

A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

CoLaborer

**Where Are Your
Treasures?**

**Jesus: Hope
of the World**

**2001 Convention
Recap**

Nov • Dec 2001



Sarah Fletcher



My new kindergartner bravely began her first weekly Bible recitation, "The Lord is MY shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in GREEN pastures. He leadeth me beside still waters. He RECYCLES my soul."

What a chuckle! What a truth! Yes, not only does the LORD restore, but He also recycles.

Think about the recycling process. Used, empty materials are gathered, washed, crushed, and remolded into a new reusable product. Jeremiah 18 records the account of the potter who took the vessel and remade it. "Cannot I do the same with you as this potter? saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 18:6a). Even the Lord's supper reminds us that Christ's body was broken for us.

"Made from recycled materials" is a label most of us should wear. How amazing that God can take the fibers of our life, crush them, break them, and remold them into a usable product for His glory. Recycling isn't easy, for it always involves change. A noted Christian speaker recently remarked that the Christian's life should be a history of change, a series of from _____ to _____'s. If we remain the same, we cannot become more like Him.

Helping in the recycling process isn't always easy either. In our city, they recently discontinued curbside recycling. What was once a simple task of placing items into a pink bin, now involves sorting, saving, and carrying items to the nearest recycling center. Quite a process! And I'll have to admit, I'm not the recycling enthusiast I once was. We Christians often have difficulty in this spiritual role. Trashed, broken, and spent people take effort; discipling takes time—time and effort we are not always willing to give.

God has been recycling in my life this past year. He has broken, collected, washed, removed, and remolded. He has brought me to this position of editor to serve you. Throughout the process, I have sensed His peace, His timing, and His direction. At this holiday season, I give thanks and praise for His wonderful recycling and restoring power.

Is God recycling you? Accept His work. Knowing that "we have this treasure in earthen (recyclable) vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." This "light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" (2 Corinthians 3:7,17). Give thanks. He's making you more like Him.

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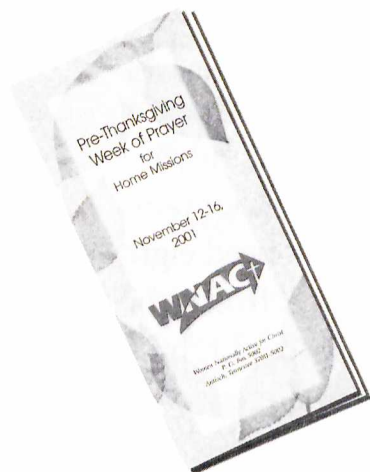
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Where Are Your Treasures?



by Mitzi Munsey

In 1895, the Vanderbilt family moved into Biltmore, their beautiful 250-room mansion in Asheville, North Carolina. The estate consisted of 125,000 acres and employed 80 servants. The Vanderbilt lifestyle was extravagant even by today's standards. But among their peers, their lifestyle was acceptable and even expected.

In contrast, just across the mountains, my grandparents were beginning their family on a little farm in the Appalachian Mountains of East Tennessee. They soon produced eight children. Just 50 miles away from the Vanderbilt estate, my family could have inhabited another planet. So different were the lifestyles.

My father was born in 1931, the same year in which 20,000 Americans committed suicide because of the Great Depression. The Depression, however, had little impact on his family. They harvested their vegetables and feasted on plenteous wild game from the mountains. The children walked to school, and shared milk and cornbread from a five-gallon lard bucket at lunchtime. Their basic needs were always met.

Extravagance in today's society is often determined by culture. In the middle class neighborhood where I live, most families own two cars. This is not considered extravagant unless the cars include a Lamborghini. Yet in many places in our world, a mere bicycle is considered a luxury, viewed with envy.

God created a beautiful world that He wants us to enjoy. He went far beyond what was necessary for life's existence and made His creation a marvelous delight to behold. He instilled within us—the people He created in His image—the desire to seek the better things of life. Animals are satisfied with whatever is necessary for life support. But humans will clothe and adorn their bodies, improve their food, or beautify their homes. The good things in life, the things that delight us, were intended to serve the praise of God. Psalm 69:34 says, "Let the heaven and earth praise Him, the seas, and everything that moveth therein."

Unfortunately, we live in a world where success is often measured by how much of the "good things of life" we own. How do we decide what is acceptable and what is wanton misuse of the things God has given us? God's Word gives us insight and principles.

Old Testament Teachings

The Old Testament heralds many heroes who were people of great wealth. Abraham is called the father of the faithful. He was obedient and unselfish, yet he was a powerful man with impressive wealth. Job was a rich man who refused to deny God in spite of losing everything dear to him. And God made him twice as wealthy as he was before. The Queen of Sheba blessed the name of the Lord after visiting Solomon and seeing his incredible wealth and hearing his wisdom firsthand.

With wealth, however, came responsibility. Old Testament law prevented someone from taking advantage of another's misfortune. The law demanded a consciousness of the less fortunate. Specific laws concerned the treatment of the poor, the widows, and the orphans. In the wheat and barley harvest, sheaves were left for the gleaners. (Remember, Ruth gleaned in the barley harvest when she and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem from Moab.) When the olive trees

were beaten, any fruit that did not fall off with the first harvest was left for the traveler who might be passing by. A person's wealth was used in service for his neighbor.

When this principle failed to be realized, wealth was sternly condemned. Both Isaiah and Jeremiah pronounced judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their excesses (Isaiah 3:13-15, Jeremiah 5:24-28). These people became fat with their riches and ignored the needs of fellow citizens. They oppressed the poor and deprived them of their rights, placing a higher value upon their own pride and wealth. These people no longer feared God. Their sins led to God's judgment just as the prophets warned.



New Testament Teachings

Jesus' teachings clearly speak of the dangers of great possessions. In the Sermon on the Mount, He warned that earthly treasures are corruptible and worthless, whereas heavenly treasures are incorruptible (Matt. 6:19-21). The "deceit of riches" was one of the thorns that choked the growing

**We must see our
"need to have more"
for what it really is—
a lack of faith in God.**

seed of the Word and prevented it from bringing forth fruit (Mark 4:19). Lazarus lay at the rich man's gate everyday, but only when the rich man was in hell did he notice Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). The rich farmer foolishly thought he could depend upon himself and his riches without including God in his life. But God judged him that night and he was found wanting (Luke 12:16-21).

Perhaps saddest of all is the account of the rich young man, so attached to his possessions that he could not part with them to follow Jesus. He was condemned by Jesus' hard words, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:25).

Jesus was critical of great possessions and the trouble they could cause. However, He did not condemn ownership of property. He and His disciples were supported by the means of devout women who followed Him (Luke 8:2,3). He visited in the homes of His followers and attended banquets held in the homes of rich men. One time, so disgusted with the struggle among guests vying for the best seats, Jesus told His host it would have been wiser to invite the poor and the sick (Luke 14:7-11). Jesus' disciples gave up their possessions to follow Him, but other followers did not. When Zacchaeus received salvation, Jesus did not require him to give up everything. He willingly gave half his goods to the poor and made amends four-fold to those he had cheated

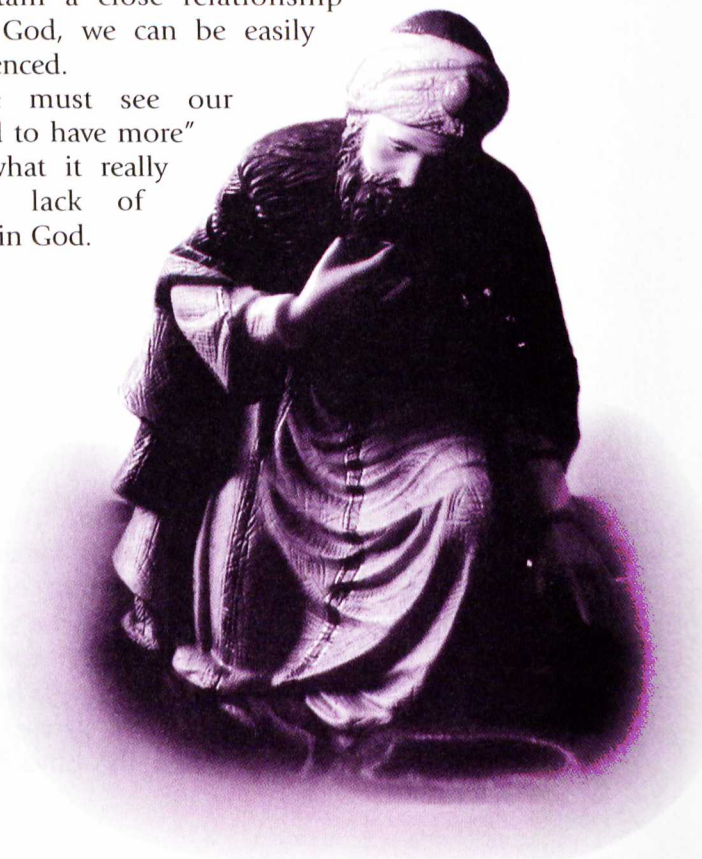
(Luke 19:8-9). The rich young man was condemned, not for having great possessions, but for making them most important in his life.

We can form these Biblical conclusions about abundance. We will by nature acquire possessions. The Bible does not condemn us for owning property or obtaining possessions. But our possessions must be used to glorify God and to aid our neighbors. There is an inherent danger in having too many possessions. Jesus said that no man could serve both God and "mammon" (Matt. 6:24). The craze for obtaining more and more possessions until they seem "necessary" leads to extravagance, shallowness, a lack of concern for our fellow citizens, outright oppression of the less fortunate, and idolatry. This downward spiral of continually wanting more causes us to become nothing more than a byproduct of the world's economic system.

Set Your Priorities Straight

How do we avoid being trapped by extravagance? First, we must realize the assault the secular world makes upon Christians. It continually pounds us with its values: Make money; Be competitive; Go one better than our neighbor; Provide a better future for our children; Be successful; Be happy; Bigger is better. If we do not maintain a close relationship with God, we can be easily influenced.

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"need to have more"
for what it really
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faith in God.



Wanting to do everything for ourselves, we realize we fall short. Accumulating possessions may give us a temporary feeling of security and success, but it's all a sham.

Take a reality check by asking, "Can we be happy without all the "stuff?" We can if we have the right attitude and the right priorities. We must learn to be thankful to God for satisfying our basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Thankfulness for His provisions enables us to trust His love for us. As we see His guidance in our lives, realizing He is with us, we can turn our future over to Him. We must not be attached to our possessions; rather, we must use them for the benefit of others.

When our priorities are straight, our lives will be less complicated. Time may miraculously appear. We will have more time for God, for witnessing, for making memories with our children, family and friends, for volunteering at a homeless shelter, or even for taking a mission trip to Mexico.

Waiting in Heaven . . .

Having worked as a missionary in Mexico for over 20 years, my family has observed these principles beautifully displayed in the lives of our people. Mexican Christians are poor by US economic standards, but they are so rich in spirit. They love God and they love fellowship with friends and family. We have watched them as they sit on hard benches, under trees, in simple block buildings, in 100-degree temperatures, in biting cold, gloriously singing praises to God throughout their three-hour worship services. Their treasures are surely waiting for them in Heaven.

Mitzi Munsey now lives in Morristown, Tennessee and is employed by Berea Ministries.

The Mender

You
can read my heart,
even after it falls apart.

You
silently restore
all that was broken, and more.

You
are the builder
of my fallen walls.

You
are the healer
of my deepest scars.

You
are the answer
to all my calls.

You
are the mender
of broken hearts.

—Rachel Sekulich

GIVE THANKS WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

Pam Peyton

Everyone has their own "What next?" stories. Not everyone responds with gratitude . . .

We approached the year 2000 with anticipation. Our son Mark was only a semester away from college graduation. Cap and gown and invitations had been ordered. We were all excited about graduation day. We were also looking forward to the financial relief that would come with reaching our shared goal. Little did we know that in two short weeks, my husband Tommy would be unemployed. After 36 years with the same company and only six years away from retirement, Tommy received the news that his plant was closing.

As desperate as the situation seemed at the time, we were thankful that our financial responsibility for college payments was over. Because of Tommy's many years with the company, he was entitled to a partial retirement settlement. And after only four weeks of unemployment he found a new job as a bus driver for Nashville Transit Authority. Thank the Lord for steady employment.

"It's always something."

Shortly after the shocking news of the plant closing, and after a night of suffering with a severe headache, I awoke one April Monday morning unable to write coherently, dial a phone, or add even the smallest numbers. An MRI revealed that I had suffered a mild stroke. My biggest fear? I wouldn't be able to work to help support our family. Sadness came with the realiza-

tion that I might not attend my son's graduation. After a brief hospital stay to regulate my medications, my symptoms began to vanish. I recovered fully. As worried as we were about my future, we were grateful that God brought me through the stroke without permanent disabilities. Four weeks later I attended graduation, one of the proudest moments of my life!

"What next?"

Everything finally seemed to be going well until January of 2001. I began experiencing some indigestion-type chest pains. Within a few days, the pain spread to my neck, jaw, and down the inside of my left arm. My doctor performed an arteriogram. Three blocked arteries demanded bypass surgery. Only 36 hours before the scheduled surgery, I was informed that my insurance wouldn't cover that particular doctor or hospital.

I was back to square one, needing to find a new surgeon at an approved hospital. By that time, my chest pains had worsened. Scared, sad, and mad at the same time, I didn't think I could endure the stress of it all. But God gave me strength. Good family and friends supported me.

I returned to work after six weeks without any significant problems. Thank God for strength, minimal pain, and a future of good health.

Another "what next" event took place on Easter Sunday.

Returning from sunrise services, we were caught in a fierce hail-storm with crosswinds and driving rain. When we arrived home, we discovered the 150-year-old oak tree in our back yard had blown over, hitting our roof, demolishing our deck and causing extensive damage to our property. More alarming, our German shepherd was trapped under the deck midst all the debris. With the help of our son and the fire department, our Smokey was freed with only a small scratch over his eye. He even made his debut on the local TV news that evening. We counted nine holes in our roof. No wonder it was raining in my kitchen!

As devastating as the storm damage was to us, we thank God no one was injured and that we were away from our home when the tree fell. We are also thankful that our insurance covered all the repair costs except the \$100 deductible. This seemingly terrible storm was wrapped in blessing. God provided the new roof we had needed for several years.

Why share my trials?

Everyone has their own "What next?" stories. Not everyone responds in gratitude. In each circumstance, God protected and met our needs. Our lives are richer because of them. We are truly thankful with especially grateful hearts. We are so blessed!

Pam Peyton lives in Nashville, Tennessee and attends Woodbine FWB Church.

broken . . .

for
you.



Susan
Henderson

I wasn't ready for Christmas. Usually, by the Monday after Thanksgiving I'd addressed and mailed cards, finished my shopping, wrapped the gifts, and decorated the house from top to bottom. Not last year. I just didn't have the heart for any of it.

"Christmas has become so complicated," I bemoaned, "a far cry from the simple stable where it all began. A world away from heavenly peace. Sometimes I wonder if Jesus recognizes anything familiar in the madness we call Christmas." If I'd had my way, most of the decorations would have been left in the attic. Except for the manger scene.

I was eager to set out the Nativity. It was special for a lot of reasons. I had painted it for Mom and Dad several years before. When Miss Connie, the Ceramics Queen, had given me the pieces, she'd cautioned, "Susan, be extremely careful with the wise men's hands. They're so easy to break." I had assured her I would take the greatest care.

She didn't warn me about the baby. I delicately balanced piece after piece in the palm of my hand

as I painted. Camels with ornate dressings, shepherds with spindly staffs, those magical magi with their glorious gifts outstretched—all came alive under my careful touch.

Finally, I arrived at the last tiny figure, the most important—Baby Jesus. No problem. He was all one, solid form. No protruding hands. No feet sticking out. No sharp corners. I picked Him up, and He shattered in my hand. I burst into tears. I had broken Baby Jesus.

When I'd called Miss Connie, she had sympathized. She'd also informed me that in all her years as the Ceramics Queen, no one had ever broken the Baby Jesus. Then she had lowered the boom. "I'm sorry, Susan, but there's no way I can get you another baby before Christmas."

Great. A nativity scene without the main character. What a Christmas gift! An empty manger. I had to find something to fill it. As I frantically dug through drawers stuffed with Christmas plunder, I stumbled onto a small, wooden cross.

Why not place *this* in the manger?

God sent His Son into a world of shattered sinners. He placed His One and Only into the shaky, untrustworthy hands of marred human beings. And we broke him.

As I stood gazing upon my rather unique nativity scene, my heart broke as completely as did the tiny figure, which should've lain in the manger. Isaiah's beautiful yet gut-wrenching prophecy rang in my ears. "...he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Broken. My beautiful Jesus was broken for me.

Have you ever wondered what God viewed on that first Christmas night? No doubt He saw the star and heard the angels sing; His eyes possibly twinkled as they fell upon ten perfect fingers and ten tiny toes.

But did He also let His eyes drift to myriad shattered pieces? Broken lives, broken hearts, broken hopes waiting for restoration, for repair. That Fatherly tug of protection God may have sensed within His heart would be ignored for the broken pieces He longed to mend and call His own. Imagine handing your precious child to people you knew would cause him harm. Surrendering a Son to the

physical pain of crucifixion and the more excruciating agony of betrayal! Willing your child to endure broken heart after broken heart as those who called him friend turn away. Imagine desiring to call sons and daughters those who would first tear your beloved one

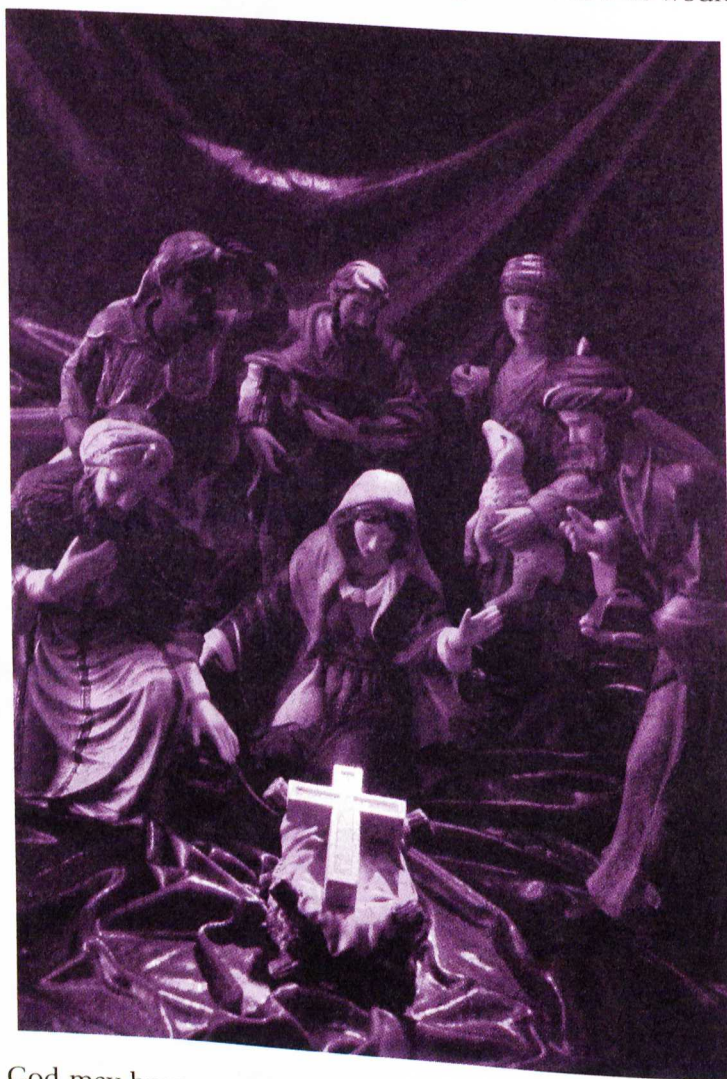
apart. Perhaps John said it best when he proclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:..." (1 John 3:1)

Yes, God sent His Son into a world of shattered sinners. He placed His One and Only into the shaky, untrustworthy hands of marred human beings. And we broke Him.

Viewing the nativity once again placed my heart in proper Christmas perspective.

This year I'm ready for Christmas. Still no baby graces my manger. The cross remains. It serves as a yearly reminder that I not only broke the Baby Jesus of a nativity scene, but I also broke the real Jesus. My sins shattered His heart; my transgressions pierced

His hands and feet; my imperfections kissed His brow with thorns. That first Christmas morning, Jesus began His journey to the cross. There, He was broken so He could put me back together.



Susan Henderson lives in Monett, Missouri where she attends the Purdy FWB Church. A published writer, Susan works as a school secretary for her local school system.

J E S U S

Hope of the World

by Kathy Coats

There once was a woman who visited a world famous tapestry shop. Upon entering the shop, she was shocked to see such an ugly sample hanging there for display. She decided to inquire of the shopkeeper as to the reason that piece would be chosen to showcase. The shopkeeper smiled as he turned the work over and replied, "Ma'am, you are looking at the back of the tapestry, not the front."

In life, it's easy for us to become focused on the problems of our present condition and forget that God's point of view is very different from that of our own. Our perspective of the trials and disappointments we experience could be compared to looking at that beautiful tapestry from the wrong side. God sees our lives from eternity's viewpoint. He knows the difficulties that must be woven in order to accomplish His purpose.

The Psalmist prayed, "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." In his book, *Faith, Hope, and Love*, Charles Allen comments on this verse. "God gave deliverance to His people. The remembering of that deliverance gives hope for the present. That hope brings inspiration to live for God in the future." If a person never experienced trouble, they could never experience hope. Remembering how God has brought us through past trials gives us hope as we face today's disappointments. Consider these typical situations in which God gives us hope.

Hope for Those Who are Lonely

(James 4:8)

Loneliness is a constant visitor throughout our lives. Single, married divorced, or widowed, loneliness plays no favorite. Small, medium or large household, no one is immune. With nine people, two cats, and two frogs at our address, loneliness hardly seems a likely visitor. But he comes. This longing to share my deepest thoughts and emotions with another often washes over me like a tidal wave.

Counselors, therapists, and pharmacists deal with this problem every day as people search for quick fixes and easy solutions to fill the emptiness in their lives. Yet, I believe that God allows this powerful emotion to invade our being for a purpose. Is it possible that God uses loneliness as an invitation for us to walk with

Him? His presence in our hearts and minds is the real solution. When a sense of loneliness enters my spirit, I try to go deeper in my study of His Word. It is exciting to see how God fills me with hope as I meditate upon His Word and pray.

Hope for Those Who've Said "I Do"

(Ecclesiastes 4:9,10; Ephesians 5:21-24)

One of the loneliest places on earth can be within a marriage relationship. When conflict occurs and continues unresolved, isolation creeps into the heart. Each person starts living life independently of the spouse. Soon, although still married, husband and wife are living two separate lives and moving in different directions. There is hope. You cannot control your spouse, so stop trying. Instead, work on your own spiritual growth and lay both of your lives on the altar of prayer before the Lord.

According to 1 Peter 3:1-6, submission is one prescription that can bring hope and healing back into an ailing marriage. An ounce of submission will do more to change a husband's heart than five pounds of scheming, nagging, or preaching. Once, when Ruth Graham was asked about marriage, she said, "It is God's job to change Billy. It's my job to love him." Real submission can only come through real humility.

God's prescriptions for a healthy marriage may not be the easiest of medicines to swallow, but what results they bring forth

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in our lives! If you need help in the area of submission, go to our loving heavenly Father and ask Him to take over this area of your life. There is hope. A bad marriage can become a good marriage and a good marriage can become even better.

Hope for Those Trapped in the Mundane

(1 Corinthians 10:31)

Maybe you are the prodigal son that stayed home. You've done all the right things on the outside. You attend church each week and keep your commitments, you're a good wife and mother, an excellent employee, and you even do daily

Bible reading. But...there is no passion. Your heart has long since departed from the path of total surrender and the pursuit of God. Maybe the "little foxes" (little sins) that you have allowed into your life (Song of Solomon 2:15) have totally sapped your joy.

As you look around, perhaps you find yourself surrounded by the mundane. Your days are consumed with meeting the needs of others. At times, you desire an escape, and you need one. The place of escape is found in the arms of Jesus (Matthew 11:28).

Hopeful tips for those trapped by the mundane are: "Be—don't seem to be" and "Be grateful." Be a godly woman; don't waste time on seeming to be a godly woman. Turn your heart with gratitude toward God for your situation (Eph. 5:20). Be thankful for the strength to carry on the daily existence of the home. Remember, real excitement and adventure in this world are found in following the Savior with all that is within us.

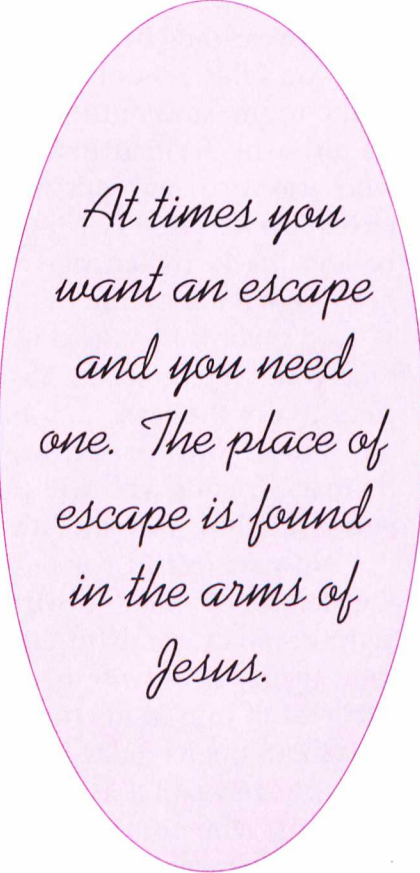
Hope for the Addicted

(Hebrews 12:1,2; Proverbs 4:23)

Addicted is a catch phrase that seems to characterize much of our culture. However, an addiction could rightly be called an idol. Many types of idols surround us—gambling, TV, codependent relationships, alcohol, tobacco, pornography, sexual deviations, eating disorders, and the pursuit of pleasure itself. Addictions can sometimes be seemingly beneficial pursuits such as exercise, jobs, or financial security. All addictions have one thing in

common: the addiction takes the place of God in the addict's life.

At first, the addict believes she can control the time and cost ele-



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ment of the particular addiction. But soon the addiction overwhelms every aspect of her life. She finds herself in total bondage to this new god. Those who love the addict often inadvertently contribute to the problem by shrouding it in secrecy and excusing the unacceptable behavior. The Bible clearly states, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

Hope for the Church

(Romans 12:17, 18, 21)

The popular book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, suggests that life's profound lessons are contained in the simple teachings we impart to children. Share. Don't kick. Love one another. Knowing the true Author of these teachings, it would be wise for us as the Church to consider them.

Chuck Swindoll, in his book *Hope Again*, recounts a story about Andrew Jackson. Before Jackson became the seventh president of the United States, he served as a major general in the Tennessee militia. During the War of 1812, morale among his troops had reached an all-time low. As a result, they began bickering and fighting among themselves. Reportedly, "Old Hickory" called them all together on one occasion and said, "Gentlemen, let's remember, the enemy is over there!"

What a sobering wake-up call for the Church! Who are we fighting? Perhaps a more pertinent question would be, "Who is our comrade in battle?" Are we side-by-side with Christ fighting against the evil one, or are we joined with the evil one tearing down our brothers and sisters in Christ? May God forgive us.

Paul wrote to the Philippian church: "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3,4 NASB).

Tolerance has become a new god in our culture, even in some of our churches. We should never lift up unity above the truth of Scripture. But should we not lift up in prayer our brothers and sisters with whom we disagree? Admittedly, the world observes our disagreements. Should the world not also witness our love and compassion as we esteem one another? Jesus' words in Matthew 25:45 plainly reveal—as we treat others, so we treat our dear Savior.

Hope awaits the individual or the congregation torn apart by one of these "holy wars." This hope is found in humility and forgiveness.

Hope for the World

(Romans 15:13)

This season, as you shop for gifts, you must decide how you will pay for them. You might pay cash. You could write a check, or charge your purchase. Our Hope was born about 2,000 years ago and placed in a manger. Unfortunately, the manger was not payment enough to provide us with the forgiveness of sins and hope for the future. Instead, a cross was required. The gift of hope was purchased on that old rugged cross. The empty tomb serves as a constant reminder of the hope that Jesus can bring into a life. Rejoice in this wonderful gift. Never forget the price or the One who paid it! Live this hope within our homes, on our jobs, in our churches, and before the lost world.

Kathy Coats, a former home missionary, lives in Rapid City, South Dakota where her husband pastors.

JUST A LITTLE PAT

by Debe Taylor

Two-year-old Bailey sat crying that morning during Vacation Bible School. Even though her "Memaw" was right in the room, she continued to cry. She was one unhappy little girl—she seemed distressed. Seated next to her, Alexis, who was two and one-half, had concern and sympathy etched on her little face. Ever so gently, she put her hand on Bailey's back, patted her and said, "It's okay, Bailey, I'm here." What a moment of encouragement!

God's words are assuring, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5b) He is always there. He is sufficient to dry the tears and make the pain go away. We really don't need anyone else, but it is comforting to know that there are friends who will put their hand on your back, pat you just a little and say, "It's okay, I'm here."

"Now we exhort you...comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all." (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Scripture instructs us to encourage one another. Time and time again Paul mentioned those who had been an encouragement to him in his ministry.

Is there a need today for encouragement? Most definitely! Someone has said that discouragement is the greatest tool of the devil. Why not turn that negative into a positive by saying, "Encouragement is the greatest tool of the Christian"? Richard DeHaan, when writing about encouragement, said, "It strengthens the weak, imparts courage to the fainthearted, and gives hope to the faltering." A simple gesture—but oh what power!

One interesting thing about encouragement is that anyone can do it. It doesn't cost anything; it doesn't take a lot of time; no special talent required; no age limit; no gender. Every one of us can reach out to someone else.

The writer of Hebrews penned, "But exhort (encourage) one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Daily encouragement is so needful. Do you know someone who is hurting, discouraged or thinking of giving up? Take the time today to pat them on the back and say, "It's okay, I'm here."

Debe Taylor is President of Women Nationally Active for Christ. She resides in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Thursday

Home Missions On the Move

We continue to look to the Lord for new missionaries. The fields are white unto harvest; workers are needed.

We welcome Rev. Larry A. Powell as the new General Director of the Home Missions Department as well as three new board members: Rev. Ron Parker, Jerry Atwell, and Rev. Bobby Shepherd.

Missionaries continue to reap results from the recent **Operation Saturation**. During this annual September event, church people from across the country and representatives from the national departments converge on home missions churches to distribute literature and share the gospel.

—Pray for contacts and conversions resulting from Operation Saturation.

—Pray that workers can accomplish their goal to place the gospel in one million homes.

—Pray for Brother Powell as he works with various departmental ministries.

—Pray for the Home Missions Board as they strategize concerning the most effective ways to reach North America with the gospel.

Friday

Tentmakers, Chaplains, Aquila/ Priscilla Workers

A growing number of Tentmakers and Aquila/Priscilla workers are laboring in the field. Tentmakers are bivocational missionary pastors. Aquila/Priscilla workers are laity who move to designated cities and help missionaries in church planting efforts. Planting a church requires hard work and dedication from each member of a family.

Our nine Free Will Baptist military chaplains who serve in the Army, Air Force, and Navy come in contact with a tremendous range of people from all over the world. More of our ministers are becoming involved in local (non-military) chaplaincy programs. Whether local or military, chaplaincy programs require "24/7" involvement.

—Pray for all Tentmakers and their families.

—Pray for current Aquila/Priscilla Workers: Tim and Debra Barron, MI; Ray and Iris Hollifield, CA; Richard and Elizabeth Ann Miller, MI; Jonathan and Becky Lewis, CO; Rusty and Vickie Shanks, PR; Chris and Beth Willhite, CA; Philip and Deborah Willis, CO.

—Pray for all chaplains and their families. Petition the Lord for guidance, boldness, and safety in travel.

Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer for Home Missions

November 12-16, 2001



Women Nationally Active for Christ
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, Tennessee 37011-5002

Monday

Lizzie McAdams Offering for Home Missions

WNAAC honored our first pioneer home missionary by naming the Pre-Thanksgiving offering after Lizzie McAdams. She was an ardent supporter of missions, a prayer warrior, and a character member of the National Home Missions Board.

The Home Missions Department is committed to the work of missionaries and chaplains, church planting and church growth, the C.E.L.F./Build My Church program, and cross-cultural ministry. The opportunities for reaching the lost are unlimited. All monies received in the Lizzie McAdams Offering are added to the Benjamin Randall Offering, November 18, 2001. This offering goes to underwrite the various ministries of the National Home Missions Department.

—Pray that people will give with a joyful heart to the many ministries of the National Home Missions Department.

—Pray about your part in this year's Lizzie McAdams Offering for Home Missions.

—Pray for the Home Missions staff.

—Pray for Home Missions works in your own state.

Tuesday

Free Will Baptist Hispanic Ministry, USA

Hispanic ministry efforts in the USA are growing quickly as churches all across our denomination move to establish and support these unique opportunities.

A new Hispanic Bible Institute is planned in Madison, Alabama, training Hispanics and others to go and reach this growing US culture. Missionary Fred Jones is relocating in the Cullman, Alabama area with plans to establish a Hispanic church there. Two other important parts of the Hispanic thrust include the continuing ministry among the Cuban population in Florida and the ministry in Puerto Rico.

—Pray specifically for the individual ministries of: Omar Alfaro, FL; Ramon Zuniga, AR; Dave Franks, Jr., with the Hispanic Bible Institute, AL; Fred Jones AL; and Bud Bivens, Chris Fannin, and David Roy, Puerto Rico.

—Remember Rev. Rick Bowling as he coordinates and directs the Hispanic ministry nationwide.

—Pray for missionaries and pastors as they begin Hispanic ministries in the USA.

—Pray for opportunities to reach newcomers in your hometown.

Wednesday

Advancing in Missions All Missionaries

All missionaries covet your prayers for family and ministry needs. Intercede today for our present missionary force.

Give praise for the following missionaries who have gone self-supporting. Continue to remember these as they reach the lost for Christ: George Harvey, AZ; Ron Parker, TX; Tommy Jones, PA; Danny Keen, SC, and Gerald Fender, TN.

—Pray for these newly appointed missionaries: Dave Franks, Jr. AL; Greg Floors, Marquette, MI; Mark Shores, NM; Bill Reynolds, RI; Scott Cheatham, CO; Eric Thompson, OR; Tim Byers, OH; Don Bailey, TX; Mitchell Strickland, WI, and Scott Wright, AL.

—Pray for all missionaries and their families presently serving under the Home Missions Department.

—Pray that A/M magazine and all related publications will inspire, inform, and unite the effort of evangelizing North America.

HOPE AND HEALING JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

† SANDY RITTER †

I'll never forget the Christmas of 1969! Just two months before, I had spent several weeks at St. Louis Children's Hospital with our nine-month old son, Grant. He was desperately ill with a rare, nearly always fatal blood condition. As Grant neared death, God miraculously intervened and prolonged his life. His only hope was a massive blood transfusion. That night, as the transfusion was being administered, my husband Pudd and I knelt to pray in the Barnes Medical Center Chapel.

I began making promises to God—things I would and would not do—if only He would heal my baby boy. As I promised to give up each vice, I waited for an answer. Nothing. My prayers seemed to hit a wall and slide back down.

When I had nothing more to give, I accepted the fact that I could do nothing—a first for me. Finally I surrendered, "I give up. If that's what you want, take Grant."

With those words, the wall seemed to dissolve and I sensed my prayers going up to God. That was all He wanted—a simple recognition that His will, not mine, would make the difference. In a very simple prayer I gave God what He really wanted all along, my life. Unknown to me, my husband had been fighting the same battle. He had also prayed to receive Christ as his Savior.

The Christmas season was soon upon us. I expected changes in our lives after our conversion, but I was totally unprepared for the difference in Christmas at the Ritter house! The meaning of Christmas had changed forever. It was no longer just a school vacation, gifts to buy, a special time for children, decorations everywhere. Suddenly each ornament held special meaning as we remembered our seven other Christmases together—Christmases spent without a thought of Jesus. Each carol was now a song to Him. Each gift reminded me of the gift God had given us. As I shopped in St. Louis for presents, I looked into the faces of total strangers and smiled, wondering if they had the same heart for the holidays as I did. Many of them smiled back and added a holiday greeting. I longed to ask, "Do you know Jesus?" For the first time I really celebrated Christmas!

God used a hematology team and an experimental drug to heal our son's little body. He used the Savior's blood to heal my soul and change my life forever. What a Christmas!

This Christmas looks to be another special one at the Ritter house in Nashville, Tennessee. In the past year, Grant has once again experienced God's healing touch, this time from cancer. He and his wife Christy, are expecting their first child—a miracle baby girl—due Christmas Eve.

HOW DID YOU FIND CHRIST?

We'd love to hear your story.

Tell us about your salvation experience in 1000 words or less.

Don't worry if you're not an excellent writer—we'll help.

Each upcoming issue of CoLaborer will feature the testimony of one person's journey to Life.

*Send your stories today:
E-mail: sarah@nafwb.org
US Mail:*

CoLaborer Magazine
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002



WNAC 2002 Recipe Book

WNAC is publishing a Recipe Book and we want to include your tasty instructions. If the recipe is heart-healthy, low cal, or low fat, please indicate this beside the recipe name. Recipes **should be typed** on this form or on an 8 1/2 X 11 sheet of paper using this same format (*only one recipe per page*). You may photocopy this form.

Deadline for submission: December 31, 2001

Limit: 3 recipes per person

RECIPE: _____

Category: (*check one*)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Appetizer/Beverage | ☐ Vegetables | ☐ Miscellaneous |
| ☐ Bread | ☐ Meat/Main Dish | |
| ☐ Soup/Salad | ☐ Dessert | |

Ingredients: (*list below*)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Directions: _____

(If more space is needed, use a second form. Do not write on the back.)

Submitted by:

(Your Name)

(Church, Town, State)

Send to: **Debbie Burden**

P. O. Box 512

Locust Grove, OK 74352

E-mail Address: debatparsonage@hotmail.com (*send recipe as attachment*)



Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WAC Officers

Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator

November is National Home Missions Month and time for the Pre-Thanksgiving Week of Prayer and the annual Lizzie McAdams offering. Emphasize the treasure theme as you meet with your officers to prepare for the week. If your women cannot fit an "every night of the week" meeting into their schedules, consider a phone-tree or e-mail type week of prayer. Meet together once, either to commence or conclude the event.

December is Free Will Baptist Bible College Month. Why not give a special Christmas gift in memory or in honor of someone in your group?

Order your 2002 Yearbook, *For Such A Time As This*, today. You'll find helps and ideas for programs and projects for the coming year. This book also includes a missionary Birthday Calendar as well as helpful plan sheets. It's a must for every group!

Prepare now for January's WAC Enlistment. Read the skit and look over plan sheets in the 2002 Yearbook. Order issues of *CoLaborer* and WNAC Brochures for those who don't attend. Call today: 1-877-767-7662 or email: wnac@nafwb.org. Our address is listed on this magazine cover.

Treasurer

Send all Lizzie McAdams Offerings and Paul J. Ketteman Memorial Christmas Fund Drive Offerings through the proper channels.

Missions Chairman

The Home Missions Department will gladly provide free materials and prayer cards for your Week of Prayer activities. If women in your group do not receive *AIM*, acquaint them with this free bimonthly magazine. Call toll free: 1-877-767-7674.

Prayer Chairman

Distribute the reproducible Prayer Calendar found on pp. 15,16. Even if your group does not plan a Week of Prayer, the calendar will remind individuals to pray. Include your whole church if possible.

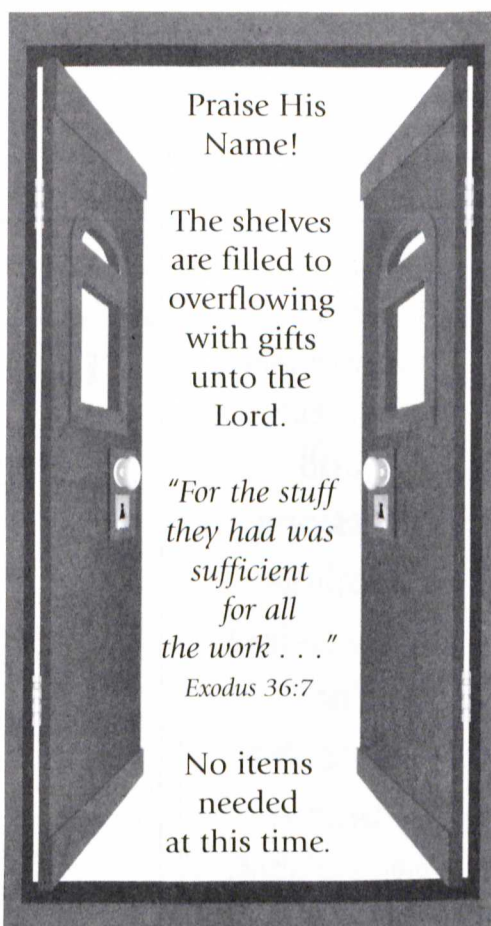
Build an altar with the stones from the December program. (See *Yearbook*, p. 55). Encourage women to commit these to the Lord. Hand out small stones as daily prayer reminders.

Study Chairman

See p. 23 for a review of the Christmas book, *The Shoe Box*. You might want to feature this at your December meeting.

WNAC has available, *Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity*, a companion Bible study guide (\$6.95) that is suitable for small groups. Consider this as a study for 2002.

(Continued on next page.)



Praise His
Name!

The shelves
are filled to
overflowing
with gifts
unto the
Lord.

*"For the stuff
they had was
sufficient
for all
the work . . ."*

Exodus 36:7

No items
needed
at this time.

(Continued from p. 19)

Service Chairman

November and December are great service project months. Consider serving missionary personnel who are often overlooked. Send Christmas cards or gift certificates to Tentmakers and Aquila/Priscilla workers. These families are unsung heroes who often do not reap the prayer support and benefits salaried missionaries receive. The Home Missions Department (1-877-767-7674) can supply a list of names and addresses.

Sponsor a 2002 TEAM member or a GO and BE participant. These high school and college-age students need extra prayer and support as they prepare for this summer.

Reserve or rent a booth at a local mall or shopping center. Serve free coffee and hot chocolate to shoppers. Though some places do not allow literature distribution, this "cup of hot water in the Lord's name" may open avenues for further witness.

Provide a babysitting night or Saturday "Shop Op" for young couples in your church. Any proceeds could fund another WAC service project.

Springboard Illustrated Volume 41/ No. 6

The Next Time

(Excerpted from "What Ever Happened to Thanksgiving" an article by Lee Ann Wilfong)

The next time . . . you sing "Count Your Many Blessings," take a moment to do just that. At the end of the song, your list should only have begun. Focus on that throughout the worship service.

The next time . . . you hug one of your children, give them a second hug. Some countries with family "quotas" would not allow you to keep your child.

The next time . . . you look in the mirror, give thanks for your mother. If she had opted for the "pro-choice," you might have been an abortion statistic.

The next time . . . you see your parents, thank them for their love and care. Many children know only abuse and neglect. If your parents were abusive, rejoice in the love, care, and healing you've found in Christ.

The next time . . . you cringe at the grocery checkout bill, thank God for provision. Many have nothing to eat and no means to obtain food.

The next time . . . the church business meeting doesn't suit you, thank the Lord for a church building where you can openly worship. Many around the world are forced to meet in secret.

The next time . . . you complain about government, be thankful you can vote. How many Christians have forfeited opportunities for involvement, and have, by omission, allowed ungodly men and laws to be put in place?

The next time . . . you groan at the alarm clock, give thanks for a reason to get up—that job that results in a paycheck.

The next time . . . you don't like something at your children or grandchildren's school, stop and give thanks for their education. Then get involved and become an active voice.

The next time . . . give "thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20).

Lee Ann Wilfong lives in Park Hills, Missouri and attends the Leadington FWB Church.

For up-to-date
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prayer requests

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Lucy and Marge

(Marge is sitting at the desk writing. Lucy knocks on the door.)

Marge: Come in, Lucy,

Lucy: *(enters)* How did you know that was me knocking?

Marge: Because you have a unique knock. I always know when it's you.

Lucy: Well, that's the only thing unique about me. I'm just a face, lost in the crowd.

Marge: Oh my goodness, Lucy, you are a very unique person. You have a lot of unique qualities.

Lucy: I don't know whether that's a compliment or not. At least you didn't say I have a lot of idiosyncrasies.

Marge: Actually, Lucy, you do have some—well, what I call God-given characteristics. He made all of us special in our own way.

Lucy: Hey, wait a minute. I'm not sure what you mean by those *special characteristics*.

Marge: Each of us is unique. We all have something special to offer. We each fill a place that no one else can fill.

Lucy: Well, sometimes I think my place would be better empty.

Marge: No, Lucy, God made you to fill your special place in this time and where you are. No one else can fill your shoes.

Lucy: Marge, you don't have to insult me. My feet aren't that big.

Marge: Oh, you know what I mean.

Lucy: You know what? I've been thinking about unique gifts to give during these holidays. Your using that word just made me think of it.

Marge: What have you thought of, Lucy?

Lucy: Well, I've thought about making special gift certificates for some of our shut ins. I'd give them time. On each certificate I'd specify a certain amount of hours I could spend.

Marge: That's a great idea. See, you do have unique ideas.

Lucy: And, instead of giving gifts to ourselves in our WAC, I thought of bringing a group of teenagers from _____ and giving them some gifts they would enjoy.

Marge: Hey, that would be fun for us and for them. Any other great ideas?

Lucy: I've been thinking about what we could give to our Lord on His birthday.

Marge: You know what would be the greatest gift of all?

Lucy: No, what would it be?

Marge: Just giving Him that unique self of yours. You are God's special treasure.

Lucy: I don't know how He can consider me a treasure.

Marge: But He does because the Bible says so. Speaking of treasures, our November program *(give time and place)* asks the question, "Where are your treasures?"

Lucy: If we do some things for others during this holiday season, will that count for eternal treasures?

Marge: Absolutely! And then in December, we consider what gift we can give to Jesus. That meeting is scheduled for _____ *(announce time and place)*.

Lucy: I plan to make both meetings. And since I'm so unique, I'm going to give you a very unique gift this year, Marge. You'll really be surprised.

Marge: Oh, I can't wait to see what it is. But having a unique friend like you is a treasure and gift enough for me.

Lucy and Marge is written each month by Dr. Mary Wisehart and Yvonne Hampton.

Life! Action

a column for teens



Name: Laura Ham

Age: 17

School: Mt. Juliet High School

Hobbies: Hiking, climbing, reading, watching movies, writing

Church: Cofer's Chapel FWB

Reflection . . .

This past summer, I traveled to Japan with Teens Equipped and Active in Ministry. Although the whole trip was a growing experience that touched every TEAM member, two moments are forever etched in my mind.

One of the most widely recognized of Japanese customs is taking off your shoes before you enter a house. This is done to keep the floors clean. Well, I had been walking around barefoot outside, so I needed to wash my feet before I entered. Shannon Little, one of our missionaries, brought a wet cloth for me to use. I did not, however, wash my feet. Aoi, a Japanese high school girl, took the rag and washed my feet for me. This was not something she had grown up doing once a quarter; she had absolutely no understanding of any Biblical symbolism her actions might possess. She was simply kindhearted and didn't think twice about making herself a servant.

We also visited a Shinto shrine. Shinto is an ancient Japanese religion. Followers must purify themselves before they enter the shrine to pray. Outside the shrine we saw a woman with her daughter, who could not have been more than three. The woman was purifying the child by helping her wash her hands. How sobering to think that this girl will probably grow up being taught to believe as her ancestors! At the current rate of evangelism, by the time a Japanese church is established and able to reach this child with the gospel, she will be dead.

This trip touched my heart; the experience has helped me grow. Please, pray for the Japanese, and the missionaries who are serving them. I know it is difficult to take time out of your day to pray for a people you don't know and have never seen. I pray for many cultures because my heart aches for the untouched, but my prayers for the Japanese have now become personal.

A Christmas book to treasure

The Shoe Box: A Christmas Story

by Francine Rivers

112 pages, Tyndale House, \$12.99 (retail)

Timmy comes to live with Mary and David Holmes in the fall of the year. His father is in prison and his mother cannot adequately provide for him. The Holmes have no children of their own and are thrilled to share their lives and home with Timmy.

School has begun and Timmy has to make new friends. He is quiet and has sorrowful eyes. He carries a shoe box with him at all times—just an ordinary shoe box. This raises many questions and even a punch or two.

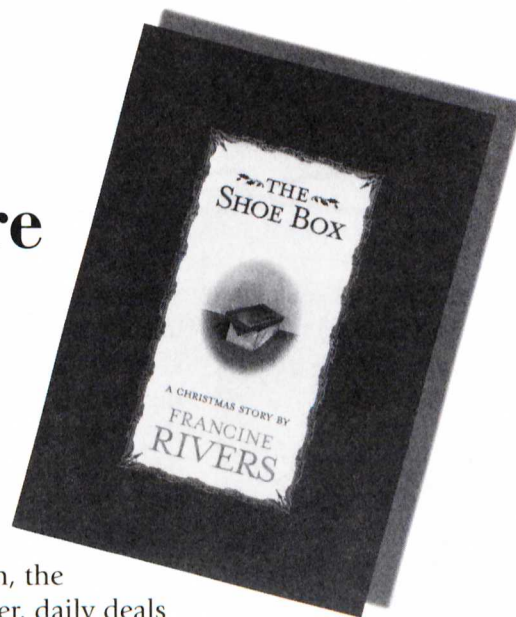
her own

Mrs. Iverson, the

social worker, daily deals

with troubled children. She often

wonders if she is making a difference in the lives of children. What a blessing that one situation turns out to be positive. Mrs. King, Timmy's first grade teacher, plants seeds of love and kindness in the heart of this young, troubled boy. She cares enough to go the extra mile and attend a program at church.



"This book is a fast read, if you can get past the lump in your throat."

—Amazon books

No one knows what is inside Timmy's box. No matter who asks, Timmy always gives the same reply, "just things!" However, it soon becomes obvious to the reader that these "things" are treasures to Timmy.

The secret of Timmy's box is uncovered at an unlikely place and time. A very ordinary event in the life of a church ministers to the child's heart.

Psalm 37:4 says, "Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart." We tend to focus on the "desires" when in reality God would have us focus on the "delighting." Timmy's story will challenge you to do just that—delight in the Lord.

Every woman can identify with one or all of the women in the story. Mary, the foster mother, is a barren woman who opens her heart to a little boy yet longs for a child of her own. Timmy's birth mother wonders why things happen to her and yet she longs for her son to have a better life than

This tender story will cause you to stop and give thanks for the gifts and abilities God has given you, no matter how "ordinary" they may seem. It will challenge you to make sure your "things" are pleasing to the Lord.

Available in hardback, this small book also contains some of the author's Christmas traditions as well as recipes enjoyed by the Rivers family. A holiday treasure in a small package! Enjoy!!

Reviewed by Elizabeth Hodges, a pastor's wife from Hendersonville, Tennessee. Elizabeth serves as president of the Cumberland District WAC.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

**ORDER SEVERAL COPIES OF THE SHOE BOX
FROM WNAC TODAY—SPECIAL PRICE
ONLY \$9.99 EACH PLUS SHIPPING.**

Women In Action



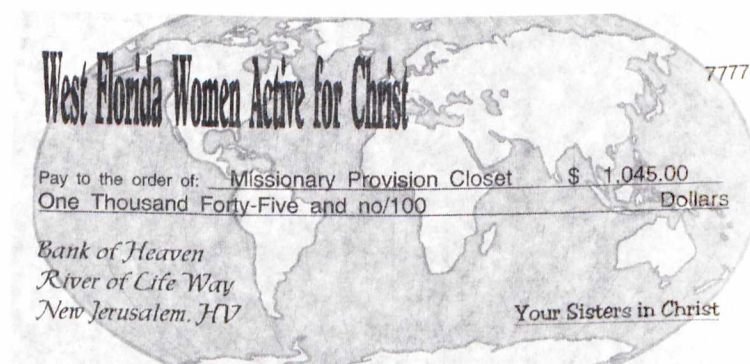
✿ Women of Georgia paid tribute to Mrs. Lora Shutes at their annual state meeting, March 15. Mrs. Shutes served as the first state president. Though unable to attend due to ill health, Mrs. Shutes received a standing ovation as current president Gail Smith presented a dozen red roses and a silver tray in her honor.

✿ Gwen Hendrix presented Marjorie Workman with \$1000 from South Carolina Women, designated for the purchase of a digital camera for use in *CoLaborer*. The new Sony Mavica produced this photo and most other photos/art included in the November/December issue of the magazine.



✿ Cedar Springs WAC, Georgia, hosted a House Warming Party for the Missionary Provision Closet, March 10. Attendees enjoyed brunch and speakers, (L-R) Home Missionary Becky Franks, AL, Rachel and Diana Bryant, FL. Gifts totaled approximately \$400.

✿ Pleasant Grove WAC celebrated its 30th anniversary at the Fish Net in Glenwood, AR. Through the years, this group has given over \$20,000 to missionary and community concerns. (L-R) Ethel Pinkerton, Brenda Fant, Mae Jackson, Judy Hogg, Beverly Fox, Barbara Smith, Lois Davis, Virdean Whisenhunt.



✿ Mt. Harmony WAC recently sewed, quilted, and crocheted over 200 items for the Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock. This group also donated sheet sets and mattress pads to the Provision Closet in April. (L-R) Beth Maxwell, Linda Crabtree, Lorene Sullivan, Dora Vandergrift, Lorena Hubbard, Sharon Eagans, Ann Doyle with Lindsey Dingman, Jane Reaves, Avanell Saffrell, Ola Sharp, Dorothy Huskey.





* WAC at First FWB Church, Washington, NC wore hats and gloves to a Mother Daughter Tea. Participants gave a \$50 love offering to Lauren Horne for her summer trip with TEAM Puerto Rico.

← * West Florida Women Active for Christ recently sent gifts totaling \$1045 to the Provision Closet. This check (pictured at left) accompanied the items.

* Doris Kramp reminded women that "Love Hopes All Things" (1 Corinthians 13:7), as she addressed the Old Mt. Zion District WAC, Rogers, Arkansas, in June.



Letters to WNAC

Dear WNAC,
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
I never dreamed that one day the
Missionary Closet would benefit my

family like it has. I remember as a local member raising funds to help either buy items or send money to help the missionaries. It was truly a blessing and humbling experience. May God bless each of you who dedicate your life to God's mission.

In Christ's love,
The Vandivorts

Terry, D.D., Ashley, Amber, Austin, Aaron

Dear CoLaborer,

On behalf of TEAM Cuba I would like to thank the ladies for providing the items for the gift packages that the TEAM members were able to leave in each home where they stayed. The gifts were greatly appreciated and the items very useful. Thank you for your generosity.

Linda Callaway

Dear Ladies:

Just a note to thank you for all the work you do to promote missions. I also want to thank you for a recent article in your magazine. The September/October issue contains an article written by Tim & Phyllis York entitled, "Troubled Teens: Flee to be Free." It is not only a needed article, but it is practical and apropos. I've always appreciated the CoLaborer Magazine, however, I feel this particular issue is the best yet. May God bless you as you minister to Free Will Baptist women.

God's richest blessings,
Rev. Clifford D. Donoho
Psalm 55:22

Dear WNAC,

Thanks so much. We had a good time with the lessons in the last issue of CoLaborer. We had nine present at our last meeting.

Tri-Cities Ladies Group
Kennewick, Washington

Dear Ladies:

Thank you so much for your prayers and support. We are continuing to move forward with our efforts to build and relocate. . . You are playing a vital role in all that we are doing. Your gift is making a huge difference. Our steps seem slow at times but each step is necessary for the dream to become a reality. Thanks again for what you are doing and especially (Florida State WAC) for this gift to help purchase a circular desk for the Library. Only eternity will reveal the true and lasting dividends of your investment in some of the finest young people in the world.

In His service,
Roy W. Harris, Director
Office of Advancement
Numbers 13:30

Mission Alert

Evangelism News from Around the World



FWB AROUND THE WORLD

Murial Gainer, Japan, praises God for a safe move to Tokyo from Hokkaido, where she has served 25 years. She requests prayer for the entire Tokyo team in the area of church planting strategy. She also rejoices that summer apprentice Brenda Wendlendt has committed to a short term appointment in 2002.

A group of young people from the church in St. Nazaire, France, accompanied Missionaries Jerry and Barbara Gibbs to the US. The youth attended the National Association in Detroit and held bilingual services in several churches. Pray for their strength as they return to a culture that is not friendly to Christianity.

An energy crisis in Brazil has altered some missionary activity, according to Missionary Jim Sturgill.

Political instability and unrest still plague the country of Côte d'Ivoire. Pray that missionary work will not be hindered.

Pray for the 16 MK's who are attending college both stateside and internationally this year. Gifts to the Provision Closet have enabled each to receive a phone card to call their families.

FWB IN NORTH AMERICA

Missionary Jeff Crabtree, Fredricton, NB, Canada requests prayer as the congregation relocates their meeting place closer to their property. The move will involve increased rent and purchase of chairs. Brother Crabtree calls the move, "a major step of faith for this small congregation."

Tim and Lori Byers have begun Sunday services at the new Lighthouse FWB Church in Ashtabula, Ohio.

Bud and Ruth Bivens, Puerto Rico give thanks for the 10 members of TEAM who ministered with them. These energetic teens cleaned and painted, visited nursing homes, held sports clinics and a children's rally.

Continue to remember Missionaries David and Wanda Carlson, KY, as they grieve the recent loss of their one-year-old daughter, Emily Ann. Her death resulted from a tragic accident.

WORLDWIDE CONCERNS

A Bible translation center in an unnamed large nation in Asia was recently destroyed by militant groups. Translators were quickly evacuated but lost most all their possessions as well as their work. Pray for national Christians who remain in the region.

From the tropical islands of the Philippines to the humid jungles of Paraguay, suffering and forgotten women are now hearing the gospel through a radio program called Women of Hope, reports TransWorld Radio. The program airs in over a dozen languages.

More than 9000 new believers joined a local church in Russia during the past year.

Michigan Apples

2001 Convention Review

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver"
(Proverbs 25:11)

Fragrant, crisp, beautiful, delicious. There's nothing comparable to the taste of an apple, picked ripe from the tree and eaten right in the orchard. Yet, who can resist a cup of hot spiced cider, mulled to warm a chilly winter moment!

Those who attended the 66th annual session of Women Nationally Active for Christ, July 16,17, 2001 in Detroit, feasted on orchard-fresh Michigan apples. Like Solomon's apples of gold, those words fitly spoken nourished our souls and fueled our minds. Now it's time to mull the cider—to pour up those thoughts that have been simmering on the back burners of our beings.

For those who did not attend, your shipment of Michigan apples has arrived! We've included a view of the orchard (a recap of the convention), as well as a sampling of the fruits (speaker's messages and seminars) we enjoyed. Eye them. Taste them. Use them. Share them.



Above: Sheila Harris (IN) stands to be recognized.

Right: Mrs. Workman displays THE suitcase.

Far right: WNAC President Debe Taylor.



"Michigan's diversity is best seen in its people. . . God has brought a mission field to us." With those words, Mrs. Diane Worthington welcomed the assembly of 729 registered delegates, officers, and visitors. Both diversity and mission fields characterized the rest of the convention.

Monday Seminars

Criticism and record keeping—two very diverse topics—drew women to Monday's afternoon

An Orchard View

Highlights—
Sharing Hope
and Healing
66th annual
Session
Women
Nationally
Active for
Christ



seminars. Anne Worthington, leader (NC), and panel members, Pam Flannagin, (FL), Gail Smith (GA), and Donnell Wilson (OK),

explored ways to Biblically approach and respond to criticism. In spite of the chilling room temperature, nearly

170 women participated. One woman described "There's A Speck in Your Eye" as the "highlight of the convention."

Executive board members, Diana Bryant and Debbie Burden entertained and informed state leaders with "Just the Facts, Ma'am," a seminar on good record keeping. Comedy vignettes, written by Mrs. Bryant, revealed the answer to the question, "What if other people didn't keep good records?" Mrs. Burden focused on biblical record keeping and the many things records can accomplish.

Cheri Ham, from the Department of Foreign Missions, introduced the new Intercessory Prayer Network. Women wanting to be involved can contact the Foreign Missions Department, P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37013.

Tuesday Session

President Debe Taylor called the 66th session to order. Carol Pinkerton, missionary to Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, shared a moving PowerPoint presentation during the morning devotion. (See p. 30) Sarah Fletcher, new editor of *CoLaborer*, presented awards to winners of the annual Creative Arts Contest. Mrs. Elvia Martinez de Escobar, president of the Mexico WNAC, gave greetings to the assembly. Speaking through translator, Ruth Bivens, Mrs. Elvia told of her love for the Lord and described current projects that the women of her country are accomplishing.



The WNAC Booth offered helpful materials.

In her annual report, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Marjorie Workman, gave praise for the more than \$550,000 given by WNAC to missionaries and mission causes. She reported a national membership of 6,593. Mrs. Workman acquainted women with new books and available materials. She also thanked women for their prayers during her husband's recent heart surgery and recovery.

Bill Evans from the Board of Retirement and Insurance explained the WNAC Endowment Fund. The interest from contributions to this fund will be used to continue the work of WNAC in future years. Brother Evans' organization has recently printed a col-

orful brochure detailing this unique ministry opportunity.

In a special presentation, Mrs. Marjorie Workman, honored Lucille Steward for her years of service and contributions to the Missionary Provision Closet. The Provision Closet was the brainchild of this Michigan woman. Mrs. Workman displayed the suitcase Mrs. Steward used in 1962, to bring those first contributions to WNAC. Mrs. Workman presented her with a special plaque.

Mrs. Workman noted dates for upcoming retreats. WNAC is partnering with Master's Men for a Couples Retreat, April 5-7, 2002, in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The 2002 WNAC Retreat will be September 19-21, at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, and will feature musician Ronda Freeman and speaker Ashley Hartley. The 2003 WNAC Retreat will be March 20-22, in Branson, Missouri.

President Debe Taylor announced a new national project, a WNAC cookbook. Deadline for submission (three recipes per person) is December 31, 2001. This cookbook should be available for purchase at the 2002 Session in Memphis. (See form on p. 18.)

Morning Worship

In a powerful, targeted message, James Forlines, Director of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, addressed the indispensable role of women in the cause of world evangelism. Brother Forlines noted Biblical examples of women in roles of mothers, life-partners, and women of zeal. He challenged, "Rise up women, we desperately need you. . . Rise up, O women of God. Your heathen sisters have no hope but in Christ through you." Near the end of the message, Brother Forlines honored one

Right: James Forlines honors Fern Phillips.
Below: Lucille Steward receives a plaque.



woman who has risen up in retirement years to go and teach in Brazil. Ms. Fern Phillips received a standing ovation and an autographed copy of *Touching the Untouchables*, the biography of pioneer missionary Laura Belle Barnard.

WNAC Luncheon

A sellout crowd of over 350 feasted on roast pork, vegetables, double chocolate cake, and the fellowship and hospitality of Michigan women. Decorated with centerpieces depicting Michigan's lakes, each table was also laden with individual gifts and diverse favors (scented soaps, chocolate cars, and mini-cookbooks) from the various Michigan WAC districts.

Susan Turnbough, missionary to Spain for almost 20 years, spoke from her heart about her

Melissa Turnbough and guest Yolanda.



love for Spain and its peoples. Using Proverbs 4 as her text, Mrs. Turnbough admonished women to guard their hearts. "Since I've been in America, I've heard so much about being politically correct. We need to worry about being Biblically correct."

Special guest, Yolanda Almeida del Campo, from the Villalba FWB Church shared her testimony. This Spanish church leader and mother of two teenage girls, studied the Bible for eight years before accepting Christ. She noted, "It is easier to share Christ in a virgin country than in a culture that's experienced disillusionment." Christianity is not popular in Spain.

WNAC Booth

Doves, ivy, and a six-foot cross attracted conventioners to the WNAC booth. The collage cross, filled with pictures of people, depicted areas and avenues in which WNAC is "Sharing Hope and Healing." Susan Henderson, author of *And a Little Child Shall Lead Them*, signed books Tuesday afternoon and evening. The booth also stocked a new updated *WNAC Manual*, the new 2002 Yearbook, *For Such a Time as This*, as well as two theme-related Bible study books, *Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity*. All of these titles are still available for purchase through the WNAC office.

Delegates elected these officers.

President: Debe Taylor, (AR)
Vice President: Joanne King, (NC)
Secretary: Debbie Burden, (OK)
Members-at-Large:
Yvonne Brown, (CA)
Carolyn Hendrix, (AL)
Dawn Sweeney, (TN)

Apples Worth Remembering

From the Seminars

Concerning Records

"We are preserving our history." —*Diana Bryant*

"Remember the ABC's of record keeping—Accuracy, Brevity, and Completeness." —*Debbie Burden*

Concerning Criticism

"We must be able to recognize gossip in order to stop it." —*Gail Smith*

"We have to purpose in our hearts how we will respond to criticism." —*Pam Flannagin*

"If we are filled and walking with the Spirit, we will not be a critical speck detector." —*Anne Worthington*

"Prayer is the key to overcoming discouragement concerning criticism. It's often the last resort instead of the strong support we need to hold on to." —*Donelle Wilson*

From the Sessions

"God has a right to interrupt our lives. . . He has put me to the test." —*Marjorie Workman*

"Our children are values vacuum cleaner." —*James Forlines*

"When Satan tries that hard, the Lord intends to bless us. . ." —*Debe Taylor*

"As long as she has a heart, she will serve." —*Marjorie Workman in tribute to Lucille Steward*

Concerning official business, WNAC passed the following resolutions.

Whereas, our constitution does not specify the number of years a WNAC Executive Committee may serve:

Be it resolved that:

1. A member of the WNAC Executive Committee may serve a total of four consecutive terms (eight years).
2. After serving for four consecutive terms (eight years), a member may be eligible for re-election to the committee after a period of absence of one term (two years).

We recommend that scholarships be given from the Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship Fund as follows:

- \$1,000 for an Ivorian student (to be decided by the Bible Institute leadership, under the direction of Clint Morgan).
- \$1,000 for Osmir, a Brazilian seminary student who is preparing for the ministry (as recommended by Curt Holland).
- \$1,000 to be divided among the eighteen seminary students at the Cedars of Lebanon Seminary in Pinar del Rio, Cuba.

Adapted from the morning devotion given by Carol Pinkerton at the 66th WNAC Convention in Detroit, Michigan.



Assalé was given to his uncle by his father when he was only 5 1/2 years old. The uncle was a Christian and a schoolteacher. The father felt this would help in the advancement of his son's education—and it did! For years, Assalé worked in the church, but without having a right relationship with the Lord. At last, being convicted, he publicly gave his life to the Lord and placed his priorities in proper perspective. He is a true leader not only in the Abidjan church, but also in the district and national Free Will Baptist works. He has his Master's degree and is working on his Doctorate.

Madame Rosalie was the second wife. She was a hard worker in the fields and had given her husband several children. One day her life changed when she heard, understood, and accepted the Gospel. The Holy Spirit worked in her life. She decided that she could no longer be the second wife. She took her children and left. She was hired by a local hospital, although more than once there was not enough money for all employees, so she was denied a salary. I never heard her complain, but I heard her pray many times telling the Lord her needs and thanking HIM for His provisions. She knows the power of prayer.



Rachelle was delivered at the Medical Hospital in Doropo by Missionary Sherwood Lee who named her in honor of his sister Rachel. She was a smart little gal who, by the age of ten, could prepare meals as well as her mother. She knew which wood burned best for the open fires; she knew which leaves made the best sauce. She did well in school. She was the number one student her senior year, yet failed the test to complete her studies. She repeated the senior year and again landed top in her class. Just before the time for final testing, a professor invited her to his home to spend "extra time." (Many girls gain guaranteed passing grades on tests by spending "extra time" with the professor. Many become pregnant and perform self-abortions, often losing not only the child, but their own lives as well.) She understood this professor's intentions and did NOT go. Again Rachelle failed to pass her final test. She went to another town to repeat, yet again, her senior year. Providentially, she moved in with Pastor Samuel and his family.

She got up each morning at 5:00 a.m. for family Bible reading and prayers as did his young children. This time Rachelle passed the final test. She was not bitter about the previous times. But in that third senior year spent in the parsonage, Rachelle said she learned about being a twenty-four hour Christian. Rachelle is now living in Abidjan continuing her studies. She is a jewel of a young lady who did not allow circumstances to dictate her actions.

Pray for these Ivorians and the Pinkertons as they labor to extend God's Kingdom.



Words FOR WOMEN

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Meet Sarah Fletcher

*C*oLaborer's new editor Sarah Fletcher admits to praying the Jabez prayer and asking the Lord to enlarge her borders, but she never dreamed the Lord would do it through her gift of writing and editing for CoLaborer magazine. But God knew. He has been preparing her step by step during her thirty-seven years of walking with Him.

Born the oldest of three and the only girl to Leroy and Janice Blades, Sarah grew up in the country near Johnston City, Illinois. Her Christian heritage is evident by her early conversion at the age of four in the home. Sarah said her dad was plowing the garden while she was in the house bombarding her Mom with questions. Finally, Mrs. Blades insisted that Mr. Blades quit plowing and come inside to help lead Sarah to the Lord. Many years later, Sarah's own children, like herself, were saved in the home at a very early age.

Grade school sweethearts, high school friends, college sweethearts, and finally husband and wife is the way Sarah describes meeting and marrying Keith Fletcher. They married during the summer of 1980 between their junior and senior years at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Eager for ministry, they spent their first anniversary as summer missionaries in Campinas, Brazil. They are the proud parents of three fine teenagers—Aaron, a freshman at Moody Bible Institute; Jesse, a high school senior; and Hannah an eighth grader.

Sarah is familiar with Free Will Baptist diversity having trekked with her husband, a minister, from North Carolina to Oklahoma to Indiana to Illinois to Tennessee. During their ministry she has worn many hats—pastor's wife, youth minister's wife, stay-at-home mom, homeschooling mom, work-at-home mom, and working mom. One of her favorite hats was tentmaker. She and her husband worked four years with Home Missionary David Potete in Chicago.

They loved it. Had no plans to leave. But God...

She comes to WNAC well qualified to serve as editor of Free Will Baptists' only magazine for women, *CoLaborer*. She has worked for Randall House Publications several years as a free-lance curriculum writer and product developer on the teen and primary age levels. She also worked as a free-lance editor for Scripture Press on various products and materials.

On two occasions she has been a teacher. She taught kindergarten at Brentwood Baptist Christian Academy in Illinois. She comes to WNAC from Woodbine Christian Academy, Nashville, Tennessee, where she taught fourth grade.

In addition to her professional experience, she qualifies for the editor's position through active involvement in her local church and WNAC.

An officer. She has held the position of District Field Worker and Editor of "Chimes," her WNAC district's paper. She has served as judge for WNAC's Creative Writing Contest.

A teacher. She has taught several age groups in Sunday school and is currently teaching fifth graders at Donelson Free Will Baptist Church where she is a member.

An organizer. She coordinated WAC groups statewide for voluntary camp ministry; helped organize a local WAC; helped develop a multi-faceted women's ministry in her local church; and assisted in WAC retreats.

A writer. Sarah has written several skits and programs for local church dramas. And, she has written and won in the WNAC Creative Writing Contest.

Sarah, like Jeremiah, says "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Starting as a curriculum writer and product developer, then teacher, editor, and back to teaching, she has come full circle again. Sarah passionately believes that "Every-thing you do in life is preparation for the next step." She has taken the next step.



FACES OF THE FUTURE

The faces of our future are at Free Will Baptist Bible College today!

Paul J. Kettelman Memorial Christmas Fund Drive for Free Will Baptist Bible College

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