

COLLABORER

September • October 2004

GIVE ME A BREAK

Are You
Passion Fruit
or Prune

TOUCHED
BY A
TEACHER

Why
Worry

GREAT
EXPECTATIONS
REALIZED
Convention
Review



realistic expectations

WOMEN NATIONALLY ACTIVE FOR CHRIST

Labor of my heart

CoLABORER

September October 2004

Volume 44, Number 5



Sarah Fletcher

IT'S A GIFT

I read and reread the words on my computer screen. "You might enjoy writing. You do not mind speaking to large groups; you may prefer teaching teachers. Consider writing curriculum." How could it know? Was I that predictable?

I've been studying spiritual gifts in a women's Bible study. At the request of our leader, each of us completed an online spiritual gifts assessment. The results amazed and affirmed me. With only a couple exceptions and surprises, I discovered that my so-called spiritual gifts involved things I was

already doing and enjoying. Later as we shared results, others in the group revealed similar experiences. A nurse rated highest in the gift of mercy. Our leader's prominent gifts? Teaching and leadership.

True, it's only a test, but it does cause me to praise and ponder. First Corinthians 12 declares, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." How wonderful that our Gracious God has uniquely gifted every believer. "For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." How refreshing that we don't have to do it all! "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." How reflective of this is my view of others?

Recognizing spiritual gifts helps us develop realistic expectations for ourselves and for others. Realizing that everyone is *not* like us, helps us understand limits and appreciate strengths. When the body of Christ works together, each person lending God-given gifts, it's a beautiful thing.

Knowing about gifts is not the same as utilizing them. Far too often, in the church, we've enlisted bodies rather than engaging the proper part of the body of Christ. Yes, jobs must be done, like it or not. Yet, how much more effective the church could be if we each enjoyed our part. If God gifts as it pleases him, should we not also factor in pleasure? Should we not pursue our passion?

I feel blessed to serve WNAC. *CoLaborer* is definitely a passion. I find great joy in writing, creating, and communicating the vision of God's Great Commission to women. It's a gift. And I am ever mindful that He deserves all glory. I'm also thankful for people God has used to direct my steps toward this end. I'm thankful for parents and family, a husband who constantly encourages me to pursue. And I'm thankful for teachers. Like some of our readers, I too have been touched by a teacher. A first grade teacher who years later, returned a poem I had written in her class, just to "keep me writing." A junior-high English teacher who sent my essay to a local paper, so I could be a published writer. A college professor who exhorted me to continue when I wanted to drop my English courses. Each of these individuals glimpsed a gift and encouraged me.

Author David Francis defines a spiritual gift as a "God-given assignment, capacity and desire to perform a function within the body of Christ with supernatural joy, energy, and effectiveness."

What fires you up? What brings you joy? What are your gifts? Pursue them with passion. Let others do the same.

"As every [person] hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another... and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men" (1 Peter 4:10a; Colossians 3:23).

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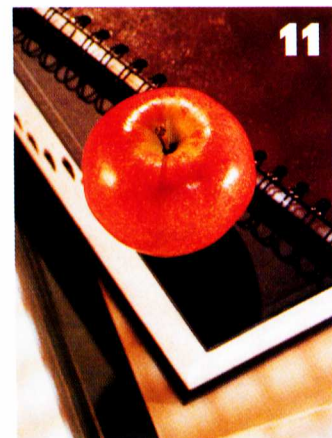
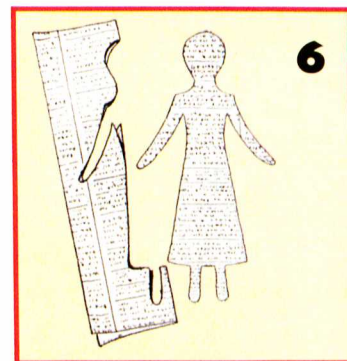
*Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

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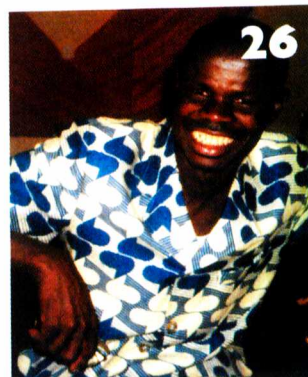


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WITHERED BEAUTY

by Sara Hollis

A year ago we bought our first house. Out back was an overgrown iris bed that I set to thinning immediately. I had good intentions of replanting the bulbs in the fall, so I stuck them in paper bags and tossed them into the back of the shed until September.

Autumn came and went without any planting taking place. Winter rolled by and then spring came with the promise of getting into the dirt again.

Living on a tight budget and needing to use what I had, I remembered the bulbs back in the dark corner. I brought out the bags to take a look. Almost translu-

cent, the bulbs had growth, but they were white and withered. I went ahead and stuck them into the ground, fairly certain that lack of all-important winter frost had ended any potential of beauty.

While I wasn't watching, something incredible happened. The weak, battered and poorly treated bulbs took root. Resting in the ground and drinking up the sun's warmth, they grew tall and straight. Most surprising of all, on the most tender of plants, blooms appeared—delicate, pristine and daintily pale lavender. Hidden in a bag for a season, poorly cared for by a gardener who broke the rules, those hardy bulbs proved my expectations wrong.

My fresh iris blooms got me thinking a bit about my life. Truth is, I've a lot to learn from those disregarded, hidden and forgotten bulbs.

Two years ago my family and I were living in another state, serving a local church of another denomination. My husband Mark pastored; the kids and I backed him up one hundred percent. We'd had our share of difficulties through our six years there. My husband and I faced health problems; our young children experienced damaging mistreatment from another child. The church grew quickly, then hit rough waters as the small congregation began to welcome people from the outside. Eventually, the church went through a difficult separation. Midst all of the pain and hardship, we felt led to stay and lead and not give up. We had survived the hard part, we thought. Now we were on the backside of the mountain.

Mark's health continued to deteriorate. Then a denominational leader took me to task for being a "nontraditional" pastor's wife; friends betrayed me. I was told I was hampering my husband's effectiveness as a pastor. As I did with the iris bulbs, I dug up ministry and serving, threw them in a bag and tossed them into a dark corner.

I was hurt beyond my ability to describe. I stayed to myself, keeping my heart and my children close at home. We attended to Mark's health, trusting that brighter days lay ahead.

One sunny May morning, Mark and I drove to a doctor's appointment three hours away. Busy caring for my family, I hadn't been too concerned about the church. Not far into the drive, Mark told me about a governing board meeting earlier that week. Two elders had asked him to stay after and talk. Accusations, criticisms and lies were hurled at my husband. The nature of the talk? His wife and children.

In the space of two or three miles, we decided it was time to leave the church and go elsewhere. We concluded we needed time out of ministry to heal. We would

begin the process of relocating, taking a break from the rigors of leading a church body. The two elders were informed and appeared supportive. They said we could take as long as we needed.

The men met with Mark two weeks later, immediately following his surgery. Despite their previous words and promises, they had developed a severance package and a timeline. In four days, Mark would announce his resignation to the congregation. Two weeks following, we would conclude our time at the church. No *if's*, *and's*, or *but's*.

Three months severance and a Ryder truck brought us to Nashville, Tennessee to start over. The Donelson Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church welcomed us, and Pastor Rob Morgan gave us permission to hide, hurt and heal.

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Everything I had known about my life with Mark had grown within the culture of local church ministry. We met while he was in seminary and went to our first church together as a couple. I knew nothing else.

Coming into this new church, I knew only two people; I was suspicious of even the kindest person. It was painful to watch others joyfully serving each other when I had been wounded for doing the same. Trust was not my first priority; tears seemed my only means of communication with my Father in heaven, and I felt truly alone.

I had been an at-home working mom. I now had to work full time—a first since the birth of my children. And Mark was still experiencing health problems.

A month into my new job, Mark landed in the hospital for a week. Home for a week, he was then

readmitted, this time with a full-blown infection. Starting in his heart, it had traveled to his eye, destroying vision in one eye, and shredding an already damaged mitral valve. He was in critical condition and needed open-heart surgery.

Fast forward. It's now two years since we left the pastorate. Even with multiple health issues, Mark is healthier than he's ever been. We think we are beginning to heal inside. I am starting to open up my heart to other people. We are both working; the kids are settled in schools. We've got a house, two dogs and a cat, a garden with beans and tomatoes, and life looks good.

I won't say, though, that it's perfect. Inside I still wrestle with, "Who am I now? Where do I fit? And, what do I do with that bag of *me* that I threw into the shed?" God is starting to speak to me again; I am connecting to the *me* I had to stow away.

When I look into the bag with its remnants of myself, the dreams and hopes I stuffed along the way, it doesn't look like much. All I see are withered and weak bulbs, translucent shadows of what I used to be.

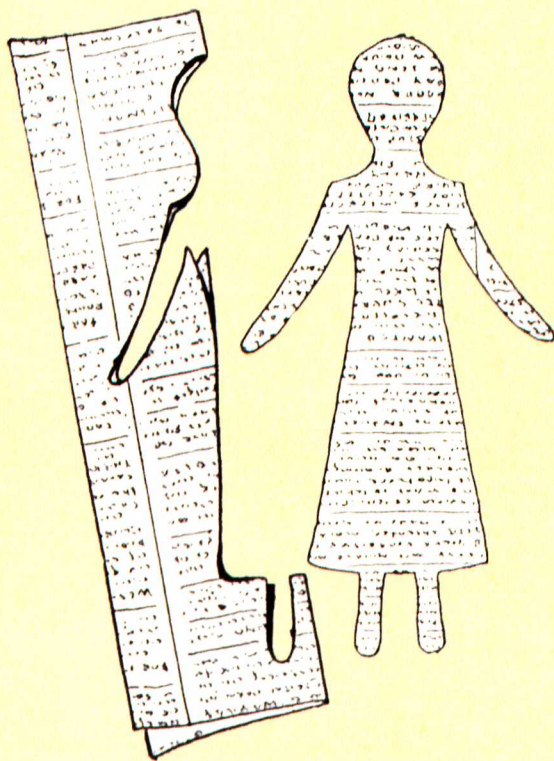
But my relentless and faithful Father is carefully pulling away the dead growth, loosening up the bruised and withered roots, and planting me in the ground. I'm not sure what to expect.

I'm thankful for the irises. Seeing their beauty gives me courage to let God put me back into the soil and to believe there's still some beauty left in me.

Sara Hollis attends the Donelson Fellowship FWB Church with her husband Mark and children Logan (11) and Kelsey (9). When she's not working in Public

Health Research at Vanderbilt University, she enjoys creating—with paper, paint, and in the garden.





Give Me a Break

by
Katy Taylor

Do you feel poured into a mold of expectation and assumption? Give yourself a break. God desires and designs us unique.

Psalm 139:14 states that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God has a plan and purpose for each of us. Along with general requirements from God, each of us possesses a set of personal expectations. People in our lives also have expectations for us. Lost or saved, they may expect similar things. We may meet or even exceed some of those expectations, but fall short in other areas. Let's examine a few expectations we may face as we walk with the Lord.

I can't do that.

People assume we are just like our family members. If our family sings, then we must have a beautiful voice that we are just not using. Sound familiar? God may have gifted us, not to sing, but to write or arrange the music or to handle the scheduling or sound.

Maybe your mom or sister is very creative or a great speaker. Everyone assumes that you also inherited those talents? Didn't happen. The knowledge may be there but you just can't communicate it to others. Relax. Your help may be needed to execute someone else's plan. Background work is vitally important.

Don't discount family. As our families minister to others, we can glean important principles and qualities that may help us fulfill our mission for the Lord. In the Exodus account of Moses and Aaron, we see the words, "I can't," come into play. In chapter four, God provides a crutch for Moses in the person of his brother. Later in Scripture, it appears Moses no longer needs Aaron to speak for him. Moses is God's chosen leader.

Sadly, our salvation or normalcy may be questioned if we do not worship as those around us. Second Corinthians tells us not to compare ourselves to others but to find our place and serve. The book, *You're Born an Original, Don't Die a Copycat* by John L. Mason gives insight on stepping out to become the persons God made us.

Been there, done that.

Do you hold seniority in your church? Been there a long time? A different level of expectation is often imposed upon those of us who've been around for awhile. People may assume we've become mature, strong Christians. Our seniority implies we hold the

ability to answer any question or handle any situation with ease. All our family members should be sold out for God. Surely we possess the spiritual formula for producing godly families. Uh-oh, what's wrong with those thoughts? Neither spiritual maturity nor a godly family simply happens with time. Christian growth is as personal as salvation. Christianity is not a family guarantee.

As faithful church members, we may be expected to get through the tough times with less support than others receive. Our situations may even be ignored for lack of knowing a right response. "Nothing said, nothing done" can cause great hurt in any Christian or church member's life. All of us need help once in awhile. Others need to minister, too.

Perfection sometimes becomes expected of us as we grow older in the Lord and in His church. In spite of what some may think, the Word says we will be perfect only after we leave this world.

Perhaps we've reacted to a situation or responded to someone inappropriately. As a result, we're taken off the pedestal. The problem lies in too much attention on individuals and not enough on Jesus. Most often, criticism comes from those blind to their own imperfections. If someone else has handled something very easily, we're expected to do the same. These lofty expectations may come from others or from within ourselves. For example, Peter just knew he would not fail the Lord. His expectations nearly crushed him when he betrayed our Lord. We must look at ourselves realistically in light of God's expectations—even when we've traveled many miles down the road of life.

Longtime members hold information. This includes both good and bad memories. We choose what we share—the troubles and woes or the ways God has blessed over the years. Some may want to use us to stir up trouble. Yes, young people and new Christians need to know how the church has arrived at its present position. Appreciation for many things will come from our memories of days past.

Taking over?

You've been asked to fill or elected to a position in the church. You're excited and ready to serve. As you begin to work, you hear someone say, "Sister So and So didn't do it that way." You're crushed and hurt.

Joshua followed a great leader. Moses had been used mightily by God. Yet the task ahead could not be accomplished by Moses. God had prepared Joshua to

go those next few miles with the Children of Israel. God still prepares His servants. We may discover new and better ways to accomplish the task. More may be at our disposal or within our abilities. The goal is to do the job effectively and efficiently. However, we must be sensitive to those passing the torch. Listen and observe. Evaluate their strengths. Their wisdom and advice may save us some headaches later on. Don't automatically slip into their routines in order to please people. Seek the Lord's guidance as to how He wants you to do the job.

How old are you?

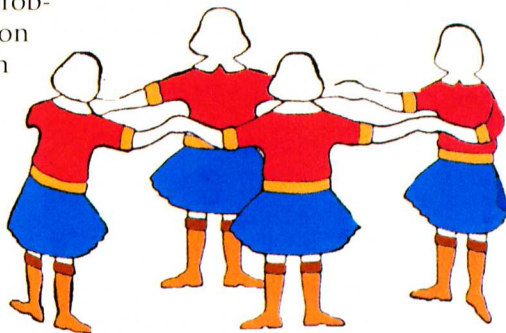
Too young? Our age affects what others expect of us. In some people's eyes, we may be too young to do anything. When God told Samuel to anoint a new king, replacing Saul, He sent him to the house of Jesse. According to 1 Samuel 16:6, Samuel's choice was Eliab. God's choice was David for reasons listed in the verse following (16:7).

We must find ways to give young people a taste of ministry, allowing them to fill various positions in the church. Opportunities can come through a youth group or through wise adults willing to mentor youth in our churches. We often assume that when teens become adults, they are ready to step in and serve. We must keep our eyes open, looking for interest and willingness in young people and new Christians. When young people are

utilized, don't expect them to fit a mold. We must recognize the uniqueness of each one and how these abilities can help accomplish the task. Too much pressure to conform can discourage a person from trying anything creative or different.

Too old? As we age, some may doubt our usefulness. We may be put out to pasture to make room for a younger person. Each one in the congregation has something to contribute toward the growth of the church. Acts as simple as a smile or a kind word for children can encourage and edify the church. Some young people need a godly parent-figure to help them through daily life. All children could use an extra grandma or grandpa. We all need to know that someone cares about us. How encouraging when that love comes from someone unexpected.

Noah was a man of age whom God used. He loved the Lord. Years of righteous living gave him the experience and confidence necessary to complete the task. Wisdom and skills attained throughout our lives are valuable to our churches as well. Not long ago, our congregation remodeled the parsonage into offices on



the main level. Young men and teens learned many things working side by side with our older men. Ask the Lord to use you until the day He takes you home.

It's all inside

Are you burdened with expectations placed upon you by others? Return to the Lord. He is the One we serve. He requires us to be faithful. We all desire to one day hear the words, "well done," (Matthew 25:19-21).

God knows our abilities and possibilities. He knew Job would stay strong when his wife expected him to curse God. God knew the heart of the quiet girl He chose to be the mother of His Son. God bases His expectations on what's inside.

Do we do what we do because we feel God wants it? Have we avoided His call because of others' expecta-

tions? Have we missed out on a blessing because we wouldn't step out on faith? Break out of the mold and into His. In 2 Timothy 2:1-4, Paul advised Timothy to do the things God had entrusted to him. We need to heed this advice and use our time wisely for the Lord. Seek the Lord's will today and step onto the path of adventure with God.

Katy Taylor attends First FWB Church in Pontiac, Michigan. An active deacon's wife and mother of three, she presently serves in her Local, District and State WAC. Katy enjoys writing.



any questions?

"Why are Christians so intolerant?"

"Why should anyone worship a God who allowed 9/11?"

"Why should we believe an ancient book written by dead Jewish males?"

"Why are Christians so homophobic?"

"If Jesus is so great, why are some of His followers such jerks?"

These are some of the questions that people in the world, maybe people near you, are asking. How do you respond? With a question.

Instead of a theological explanation, a memorized soulwinning "pitch" or a predictable pat answer, author Randy Newman suggests using questions as evangelism tools. Responding with a question engages the mind of the person who might be turned off by an answer and opens the door to further dialogue concerning salvation.

Mr. Newman's ideas are not new. He patterns his methods from the ministry of Christ.

Throughout the New Testament, when questioned, Christ counters the inquirer with another question.

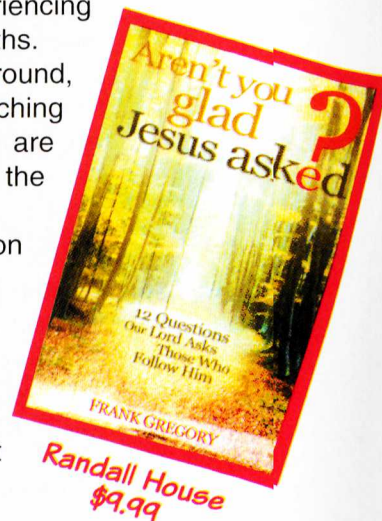
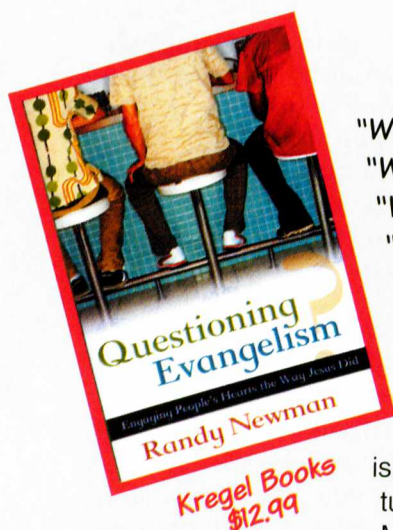
The book is especially relevant for ministry in our pluralistic culture. The author encourages Christians to listen to inquirers and sense the hidden issues often masked in their questions. For example, a person who dismisses belief in a God who allows evil may be grieving a personal loss or experiencing tragedy. A person with no use for the Bible may never have been exposed to its truths.

The author is well qualified to approach the subject. Coming from a Jewish background, Mr. Newman has worked with Campus Crusade for Christ for over twenty years, teaching seminars and actively evangelizing. His stories are believable, his experiences are encouraging, and his suggestions offer new ideas for this often difficult area of the Christian life.

Questioning Evangelism is well worth the read. A study guide (sets of questions on each chapter) is included for use in groups.

Aren't You Glad Jesus Asked? Free Will Baptist pastor and author, Frank Gregory, explores ten questions that Jesus asked of His followers. These short devotionals are straight from the heart, drawing from the author's life and personal experience. An easy read, it's an excellent choice for a beginning group study, a gift or family devotions.

BOTH BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE FROM WNAC



IN THE ORCHARD OF LIFE, ARE YOU

passion fruit or prune?

PASSION FOR THE LORD. Serving Christ with everything you've got. Passion. What a word! Makes you want to hold your chin high, breathe a confident breath, and volunteer for a few committees.

Passions. We've all got 'em. Some love to sew. Some dream up gourmet feasts. Others can hit a line drive past second base any day of the week. Then, why is it when it comes to the Lord, we try to stifle our passions? We think God is only pleased with us if we are teaching Sunday school or leading a Bible study. Isn't that working for the Lord...being passionate for Christ?

If any of you are like me, you've tried to do some of those things a good church-going woman should do. Singing in the choir when you can't even find the bucket the tune is supposed to be carried in. Teaching the preschool class while biting your nails completely off. Clean the church? Have you seen my house? We tried it. We flopped.

Then here comes that little voice inside our heads. Thoughts of discouragement and defeat flood our minds. The final consensus of one screams failure. We've failed the Lord. Next, our imagination runs wild with fictitious conversations we just know everyone is having about us. Surely all the ladies in the entire church most definitely think that we are doing nothing for the Lord.

I know how it feels. Try attending a Bible college where everyone around you has answered the "call" to something. Missionaries on my left. Preachers on my right. Christian educators before and behind. Even within my very own English department, fellow students were studying to teach Shakespeare to inner city children or travel overseas to impart the wonders of conversational English...all with the goal of ministry, mind you. Me? I just like to write stories. Talk about thoughts of "not holy" and "not passionate enough" bombarding my psyche!

Then I realized, it doesn't have a whole lot to do with what you do. You can be a missionary, a church treasurer or the pastor's wife and still struggling with the pursuit of a passionate life. So what's the answer?

Colossians 3:17 says, *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."* Whatever you do. What a great thought. Whether your passion is to manage a business or to needlepoint until your fingers fall off, the key to living a passionate life is to focus every area, every compartment of your life on the Lord. Don't be consumed by things you are supposed to do, especially if your passion is squelched. Don't listen to Satan's accusations and lies about your insignificance. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 tell us that God has granted each one of us different talents, ideas, gifts, and desires. He's done that for a reason; He wants us to use them! If you love to bake, whip up a batch of cookies for your pastor, a sick friend, or the next door neighbor who never takes out his trash. If you are good with accounting, think of creative ways to help those struggling with debt. If you enjoy music, participate in your church services or offer lessons to lower income families. The possibilities are endless! Just allow God to use your passions.

Now that we understand what the Lord expects, how can we cultivate pas-

by
Emily White

5 steps to pursue your passion

1. Determine the gifts and abilities that God has given you. Ask yourself, "What do I really like to do?" A spiritual gifts assessment may be helpful, or ask a friend to suggest your strengths.
2. Pray about opportunities to use your gifts. Pray specifically that God would reveal any overlooked or hidden areas already available to you.
3. Talk with your pastor or a mentor about opportunities within your church. Are there church roles you are filling that are uncomfortable and burdensome? It's probably not your passion.
4. If you are seeking employment, look for a job in your strength areas. Why endure a job you hate if you could find a job in which you flourish?
5. Always remember the source of your passion. God created you with these bents. Give Him all glory for any accomplishments.

sion in our lives? Passion depends upon one thing—our relationship with the Lord. In Revelation 2:1-7 we read about the church at Ephesus. If they were around today, they would have taken every temperament test in the world. They would have had a handle on their spiritual gifts. They were active and doing all the right things. The problem? They forgot their first love. They forgot why they were doing all these good deeds.

Remember Martha? We've all been catapulted into conviction by her testimony. No doubt she was doing what she loved. She was even doing what was pragmatic. But the Lord saw the situation a little differently. Just think about it! Jesus, the Son of God, the Messiah you've been waiting thousands of years for is sitting in your living room, and you can't tear yourself away from the kitchen? Martha, what were you thinking?

Ahem, the very words of God—His message to us straight from His heart—are setting on our nightstands, on a bookshelf, or somewhere in the van. We drop our head. We wonder where our passion went? The formula is simple. Neglect Jesus. Lose passion.

Read your Bible and pray. Those of us who have been in church all our lives have heard this statement rehearsed time and time again. But there is nothing more important for a Christian. Your pursuit for passion is directly related to your pursuit of Christ.

Colossians 3:17 doesn't say to follow your passions to make you happy or just to do it. It says that everything we do should be in the name of the Lord. There's the focus. There is the wellspring of passion.

Emily D. White hangs her hat in Nashville, TN, where she works as an Editorial Assistant at Randall House Publications.



In the Word

According to God's Word, the purpose of spiritual gifts is to help the church grow and function as a body.

—Read these passages: **1 Peter 4:9-11; Romans 12:1-16; 1 Corinthians 12:1-14:30; Ephesians 4:1-16.**

—List each gift. Beside each, write the name of the person(s) in your church that you feel possesses this gift.

—Consider ways to utilize these persons and these gifts in your local body.

—Does knowledge of differing gifts change your outlook or perception of others in the church?

—Could it affect your own "guilt factor" in ministry?

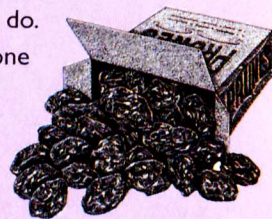
—Encourage a person concerning their gift today.

PICK OF THE PRUNES

NOT INTO PASSION? WANT TO BE A PRUNE?

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS.

- Take on all the jobs that no one else will do.
- Vocalize that you are doing the jobs no one else will do.
- Find something to criticize in everything and everyone.
- Let others know that "you could have done it better."
- Qualify every praise item.
- Resist change in any form or fashion.
- Invite pity to every party.
- Stress for the occasion.





Readers share the spiritual impact of educators in their lives

UNFORGOTTEN LOVE

It was November, 1953, and sorrow was still my companion. On July 8, my four-year-old brother was hit by a car. On July 9, my dad, my mom, my aunt, and a good family friend were involved in a car accident as they returned home from Akron's Children's Hospital. That same day, they all died except mom.

I was nine and in the fourth grade. My teacher was Mrs. Jeanette Glasgow. Everyone knew she was one of the nicest teachers in the school, but my heart was still suffering from the grief of the past summer, and I didn't seem to notice. I kept to myself and tried to stay in the background.

Winter brought snow and bitter cold weather which was usual for Ohio. No school buses for city children, we had to walk. That winter I had no gloves so my hands became

dry and cracked then they began to bleed. One day during writing class, my hands were hurting so bad I was having trouble forming the letters. When Mrs. Glasgow came by my desk, I hid my hands in my lap so she couldn't see them.

One morning, as she stopped at my desk to check my work, I forgot to hide my hands and she saw them. I was so embarrassed and ashamed I held my head down so she couldn't see the tears filling my eyes. Slowly she walked away.

The next day I arrived at school early and she was at her desk. My hands were burning from the bitter cold wind as I walked into the warm class room. She lifted her head and smiled, "Good morning, Linda." "Good morning," I answered. I made my way to the cloak room, hung up my coat then took my seat. She followed me and for the first time, I wasn't afraid.

Her love and compassion fell over me like a soft warm blanket. Then I noticed the white bottle in her hand. Smiling she stooped down and showed me the bottle of Jergens hand lotion. "Here," she said in her soft gentle voice, "I bought this for you yesterday. I thought you might like it."

I didn't know what to say. I sat there and stared at the bottle of lotion in her soft pinkish hand. She unscrewed the lid, turned the bottle over, then waited for me to extend my hands. I turned my palms up and let her pour the cool white liquid into my red cracked hands. The almond scent drifted into the room like a warm summer breeze and brought me a renewed sense of worth. Within days of that first treatment, my hands began to heal.

Not only did she heal my hands, she also healed my bleeding heart. Thanks to you, Mrs. Glasgow, the

scent of Jergens lotion will always carry me back to your classroom in Rittman, Ohio, where your love made a difference in the life of one little girl who has never forgotten your compassion.

*Linda H. Simons
New Bern, NC*

TWO TEACHERS

Sunday school teachers have touched and inspired my life. Two deserve tribute.

Many years ago, when I was a little girl, in the late 1930's and 40's, Mrs. Frances Bryson was my special friend and teacher. Her class of little girls were welcome in her home. She loved us and made us feel the unconditional love of Jesus. She emphasized the teaching I had at home and encouraged me to memorize Scripture—verses I have never forgotten. I accepted Christ and was baptized at age eight. She was a devoted Christian and her influence has guided me in so many ways.

A widow, she lived alone in my hometown. I married and moved to Norfolk, VA, in 1951, so I didn't see her often. My mother died in 1996, and Mrs. Bryson attended her funeral. After that, we kept in close contact. I would visit her; I loved to get her letters. She gardened, tatted, and sewed on an old treadle machine. She was the oldest member present at the 175th anniversary of our home church, Cowee Baptist.

Last October, I visited Mrs. Bryson. We sat on the sofa and she held my hand. She cried as she read this tribute.

The next week I received a phone call. Mrs. Bryson had gone home to be with the Lord on October 31, 2003, her 97th birthday. I thank God for her and her influence on my life.

Mrs. Clara Mae Taylor was our pastor's wife at Grace Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA, in the 50's

and 60's. She taught the young married ladies class. I was far from home and family and she met the needs of my life as a substitute mother and friend. Spiritually, she gave me so much encouragement in living my life for Christ and in teaching my two boys.

She loved her "girls," was always there with a listening ear and a comforting hug. She often had us in her home for class meetings. She taught me that when Christ comes first in our lives, everything else works for our good. She influenced me to teach Sunday school. I often remembered the things she taught me as I studied and taught my class. She went to be with her Lord at age 101.

God has blessed me in knowing these loving Christian teachers and friends.

*Anna J. Duvall
Hyde Park FWB, Norfolk, VA*

A SHORT, LITTLE REDHEAD

Eileen Ramey was my first, second, and third grade teacher in a small two-room school. The school house had long tables with benches to sit and study on and a pot belly stove in the middle of the room.

Mrs. Ramey is a short, little redhead. Other children told me she was rough and I was a bit afraid of her for a little while, but she wasn't as mean as they said. It didn't take me long to fall in love with Mrs. Ramey. She was so kind to me and everyone else.

I was seven before my dad allowed me to walk to school. We had to cross a creek every morning just to get there. One cold morning, I fell in the water. Mrs. Ramey let me sit by the stove so I could get dry. The stove pipe fell and almost hit me, but Mrs. Ramey ran and pushed me out of the way. Were it not for her watchcare, I would have been badly burned by the red hot pipe.

On the last day of school, I would always cry, just thinking about not seeing her everyday. But I would see her on Sundays at church. We both attended Tom's Creek FWB Church at Nippa, KY.

When our little school was closed (my fourth grade year), she moved with us to the W.R. Castle Memorial School. Her husband, Howard, (a math teacher in Flat Gap, KY), drove her to school each day. She served as librarian until she retired with forty-five years of service.

She always stayed with children after school as they waited for buses, reading stories, and letting students share stories about themselves.

Mrs. Ramey has taught so many children in our school system. She's seen most of her students grow up, marry, and have children of their own—many of whom she has taught also. She taught all three of my sons in school. They learned to love her as I did.

Over the years, she and her husband have also faithfully volunteered at our local hospital.

Her past few years have been difficult with broken bones and several surgeries. She comes to church whenever she can. Howard is still her faithful driver.

She has been a great inspiration to me for all these years.

*Diane M. Daniels
Wittensville, KY*

MEMORY ON HER KNEES

In James Whitcomb Riley's poem, "Out to Old Aunt Mary's," upon the death of his beloved aunt, he says, "...memory is now on her knees..." And memory was on her knees in Erwin and Unicoi County, Tennessee, when Miss Zetta Harris fell asleep.

Miss Zetta Harris, in all probability, has influenced for good the lives of more children than any other woman in the history of edu-

cation in our county. Her godly life showed her students where she was going and that she wanted them to come with her.

Miss Harris was my preschool Sunday school teacher in 1939-1940. I had missed the Christmas name drawing. I knew I would not receive a gift. But Miss Harris had put a little gift, a handkerchief, under the tree for me. She didn't want to see one of her children disappointed. Children never forget kindness. She loved the Lord by suffering his little children to come unto Him.

I could hardly wait for fourth grade. It was 1943-1944. I was assigned her room. This master teacher exemplified her Master Teacher each day. Every morning she stopped in her spot as she entered the school ground to pray for that day. And that day consisted of roll call, listening to each child say the Bible verses to earn gifts for camp at Children's Bible Mission. Then we sang. It was wartime, and we sang every patriotic song we knew, plus other tunes. I well remember that she drew the line on what we could and could not sing. We could not sing, "Pistol-packing Mama" or songs like that. Before the school year was over, we were required to say and spell the states and capitals, (all 48 of them) and say and spell the books of the Bible.

Our seats were bolted to the floor, with forty-five students filling the room. Miss Harris was very strict, but she never raised her voice. She demanded excellence but her strictness was with love.

She loved us and we knew it. She prayed for us and we knew it. Many family reunions included her. All four of my children were taught by her (as a substitute) and they too loved her dearly. Near the end of her life, her room at the nursing home was decorated with gifts from her children. She was never without visits or phone calls.

Though Miss Zetta's last days were spent in physical darkness, on December 10, 1995, this dear lady in her nineties opened her eyes and saw her Lord. It was "Good Night Here and Good Morning Up There." She fell asleep, telling her children to come.

I am grateful to have known and loved her and to have felt her love. She was a teacher, a friend, a role model, and my inspiration to become a fourth grade teacher.

*Eleanor Grindstaff
Erwin, TN*



THE DOWN HILL RUNNER

*I waited for the school bus and watched.
My first grader bounced off the bottom step
And turned to run down hill toward me.
Laughing as he ran,
His blond hair blowing in the wind
Made a golden halo in the sunlight.
He ran, arms outstretched,
As if he were welcoming life and all it had to offer.
But, he kept his gaze on me.
I waited, anxious
That one small stone would slip beneath his feet
And send him tumbling.*

*He watches his own first grader these days,
Anxious, as she runs, eagerly embracing her.
He knows what cruelties lie, waiting, to trip her.
She flies, arms open, down life's hill
With her eyes only on him.*

*I feel like a down hill runner right now-
Like a little girl racing down an ever steeper slope,
Arms out stretched, reaching for the Father.
Time slips away. I must hurry
To grasp one more precious soul,
To lift up one more fallen,
To mend one more broken heart,
To kiss one more hurt,
To nourish one more hungry soul.*

*My heart is set. My gaze is fixed.
I see Your hand extended, waiting for mine.
I race toward You.
Help me not to stumble.*

—Ruth Bivens

*Ruth Bivens attends the Palabras de Vida Eterna FWB
Hispanic Mission in Monett, MO. This poem won third
place in the 2004 Creative Arts Contest.*



by Lee Ann Wilfong

worry: undue concern; useless care; anxiety.

One person terms worry as "the senseless process of using today to clutter up tomorrow's opportunity with left-over problems from yesterday." Philippians 4:6 says "*Be careful for nothing...*" Knowing this, why do we waste so much time on useless anxiety or undue concern? Why do we worry? All of us are guilty. Only when something bigger comes along, do we realize the smallness of the problem we once wasted so much time worrying over.

As we age, our worries change and increase. As babies, our only worries are food and attention. As children, our worries include who's our friend? which toy do we want? and when's lunch? As teens, we start worrying about the boyfriend or girlfriend we want or the one we have, getting through school, acne, getting a car. We worry if we will get married. Then, when we marry, we gain a whole new set of worries. Newlyweds must contend with the worries of bills, house, marital spats, jobs, pregnancy, then babies...and the list keeps growing. During parenting years, there is always something to worry about—children, bills, middle age. Then the children move away from home and we quit worrying. No, when older adulthood reaches us, we have to worry about a multitude of things. The grown children and

their children that they don't know how to raise. Health. Having enough retirement money to live on. Dying.

As we move on through each stage and look back on what we used to worry about, sometimes those past things seem trivial. Most of our worry is for things that have already happened and can't be changed; for things that are going to happen whether we worry or not; or for things that won't happen at all. Sometimes, God places events in our lives that put our worries in perspective.

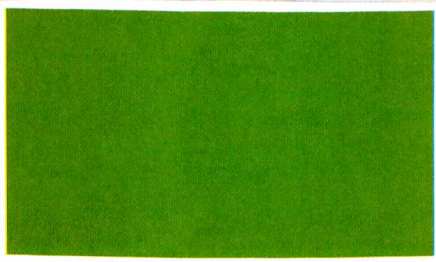
FEBRUARY 8, 1994. We received word that my mother had terminal cancer with only a short time to live. I know on February 7, the day before this news, I was worrying or fretting about something, but I cannot remember what. Whatever the worry, it instantly became trivial. For the next seven weeks, my mind was consumed with thoughts of my mother. Had her dying process not been part of my life, I'm sure I would have been fretting about something else. However, nothing seemed important enough for worry when faced with this sad time.

MARCH 30, 1999. I was working at an accountant's office during tax rush time, worrying about getting returns out in time. I may have been worrying about what dress to

wear on Easter Sunday or whether I could get the ham baked by the time church was over. One ring of the telephone, and I was facing a whole new situation. My husband had fallen from a roof and had seriously broken his heel. Necessary surgery could potentially affect

his work abilities permanently and would definitely change things for at least three months. Because he had just started working for himself, he had no unemployment or worker's compensation benefits.

Most of our worry is for things that have already happened and can't be changed; for things that are going to happen whether we worry or not; or for things that won't happen at all.



Our income was instantly reduced by about eighty percent. I still don't have an earthly explanation as to how we were able to meet payments and go through hospital visits without insurance or his income; I can only credit a heavenly reason, a Supreme God who met all our needs.

JUNE 25, 1999. Forget worrying over a house payment; forget worrying about Vernon's foot. My husband was diagnosed with cancer, facing surgery, not knowing what would be next. Worrying about bills and work and *stuff* now seemed so trivial. Following that day, our vocabulary came to include words like surgical removal, radiation, chemotherapy.... Looking back, it seems almost surreal, as if I'm watching a movie about someone else. However, at the time it was a very real and present concern. We clung to those verses that reminded us "*all things work together for good*" and "*my God shall supply all your needs.*" We reminded ourselves "*be careful for nothing,*" but guess what? Yes, we still worried. I worried when I arose in the morning and prayed. I thought maybe I should remind God that the car payment was due and utilities bills needed to be paid. (Like He didn't know?) He had always provided the money when it was time; I knew this month would be no different. But, I still worried. I worried throughout the day as I worked or as we sat waiting for yet another doctor. I worried when I lay my head on my pillow, knowing that sleep would come only after several hours of needless fretting. I never doubted the power of God; I just worried. Yes, it was a lack of faith. Yes, I wasn't fully claiming the promises God had given. I was human. With each prayer answered and problem resolved, I said, "Thank you, God,

and forgive me for worrying needlessly."

SEPTEMBER 10, 2001. People in America were rushing about their busy lives, fretting over hectic schedules and irritating jobs. All over the nation, people were making plans for vacations, plastic surgeries, loan consolidations, new home constructions. We all had worries. However, on September 11, 2001, all those worries paled in comparison to the very real tragedy on every American's mind. Terrorists had invaded our country and had taken thousands of lives, leaving millions of people afraid for their lives. On that day and for many days after, when people sat down together, they did not dwell on trivial issues such as new buildings going up or potholes on Main Street. They gathered to discuss the very real fear that our nation, once thought a safe haven, was now in danger of more attacks. More prayers were spoken during that time than had been heard from the Western Hemisphere for a very long time. Forget the insignificant worries of yesterday, now there was a very real worry with very real consequences. As tragic an event as 9-11-01, God's promises were still as real and alive as they were the day before and as they will be in the days ahead. Not only Jesus Himself, but also His promises are the "*same yesterday, today and forever.*"

Many individuals worry and fret about the "things" in life, never thinking about how precious life is. The terrorist attacks reminded people that life is a gift from God. Unfortunately, it didn't take long until people were already forgetting God and going back to their selfish habits, leaving Him out of their lives once again.

Am I by myself here? Do you have worrying spells? Why do we do that? Why do we let the cares of this world weigh us down? Again, I must conclude, we are human. We are looking around us instead of

looking ahead to our eternal goal. No matter how many problems, we should always be thankful for our life and for the Giver of that life. If someone says life is hard, ask them, "Compared to what?"

After telling us to "*be careful for nothing,*" Paul continues in Philippians 4:6, giving us the alternative to worry, "*but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.*" Paul is not talking about the simple prayers we utter each day, thanking God for the day, asking Him to keep us safe, or saying grace before a meal. He's talking about the kind of praying we do when we're on our knees for hours, sometimes unable to even voice our fears, just an unspoken communion with our Heavenly Father until we allow His peace to cover us. He is referring to "supplication," where our whole mind and heart are consumed by our prayer.

In verse seven, Paul continues, "*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" This promise is the only one we, as Christians, can rely on when trouble comes. Don't rely on medical professionals or lawyers, on police officers or others. Be thankful for their roles in life, but remember their abilities are limited. God's abilities are limitless!

ON A LIGHTER NOTE,

Fretting over money or weight or other day-to-day things that bug you? Smile and remember:

RICH people are much more likely to drown in yachting accidents.

EVERY seven minutes of every day, someone in an aerobics class pulls a hamstring.

MECHANICS' cars break down, too.

THIN people aren't really all that happy.

Although they can certainly help us with their love and support, we can't even expect our Christian brothers and sisters, our family, or even our pastor to bring us the peace Paul speaks of, that "peace that passeth all understanding." Many times we go to God last when He should be the first One to whom we turn. He's the only One with the true solution to our worry—peace that cannot be understood.

Now, I know all these promises. You've probably read these Scriptures, too. But do we put them into practice? Unfortunately, not always and not nearly enough. We continue to doubt and fret and worry before we turn our problem over to God. Yet one thing is sure; God is always there when we're ready to let Him help. One writer commented, "At day's end, I turn all my problems over to God...He's going to be up anyway."

All things did "work together for good." My husband is working 40-plus hours each week. His medical tests show no cancer recurrence. We don't have a lot of money, but we have enough. Although I miss my mother terribly, I know she's celebrating her new life in Heaven with no pain and suffering. Stories of those who came to faith in Christ during and after the 9-11 terrorist attack lend purpose to the tragedy. Oh yeah, I even got the ham baked in time for Easter dinner. Why in the world did I worry?



Lee Ann Wilfong lives in Park Hills, Missouri with her husband Vernon and daughters Megan, (sophomore at FWBBC) and Tracy (HS junior at Liberty Christian Academy). She attends Leadington FWB Church and is actively involved in Missouri's WAC. Five years since his diagnosis, Vernon remains cancer-free.



God, Give Meaning to My Life

My family's in bed and I'm still going strong. There's so much to do and tomorrow's another day filled with it's own needs and responsibilities.

At 2 a.m., I tumble, fretting and tired, into bed. I wonder what—if anything—I've accomplished today. Everything I did has to be done again tomorrow and the next day and...

The alarm jars me awake. Another frustrating day of questions has dawned. "What am I doing and why? What am I accomplishing? Will this whirlwind of activity ever stop? Isn't there more to life than this?"

Elijah asked himself those same questions. He found answers, but not where he expected. To his surprise, God met him—not in the tumultuous wind, the fearsome earthquake or the shimmering fire (1 Kings 19:11-12). It was in the stillness of a quiet whisper that God met Elijah. And, in that quiet whisper, Elijah found strength, direction and renewed meaning for his life.

Oh, I know, God spoke to Job through a whirlwind (Job 38:1)—but it was a whirlwind of God's making, not Job's. There's a difference. God says, "Be still, and know that I am God..." (Ps 46:10a).

We can't know who He is without understanding who we are. He is Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of all that is. We are His, created by Him for His glory, not for our own. (Isaiah 43:7; 1 Corinthians 6:20). Apart from that, everything is chaos—a whirlwind of activity with no purpose, no meaning.

Our gracious God has given us gifts and talents. They're not for our pleasure or gain, but rather for us to use in service to Him (1 Corinthians 12:7), for His glory, for the benefit of other Christians (1 Corinthians 14:12) and for the salvation of those without Christ (Matthew 5:16). Everything we are, everything we do, can and should revolve around bringing glory to God. What easier way than through the gifts He has given us!

If you think you don't have any gifts, think again. There's a good possibility your gifts can be found where your passions and interests lie. Center your whirlwind of activity on bringing glory to God and send it off in the direction of your gifts. Watch out! You'll find purpose, direction and meaning for your life. Plug into God's great power source and let your light shine.

Suzan Hutchison attends Mt. Gilead FWB Church, Brinson, GA, where her husband Tim serves as interim pastor. This mother of two grown children enjoys gardening, reading and collecting seashells.



The Toys of Life

by Monica Bryan

Paralysis makes life challenging. On those predawn Sunday mornings when my body yearns to stay in bed, maneuvering my husband's heavy wheelchair and equipment becomes an exercise in patience and endurance. Until we get to church that is, and then the very things that we view as a necessity for his life majestically change into toys.

"Can I ride, Mr. Bobby?"

"Can I do that thing and open your van doors?"

"Can we watch your elevator?"

"What's that lever for? Will it make you go faster?"

My two favorites are "When I grow up and get my wheelchair, I'll..." and the visiting child who walks backward down the hallway with mouth agape and eyes wide open at the site of van doors opening by themselves and a chair with wheels moving without help.

The very things we view as a necessity, a part of our lives, and that other adults view with pity, are mere toys to children. Their innocent curiosity about

people and things that are different allow them to befriend people without hesitation. As I watch children interact with my husband, Jesus' words, "Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me:" (Mark 9:37) come to mind.

"To receive one of such..." How many times am I receptive to those around me who are different - the women who leave their husbands, or break up another marriage, or simply refuse to believe? What I perceive as handicaps and hurdles in their lives, is probably a broken toy to God. May we view such women and problems with delight as a gift from God, just as children view my husband's problems as delightful toys.

Monica Bryan and her husband Bobby attend the Garner FWB church, Garner, NC. A free lance writer, Monica enjoys reading and quilting.

Apple Stuffed Pork Loin

1 1/2 lbs. pork loin
1 tsp. salt
Dash ground ginger
Dash ground cloves

FILLING:

2 green onion, finely chopped
2 green apples, finely chopped
2 T. oleo

2 T. brown sugar
1 T. prepared mustard

With sharp knife make slits in loin deep enough to hold filling. Mix all ingredients for filling. Rub salt, ginger and cloves all around pork loin. Place in roasting pan. Spoon filling into pockets of loin. Place the remaining filling around roast. Roast at 350 for 1 1/2 -2 hours or until tender.

*Wanda Key
First FWB, Locust Grove, OK*

Apple Cheese Spread

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
1/2 c. mayonnaise
1/4 c. sugar
1 red apple, finely chopped (not peeled)

1/2 cup finely chopped celery
1 c. grated sharp cheese
Chopped pecans

Mix all ingredients, except nuts. Refrigerate. Shape into ball and roll in nuts. Serve with crackers.

*Marcia O'Kelley
Richmond Ave. FWB,
Allen, OK*

Apple Cranberry Crisp

4 med. sized cooking apples (about 1 1/3 lbs.)

1 lb. can whole cranberry sauce
1 tsp. cinnamon

1 c. uncooked quick-rolled oats
1/2 c. flour
1 c. dark brown sugar, firmly packed
1/2 c. butter

Peel apples and slice thin. Arrange in square baking dish about 10 x 6 inches. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Spoon cranberry sauce over this. Stir rolled oats (oatmeal) flour and brown sugar together. Cut in butter until evenly mixed. Sprinkle this over cranberry layer. Bake in moderate oven (350) until apples are cooked through and top is lightly browned, about 40 minutes. Good served plain or with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. Serve hot. Serves 8.

*Debbie Wright
Fairview FWB, Spartanburg, SC*

Recipes taken from *The Fruit of our Hands, the WNAC Cookbook*.

fall favorites



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PROGRAM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29

3:00-6:30 Registration/check-in
5:30-6:30 Dinner
7:00-9:00 First Session: Carol Kent

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30

7:15-8:15 Breakfast
8:30-9:30 Second Session: Carol Kent
9:30-10:00 Fun time/Missions Focus
10:00-10:30 Break
10:30-12:00 Third Session: Carol Kent
12:00-1:00 Lunch and departure

with author and speaker

CAROL KENT



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a baby? a grandbaby? Wishing, waiting, wondering. WNAC invites you to join the journey of two women. Experience the great expectations of a first-time mom and a soon-to-be grandmother as they journal through the months.

mother

grandmother

July

I've found at least one culprit of heartburn. As much as I hate to admit it, I need to lay off the Krispy Kreme doughnuts. I didn't gain weight at my appointment, but I don't worry too much with it at this point. As usual, it took a few minutes to find and keep the heartbeat. In all my doctor appointments, only one time have they been able to find and keep the heartbeat long enough to get the count on the first try. I am now 32 weeks pregnant. I've completed all my pre-admission paperwork. This time the ultrasound technician took lots of measurements. He looked at the baby's bones, stomach, bladder, kidneys, and heart (the only thing I recognized since it was pumping). He even counted all the chambers of the heart. Unlike before when I could see all the baby, I could now only see part at a time. The baby is already in a head-down position (I'd pretty well figured this out from the location of the kicks) and weighs around 5 lbs. 1 oz. I read that a baby usually doubles in size between 32 and 40 weeks, so this might be one big baby. The technician asked if I wanted to know. Yes, I want to know. It is 100% girl! I brought home picture proof that it's a girl, but I'm not sure I want this shown around. I'll just let people take my word for it. We vacationed for ten days at a relative's cabin on the lake. The antique bed with the big pillow-top mattress was so high off the floor, I wasn't sure how I would manage to get into it. Let's just say it was an interesting thing to see and do. On our way home, we stayed with my parents. My family held a baby shower for my cousin and me. Being together with everyone and getting all the baby stuff was lots of fun. I've been hesitant in buying, waiting to see what I'd receive. I got useful things along with some really cute clothes. My body just seems to get more tired and achy, but the shower helped build my excitement. I need to take care of things at work and finish up my classes so that I will be ready whenever the baby decides to come.

August

The days are going slower. I'm trying to make sure we have all the necessities in case the baby arrives ahead of time. We got the stroller/car seat this weekend. What a relief since the hospital won't let us take the baby home without it. I still have my church shower. Hopefully I will be there for it. The baby is still doing lots of moving around. Yesterday I looked down and I had a big lump on one side of my stomach. I could certainly tell where her bottom was located. Today I was walking down the stairs at work. She had moved to the other side of my stomach. I was lopsided. The doctor still says the baby is big. She expects to see me next week. Unless something happens in the next couple of days, she won't arrive on my dad's birthday as Grandma has said. I certainly wouldn't complain if it was in the next couple of days. Moving around only keeps getting more difficult. Still no baby! Students are starting to arrive back at school. Everyone is giving me a hard time for still being here. I was hoping I'd be gone. The doctor told me today that if the baby doesn't come by my due date, she might consider a scheduled c-section because the baby is so big. She's never mentioned this before so I was a bit in shock. Still no progress. I guess the baby is in no hurry. I made it through registration and my church shower. I'm still working but moving slower every day. I'm ready for this baby's appearance any day now.

My Dearest Grandbaby,

We are getting so excited as the time of your arrival gets closer. We had a small family shower just for a few things to get you through the first weeks. After you arrive, and we FINALLY know if you're a boy or a girl, we'll have a baby shower for you.

It's difficult for a grandma not to know who you are, as grandmas just want to buy things. There are so many cute boy things and girl things, but I have to wait to know if I need pink or blue. (I did buy you a yellow sleeper.)

Your mommy is so cute! She is still so little with just a round little belly. She is still working and wants to work until you're born, so she can spend more time with you. She is still so sweet. I don't remember being that pleasant so close to delivery.

Your mom says that you are very busy and your dad loves to watch you at night as the shape of a foot or a knee or an elbow appears. Remember, when you get here, if you ever need anything, call...

Nana

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

IDENTIFY. This issue concerns realistic expectations and utilizing spiritual gifts. It might be helpful to identify spiritual gifts within your group. The website: www.churchgrowth.org offers a free online spiritual gifts analysis for individuals. Other similar resources are also available online or from a Christian bookstore. Though not comprehensive or always accurate, these types of measures can identify desires and open new doors of interest.

RETREAT. WNAC's National Retreat will meet October 29-30, in Ridgecrest, NC. There's still time to register. See p. 18 for registration information. It's also time to promote the 2005 Retreat, March 3-5, in Branson, MO. If finances are a difficulty, create a plan with reachable goals, permitting women to set aside so much per week or month toward the retreat price.

EMPHASIZE. If August caught you by surprise, celebrate WNAC Emphasis Month in September. It's a great time to focus on enlistment as well as support.

NOW AVAILABLE

\$8.00

Order yours today!

LET US PURSUE

**2005 WNAC
PROGRAM &
PLAN BOOK**

MISSIONS

PRESENT the WNAC 50/50 project (see back cover). Challenge women to sponsor a Central Asian sister.

SHARE the FOCUS article about Silas (pp. 26, 27) and the ministry of the Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship Fund.

CONSIDER participation in Operation Saturation. This year's target churches are in Fredericksburg, VA and Denver, CO.

PRAY for missionary speakers at the 2005 WNAC NATIONAL RETREAT.

STUDY

SHARE the reviews of Questioning Evangelism and Aren't You Glad Jesus Asked on p. 8. Consider using these as a fall study for your group.

CHALLENGE women to study and find the woman in the Bible they can best identify with. Ask each to give reasons why they chose this person.

SERVICE

SPONSOR a coffee/snack break for local hospital, government, or school employees. Include notes of appreciation along with the snacks.

POLL your group to find their passions in service. Brainstorm ways to use your differing gifts.

OFFER a free babysitting night to single moms or young families, providing them with a much-needed break.

NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Full and Queen sheet sets; Tupperware pitchers.

WNAC OFFICE. Funds to purchase a G-4 or G-5 Macintosh Computer and software necessary to produce *CoLaborer* magazine.

PRAYER

TAKE a prayer break. Encourage groups of women to meet over lunch or at breaktime to pray.

PRAY for missionary teachers in Japan and for educators and administrators in your church or community.

ADOPT a student in your church for this school year and pray daily for this person.

ENCOURAGE youth to participate in See You at the Pole, September 15, 2004.

CONSIDER sending a representative from your group to the 2005 Prayer Summit March 31-April 2. Call 1-877-767-7736 for details.

WOMEN OF THE HARVEST MAGAZINE

LOOKING FOR A HOLIDAY GIFT for your missionary?

Women of the Harvest is a bimonthly publication specifically designed to encourage and connect women serving cross-culturally. Devotional and practical articles offer helps for cross-cultural living. \$24 a year delivers it to your missionary. Order gift subscriptions at 1-877-789-7778. Find out more about their ministry at www.womenoftheharvest.com

We're on the Web!!

Check us out @

www.nafwb.org/wnac

FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...

Dear WNAC,

Thank you, thank you! Our school received box tops from several ladies groups and individuals. We turned in \$160 worth and are awaiting our check. We hope you will continue to save your box tops for us. Once again, thanks and may God bless your ministry.

Dawn Real
St. Croix, VI

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the [monies] sent for my missions trip this summer. I really appreciate your involvement in missions and the lives of MKs. This is very thoughtful.

Suzanne McVay
Spain

Dear WNAC,

CoLaborer is a wonderful magazine, and I read it from cover to cover. It is so colorful. I really would like to see a mini-Bible study in CoLaborer. Our ladies used to enjoy doing these. Thanks for the good work you put into this magazine.

Rosaline Johnston
New Brunswick, Canada

Dear WNAC,

What a blessing WNAC has been to missionaries! And we are among those touched by your generosity. Thank you for your recent gift to our account. We truly appreciate your support and prayers. May God bless the women of WNAC.

Cristina Price
France appointee

Dear WNAC,

I recently visited the Provision Closet to obtain some items needed to supply our home in France during language school, and in Ivory Coast. While I was digging through boxes of Tupperware and wading through cabinets of sheets and towels, I noticed that many of the donated items had the name of the church or women's group that sent them. As I recognized those names and fondly thought of my home church's WAC, I was overcome with gratitude for God's provision through your generosity. Thanks again for all you do.

Shane and Joy Davison
Cote d'Ivoire appointees

Dear WNAC,

Our girls and their families arrived at our home before we visited your office and the fantastic Provision Closet. Finding towels, linens, and cooking utensils for so many was a chore. Soon the girls were preparing my provision closet shopping list. Now busy with state-side assignment, we are always anxious to get back home to use the lovely things we found in the Provision Closet. The girls will be back to visit again at Christmas and I will have enough dishes, pots and pans to prepare their favorite Brazilian dishes. There will be new towels in the bathrooms and new sheets on the beds. Thanks to all who love to shop for us and fill the Provision Closet with such lovely gifts.

Vicki Sturgill
Brazil

Dear WNAC,

Just wanted to write a note to say thank you so very much for all your hard work. Thank you for sending each CoLaborer—I love the changes—it looks wonderful! Please communicate my thanks as well for all that is done to keep the Provision Closet stocked and maintained. I know this cannot be a small task and it has been such a huge blessing to us. Thank you again for all you do. You are all dear to my heart.

Becky Derby
France

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for your generous support. Please keep me in your prayers. Because of you, my trip to Uruguay is possible.

Hannah Fletcher
E-Team Uruguay

Dear WNAC,

We're on our way. Thanks for giving so that we could be a part of E-Team this year. Please pray for us while we're gone. We appreciate you very much.

Suzanne Dean
Tyler Cross
E-Team Chicago

LOOKING FOR A PROJECT IDEA? BUY A BOOK

FWB Family Ministries needs books for its P.A.T.H. Christian Academy library. By state education standards, the school needs 2,000 books—1,900 more than they currently have. Groups and individuals can participate in three ways:

- 1) Donate funds (send through WNAC channels earmarked FWBFM library)
- 2) Purchase needed titles from www.amazon.com (under wish lists, Free Will Baptist Family Ministries). Amazon will ship these directly to Family Ministries.
- 3) Donate used books from the wish list (good condition, please).

Send used books to: FWBFM, 90 Stanley Lane, Greeneville, TN 37743. Questions? Call Mary Crum 423-639-9449 ext. 11.

LABORS OF LOVE

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." 1 Thessalonians 1:2,3



❁ Women from all three FWB churches in Abidjan, Cote 'd Ivoire, participated in a Couples Retreat, June 4-5. The event drew fifteen couples, seven singles and five nursing babies.

❁ Missions Partners WAC of Donelson Fellowship FWB Church, Nashville, TN, showered "home church" missionaries, Jonathan and Teresa Snow with a farewell money tree on June 20. The six-foot evergreen, covered with, what else but snowflakes, provided almost \$800 for last minute needs before the Snows July 2004 departure to Japan.

PICTURED: 1. Churches of Abidjan, West Africa, participate in Couples Retreat. **2.** Snowflake money tree for Jonathan and Teresa Snow. **3.** Sheila Williams, Bradley, WV, (center) with Cuban hosts, the Noriega family. **4.** New officers at Lawnwood (OK) WAC: (l-r) Prayer Chairman Marsha Rennick, President Nadine Hood, Vice President Lynda Poteet, Missions Chairman Charlet Chapman, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Angela Lorenz and Secretary/Treasurer Vera Hill.

❁ Lawnwood FWB WAC, Tulsa, OK, elected officers for the remainder of 2004 at its March meeting. Women gathered small items for the Greater Tulsa District Project. This project includes restocking church kitchens, collecting food for needy families in the district's churches, gathering useful items to fill baskets for members in nursing homes, and contributing to the Provision Closet.

❁ The congregation of Bradley FWB Church will never be the same since they sent Pastor Wayne Peters, Pastor Emeritus Daniel Legg, Sheila Williams (retired missionary to Ecuador) and three others from the church on a nine-day missions trip to Cuba this past March. The group visited the Cedars of Lebanon Bible Institute and spoke in several Cuban churches.



Share your
**LABOR OF
LOVE**

Send news and
photos to:
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN
37011-5002

EMAIL:
sarah@nafwb.org

HELP! I'M A MOM

bright ideas for mothers from mothers

What can you do when children lie to you?

A young boy at our church stole an ice cream sandwich from the church/school cafeteria. When questioned, he said, "I brought it from home." Your child may not tell such an obvious untruth, but rest assured, one day he or she will lie to you.

It's our responsibility as moms to teach our children truthfulness as well as other moral values. It's not an easy task.

LET THE WORD TEACH. Don't wait until your child is caught in a lie to teach him biblical truths about honesty. Simple Scriptures such as Colossians 3:9, "Lie not one to another," or Ephesians 4:25, "Putting away lying, speak every man the truth with his neighbor," should be hidden in your child's heart now so he can make good choices when the occasion to lie arises. Read Bible stories that portray the consequences of lies.

Good stories about honesty and its rewards will lend positive reinforcement.

TEACH BY EXAMPLE. If at all possible, keep your word, even in simple matters. Don't promise unless you are reasonably sure you can follow through.

Never ask a child to lie for you. "Tell them I'm not home." "Don't answer the door, so they'll think we're not here." Unless your child is confident that you believe truthfulness is the best way, he will not practice honesty no matter how many Scriptures you teach or how many times you tell him not to lie.

TEACH THROUGH REWARDS. Discourage lying by rewarding honesty. 1 Peter 3:10 says "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil." When your child chooses to be truthful, even knowing he may be

punished, he should be praised, and rewarded. Perhaps his reward could be a "good day" with a favorite activity or food. A simple word of praise goes a long way in enforcing right behavior.

TEACH WITH DISCIPLINE. When a child is old enough to understand that lying is not acceptable, it's time to administer appropriate discipline when he's untruthful. Children must understand there are immediate and long-term consequences for lying. Never punish a child in anger. First, determine if he is really lying. Don't take another's word. Unless you can prove otherwise, if he insists he is telling the truth, accept his word. Discipline should be age appropriate and not so harsh it discourages future honesty.

Remember, our goal is to help our children value and practice honesty because it pleases God.

NEXT ISSUE: Helpful home remedies.

Dear CoLaborers:

I played the new Rodgers Trillium 905 organ in Memorial Auditorium of Free Will Baptist Bible College for the first time yesterday. It is absolutely breath-taking. It has three manuals; it fills the auditorium with sound; every stop works. It has beautiful flutes with that little rush of air as the key plays making it sound like an actual flute. It has majestic trumpets and a lovely, reedy, oboe solo stop to which you can add a very nice vibrato. Its strings are gentle and sweet. It has that big organ sound (diapason stops) and one of those crescendo pedals that adds more organ voices to give you that big organ finish. It has hundreds (maybe thousands) of presets, and it has midi-capabilities to record or make synthesizer sounds. The chimes are beautiful too. I tried them all! We even have "pipe potential." If we one day have a new auditorium, we can build and add a range of pipes to this organ!

I want to say thank you to WNAC for making this organ possible. Our old, very ill organ had been on life

support for the past five years. Repairmen would come and gravely shake their heads saying, "We've done all we can." No two days were ever the same—you never knew which stops would play; you never knew when (even in the middle of a hymn) they would decide to drop out. Near the end, it wouldn't even turn on unless the electric circuits were jiggled and persuaded to connect. (That's pretty embarrassing when you try to start "The Doxology" but no sound comes out of the organ!) We couldn't play anything with solo voices. Strange buzzes would start from time to time (even in the middle of chapel); one day a cord caught on fire and started smoking during the prelude. It was scary! And I have personally shed more than a few tears over the undependable and embarrassing old thing.

We played that organ for more than 30 years—I learned on that organ! And we were grateful to have it, a marvelous gift from WNAC back in the early 1970s. But the time had come.

Without your help, we could not have purchased this new one. Your

\$17,000+ dollars paid about half. In our current budget state, we could not have purchased a new organ, and certainly not one of this quality and beauty—without your help.

I could go on about how important I feel it is to expose our students at FWBBC to quality music, especially the hymns we love. And I love the regal, worshipful sound that a good organ adds. This organ is more than an instrument; it's a statement about upholding high ideals and quality in church music.

Finally, let me say, as one organ donor to others, there is no joy that supersedes the joy of giving new life. Our chapels and other services have new life because of your wonderful gift. I believe that the Lord is honored with your generosity to our college. He sees your hearts; He knows you gave them along with the organ. You have richly blessed us at FWBBC.

With much gratitude,

Caral Reid

Free Will Baptist Bible College
Librarian (and sometimes organist)

DON'T LOSE HEART



DEBE'S DELIGHTS

*"thy commandments
are my delights."
Psalm 119:143b*

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

In the opening of his book, *Do Not Lose Heart*, Dave Dravecky, born-again, ex-Giant baseball pitcher, shares this insight.

"God doesn't command us to stay encouraged without giving us a reason to do so. He knows there is plenty in life to cause even the stoutest of soul to lose heart. Calamities and mishaps and disease and accidents and foul play and a thousand other devastations can pulverize our lives at any moment. Life in this fallen world has countless nasty ways of causing us to lose heart. But God is greater than any calamity, mightier than any disaster. When Paul says, "Therefore we do not lose heart," he is thinking back in verse 14 to an irresistible reason for staying encouraged: "We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence."

Seems like everywhere I turn, there is trouble; everyone I talk to has a situation plaguing them; every place I look there is heartache. I agree with Mr. Dravecky that even the stoutest of souls can lose heart. Whether you are in the throes of despair or you can't lift up your head or you are just plain and simply "down in the mouth," I have great news for you. There is reason to not lose heart. Over the years, I have learned three lessons that keep me strong in heart.

Don't lose heart because God loves you. If anyone had good reason to lose heart, it would have been the weeping prophet, Jeremiah. Yet, in Jeremiah 31:3, he offers us great comfort. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Often we feel like the ordeals of life are enough to keep us from the love of God. Leave it to Paul—shipwrecked, stoned, beaten, left for dead, run out of town, snake bit—to assure us of His abiding love. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor

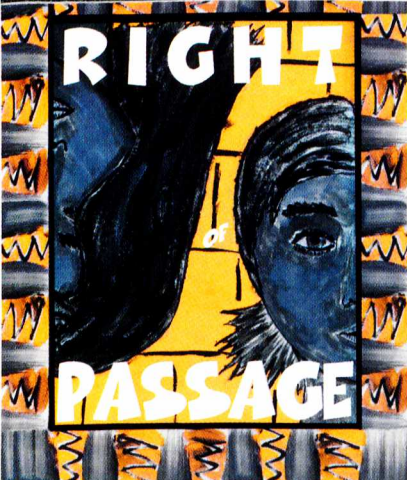
things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). No matter what comes your way, God loves you. So don't lose heart.

Don't lose heart because God is good.

We sing the chorus, "God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He's so good to me." But I wonder, do we truly believe it when things aren't going just right, when the money runs out, when expenses are more than we thought? Philippians 4:19 tells us, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." I love a passage in the Psalms, which speaks to this very point. "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalm 27:13). So often I would have "fainted" (lost heart) had I not believed that I would see God's goodness in the land of the living. No matter how dark the days, God is good. So don't lose heart.

Don't lose heart because God is faithful. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). God has made countless promises to us. If we will do our part, He will be faithful to do what He said He would do. In Deuteronomy 7:9, Moses told the children of Israel, "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." In my life, the faithfulness of God has been proven time and time again. No matter what happens in the world, God is faithful. So don't lose heart.

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:16-17). Be encouraged; don't lose heart.



by Karyn Pugh

I have a small, dark secret now, hidden deep within. But when IT starts to grow, all will see my sin. I didn't think to comprehend the consequences of our act; But now that IT has come to be, I cannot take IT back.

My mother says I cannot keep IT anyhow—this awful thing that's come to be—my daddy won't allow. My secret is still secret. I want to keep IT so. I want to make IT go away. I don't want to let IT grow. My heart grows heavy, struggling with this choice. My parents and friends pressure me, drowning out the still small Voice.

My boyfriend drove me there today. He said he knew how to make IT go away. I was scared and afraid, so very unnerved. This pain and anguish I don't deserve. As the nurse led me to a room, a vision flashed before me of arms and legs, fingers and toes, and eyes that would never see. I ran from the room, away from the vision. I had made my choice. I had made my decision.

Though I am young, I am very old. My innocence is tarnished, no longer bright and gold. I am a fallen angel, far beyond turning around. I listen for that still small Voice, but cannot hear a sound.

My parents were not happy. They wouldn't accept my choice. IT isn't alive they tried to say. IT doesn't have a voice. They said I could not stay at home unless I killed this thing. I cried myself to sleep that night. What sorrow one sin can bring.

There is a small bulge beneath my chest now, I'm in this awful mess, somehow. I have no home, no place to go. Not even my church will mercy show.

I found a place where I can stay, a place where I can live and grow. The people here are very kind, yet my anguish they cannot know. I've given up on God; He is not there. He didn't help me with this, so why should I care? My belly is huge; I can barely walk. This is such a predicament, and IT's all God's fault. I wish I hadn't been born; I wish I had been warned.

Today IT moved inside of me. Does IT too wish to be free? Like the brush of a butterfly's wings, IT touches my insides. I'm so glad I did not give in and listen to all those lies. *IT is alive in me!* The truth I've found. I can feel IT move around. I know for sure I made the right choice to

don't know how IT happened, but yet IT is still here; Condemning me for loving him and giving in to fear. Who would have thought IT would turn out like this? To think it all started with just one kiss. He said that we would be okay. He said that IT was safe. He would love me always, "Don't turn this into rape." I gave into IT, despite my doubt. And here I am; left with no way out.

let IT live and have IT's voice. I feel IT's tiny heels pushing against my womb. Safe inside, when, how soon will IT come? These feelings are all so new to me, such precious moments I never knew could be.

IT turned today. I know I felt IT move. I cannot help but fall in love. IT will be here any day they said. Childbirth is painful, somewhere I read. IT has found a place in my heart, this thing once despised, now a part.

I'm very afraid, and I feel so alone. Almost ready to make itself known, IT will soon be here in front of me. I marvel at how awesome that will be. I wonder if I will make IT through; I wonder if IT will love me, too.

The social worker came today with paper for me to sign. A paper that would give IT up, telling the world IT isn't mine. Again I have a choice about IT's life. And most certainly, this choice to keep or give IT up is not easy. I really want IT now, for more than just a minute. For as IT's grown under my heart, IT's also grown within it. I sent the lady away; IT will arrive today.

I felt the first twinge, early this morn; I know that IT's time—IT will be born. This pain is so sharp, like a million tiny knives. Could this be the end of both our lives? The contractions are hard and very close together. I wonder if this pain will last forever. The nurses are good, I'm sure, gentle and kind. But I can't even thank them. The pain's so great, I find. IT's all that boy's fault that I am in this mess! But then again, wasn't I the one who chose to have some sex?

I've never sweated so hard in my entire life. Why did Eve have to bring on so much strife? *Eve made a choice. Just as you did.* I know Lord, you gave me free will. But I don't believe in you, I never again will. Aghhh! This hurts so much, I know I won't last. God make the pain end, please do so fast!

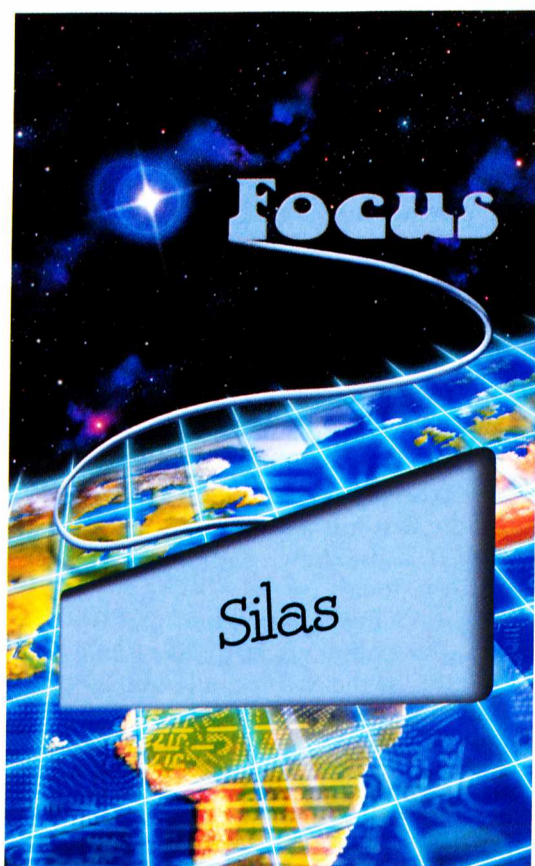
PUSH! Says the doctor. I'm trying, I said, Push once more. He can feel the head. SO CAN I! With one more push, I hear a weak cry. All the nights of fear and crying, All the months of waiting and trying, All the price I paid, all the life I gave, have got me here, where I am right now. I made IT okay. I made IT somehow.

As I stare at IT and IT at me, I wonder how such miracles could be. I wonder if God in heaven sees that I am free, and again believe. Forgive me, Lord, for all my sin. Thank you, Lord, for staying with me. Then, thank you God for letting me live, Thank you, God, for the life you give. Save my life, Jesus; save my soul. I love you, Lord. You have made me whole!

I lost my parents, my friends and my innocence. None of this I understood, nothing made sense. But the miracle, the joy, the beauty of life I now see as I look at the face of my beautiful baby.

Karyn Pugh is active in WAC at Millington FWB Church, Millington, TN. A high school senior, Karyn credits the Lord for giving her this narrative poem one night after her quiet time. "I was just impressed to write," she says.

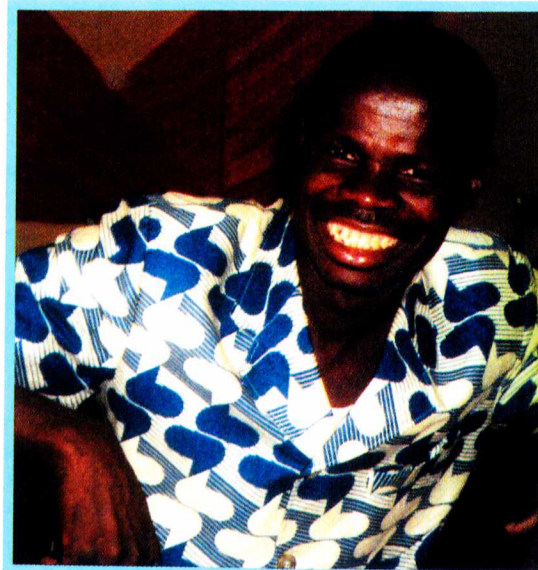




Pray:

- for Silas' ministry at the First Church in Abidjan.
- for Francoise, in her roles as pastor's wife, teacher, and mobilizer of women.
- that God would protect and strengthen their family as they labor for Him.
- for the eleven ordained pastors serving in war-torn Cote d'Ivoire.
- for Jerry and Carol Pinkerton, Alice Smith, and Verlin and Debbie Anderson, missionaries working in Abidjan.
- for continued growth and commitment within the Ivorian church.

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COLABORERS

YAO KOUASSI N'GUETTIA is from Seroudi (not far from Bondoukou), Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa. While he was in elementary school, a missionary came to his village showing films. He didn't know the white man's name; the kids just called him Abednego because of Daniel and his three friends in the film. Another pastor, Amiezi Paul, shared that when this man came to his village of Tanda, they called him Naaman. That missionary was Rev. Archie Mayhew.

Silas was convicted through the films. He didn't understand all that was involved, yet he knew God loved him and he was a sinner. He yielded his life to the Lord and to His service.

During his high school years, Silas lived in Bondoukou. God used Pastor Jimmie Aldridge to mentor Silas during these years as the two prayed and studied together. Silas knew God had not only saved him, but called him to be a preacher. He resisted as he felt so incapable for this high, saintly work. He observed lives of other pastors and knew pastoring was hard work with many difficulties. Yet, the heavy weight God had placed on his shoulders to preach the Good News remained.

He was active in the Lord's work and became president of the local youth group. Even before his marriage, he filled the role as pastor of the Bondoukou Church. After serving, he felt the need for more formal education. The FWB Bible Institute was not operating at this time, so of his own meager finances, he and wife Francoise went as students to the Christian and Missionary Alliance Bible School.

Their finances were soon gone. Because of failed crops, money promised by friends failed to appear. Silas and Francoise prayed and decided to stay as long as they could, fully depending on God. Other missionaries gave assistance and requested help from WNAC.

WNAC responded with funds from the Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship Fund. Never have Silas and Francoise forgotten the help from the Christian sisters in America. For three years, their main support came from these dear ladies. Often they have voiced praises to God for these women.



Pastor Silas (front right) with Abidjan congregation in 2000.

During their one year internship, they served in the First Church at Abidjan. God blessed their ministry. What joy it was as Rev. Eugene Waddell, then director of Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions and Dr. Mary Ruth Wisehart, at that time WNAC's Executive Secretary-Treasurer, attended their graduation at the CMA school.

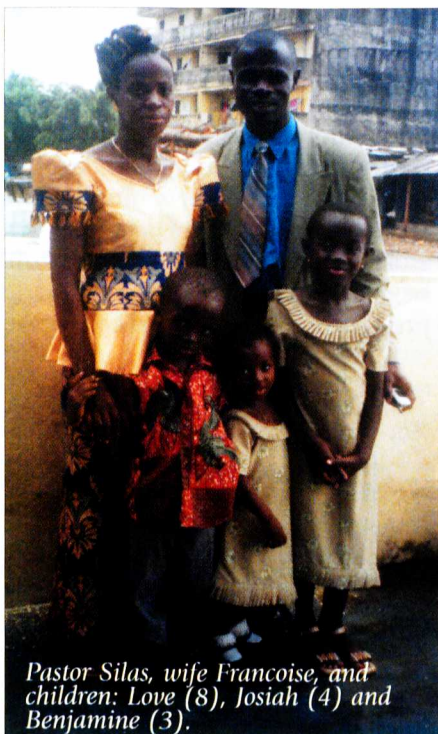
In April 1999, First Church of Abidjan called Silas as their first African pastor. After much prayer, he accepted in September 1999. Attendance on Sunday now averages 160. Recently 17 people were baptized. Silas and Francoise's family now includes two daughters and one son. The Lord has greatly used this humble man.

After completing requirements by the Ivory Coast Ordination Committee, Pastor Silas was ordained June 12, 2004. Free Will Baptists

now have eleven ordained Ivorian pastors. With the exception of one, all of the ordained pastors in the south were present for the ordination service. Pastor Jerome was the only ordained pastor from behind rebel lines who was able to attend. Missionaries Verlin Anderson, Alice Smith, and Jerry and Carol Pinkerton were also present at the ordination.

Pastor Silas' story shows so clearly how God uses individuals working as collaborators, with God-given talents, in their own way and time, to bring others into His Kingdom. Silas requests that believers continue to pray asking the Lord's help so that he will be able to accomplish all that God desires.

—CAROL PINKERTON



Pastor Silas, wife Francoise, and children: Love (8), Josiah (4) and Benjamin (3).

Other Prayer Concerns



—Pray for these missionaries on stateside assignment: Cathy Crawford, Debbie Griffin, Carlisle Hanna, Donnie and Ruth McDonald, Sam and June McVay, Lynn Midgett, Andy and Andrea Moore, Steve and Becky Riggs, Jim and Vicki Sturgill, Joni Thomas and Patsy Vanhook.

—Pray for the ministry of *Impulse*, a new quarterly video magazine that will highlight FWBIM involvement across the globe.

—Pray for persecuted brothers and sisters around the world. Pray a hedge of protection around them and open doors for ministering to the lost.

—Pray for home missionaries Randy Puckett (TX), Paul McKissick (VA), and Bill Reynolds (RI) who are all seeking church property.

—Pray for continued impact upon summer E-TEAMS. Ask the Lord to continue calling many of His children into mission work.

—Pray for new Arizona mission works in Flagstaff (Paul Hammonds) and Yuma (Jason Taylor).



REALIZED *Great* **EXPECTATIONS**

WNAC'S 69TH ANNUAL CONVENTION, July 19-20, 2004, in Kansas City brought together women with great expectations. During the conference, women saw many of their expectations realized, not only in worship, but also in the WNAC core areas of prayer, study, service and missions.

REALIZED IN WORSHIP

"I worship you, O Mighty God. There is none like you." These words of the mother-daughter duet by Ruth and Katie McDonald provided focus for this year's worship. A ladies handbell and acapella choir from Mtn. Grove, Missouri provided a mini-concert in the Tuesday morning session. Other special music from fellow Missourians added to the spirit of worship. Each speaker and session challenged women to expect great things from God.

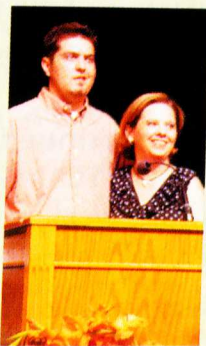


Katie and Ruth McDonald offer praise in song during Tuesday morning worship.

REALIZED IN PRAYER

HGTV may seem an unlikely place for prayer, but "HGTV-WNAC Style" seminar presenters Joyce Little and Wanda Powell both shared ways to enhance lives through prayer. "Cultivating a Garden of Grace," Joyce shared ideas for intercession. Likening individuals to precious plants, as she arranged each stem, she spoke a prayer for this person. Wanda Powell suggested that our treasures and momentos can serve as reminders to pray for family, friends, and God's servants around the world.

Tuesday morning's session began as President Debe Taylor presented a living answer to prayer.



A LIVING ANSWER TO PRAYER

Two years ago, at the WNAC Convention in Memphis, TN, President Debe Taylor requested prayer for her son Bradley, who was not living for the Lord. At the close of the 2002 Monday seminar, many mothers joined her in praying for prodigals.

This year's convention began with prayer, offered by Bradley Taylor. Standing with her son, Debe thanked those who prayed. She gave testimony of God's faithfulness and offered praise for this realized expectation, a living answer to prayer.

Seminar leaders (l-r) Wanda Powell, Sandy Atwood, Debbie Burden and Joyce Little.



Later, missionary Don McDonald affirmed that God works and He works through prayer. Citing the prayers of his father, he challenged listeners to take up the task of intercession for the harvest. "The need is for prayer," he urged.

REALIZED IN STUDY

"Great expectations became reality this year when *CoLaborer* magazine went four-color." In her annual report, Executive Secretary-Treasurer Marjorie Workman shared how this improvement came at no cost increase to WNAC. She also communicated the results of the recent WNAC survey (see p. 31).

Fifteen women realized great expectations as winners in the Creative Arts Contest. A Monday morning PowerPoint presentation highlighted their talents in art, photography and writing.

Three theme-related Bible studies and the 2005 Program and Plan Book will help women realize greater expectations through study.

REALIZED IN SERVICE

Seminar hostess Debbie Burden encouraged women to practice hospitality with a heart. Using fabrics, accents, and a "\$1.00 white plate," she offered several practical and inexpensive ideas for sharing home and food with others. Joanne King, WNAC Committee member and "Queen of the Potluck" gave suggestions for making a church dinner work. Throughout the presentation, the emphasis was clear: hospitality is not merely an art; rather, it's the result of a serving heart.

WNAC women rejoiced that FWBBC has a new organ. Funds from the Mary R. Wisheart Organ Fund provided half of the purchase price. Years of service projects, gifts, and designated monies from WAC groups made this expectation possible.

A Tuesday late-night tea reception honored state presidents and field workers for their many hours of volunteer service.

A handful of women realized even greater expectations as they participated in Women Active in Kansas City. Working in food banks, prisoner family ministries, and evangelism efforts, these women experienced the joy of serving Christ by serving others.



Tea reception for state leaders

ONE WOMAN ACTIVE IN KANSAS CITY

In spite of her convention responsibilities, Missouri WAC Member-At-Large Jeanette Dalton chose to become a Woman Active in Kansas City. Accompanied by groups of teens (Reach That Guy), Jeanette spent her Wednesday teaching in two Child Evangelism Fellowship Bible



Afternoon Bible club workers

Clubs. She's no stranger to this type of outreach. Jeanette has been involved with Child Evangelism ministries for over 40 years. Throughout the school year, she conducts two weekly Good News Clubs in her hometown of Mtn. Grove.



Jeanette shares the Wordless Book

During the morning club at an apartment complex, Jeanette led two children to faith in Christ. That afternoon, in a noisy Salvation Army gym, five girls prayed to receive Christ.

Each year, WNAC offers women opportunities to minister within its Convention city through evangelism and various service projects. As Jeanette can testify, the benefits are eternal. Plan now to participate in Louisville, 2005. Choose to be a Woman Active for Christ.



Three who prayed to receive Christ

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were passed by the 2004 WNAC Convention:

1. We recommend that scholarships be given from the Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship Fund as follows:
 - a. To continue the scholarship for Paul and Robert in Cote d'Ivoire and Philippe for a total of \$1,250.00
 - b. To continue the scholarship for the Cuban Cedars of Lebanon Seminary but reduce the amount to \$500.00.
 - c. To continue the scholarship assistance for the five students at the Volena Wilson Bible Institute in Conoor, Tamil Nadu, South India for a total of \$1,250.00.
2. We recommend doing a National 50/50 project, encouraging each local WAC to participate in sending a \$50/\$50 offering with \$50.00 for Central Asian women to participate in their "Sisters' Prayer Fellowship for Revival for the Nation of Central Asia" and \$50.00 to the WNAC general fund. If there is an overage in the Central Asian women's' fund, it will be used by the Central Asian women for a mission project. All money needs to be in by January 15, 2005.
3. We recommend that WNAC send a letter of support for the Decency Act to the FCC. We further recommend that each member write the FCC in their local broadcasting networks in support of the Decency Act. For more information log on to American Family Association or Focus on the Family website.
4. We recommend that the WNAC send a letter of commendation to President Bush for his position on the Constitutional Amendment stating that marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman.
5. Be it resolved that all members take a stand for marriage as the union between a man and a woman and that each member send a letter to her Congressmen voicing her support of this definition of marriage. At Congress.org enter your zip code to find contact information for state and local representatives.



Lynette Morgan speaks at Luncheon. Decorations included angels and lighthouses.



Fellowship in April 2005. Churches in this region seek to mobilize women in prayer and evangelism. However, due to extreme poverty, these women cannot attend without financial assistance. WNAC hopes to underwrite the \$50 per person expenses for all 500+ women who will attend.

Tuesday morning speaker, Ruth McDonald reminded worshippers that God works through each of us, sometimes in unlikely means. She shared how God recently opened the door for her to lead a community Gospel music choir. This opportunity has resulted in greater interest and openness among the Japanese toward Christianity.

Veteran missionary Lynette Morgan described great expectations, inviting luncheon guests to imagine with her an African rain after the dry season. She related the refreshing news of continued dedi-

cation and growth within the Ivorian church. Lynette also shared her vision for Central Asia, the church in America, and the word. Citing passages from Haggai and Habakkuk, she chided Americans who live in comfort while the house of God is in ruins. She hailed Central Asian believers who have "put the house of God first" in spite of persecution and poverty. She challenged listeners to "be amazed" at the work God wants to do in and through believers to reach the world.

FUTURE REALIZATION

Conventioneers came with great expectations; they left with great expectations. Resolutions adopted by the body encourage women to take a stand for biblical principles and morality. Scholarships awarded to students in Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba and India give nationals opportunity to realize goals and expectations for Bible Institute training. The 50/50 National Project allows participation and partnership with Central Asians who are also committed to finding their place in the Great Commission. Upcoming WNAC National Retreats in Ridgecrest, NC, and Branson, MO, offer rest and refreshment, along with motivation for ministry.

Will these expectations be realized? Fulfillment comes only as women wait upon God, the source of all great expectations.

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A LIST OF CREATIVE ARTS WINNERS IS POSTED ON THE WNAC WEBSITE.

Words For Women



Executive Secretary-Treasurer

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

PERCEPTIONS

A longing to go back haunted me for years. Were my memories accurate or just a child's perception? To a preschooler, things are not always as they seem. I vividly remember the walk through the woods, the excitement of the picnic, the chattering and laughing of my family. Suddenly, there they were, like monsters, stretching upward toward the blue sky. Huge, gigantic rocks towering upward, dwarfing us as we scaled their breadth and height. Unbelievable! The terrain all around was flat, flat, flat. These massive rocks seemed out of place. They were awesome. We never went back to see them again. Why? I don't know. We just didn't.

I grew up. Married. Moved away, returning only for family visits. On those visits, a strong urge to search for the rocks always swept over me when I drove past Camp Charles Road—approximate location of my childhood memory. I couldn't escape the wonderment of the rocks' massive size and existence. I longed to check out my childhood perceptions.

At WNAC, we often hear comments that reveal perceptions about our organization—some true, some not. "You are an aging group. Soon there will not be a WNAC." "You appeal mostly to rural churches." "Do groups really use *CoLaborer* magazine for their programs?" "Why doesn't *CoLaborer* have a page for teens?" "You need to share information about our missionaries." "Why do you need dues?" "You receive money from the Cooperative Plan, don't you?"

In an effort to evaluate our organization, WNAC carried a survey in *CoLaborer* magazine and online. Although this was not a true scientific research project, the 295 participants (individuals and groups) who completed the survey reveal some interesting facts about some of these perceptions.

Of those responding, less than 15% were over 70 years of age, 60% were between 30-60, and 9% were under 30. Most come from small groups ranging from 6 to 12 in attendance. Only 15% have a group attendance above 20. These numerics gives new meaning to WNAC's watchword "laborers together with God." It's amazing how much cash and non-cash gifts these proportionately

small groups give to missions, education, and related ministries each year.

The perception that most groups are in rural churches proved false. The survey showed that 35% are rural while 65% are small town to urban.

The survey also contained questions relating to *CoLaborer* magazine. Eighty percent of those responding use material from *CoLaborer* for their local programs. Approximately 67% read *CoLaborer* from cover to cover. Magazine favorites include features or programs, articles, and ideas for leaders.

Surprisingly, some who completed the survey aren't aware that some of the things they want to see in the magazine are already there. Every issue has a teen page. "Focus," a standard column, is always about some aspect of missions. Other individuals chose as their favorites, materials not currently in the magazine. For example, "Lucy and Marge" promotional skits have been printed in the *WNAC Program and Plan Book* for the past three years.

Readers want to connect. They want more missionary stories, more Bible studies, and more ideas for improving meetings. They like poetry, recipes, pictures, and skits. They want to hear others' stories—human interests, missionaries, and prayer needs. They would like to see the Missionary Provision Closet.

It's been good for us here at WNAC to see ourselves from others' perspective. Thanks to all who took the time to complete the survey.

I returned to my hometown recently. As I passed the road, the old longing cropped up again. This time I shared my desire with my sister-in-law who happened to be driving. With one quick turn of the steering wheel, she whipped the car around and headed down Camp Charles Road. Minutes after obtaining directions from the camp caretaker, my brother, sister-in-law, husband and I were trekking through the woods to confirm the validity of my childhood perception.

Barely a mile into the woods and there they were, rocks looming as gigantic as I remembered. What a thrill to know they were real and big. The rocks still seem displaced. But our Creator God is full of neat surprises. Perhaps, sometimes, we all need to check out our perceptions.

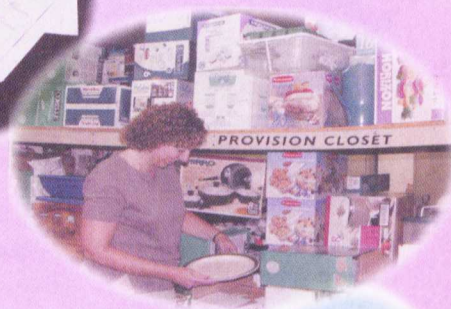
THE WNAC NATIONAL PROJECT

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\$50 allows a Central Asian woman to attend the April 2005 Sisters' Prayer Fellowship, a first-time event to mobilize women in prayer and evangelism.

\$50 supports WNAC office ministries, providing literature, conferences, education, and missionary assistance.



INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE. MONIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 15, 2005

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