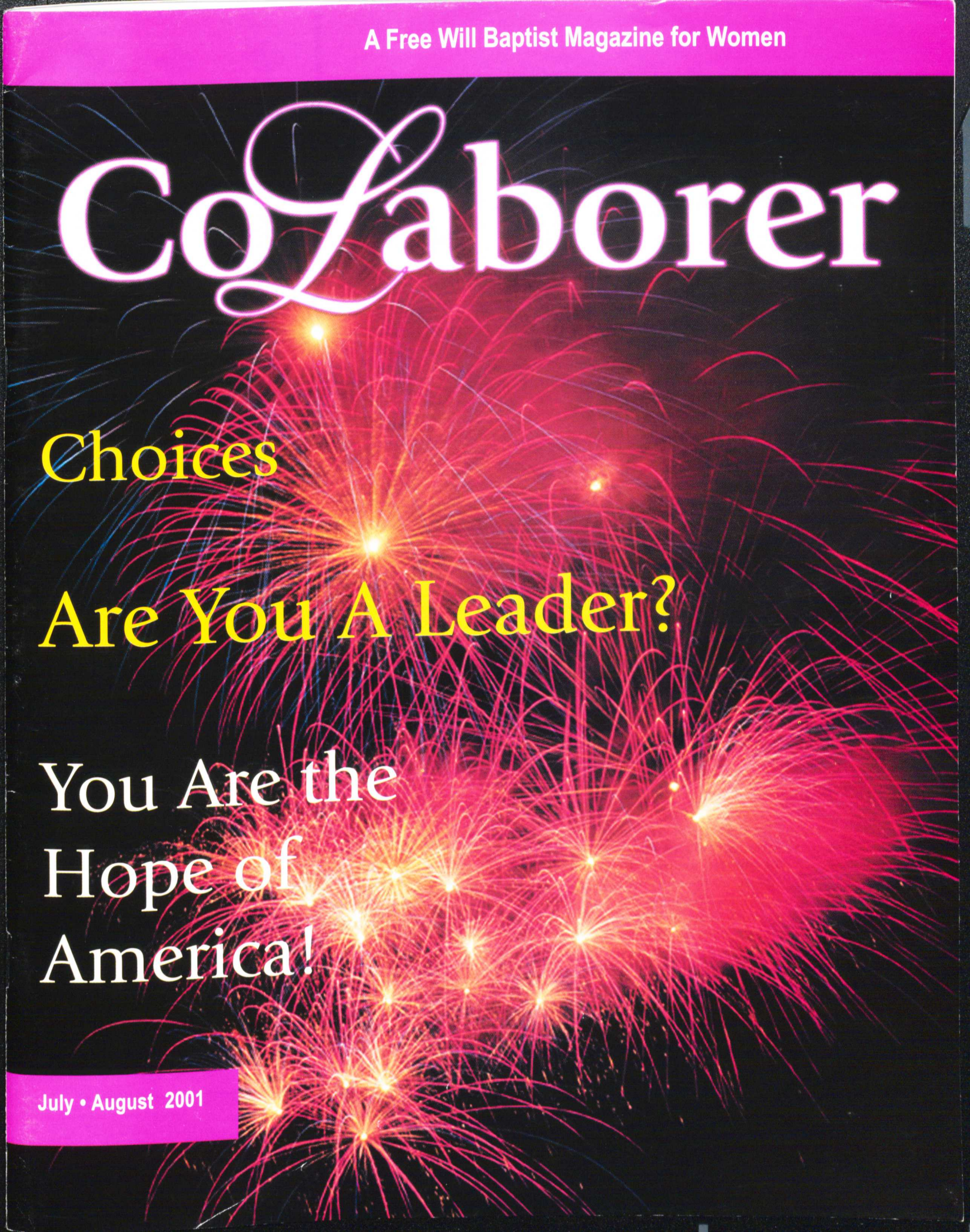


A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

CoLaborer



Choices

Are You A Leader?

You Are the
Hope of
America!

July • August 2001

VISION

Rhonda McReynolds



Big Sister

West Virginia on a hot summer day! The outdoors called my name in the morning and kept my attention until late afternoon. Dad and Mom were gone for the day. My older sister, Angela, now stood in authority.

The summer breeze blew in our faces, along with not-so-pleasant insects, as we peddled our bicycles fast and then faster—not a care in the world. My cousins, my sister and I would travel together to imaginary destinations such as our jobs, the grocery store and, of course, McDonald's where our favorite meal was the mud pie burger.

That afternoon, I got separated from the group. Suddenly, the summer breeze changed to strong winds that swirled around the bottom of the mountains. As I tried to push my body against the wind, I couldn't see through the thick dust to find my sister. I did the only thing I knew to do—I sat down beside my bike and cried. Then, through the clouds of dust, I saw my big sister running toward me with her hand reaching for me. Calmly, she picked up my bike, took my hand and guided me back to safety.

This five-foot nine-inch tough girl stood up to the best of them. She might be skinny, but boys ran in fear when she got after them. With her long legs, she was female lightning. Whether climbing a tree or scaling the mountain, she stayed ahead of the crowd. "No boy could beat her." And when it came to her little sister, she could beat me up (and did on occasion), but heaven help anyone who mistreated me—at least while she was looking.

Sometimes her hands smooshed mud pies together. Sometimes they squeezed tightly the neck of a softball bat. But her hands always had time to stop and gently scoop up a wounded or abandoned animal. On any given day a chicken, a cat, an abandoned puppy, a wounded parakeet or a stray dog called our back yard home. Her heart cried if any living creature was in danger.

Whether Angela was chasing me through the house, biting my nose or holding me down tickling me until I turned blue with laughter, she always backed it up with a hug. Each night before bed, she listened to me as I shared my exciting stories and far-fetched dreams. Then she would hug me with one hand and punch me with the other.

Throughout my high school years, my sister and I had our own friends. But she was always in the background, making sure her little sister was all right. At my high school basketball games, I scanned the crowd to make sure Angela was there to watch me. And she never let me down. I heard her scream above everybody else, then, on the way home, she would tease me about the way I played. On my big nights out, she would wait up for me so I could tell her everything. We would run to our bedroom, shut the door and whisper all night—about what? I'll never tell.

Today, Angela puts her tough girl attitude, her comforting hands and her compassionate heart to work everyday where it matters most. As a Registered Nurse, she gives her patients exactly what she gave to me—an outstretched hand.

Five hundred miles separate my sister and me, but I feel closer to her today than ever. We still share all our secrets; she still has to prove that she will always be able to beat me up; she still reaches out her hand to me when I can't find my way through dust clouds.

Elizabeth Fishel, said "Both within the family and [in our Christian family], our sisters hold up our mirrors: our images of who we are and who we can dare to become." I hope that one day, I can become the woman my sister already is.❖

Volume 41

Number 4

JULY • AUG 2001

8

The July Program discusses ways to stand up for your beliefs.

23

Vernon, Alabama WAC ministers to the sick and elderly of their church.

28

Read a true story of how bad choices led one young woman down a wrong road, until she surrendered to God.

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

C O N T E N T S



FEATURES

4

Talk is Cheap—Ida Lewis

8

July Program

You're the Hope of America: Take A Stand!—Bessie Richards

11

August Program

Mystic, Master, Manager—Brenda Evans

25

WNAC Convention Program

28

Choices—Lori Simmons

DEPARTMENTS

15

Springboard: Innovative Ideas for Officers

Springboard Illustrated—Annette Aycock

Lucy & Marge—Dr. Mary R. Wischart & Yvonne Hampton

19

Communicator—Marjorie Workman

20

To Be Like Dustin—Debe Taylor

22

Letters to WNAC

23

Women In Action

24

Emphasis Resource Sheet

26

Life!Action

27

Mission Alert

31

Words for Women—Marjorie Workman

Talk is Cheap

by Ida Lewis



There I stood with the telephone receiver in my trembling hand. A cold, stony silence filled the air, and a sense of loneliness filled my very being. I just hurt my very best friend—a young girl whom I had led to the Lord just a few short years before.

*Ida Lewis is the editor of AIM magazine for the Home Missions department.
She attends Richland FWB church in Nashville, TN.*

We had been born within two weeks of each other and had been brought up in the same church. I had allowed my anger to get the best of me, and I had said something really horrible to her. To make matters worse, her mother picked up the extension receiver about the time the words flew from my mouth. She had heard everything. What a disappointment I must have been to that mother—not exactly the testimony of a good Christian girl.

It didn't take me long to realize that I would have to explain to my own mother what had happened, and then I would have to face my friend and her family. I flew to my room, my place of peace and quiet, and began to talk with the Lord.

I couldn't understand how I allowed my anger to overtake me and make me say the things I did to someone so close to me.

Now, more than thirty years have passed, and I have never forgotten that moment. Sad to say, it hasn't been the only time that I have spoken before thinking. Even sadder is the fact that I know that I'm not alone. Over the years, during the process of maturing both personally and spiritually, I have learned from those times. Have I conquered my tongue? I still talk to the Lord because I know that He is in my heart and will always be willing to help me. Yes, the devil is right there attempting to try my patience and loose my tongue.

How often have we heard the comment, "Talk is cheap"? "Cheap" conjures up thoughts of things that cost very little, but the wrong words spoken at the wrong time, to the wrong individual, in the wrong setting can be ultimately the most costly event that can happen.

What does God tell us regarding the tongue,

our actions and motives and how do they all come together to affect our Christian witness?

1 John 4:21: "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

When we truly love others, as we are commanded to do, it should be difficult to become involved in idle chatter about them. Unfortunately, in today's fast-paced world with so much to take control of our minds, it can be too easy to speak before thinking. When the words come out, it is too late. The damage has been done.

1 Corinthians 13:1: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

We can muster all the righteous strength possible, but if the love (charity) in our heart is missing, what we "say" is worthless. Idle chatter is a waste of time and effort and can cause irreparable damage.

Be sure of the facts. How much knowledge do we really possess? When we speak, do we temper what we say with the love of God, and are we sure of our facts? Why, when people hear something about a situation or a person, and they have questions, do they hesitate to go to the

"I couldn't understand how I allowed my anger to overtake me and make me say the things I did to someone so close to me."

person involved and try to find out the truth? It often seems easier to just pass on the comments and not think of the consequences. We do not need to get excited and revel in the juicy tidbits that we may hear about others. We need to seek the Lord's wisdom and guidance. A good guideline in this instance would be the Golden Rule.

How many times have we "shared" information that was untrue, incomplete, or simply just didn't need to be shared? What is our ultimate goal? Hitting close to home, how many times have we passed on information as a

"prayer request?"

Ouch! Remember that Christians are human and given to failings. When we talk, are we being sincere? We need to have a balance of head facts and heart love before we begin to speak.

When the opportunity to become involved in gossip and speculation pops up, we need to turn from it. If we knock someone down too many times with unscriptural and negative comments, eventually, they may stay down. Do we really want that for the people in our church...our pastor and his family...our own family...in our workplace? Do we want the reputation of being a "talker"? Do we really want to show our ignorance by not seeking out the real truth when a question arises? Do we want to be responsible for creating a constant state of turmoil? The answer is a resounding, "No!"

What about our influence on our children and other family members? Are we raising children who are going to be spiteful, vengeful and malicious in their speech? They usually want to emulate the ones they love the most. Our children hear what we are saying more often than we realize. You may be familiar with those in a church who continuously go home and "have the preacher for Sunday dinner," as the saying goes. They speak negatively about the church all the time and then wonder why their children don't want to go and participate. Are we the absolute best Christian examples to those around us?

*"If you have to
talk about
someone, do it on
your knees."*

CAN TALK BE CHEAP? YES! I have been at both ends of the spectrum at one time or another. I imagine that you have too.

Important things to remember when beginning a conversation are:

- When you tell someone something that you've heard, will it hurt them? Is it true? Did they need to be told? Are you really trying to help?
- What is said will almost ALWAYS come back to haunt you in some way. Remember that the content of what has been said will change according to the number of people who repeat it.
- How does "talking" make you look to others? To God? Does it accomplish anything good? What's the purpose?

We need to be so careful. God has placed a lot of responsibility on us—that of caring for our fel-

low Christians and being a witness to the lost. God is the only one who can give us the complete picture of any situation. We need to remember that we may not have that complete picture until we are in His presence.

Love one another as Christ loves us. If we do that consistently, can you imagine the sweet fellowship we will have among ourselves, our families, our work place and in our church?

- If you have to talk about someone, do it on your knees!

- If you have a question about something or someone, or you have ought against someone, GO TO THAT PERSON—not to everyone else.

The tongue is one of the smallest and yet most potent tools that we have (James 3:5). It is up to us to decide whether we will use it for the glory of God or allow the devil to take control.

Our tongues can either draw someone to the Lord or cause them to turn the other way. What power we have and don't realize it!

A dear friend has always made the comment, "I can forgive, but I will never forget." What a terrible thing to say, but in retrospect, I find that it can be true if we allow it. We, with God's help, can forgive what others have done, but the impression will remain in hearts and minds. It may never completely go away. Yes, God will help us if we ask, but many times we forget to make that request. Instead, we allow that impression to color our future judgments. Thankfully, God does for-

give us, and wipes our slates clean.

While much of what has been mentioned here may have had a somewhat cautious ring to it, we also need to remember that what we say can also be a positive thing. Instead of being "cheap," what we say about others can be very beautiful, leaving good impressions and long-lasting pleasant memories.

Our salvation and Christian witness are the most precious commodities we have. We want others to know we really care.

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father" (Philippians 2:11).

"Our tongues can either draw someone to the Lord or cause them to turn the other way."

In case you are wondering, my friend from my teen years is still very much my friend, and my sister in Christ. Our lives have taken different paths, but after fifty-two years and through the grace and forgiveness of God, the bond

is as strong as ever. We, as sisters in Christ, can make a difference in this world. But yes, the Lord needs to be the center of everything we say and do.❖

You're the Hope of America: TAKE A STAND!



by Bessie Richards

Purpose: To be prepared to take a stand when Christian values are challenged.

Scripture: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Hymns: Stand Up for Jesus; God Bless America

Introduction:

Are you proud to be an American? Have you recently thanked God for the innumerable freedoms and privileges that have been our heritage for decades? Sadly, as is often the case, we don't appreciate what we have until we've lost it. **Wake up America!**

Daily, masses of people from almost every nation seek residence in the United States. Some even risk their life trying to enter illegally. Why? Many are fleeing from communist ruled lands where freedom is non-existent. Others suffer poverty and hunger in the Third World. America offers them a ray of hope for freedom and abundant life.

Bessie Richards is a home missionary to Slidell, Louisiana.



"Too many professing Christians are unaware or apathetic to the situation around them."

Spend a few minutes conversing with any American living outside the United States. That individual will gladly recount emotions he or she experienced upon re-entering our beloved homeland, the pride in seeing the Statue of Liberty standing in New York Harbor—arms outstretched in welcome and the thrill of seeing "Old Glory" flapping in the wind.

Yes, God abundantly blesses our nation because our forefathers bravely fought for and stood firmly for God's principles. Today, it is heartbreaking to see America rapidly becoming a pagan land, and too many professing Christians are unaware or apathetic to the situation around them. **Wake up, America!**

God says, "If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2Chronicles 7:14)

Take Your Stand on God's Word

In the age of rapid cultural change, we have one place to put our confidence—in God. Matthew 24:3-5 tells us that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Our society tries

to substitute Biblical teachings with a new morality where good is called evil and evil is called good.

"Freedom doesn't give us the right to do what we please, but to do what pleases God." (*Our Daily Bread*, July 1999, RBC Ministries).

God counts on Christians, His ambassadors, to boldly tell others about Him and what His standards are for each individual and for our nation. To do so, we must personally know His Word—our handbook for Christian living.

The results of a May 2000 Gallup poll found that although religion is still popular in America, many people who profess to be Christians are basically Biblical illiterates. Eight in ten Americans say they are Christians, but only four in ten people know who delivered the Sermon on the Mount. Most people say the Ten Commandments are valid rules for living, but they can't name them.

How do you and I measure up? No doubt, each of us feels the need to spend more time studying God's Word in our prayer closet, together with our

family and with other Christians. Will you make a commitment to God to "study to shew thyself approved unto God,



a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15)?

Take Your Stand in a Hostile World

Who would ever have imagined that the day would come in America when Christians and Christianity would be ridiculed and hated? We are called hate-mongers and bigots for taking a stand against the powerful homosexual movement — an abomination in God's sight. If we protest to the TV producers about the steady diet of violence, vulgar language and immoral behavior presented in the majority of television programs, we are classified as narrow minded, in spite of proven facts that television is among the biggest influences in our society today. When we speak and take action against the pornographic materials that flood the Internet and newsstands, we are accused of interfering with freedom of speech. Now, we are criticized because we vote against gambling, considered by many to be a harmless form of entertainment. The list of accusations against us lengthens weekly.

What should be our response to all of this hateful venom? Jesus said to those present when He spoke the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:11,12).

The same God who strengthened Joshua, Joseph, Daniel, Gideon, Queen Esther and all believers who have boldly taken a stand for Him is still with us today. He promises to be with us always and enable us to meet the challenges before us.

Take a Stand for Our Children's Sake

It is not easy for adults to admit failure, but we must. Americans should weep and repent of what our selfishness, busy schedules, unconcern and

apathy have produced in the lives of the youth of this generation. Never in the history of our nation has the rate of teen suicide, unwed pregnancy, juvenile arrests for murder, robbery and violence been so high. Too many of our children are growing up without the love and security of a happy family life and the moral teachings they need in order to be emotionally healthy youth.

Let's get involved in the lives of our children and the youth around us. We need to let them know we care by our words and actions. If they are convinced of our genuine interest in them, the barriers will come down. They will feel free to share what's happening in their life. They will listen when we show them the consequences of bad choices. If our love and dedication to Christ are the real thing, they will want to know Him and serve Him, too.

Conclusion

It is easy to be overwhelmed and depressed when we observe the inroads Satan is making in American society. Yet, Jesus' day was similar. He described His society as a generation of vipers, scoffers, blasphemers, adulterers, child offenders, false accusers, liars, hypocrites, lovers of pleasure, etc. The Bible gives no evidence of Jesus being discouraged or hopeless even though He knew all that would soon happen. He knew the ultimate victory was in the future, that the gates of hell would not prevail against God's people.

God will always have a remnant of faithful believers and, thank God, you and I can be among them. **Are you ready to take a stand?❖**

*"Our society tries
to substitute
biblical teachings
with a new
morality where
good is called evil
and evil is called
good."*

Mystic, Master, Manager

by Brenda Evans

*"All the
world is not
my stage,
and although
the leader, I
am not the
star
attraction."*

He was a contradiction who marched with the hoi polloi for long weeks, then hid from human contact for days at a time. In fits of anger he broke objects or struck people, once delivering a blow that killed a man.

Brenda Evans is a high school English Teacher. She attends Donelson Fellowship in Nashville, TN.

"Leadership is not about jousting for supremacy or gaining the upper hand; it is about getting the job done."

He fled shamelessly at the sight of a snake, yet went head-to-head with a rowdy gang of bullies tormenting young women.

Protesting that he was tongue-tied and shy, he nevertheless sat as both judge and jury, delivering death sentences and settling civil suits. He spent long hours in prayer. Once he laid himself facedown in front of constituents who threatened to kill him, then defended them to the one who offered to annihilate them. For a man who claimed to be slow of speech, his last recorded words were an impassioned oration—poignant, suppliant, prophetic in tone.

Low-born, but high-reared, Moses was a paradox. Both dissembler and planner, rebel and leader, mystic and manager, he began in a basket and ended on a mountain top. From the bloody Nile he was catapulted into life among a roiling, grumbling multitude at the Red Sea and thirty-nine years later at the Water of Meribah and ultimately at the Jordan River near Mount Nebo.

What a ride (or swim) it was. From bloody river to brackish spring, from idyll to idol, Egypt to Canaan (almost), Moses pressed on, leading a group of pilgrims who were whiners and complainers, sometimes pious, sometimes compliant—imperfect people like you and me who were a pain to lead. Among his

What to Do First

Begin with an attitude. Attitude is the mental and emotional posture or position that we adopt as we take up any role, including that of leader. In ballet, *attitude* is a position similar to the arabesque in which the raised leg is bent at the knee. In aeronautics,

"A leader must begin with a sacramental attitude in which she practices utter commitment to her liege—the Lord Jesus."

followers were acknowledged skeptics, artists, clowns, thinkers, craftsmen, gossips, rebels, and believers. Plus there was that ambiguous "mixed multitude." Heaven only knows what kind of people they were—difficult, I'm sure, undoubtedly making it up as they went along.

So what is a person to do when she is thrust in front of people like that, people who are hard to lead?

it is the position an aircraft takes in reference to the horizon. In humans, it is the position we take on a subject, situation or event, a choice we arrive at through our intellect and feelings.

So what should be my attitude toward leadership?

Practice a sacramental personality. A leader must be given over to Jesus Christ, all rights and reservations removed. She must be one who says, "Here I am, Lord;

help yourself to my life." This is what Oswald Chambers calls a sacramental personality—one that is available and abandoned to God.

This sacramental relationship is evident in the origin of the word. To early Romans a *sacrament* was a legal agreement that placed a person's life or property in the hands of a supernatural power that upheld justice and honored solemn contracts. Later *sacrament* became a soldier's oath of allegiance to his commander when embarking on a military campaign.

To state it plainly, If I have a sacramental personality, I have given my first allegiance to Jesus Christ. He is my liege lord. To Him I give my loyalty, fidelity, devotion and duty. This master/servant relationship is not a "decent, thin veneer," as John Stott says, but a deep intrinsic grain that identifies *whose* I am.

Furthermore, that relationship drives my actions and interactions with those whom I lead. Jeremiah is an example. He understood how his relationship to the Lord God impacted his role as prophet to the people. Called to tell the truth and lead the people to repentance and righteousness, he was seized by an angry mob. "I am in your hand," he said. "Do with me as seemeth good" (26:14). Those threatening both his leadership and his life did not understand the double meaning of his words. They assumed that he was speaking only to them. The truth is,

A good leader will become:

- a planner who strategizes and organizes, looking ahead to tomorrow, next month, next year
- a collaborator who never considers herself the sole source of wisdom, insight, or leadership and so empowers others to use their gifts as fellow laborers
- a learner who replenishes her well of knowledge and challenges her preconceptions through reading, research, and consultation with experts in the field
- a risk taker who is willing to push against old boundaries, think divergently, envision new approaches, draw on fresh resources
- a communicator who defines and expresses the corporate plan and vision
- an encourager who is a builder, not a destroyer; a motivator who knows that kindness, gentleness, and gratitude enliven and strengthen the human spirit
- a procreator who births, trains, and mentors new leaders.

Jeremiah had been captured at the age of 20 by the God of the universe. He knew whose he was: first the Lord's, then theirs.

From the beginning I must know whose I am. I must choose to stay off a pedestal, for that pedestal distances me from those whom I am called to lead. All the world is not my stage, and although the leader, I am not the star attraction. The work that must be done takes top billing—sets the neon marquee. I must not lead for recognition: this is not my performance. I must say, "Here I am, Lord; help yourself to my life."

Where to Go Next

Commit to servant leadership. After we learn an attitude and establish a relationship, then we are available to be of use to others. Eugene Peterson calls this "actual physical service (not spiritual intention, not a desire to be of service)," but a physical commitment of our bodies to do the work. Leading is not an easy-sneezy job. That must be why Paul introduces his five-chapter practical section at the end of Romans with this imperative: Present your bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1,2).

Sweat, blood and tears are not just metaphors for what it takes

to be a leader. Often the flesh suffers, the bones ache, the mind is dehydrated. We are drained, dried up, for leading is not glory and ease. It is humility and humiliation, ultimate success and utter failure, Alpine mountains and Amazonian chasms.

In *Men of Action*, his book on the early church, Paul S. Rees talks about both our steadiness and our steadfastness whether on the mountain or in the chasm. He says that if we want to launch out as leaders who serve our Lord and others, we must get over our fear of sinking, our fear of sneering, and our fear of suffering. We must bravely

ungodly shortcut: "Power offers an easy substitute for the harder task of love. It seems easier to be God than to love God, easier to control people than to love people."

After a seashore breakfast of bread and fish, Jesus electrified Peter with three tandem questions and mandates: Do you love me? If you do, then stoop to love and shepherd my sheep. (See John 21:15-19.) Jesus was calling Peter to a kind of leadership that Dietrich Bonhoeffer later called "brotherly service, the work of a brother among brothers." Eugene Peterson says that despite his servanthood that kind of leader

meet with more ingratitude from men than we would from a dog; but if our motive is to love God, no ingratitude can hinder us from serving our fellow man," says Oswald Chambers.

My goal, then, as a servant leader is to get the Master's job done that I have been called to do. To accomplish that I must hold myself accountable for developing effective leadership strategies.

In summary, a leader must begin with a sacramental attitude in which she practices utter commitment to her liege—the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then she will move forward in servant leadership that avoids power and authority and embraces service "under the mastery of God," as Eugene Peterson says. Next, a leader must become a learner, collaborator, strategist, communicator who helps define and execute a corporate plan and vision for the work God has called her and her group to do.

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. ... for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:23-24). That is the bottom line for any leader.❖

"My goal, then, as a servant leader is to get the Master's job done that I have been called to do."

serve on. And if we are wise, we will learn, like David, to deftly dodge javelins, for we will sometimes have to dodge things that the Sauls we are serving throw at us.

Then, too, a servant leader can not yield to the temptation to rise up, overthrow all restraint and become master of himself and all he surveys. For leaders, the temptation of power and authority is beautifully seductive, in fact, almost irresistible. But Henri Nouwen warns that for a leader, empire-building is an

is "the freest person on earth."

What to Do Last

Develop effective methodology. Leadership is not about jousting for supremacy or gaining the upper hand; it is about getting the job done. It is not about occasional bursts of insights or short-term enthusiasm; leaders are in for the long haul. Neither is it about helping our fellow man. "If we are devoted to the cause of humanity, we shall soon be crushed and brokenhearted, for we shall often



Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WAC Officers

Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator

WNAC August Emphasis Month is quickly approaching. This is an important month for WNAC, so make plans now to have a successful emphasis at your church. Packets will not be mailed, but you can find the Emphasis program in the 2001 Yearbook. The order form can be found on page 24 of this issue of *CoLaborer*. Look on page 19 for more information. You can order your emphasis materials through WNAC by calling toll free 1-877-767-7662. Or e-mail us at WNAC@NAFWB.ORG.

The WNAC National Convention will be held in Detroit, Michigan, July 16-17. Make your reservations today. If you can't attend, pray for those who are working to make the convention a success.

Secretary/Treasurer

The delegate card must be completed and returned with a \$5 registration fee. Each local church may elect one delegate to register for voting privileges at the WNAC Convention. You can find the form on page 16.

Missions Chairman

Make sure you have the latest materials from the Foreign and Home Missions departments. This is a good time to update your Missions Cards. Subscribe to *Aim* by calling the Home Missions at 1-877-767-767. Order *Heartbeat*, *Women's Beat*, *Men's Beat*, *Pastor's Beat* and *Youth Beat* by calling the Foreign Missions Department at 1-877-767-7736.

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Prayer Chairman

WNAC Emphasis Prayer Request

1. WNAC members and officers (local, district, state)
2. National officers who are elected at the 2001 WNAC National Convention
3. Financial support for a solid base of operation that meets current and future financial needs
4. Marjorie Workman, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of WNAC
5. WNAC Staff

Study Chairman

"The Prayer of Jabez" is a great book for your church library. Learn how a small prayer can change your life. You can order this book through WNAC by calling toll free 1-877-767-7662. See page 20 for a book review.

Service Chairman

During the summer months, shut-ins have a hard time dealing with the heat. Make sure the elderly from your church have the proper supplies such as fans and plenty of fluids throughout these two months.

Beginning with the January 2002 issue, CoLaborer magazine will increase to \$10 per year per issue for the bundle plan and \$11 per year for a single subscription.

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All the Way from Brazil!

by Annette Aycock

Rosana is a beautiful, vibrant, Brazilian. She is the wife of Eduardo and mother of Carolina, age 11. Rosana had been searching for hope and meaning for her life for many years. She truly began searching after her brother, Rogerio, moved to Canada and met a Christian woman named Joanne who led him to the Lord. Rosana saw the transformation in her brother's life and desired what he had. Joanne continued to pray and witness to Rosana over the phone. One particular night Joanne prayed with Rosana and told her that God was waiting for her and would send something in her life to let her know that He was waiting. God will send someone or something into your life—a person, a SIGN!

The next day as Rosana was driving her daughter home from school, she spotted a sign in front of a church close to her house. The sign said, "Please come join us for our missions conference. Tonight: Andy Moore from Brazil." She turned the car around to get a second look at that sign. Did she really see what she thought she saw? She stopped in the parking lot and prayed, "God is that the sign you wanted me to see? Please God, help me." Rosana had only lived in Florence for two months. Rosana knew at this point that all of this was not a coincidence. She went inside the church where she found out that Andy Moore would be speaking tonight and David Aycock, who was born in Brazil, would be there the following night. She was lovingly urged to come to these

services. Rosana was there to hear Andy preach. She was very impressed that such a young couple as the Moores would leave their country and go to hers in search of unsaved souls.

Rosana returned to the First Church the next evening and this time with her family. "What happened the next night completely changed my life," Rosana writes. "David, his wife and their four children decided to return to Brazil as missionaries. That night David talked about my country, my people, my culture and my life. He was so sure of the work of the Gospel that I started to open my heart for God. He showed us a Brazil that I didn't know. While I was listening to David, something incredible happened to me. I stared up at the altar and whispered, "Please, God, I need you.." At that moment I felt His presence. It was so intense. It was better than anything I had ever tried in my life. This was love sweeter than anything. There have been so many miracles in my life—a loving husband, a perfect daughter, good friends and to be able to live in this blessed country, but never one so powerful as this one. This miracle was the greatest, the one that made all the others possible. This was the miracle of God's love.

After the service, David asked me if I was ready to give my life to Christ. I told him yes. At that moment, David led me to the Lord in my own language. This was a true moment of GLORY! Praise the Lord!"

The story doesn't end there, nor should it! Once we are saved and have the Lord living in us, the abundant life has only begun. One week after Rosana was saved, the Moores gave Rosana the book, *They Deserve A Second Chance*, by Shirley Combs. The book tells about the ministry of saving the street children of Brazil. Rosana read 2 pages and said that she knew in her heart what God wanted her to do. God wanted her to help save the children of Brazil—the children of her country!

Rosana organized a missions team of 18 volunteers to travel with her to Brazil the first of June. She traveled and spoke in dozens of churches and meetings trying to raise \$18,000 to build an Activity Center at the "Lar Nova Vida," the children's home in Araras, Brazil. This missions team worked on building this Activity Center while in Brazil—Not bad for someone who has been saved for seven months!

What about you? What about me? If all of our new converts behaved in such a manner, would we already have the world evangelized? "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19a).

A church sign. A simple thing. But, God used it to help change a life. Because He is so powerful, He can use small and simple things to do great things for His Glory. So, look around you—you may feel very small and what you have may be very simple—but just give it to God and WATCH OUT! He has big plans for YOU!!! ♦

Annette Aycock is a missionary to Brazil.

Lucy & Marge

Marge: Lucy, we really need to be doing something about our society.

Lucy: What do you mean WE should be doing something about it?

Marge: Shouldn't we be doing something for our young people to keep them from killing other young people? And can't we do something to stop all the pornography on the internet that's destroying their minds?

Lucy: Well, things are bad, aren't they? Just the other day I heard that right here in our own community a man killed his wife and child and then killed himself. What in the world is wrong in our country?

Marge: I think that we as Christians are not the influence we should be. And you and I should be doing something about that.

Lucy: But Marge, we're just mere women. What can we do?

Marge: Mere women! Think about all the opportunities we have in this country.

Lucy: What opportunities, Marge?

Marge: We have a great deal of freedom, we can vote, we're free to make our own choices in every area of our lives. Of course WE

can do something to make a difference.

Lucy: Oh Marge, you make me ashamed. When I think about women in other countries who can't even provide food for their children, and other women who don't have nearly the freedoms that we do, I am ashamed that we don't do more to make a difference.

Marge: It seems we want to shift the responsibility to others, our government, or schools or even our churches. But God holds us personally responsible for being an influence in our society.

Lucy: Marge, you make me want to do something. But what can we do? Go out on the street corner and start preaching? I know, you preach and I'll play the tambourine!

Marge: Oh, Lucy, don't be ridiculous. That's not what I meant at all.

Lucy: Well, what do you mean, Marge?

Marge: We can learn how to make a difference in a hostile world at our next Women's Meeting.

Lucy: I recall that we've had some articles in *CoLaborer* magazine about some of our women who are making a difference.

Marge: Yes, like Gwen Hendrix in South Carolina, Lucille Steward in Michigan, and Dawn

Sweeney in Tennessee. They're not just standing around wringing their hands, they're doing something. And they're women just like you and me.

Lucy: Yes, I believe God has given us a place to make a difference in our society.

Marge: We can start right in our own home, church and community. And then we can reach around the world.

Lucy: I'm going to urge all of our women to come to our next meeting (when & where) so that we can make plans to begin influencing our society.

Marge: Even if we are mere women, Lucy.

Lucy: And probably I won't have to go out on the street corner with my tambourine after all!

*Lucy and Marge was written by
Dr. Mary R. Wisheart and
Yvonne Hampton*

Communicator

by Marjorie Workman

WNAC's purpose is to provide opportunities for women to understand and fulfill the Great Commission through their responsibilities in the family, in the church, in the community and around the world.

Nothing is more important to the heart of God than our proclaiming His name to all people. This we do through personal and collective involvement, prayer and financial support.

All of the materials we print, the retreats and conventions we plan, and the miles we travel speaking and promoting are done with our purpose in focus.

Consider what the ministry of WNAC means to our missions departments, Bible colleges, children's homes and local churches. It means the women have provided over \$2,758,000 in the past five years for these ministries. It means a well-stocked Missionary Provision Closet for all of our missionaries. It means scholarships for young men in other countries training to minister in Free Will Baptist churches in their country. It means loans available for students attending Free Will Baptist Bible College. It means a new organ for the new chapel on the new FWBBC campus. For the local church it means a variety of things—women involved in prison ministries, nursing home programs, Bible studies, prayer fellowships, teaching ministries and other services where needed.

Emphasis month for WNAC is August. The purpose for an emphasis month is twofold: To present the work of WNAC to the local church and to provide an opportunity for the church to assist in the financial support of the National WNAC Office.

Materials are available to help with your August emphasis. The skit "Through the Millennia" is fun, short, informative and easy to do. The skit is in the 2001 Yearbook. Order a copy for \$3.00 from WNAC. See page 24 for other resources available (some free), and how to order.

Prayers should bathe your plans, program and presentation. Pray for your WNAC staff and state and district officers. Pray for your local WAC officers. Pray for women to become active in your WAC, especially your young women. Pray for women of other cultures to whom you can minister.

Have creative announcements and promotions for the special Emphasis Program and offering. For ideas, read the skit, "Through the Millennia." Inserts for your church bulletins can be made from page 23 of the Yearbook or enlarge the page for a poster to publicize your program.

Arrange with your pastor for an appropriate time to have your special emphasis. Ask him to receive a special offering for WNAC during the month. This offering is vital for the support of the National Office since the summer months are low in income.

Send your offering through the WNAC channels. That way your district and state can tally collectively what they are doing to support WNAC.

Income received from the Emphasis Offering goes toward meeting operational expenses of the National Office. These expenses include salaries for four employees, equipment, office rent, postage, travel, toll free telephone for your convenience in ordering materials or checking on accounts, free brochures to help promote your local WAC ministry, and other expenses.

Set goals. How many new women do you want to reach? How many pieces of literature do you want to hand out? How many quarter folders will your women fill? How much do you want your offering to be? Check to see what you did last year and set your goals for this year. Your success depends on prayer, good planning, great publicity and God. Have a great Emphasis Month. ♦

TO BE LIKE DUSTIN

by Debe Taylor

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”
(Psalm 122:1)

I have attended church ALL of my life. Never was there a period of any length of time where I didn't. There was never any question about whether or not we would go—we just went. Yet, I can't say that my sentiment was always that of the Psalmist David.

There have been plenty of times when I went because my parents just told us girls we were going. No arguments, no discussion, no “back talk.” Since becoming an adult, there have been many times I went because it had become habit. I held a position in the church; for me it was a social event. Now maybe I'm the only one who has ever felt this way, but somehow, I don't think so.

For Dustin, it is not at all like that. Dustin is three years old and has more energy than I care to think about. However, every time Dustin heads

“EVERYONE
KNOWS HIS
MOMMY HAS SAID
IT'S TIME TO GO
HOME WHEN WE
SEE AND HEAR
DUSTIN QUIETLY
CRYING.”

to church, he is absolutely excited. When he arrives at church, he is so thrilled to see everyone, and I do mean everyone, that he has to give us all a hug. Dustin makes each and every one of us feel very special.

Dustin isn't just glad to come to the “house of the Lord,” but he doesn't want to leave when church is over. Everyone knows his mommy has said it's time to go home when we see and hear Dustin quietly crying. Before long you hear these mournful words, “I don't want to go home from church.” Boy! That's a switch!

Don't you imagine every pastor would love to have a church full of Dustins—so glad to come, friendly to everyone and not in a hurry to head home. Dustin's family attends my church and my pastor would love to have even a “few” like him.

Oh, I want to be like Jesus, but in striving to be like Jesus—I want “to be like Dustin!”

“I WAS GLAD WHEN THEY SAID UNTO ME, LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.”

The Prayer of Jabez

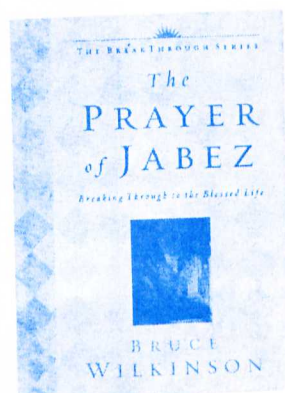
Reviewed by *CoLaborer*

Are you an ordinary Christian who desires to reach for the extraordinary life? Then this book is for you.

Discover the one sentence prayer prayed by Jabez that is tucked away among a long list of genealogies in I Chronicles—one of the least-read sections of the least-read books of the Bible. You probably have never read it if your tendency is to skip genealogies.

Jabez's desire was to be more and do more for God. God granted his request. Wilkinson walks the reader through the four requests of the prayer. He says the request may "strike you as sincere, sensible, even noble, but not terribly remarkable." He shows the reader just how dramatic and life changing each request is. Each phase of the

prayer is illustrated by experiences of people who pray the Jabez prayer.



by Bruce Wilkinson
\$9.99
93 pages

Wilkinson tells how Jabez's prayer revolutionized his own life and ministry. He then challenges the reader to make the prayer a daily part of their experience and watch God's astounding answers. He gives six steps to follow for thirty days. By the end of the thirty

days the prayer will be well on its way to becoming a lifelong habit. The author warns "what you know about this prayer won't get you anything. It's only what you believe will happen and therefore do next that will bring about a life change."

This little hardback book with only 93 pages and seven short chapters is a powerful book.

You may purchase *The Prayer of Jabez* from WNAC for \$9.99. Call toll free 1-877-767-7662.



Dear WNAC,

Greetings to you and those who serve with you in the WNAC office in Jesus' precious name.

Thank you for sending the towels out by Brother James Forlines. We needed them, and I am thankful for them. We have had nine adults in our house and several thousand on the compound.

We know, by experience, how wonderful it is to have the Provision Closet. When we went to USA for furlough in December, 1957, we had nothing with which to set up housekeeping—and no money for rent. Mrs. Eunice Edwards and LaVerne and Lorene Miley gave us some of what they had. Hence, when I say "thank you," I really mean it!

In Christ,

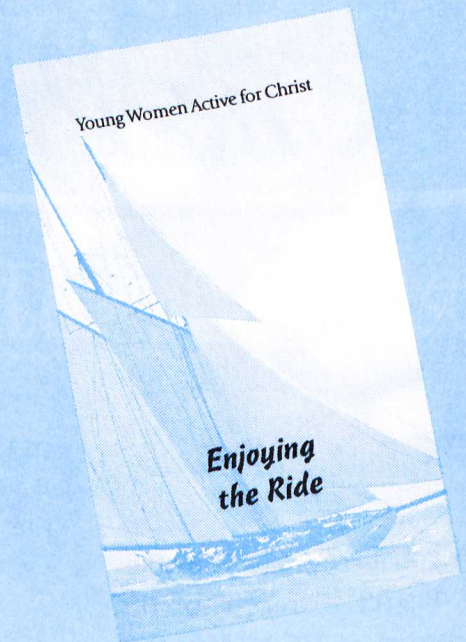
Brother Carlisle Hanna, Missionary to India

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Thank you very much for the \$5,747.98 that you gave to our account in 2000. Think of the people who have heard the Gospel because of your generous gifts! May God bless each of you. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

In Christ,

Pam and Robert West



Kick off your Young Women in Action ministry by ordering copies of *Enjoying the Ride*.

- Programs for One Year
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1-877-767-7662. Write us at WNAC, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN, 37011-5002

Women In Action



First Free Will Baptist WAC of Vernon, Alabama, make fruit baskets for the sick and elderly.

(Pictured left to right) Jackie Harrison, President; Jean Dubose, Service Chairman; Martha Turner, Vice President.



The Ladies Auxiliary of Liberty FWB in Chuckey, TN, sponsored a Breakfast and Bazaar to raise money for missions. At their monthly meeting they presented Annette Aycock, missionary to Brazil, a check for \$3,500. Annette's daughters and her mother were also present.

The Oklahoma First Mission WAC Executive Committee met to plan the year's work. Their theme is "Totally His." Eight women were in attendance.



Sherri Hanna, Home Missionary to Edmond, Oklahoma, spoke at the meeting of the Oklahoma First Mission WAC. Twenty eight women attended.

(Pictured left to right) Joann Warren, District President; Sherri Hanna, Missionary to Edmond, Ok; Marsha Hood, Special Music.



Resource Sheet for WNAC Emphasis

Order by calling Toll Free: 1-877-767-7662 * Order by e-mail: WNAC@NAFWB.ORG

	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
CoLaborer Magazine July/August: Single Copy	_____	\$1.50.....	_____
Revised 2001 Manual: Includes officers' guides	_____	\$12.....	_____
Manual Study Guide	_____	\$3.....	_____
Books: <i>Sparks into Flame: A History of WNAC,</i>	_____	\$5.....	_____
Wisehart, 1985 (with study guide)	_____		
<i>The Free Will Baptist Woman's</i>	_____	\$1.....	_____
<i>Missionary Society (1780-1920)</i>	_____		
2001 Yearbook: Emphasis Program	_____	\$6 (Now \$3).....	_____
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2002 Yearbook	_____	\$6.....	_____
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<i>And A Little Child Shall Lead Them</i> , Susan Henderson	_____	\$13.99.....	_____
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\$3 for 1 Manual + \$1 for each additional Manual

All other materials unless otherwise specified:

\$1 to \$5 .50 per dollar
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Women Nationally Active for Christ

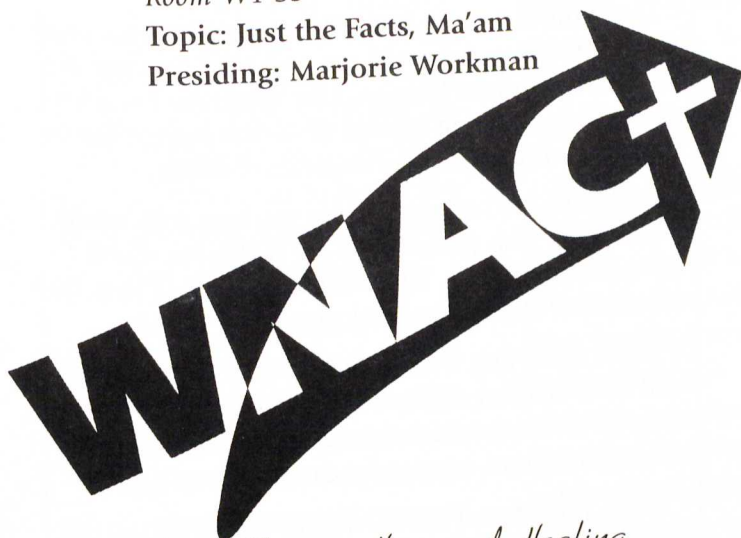
National Convention
66th Annual Session
Detroit, Michigan
July 16-17, 2001

MONDAY AFTERNOON July 16

WNAC SEMINARS

Cobo Center

- 1:30 Theme: You Have a Speck in Your Eye
Room W1-54
Presiding: Debe Taylor
Speaker: Anne Worthington
- 3:00 STATE LEADERS MEETING
Room W1-55
Topic: Just the Facts, Ma'am
Presiding: Marjorie Workman



Theme: Sharing Hope and Healing

*"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" Colossians 1:27.*

TUESDAY MORNING July 17

Cobo Center Arena

- 8:30 Presiding: Debe Taylor
Congregational Singing
Special Music: Michigan WNAC Ensemble
Devotional: Carol Pinkerton
Welcome: Dianne Worthington
Creative Arts Awards
Credentials Committee Report/Seating
of Delegates
Executive Secretary-Treasurer's Report:
Marjorie Workman
Resolutions Committee Report
Appreciation Committee Report
Nominating Committee Report
Partial Registration Report
- 11:00 MISSIONARY SERVICE
Congregational Singing
Offering
Special Music: Esther Harbert
Message: James Forlines

TUESDAY AFTERNOON July 17

Cobo Center Windsor Room

- 12:30 WNAC FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON
Invocation: Eugene Workman
Speaker: Susan Turnbough
Benediction: Randy Bryant

Life!Action

a column for teens

Chrissie Fondren 1982-2001

The last day of the year 2000, brought the Alabama Children's Home, the staff and the children tragic news.

Christine Fondren lived at the home in the early 1990's and then returned in 1995, staying until 1999. Christine, her husband and unborn child were involved in a tragic car accident on December 31, 2000. Her husband died as a result of the accident. Christine and the unborn baby went to be with the Lord on January 6, 2001.

Christine was a lovely child and young lady. She had made plans for her life and was actively pursuing her dreams—college and marriage. She had a wonderful way of making a typical situation comi-

cal—usually by something she said, but occasionally by her outrageous actions.

In thinking about Chrissie's life and unfortunate death, I became convinced that there were some important things left unsaid that she would want kids to hear, because she was a kid herself, at a mere 18 years of age when she died.

What Chrissie would tell us if she could:

1. Don't think you are invincible. I used to think that all the things people told me and tried to warn me about would never happen. Like somehow I was immune from it. Being human made me susceptible to the same temptations and tragedies of others.
2. Watch the kind of associations you have with others. Don't hang with people who are bad for you and do questionable things. Your friends will affect you, no matter how strong you think you are.
3. Don't think that what you do is your own business and doesn't affect others. I used to think this way but didn't take into consideration how my actions and their effects could hurt others who cared so deeply for me.
4. Make sure of your eternal destiny before it's too late. It only takes a moment; at any moment, to slip into eternity and your destination is forever determined.
5. One last important statement: "THOSE WHO DO NOT LEARN FROM (THE) HISTORY (OF OTHERS) ARE DOOMED TO REPEAT IT." ♦

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Mission Alert

Evangelism News from Around the World

Uruguay

Jaimie Lancaster requests prayer as they search for property for a church in Montevideo. They had found what seemed to be the perfect spot at a good price, but it appeared that the price increased appreciably when the owner realized he was dealing with Americans. Ask God to give them wisdom and show them the property He has for the church.

North India

Carlisle Hanna requests prayer for rain in North India. It has not rained since last September when the monsoons ended. It is extremely hot and dry and there is much sickness. Many villages are burning. People don't cook until after dark when the hot west wind dies down. Pray that God will send rain to the area.

Panama

Eddie and LaRhonda Bowerman request special prayer for their work among the Kuna Indians. They feel that without housing in the Kuna village, they will not be able to learn the language. They have been seeking permission from the village chiefs for some time, but have been repeatedly denied. The Kuna are supposed to have another vote soon. Pray that the Lord will have His hand in this. ♦

Spain

Anthony and Lea Edgmon request prayer for Carmen who is in an intense spiritual battle. She is studying the Bible with the Edgmans and knows the truth of the gospel, but she is afraid to make a commitment to Christ. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will minister to her as she reads the Bible and convince her that God is trustworthy.

Anthony and Lea have also joined the community choir and hope to build relationships with people of Villalba. Pray that God will give them many opportunities to share Christ with people in the community.

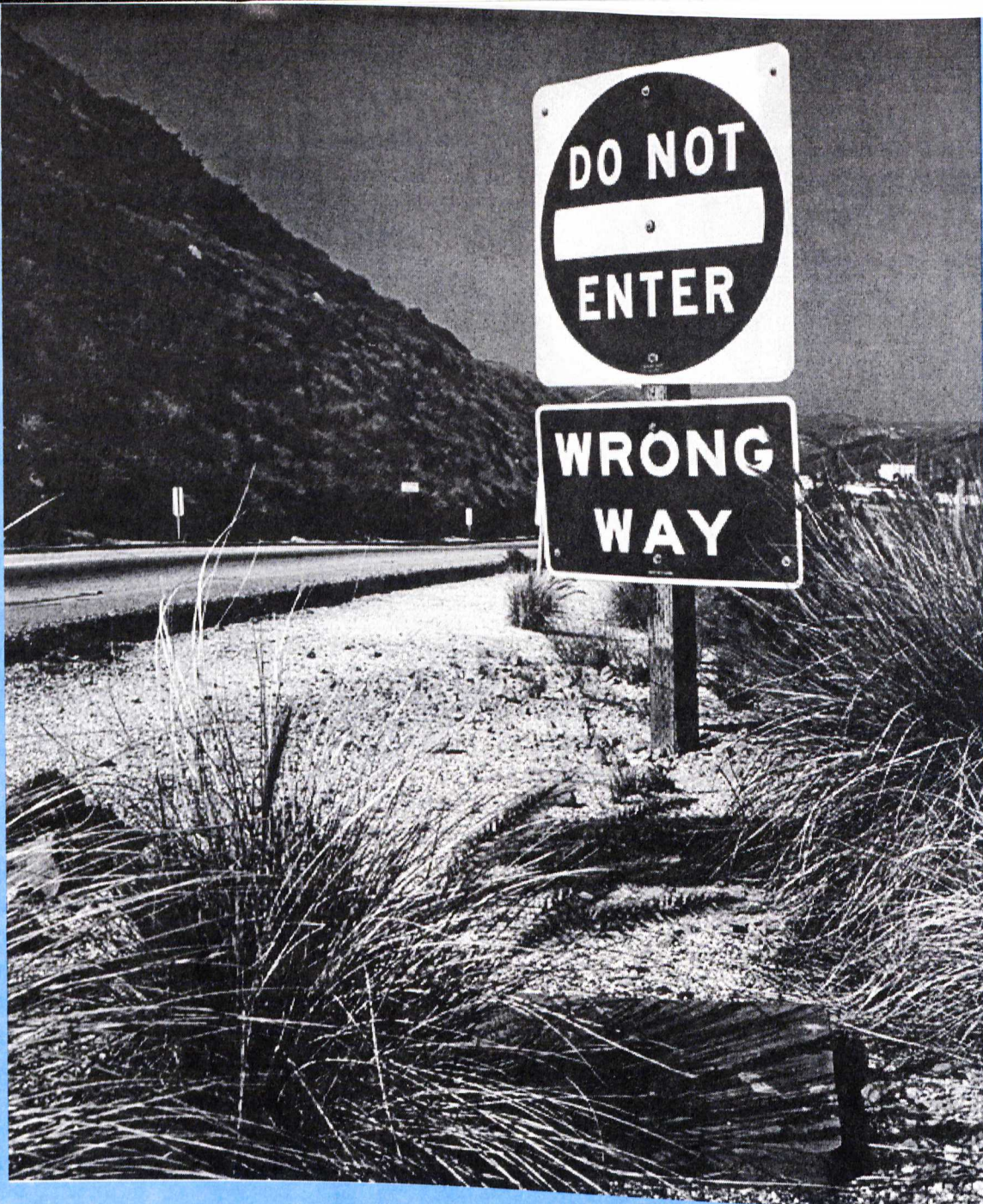
Korea

According to Dr. John Chang in Korea, the second FWB Church for All Nations was es-

tablished in Pusan, the second largest city in Korea, on March 9, with 15 members. Last year the first FWB Church for All Nations was established in Seoul and now has about 100 members. The seminary that began in March 2000, now has 13 students on campus and 670 studying by Internet. Pray that God will use the ministry in Korea to further His kingdom in Southeast Asia.

Côte d'Ivoire

Shane Davison in Bouake, Côte d'Ivoire, requests prayer for the salvation of Moussa, who is a French teacher. Moussa has been having financial problems and recently asked Shane to help him plan a budget. During their planning session, Shane talked to him about tithing being a part of a Christian's budget, and this led to a lengthy question and answer session. Shane was able to share the gospel. Pray that Moussa will ask Christ to be his Savior.



Choices

by Lori Simmons

*"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one MOST traveled by
And that made all the difference."*

(Our regrets to Robert Frost)

Lori Simmons attends the Arbor Grove FWB Church in Hoxie, AR.

*"He took me aside and explained that
it was time to make a choice between the wide
and narrow path, between Satan and
God."*

As I rocked my son the other day, I began thinking what a blessing he has been to me. At a desperate time in my life, God used him to bring me to a crossroads.

When I started high school, I began making small but significant choices that sent me down the "wide" road. The decisions I made were those I thought would bring me the things I desired most in my life at that time—friends, popularity, a boyfriend. My self-seeking attitude meant that I would do whatever it took to obtain them.

At the end of my eleventh grade year I became pregnant. The sin I had hidden was now exposed. From that moment on my decisions would not only affect me, but my baby and his father also. I was faced with many options.

A co-worker offered me money for an abortion, but my immediate response was "no." And I couldn't bear to think of giving up my baby for adoption. My boyfriend and I decided to get married.

So at ages 16 and 18, we began pre-marital counseling with my pastor. He helped us to understand that God blessed us in spite of our disobedience. He showed us that pre-marital sex was sin, but that children are a blessing from the Lord and are always to be viewed that way.

He took me aside and explained that it was time for me to make a choice between the wide and the narrow path, between Satan and God. Coming from a Christian family, I had always

considered myself a Christian, but now I was faced with the truth about my spiritual condition. I was not a follower of Christ. That night, I received Christ as my Savior.

This new journey I had begun was certainly a much different one than I had ever traveled before. In the past I had been guided by my emotions. I trusted those around me who, ironically, were also headed in the wrong direction. My life's map was society and I lived by its standards. I engulfed myself in television and teen magazines that instructed me on what was most important in life.

But, now, God was lovingly guiding me through the crossroads and onto the right path. His intervention became so evident in my life. After our quickly planned wedding, an apartment became available right next door to my pastor, his wife and their four-month-old son. Here was a perfect opportunity for them to display their daily Christian lives before us. And they did their job well.

We witnessed first hand their praying together, reading God's word,

*My life's
map was
society
and I
lived by its
standards.*



and rearing their son in a godly manner. Their fun-loving, kind and generous spirits were infectious. By their demonstration, we knew how God intended our lives to be.

While God certainly rescued me and gave me a new direction, there were still many natural consequences set in motion as a result of my sin. Wrong choices meant that I couldn't finish high school, my husband couldn't accept the basketball scholarship he was offered, and the freedom and enjoyment of youth were cut short.

But even more seriously, our sin had separated us from God and our actions brought a reproach on our church, our families and on God's name. The closer I grow to the Lord and the more I learn about His perfect plan for my life, the more I grieve over my defiance toward Him in the past. Self-reproach is the definite result of making poor choices. God has forgiven me, but accepting His grace and

forgiving myself are quite difficult at times.

Another consequence will come when our children are at the age when we must explain our poor choices and try to convince them that abstinence is the best way. Though they are very young, I have already begun praying that the Lord will guard my children's hearts and bodies. I want them to experience the gift of physical intimacy the way God intended—a gift only to be unwrapped on their wedding night.

God has given me a desire to share this message with other young women as they travel down the path and begin making life choices. Perhaps sharing my own experience will help them to choose the road less traveled.

On my new path the map is reliable and the road is well-lit. God's Word now guides me and directs my decisions. The Holy Spirit convicts me if I am disobedient and keeps me from straying down the wrong path. My life now has purpose. I know that I can not change my past mistakes, but I can now travel the road God has set before me with Him as my guide.

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one LESS travelled by.

And that made all the difference.

(From: *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost)

*"God has forgiven me, but accepting His
grace and forgiving myself are quite diffi-
cult at times."*



Words for Women

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Happily Ever After

Many fairy tales have one thing in common—their ending. “The Three Little Pigs,” “Rapunzel,” “Sleeping Beauty,” “Cinderella,” and “Beauty and the Beast” all end with “and they lived happily ever after.” Psalm 96 reminds me of the fairy tale ending but with one huge difference. A fairy tale is an unbelievable story, but Psalm 96 is true—you can stake your future on it! Journey with me through Psalm 96.

First, we are to sing to the Lord (vs. 1-2). Not everyone can sing. I can’t. I recently learned why. The worship leader at my church walked in on a baby shower. I offered him a glass of punch. He said, “No, it will affect my singing.” At my surprise to his comment, he explained that the sugar in the punch coats your mouth and you can’t sing as well. I was elated. Now I know why I can’t sing—I’m always putting something sweet in my mouth.

Why are we to sing and to declare His glory? Because of His goodness and greatness (v. 4). Because He is to be feared or revered (v. 4, 9). Because honor and majesty belong to Him (v. 6). Because He is the creator who made the heavens (v. 5). Because He is the only true God and all other gods are mere idols (v. 5). Because all strength (power), beauty (v. 6), and holiness (v. 9) are His.

In addition to singing, we are to show His salvation and declare His glory (v. 2-3). Salvation means deliverance. Deliverance from a trial, suffering, or temptation. It certainly applies to deliverance from the bondage of sin. It is the deliverance from sin that makes it

possible to one day live happily ever after. Not in a make-believe world as in the fairy tales, but in a real place called heaven where it will truly be “happily ever after.”

How do we show and declare His glory? By personally acknowledging Him and telling of His wonders (v. 3)? What wonders? All those things that are beyond man’s capabilities—the miracles. All the great things that are beyond man’s imagination—creation, heaven, angels. Those things that are beyond human understanding—the virgin birth, the new birth, the resurrection. The astonishing things—Jonah being swallowed by a great fish, Daniel being delivered from the lions den.

We are to declare that the Lord reigns (v. 10) and that He is the righteous judge of all the people. Often we think of judging as something bad or dreaded. However, in this case, knowing that his judgment is righteous causes rejoicing. The King is coming to set all things right (v. 13). He will wipe away all tears, and there will be no more death, sorrow, or pain (Rev. 21:4). This great truth causes even the inanimate things—the heavens, the earth, the sea, the fields and the trees—to be joyful (v. 11-12). It is this hope that keeps us going in a world full of despair, trouble, and injustices. Because He reigns, women of faith have the promise of living happily ever after. It’s not a fairy tale. ❖



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11