

COLLABORER

A photograph of a woman with dark skin holding a sleeping baby. The woman is wearing a red and black patterned garment and a gold necklace. The baby is wrapped in a white cloth. The background is a warm, orange-brown color.

March • April 2005

**Under
Construction**

**INTO THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**

**Cultivating a
Garden of Grace**

**PreEaster Week
of Prayer**

Women Nationally Active for Christ



Sarah Fletcher

RESURRECTION POWER

We'd celebrated the holiday a day early with our folks, not wanting to miss the special services at our church. Predawn goodbyes complete, with cooler, covers, and book-on-tape, early that Easter morning we headed back to Tennessee.

We thrilled watching the sunrise over the Ohio River as we crossed into Kentucky. We were making good time—enough to get home, shower, dress and make it church without a rush.

Until.....about midway into the trip, we spotted a woman, arms waving, standing in the middle of the interstate. Two cars in the westbound lane were stopped. Something had happened. We abruptly stopped. There, just a few feet from our car, on the pavement, lay the body of a young man. Dead. Persons in the two westbound cars, first upon the scene, had frantically and unsuccessfully tried to administer CPR. Our cooler became a water basin for washing their blood-stained hands. Waiting for the ambulance and authorities to come, we sat stunned and powerless in the presence of death. What could we do? We prayed.

A bloody Easter. Permanently stamped in my memory, this incident certainly made the Easter service later that morning more gripping, more relevant. Throughout the day, we prayed for a grieving family miles away and wondered about the details of this wreck and the destiny of its victim.

Several years later, as I related the story to a coworker, her expression changed from casual interest to concerned surprise. "I knew that young man," she murmured. He had been a believer, an honor student in her Christian school. That Easter morning, coming home from a new graveyard-shift job, he had fallen asleep. Hitting a guard rail, his body was thrown from his vehicle.

Though this young man had experienced death, because of faith in Christ, he also knew resurrection power. His Easter death reaffirmed my need to know resurrection power.

What is resurrection power? It's the *dunamis* (dynamite power) that raised Christ from the dead and will one day raise us heavenward. However, resurrection power is not only for life endings, it's about life beginnings. Nineteenth century writer Phillips Brooks said, "The great Easter truth is not that we are to live newly after life—that is not the great thing—but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the Resurrection." The Apostle Paul longed to know "the power of [Christ's] resurrection" (Philippians 3:10). He prayed for others to know "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead..." (Ephesians 1:19, 20). Resurrection power is available to us as believers.

What does this resurrection power entail? It's the basis for our faith and salvation (1 Corinthians 15:17). It's our hope, our identity as God's children, and our call to service and suffering (Romans 8:11-17). *Dunamis* power is also the basis for holy living, creating a desire within us to do God's will (2 Peter 1:3, 4).

Difficult to imagine, the intensity of force able to bring a person back to life, is the power at work in us. Helping us overcome sin. Allowing us to forgive. Calling us to pray for others who know nothing of resurrection power—only a bloody Easter.

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**LET US
PURSUE
IN 2005**

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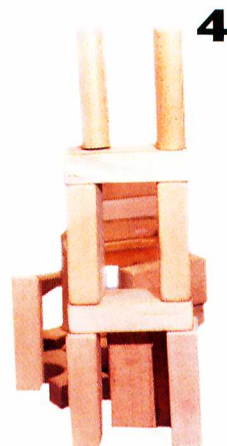
*Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.

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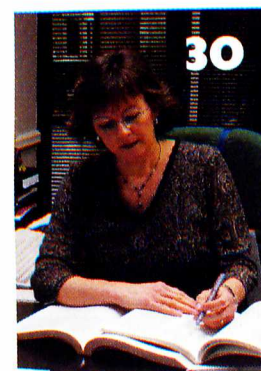
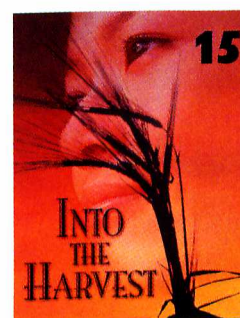
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ON THE COVER: Baby son of Gboko Paschal and Rachel, laycouple in the Yopougon church, Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa.
PHOTO CREDITS: cover—Cason Anderson; p. 14 (church)—Mark Cowart; pp. 24,25—FWBIM; p. 29 original watercolor by CAC winner Kay Brown.

under construction



by Judy Delong

What are you truly willing to give up to serve God? Could you give up anything, everything, to serve Him in a distant land?

Nehemiah was a man who struggled with these same questions. He had worked hard to rise high in the Persian government. He was one of the closest advisers to the king himself. Nehemiah had wealth, power, influence. He wasn't just comfortable, he had it made.

But Nehemiah had something of even greater worth to him—a love for God and a deep desire to serve Him even above the king. Nehemiah was a man of God, a man of prayer, a man devoted to God's Word. He had a passion to please God and that passion made him a deeply spiritual man. It also made him open to God's call, a call that was about to move him away from his life of comfort into a new life of excitement and opportunity. Nehemiah is the story of a man of influence and comfort leaving it all behind to go far away and face opposition, ridicule, hard work and personal inconvenience to get a job done for the Lord and for his people.

—"Introduction to the Book of Nehemiah" *Touch Point Bible*, p. 419. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois, 1996

Would you give up anything, everything, to serve Him in this land? Or are you too comfortable to go or do whatever God might call you to do? Are you willing to pursue God's plan for your life?

NEHEMIAH'S HEART

Nehemiah lived in a palace; he worked for a king. Yet, in spite of his position, he longed for his homeland. Nehemiah 1:2 records that one of Nehemiah's brothers and some other men came to the palace in Shushan where Nehemiah was serving. Nehemiah inquired about the Jews that had escaped captivity and were still in Jerusalem. The men shared that the people were in great affliction; they were in trouble and disgrace. The city was in bad shape. The wall was broken down and the gates had been burned with fire. Nehemiah had a heart for his people. He felt their pain and sadness.

Have you ever received unsettling news from your homeland? John Weaver in his book, *Inside Afghanistan*, describes his emotions in the days surrounding 9/11. Other missionaries have expressed similar sentiments. Knowing a homeland is in trouble when you are away creates a helpless uncertainty. No doubt Nehemiah sensed this helplessness. These were his people and they were in trouble.

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The king gave Nehemiah all he asked for and more. He sent captains of the army and horsemen with him. When God's hand is upon our lives and upon the work He has called us to do, the results will be more than we ever dreamed.

Have you ever experienced any amazing answers to prayer? Were the results more than you expected?

THE ENEMIES' HATE

When Sanballat and Tobiah heard that someone wanted to help Israel, they were angry and grieved. They set out to try to stop Nehemiah. Our enemy, Satan, is always disturbed and angry when we step out to do a work for God or make a greater commitment to Him. If Nehemiah had stayed in Shushan, he would have never confronted these enemies. Yet many people were helped by Nehemiah's willingness to go. Someone has said concerning Nehemiah, "One man's heartache motivated and accomplished a great work!" If God calls you to a work for Him, especially if it is outside your comfort zone, you will soon encounter the enemy's hate.

What are some ways the enemy threatens the work of God today? Do you know of any works stopped by enemy intimidation? Does acknowledging an enemy help us pursue God's plan?

THE PEOPLE'S HELP

Nehemiah didn't go it alone. He enlisted the people's help (3:1-30). To get the job done, groups each took a portion of the wall and began to work and rebuild. In our work for God, we may want to do so much. The task may appear so big that we get discouraged and don't do anything. We must realize that we

are only responsible for our portion of the wall. We then must begin. God doesn't want us all over the wall trying to work. He wants us to be faithful where we are. We need to complete our part. God will appoint others to take care of the rest. Sometimes, we may have to help with a job that isn't particularly our calling. Nehemiah 3:8 states that Uzziel was a goldsmith. But he worked on the wall. Hananiah was a manufacturer of perfumes. But he worked on the wall. God may call us to do something comfortable, then again, he may ask us to step outside that comfort zone and do something else. This out-of-comfort task may only be temporary, or it could turn into a long-term ministry. Either way, God extends strength and joy for the journey.

Has God called you to do a work for Him? Do you feel unqualified or inadequate? Have you ever worked out of your comfort zone?

How can we pursue God's plan for our lives? **Pray.** Ask God for a willing heart to work and for opportunity to accomplish His will. **Work.** Do all we can do according to our abilities. **Trust.** If God opens another work that seems beyond you, trust that He knows all about you. If He is calling you, He will equip you. **Remain.** Stay in God's Word and faithfully pray so you will have strength to battle the enemy as he tries to stop you from doing God's will.

Nehemiah wasn't known for his wall building abilities, but for his willingness to step out and let God use him.

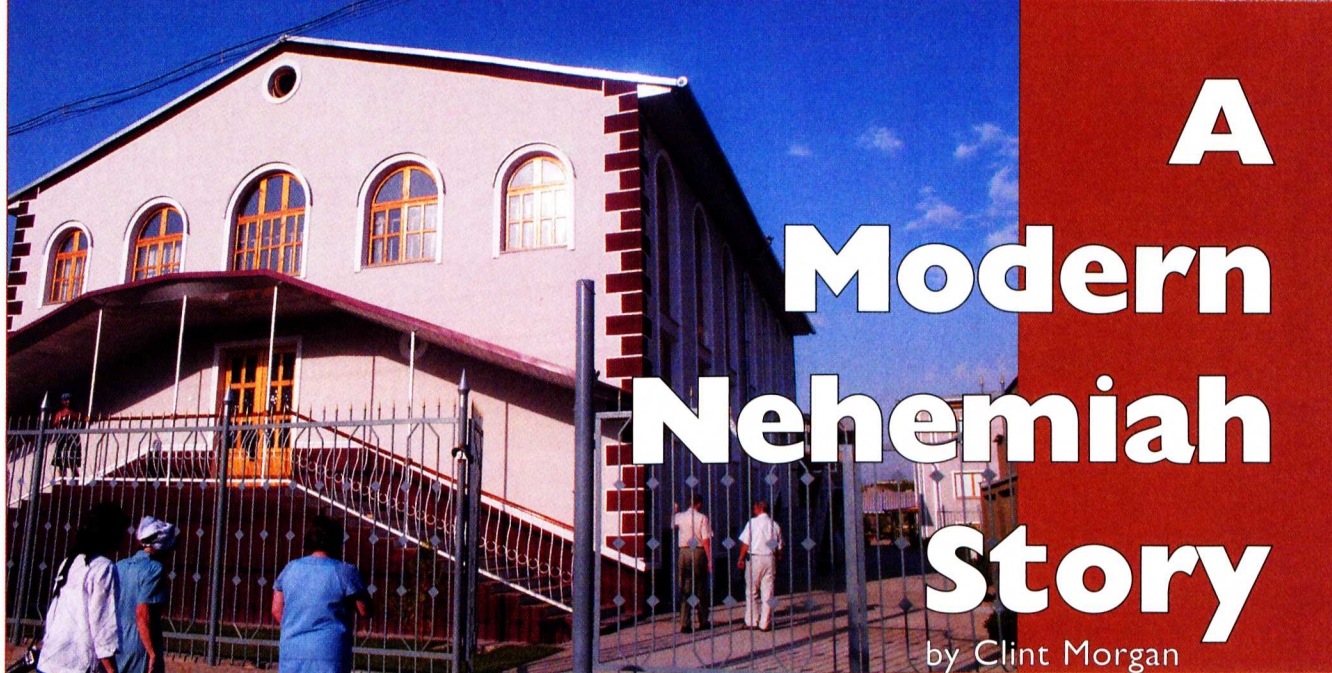


Judy Delong takes an active role in her WAC at Tom's Creek FWB Church, Nippa, KY. She also serves as a member at large for Kentucky Woman Active for Christ. Judy enjoys reading, writing speaking and singing in a local trio. She and her husband Teddy boast three sons and six grandchildren.



- CHRISTIANS IN CENTRAL ASIA** are reaching out to children in their countries, bringing them to summer camps.
- NEARLY 20,000** Central Asian children went to camp last summer. **85%** were not Christian. But they all heard the gospel—some for the first time—and many accepted Christ.
- YOU CAN SEND** Kidz to Kamp for only **\$25 per child**. What better investment could your women's group or VBS make?
- HOW MANY CHILDREN** in Central Asia will hear about God's love for the first time because of you?

Contact Clint or Lynette Morgan, cmorgan@fwbgo.com for information and promotional ideas to help send hundreds of children to Christian camps.



A Modern Nehemiah Story

by Clint Morgan

WE ENTERED THE COMPOUND THROUGH WROUGHT IRON GATES, parked the car and got out beside an imposing building identified as a *community learning center*. The structure was impressive. More astounding, however, was the beautiful melody coming from some unseen place on the compound. I was quite certain, a one-hundred-voice choir must surely be practicing in the learning center.

To my surprise, I discovered that the magnificent sound was not coming from a well-trained choir, but from workers on a construction project juxtaposed to the learning center. Like worker bees preparing a hive for their queen, these dedicated believers busily labored, building a prayer house for their King.

My first trip into Central Asia in August 2002, truly surpassed my expectations. Many of my preconceptions unraveled as I discovered the Church, alive and well, in the face of great opposition. Several groups of believers really left an impression on me, including the singing builders of the Nehemiah Baptist Church.

No, Nehemiah is not the actual name of the church. For security sake, I've chosen this apt term, not wanting to compromise the well being of these believers. Recently, the government in this relatively large city in Central Asia has closed five nearby churches.

The story of Nehemiah Baptist Church begins long before the construction of this sanctuary. Its history covers a long winding trail strewn with short periods of resounding victories and prolonged times of overwhelming resistance when it seemed this

fortress of faith would be destroyed by the Evil One.

Over one hundred years ago, a Russian soldier (a Baptist believer) moved from Siberia to this Central Asian city. Shortly after his 1902 arrival, he started a church. By 1905, with a pastor, deacons, and well-trained leaders, Nehemiah Baptist Church became the center for distribution of the Gospel throughout the countries of Central Asia.

After the Russian Revolution of 1925, Baptist churches in the area came together to form an association. About fifteen churches and over thirty groups comprised this newly-formed organization. Within just a few years, membership grew to over 2,000.

In 1929, things changed drastically. The openly-atheistic Soviet government became more aggressive in its attacks against Christianity. Its more passive

method of attack—propaganda—failed. The government felt compelled to crank up the resistance, making it illegal for all churches to exist.

For the next three years, the Baptist churches tried to resist. Gradually, they were pushed into hiding, forced to meet secretly in homes or secret places. From 1936–1938, the churches experienced open and aggressive persecution. Literally thousands of believers and pastors were arrested, imprisoned and tortured. Many paid the ultimate price for their faith, martyrdom.

The trail of Nehemiah Baptist Church has often been a bloody one. It seems hard to imagine the acts of cruelty used against believers in hopes of stamping out Christianity. But the promise of Christ in Matthew 16:18, is clearly visible in the saga of the Church in Central Asia.



During WWII, the Soviet government turned its attention to military concerns and basically forgot about the Christians and their activities. Sensing a reprieve, churches began to actively evangelize the countries of Central Asia. In 1946, they once again became officially registered. Four evangelical groups joined together in an association. The government allowed this, hoping to keep a closer watch over this movement. Nevertheless, this proved a time of relative peace and rapid growth for the churches.

By the early 1950's, Christianity's expansion began drawing the attention of the media. Needless to say, this increased coverage produced a negative effect on the advancement of the work.

The government decided that each city needed only one church and proceeded to forcefully close down all other churches. Again, places of Christian worship became illegal. The lines were drawn. For the next thirty years, a running conflict ensued between the government and the churches.

Nehemiah Church suffered extensively during this period. From 1950-1983, the government destroyed fourteen different properties this church had purchased and remodeled for worship. Almost every six months, Nehemiah church was forced to find a new meeting place.

Their persistence and faith eventually paid off. In 1983, after almost thirty years of struggling to simply survive, the government recognized the Nehemiah Church as a legal organization. Finally, perseverance reaped rewards.

In the early 1990's, the fall of the Soviet Union gave churches

unprecedented opportunities for expansion. Nehemiah Baptist Church stood poised to take advantage of this slightly opened window of opportunity. Members pooled their spiritual gifts, talents and other resources and began to reach out to their community. The subtle but powerful resistance of the government could not contain the church's holy fire.

They built buildings and began an active outreach in the community, providing English classes, computer training, music classes and much more. The community sensed that this group of people really cared.

When the group outgrew their gathering place, they sought to build a bigger sanctuary. From day one, the government and the church's Muslim neighbors attempted to thwart their efforts. At every turn, complaints surfaced... about the construction of a wall around the property...the number of people coming and going...and most of all, the message they were sharing.

The Nehemiah congregation committed themselves to complete the task no matter the level of opposition. My August 2002, visit found this beehive of activity aimed at completing the construction of the new church. Government officials and Muslim clerics were breathing out threats to close the project down. Christians

were working day and night to finish the building.

With the heartfelt conviction that this edifice would bring glory to God and expand His kingdom, the people pressed on. As they worked, they sang praises to the King of Kings and asked His blessings on this effort. Joy in their hearts translated into music and dedicated labor. In just three months—an unbelievably short time—the walls of the church were up. The antagonism ceased.



Much like the Jews who, under the leadership of Nehemiah, rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, these modern-day believers set their faces like flint and went about their God-assigned task. Taunted and tempted, they never became discouraged nor ceased their labor.

Today Nehemiah Baptist Church stands tall, a lighthouse in a dark, restricted access country. I rejoice that God permitted me to see His people "on the wall, doing a great work and not coming down."

Clint Morgan, longtime FWB missionary, oversees International Missions efforts in restricted access countries.

✧PURSUE THE PERISHING✧PURSUE THE PERISHING✧PURSUE THE PERISHING✧PURSUE THE

- a salt shaker in the kitchen cabinet
- a box of matches in the junk drawer
- a burning flashlight in the glove compartment

DO ANY OF THESE DESCRIBE YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WITNESS?

Jesus came to “seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10) “Seek” and “save” are very strong verbs that imply aggressive, intentional and decisive action. As we strive to “let this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5), we will want to actively pursue a life of personal evangelism.

CALL THE MOVERS—Our Place

I love the way Eugene Peterson paraphrases John 1:14. “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.”* Jesus’ magnificent glory was shining throughout eternity past for all of heaven to see. However, in order for

mere earthlings to see that glory, He had to come live where we live. Nothing accidental about it—His was a very intentional move. The cost was greater than that of any professional moving company on earth.

These days, there’s wonderful emphasis on the concept of *being* rather than *doing*. Praise the Lord, we are saved by grace through faith, based solely on *being* in Christ (Ephesians 2:8,9). Our salvation is secured through what He has already done and not based on anything we could ever do to earn it.

Having said that, though, the task of world evangelization depends upon something we do. Just being will never get the message to those who most need to hear. No more than the flashlight in the glove compartment will bring any light to the stranded traveler. No more than the saltshaker in the cabinet will season the soup. No more than the matches in the kitchen drawer will ever ignite a fire. All of these things—and we believers—were intended for a much focused, very intentional task.



*The Message.

by Ruth McDonald

INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Have you ever heard a testimony like this? "I just thank the Lord for my wonderful church family. If it weren't for all of my friends here in this fellowship, I wouldn't have anyone." Or how about this one? "I thank the Lord for my Christian work environment. It's just wonderful to go to work every day with other believers and know that I don't have to constantly deal with worldly philosophies and lifestyles." Perhaps one (or both) of these testimonies is yours.

When my husband and I were in graduate school preparing to go overseas as missionaries, we encountered a mindset that changed our thinking. Many of our fellow students, like us, had to work to pay their tuition. Rather than seeking employment on the Christian campus or in one of the many Christian organizations nearby, these young people intentionally sought employment in places where there were no other Christians.

Do you choose your place of residence, work or school environment based on comfort? Or do you choose to "move into the neighborhood" where you are most needed—a place where Christ is not named (Romans 15:19)?

A few years (and a few pounds) later, I decided to join a weight loss group while on stateside assignment. There were two chapters nearby: one in the basement of the Baptist church and one at the Jewish synagogue. Remembering those committed classmates of mine, I signed up for the synagogue group. The Lord gave me opportunities to be light in a dark place.

How will they believe unless they hear? How will they hear unless someone tells them (Romans 10:14-15)? If you are not now in a place where people need to hear, maybe you should call the movers. Move to another job, school, weight-loss group—perhaps even another country.



PHONE HOME—Our Prayers

Have you ever noticed that God seems to delight in answering certain kinds of prayers? We watch in amazement as He grants the desires of little children and new believers, don't we? Another type request that He seems to always honor is a prayer for opportunity to witness. Take some time to share with another Christian about different situations in which God has answered this prayer in your life. You'll hear about many wonderful *God things* and *God appointments*.



For example, the eight-year old girl who prays for an opportunity to witness and then gets to share with a friend at a sleepover. The young wife who prays for a coworker and hears that person ask the very next day, "So, how do you know if you're going to heaven?" The overseas missionary who prays for an open door of witness and then hears the question from a Buddhist neighbor, "What exactly does the Bible teach?" These are all my personal experiences—and I could share many more. What about yours? What opportunities for witness has God afforded you?

Why does God so often honor this request? The Bible says that the prayer prayed in His will is effective. We know from Scripture that "*He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). Therefore, we can be confident that we pray according to His will when we ask Him to use us to bring His message to someone around us. As we intentionally put ourselves in places needing a witness and pray fervently for open doors of communication, He seems pleased to use us to point others to Him. Our sphere of personal influence can be enlarged as we become intentional in our placement and our prayers.

Our prayers, however, should not be only for our own opportunities. No one of us will ever have the opportunity to personally impact the entire world for Christ. Many with a heart for ministry say they'd like to clone themselves in order to be able to respond to every need they're presented. We can't do that, but we can certainly pray for missionaries and others who have moved into other neighborhoods around the world—neighborhoods in which we personally may never live. (Missionary prayer cards, newsletters,

Hotline and the World Prayer Guide offer practical tools for use in praying for the ministries of others.)

Most of us have heard of the great missionary William Carey who ministered in India for 42 years. His is a story studied by every student of missions, a name respected for his faithfulness in evangelism and Bible translation. But most of us have never heard the *rest* of the story—the account of his invalid sister Mary. Mary (called Polly by those who knew her best) was mostly bedridden for over 50 years. She wasn't able to get out of bed, much less go to India. However, hers was a story of faithfully interceding in prayer for her brother. He wrote her long letters detailing his struggles, challenges, victories, and successes. And she took each of them to the Father in prayer.

Not only should we pray for those who've been sent; we're also instructed to *"pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest"* (Matthew 9:38). A commissioning service is a wonderful thing to attend. But behind every fresh, enthusiastic new recruit, are those who prayed them into the harvest field.

My husband Donnie knew from his teenage years that the Lord was calling him to carry the gospel overseas. What he didn't know, however, until many years later, after his commitment was firm, was the story of his father's prayers. As a young father and family man, E. B. McDonald walked the aisle in response to the Holy Spirit's stirring. A bout with tuberculosis as a young man had left him with a stiff hip and a life-long limp. He knew that health issues would prevent his carrying the gospel overseas. It was a different ministry to which God was calling him. As he knelt there he prayed, "Lord, I've got four sons. With your help, I want to raise a missionary." Did he go home and make an announcement? No, he just quietly lived out a godly life, disciplined and loved his sons, continued to support various missionaries in prayer and hospitality, continued in prayer, and waited.

Perhaps you can imagine the emotion with which the different participants sang this old hymn at our commissioning service in June of 1986. "Give of your sons to bear the message glorious. Give of your wealth to send them on their way. Pour out your souls for them in prayer victorious! And all thou spendest Jesus will repay!" (O Zion Haste!).

To whose account is the *fruit* tallied? According to Matthew 10:41-42, the one who gives even a cup of cold water to a prophet will receive a prophet's reward.

If you have prayed your young *prophet* into the harvest field; if you have faithfully prayed for those who pursue the perishing around the world, you are also pursuing the perishing. Polly Carey's prayers for her brother may very well have accounted for his ability to minister faithfully and effectively. And any influence that Donnie has had in Japan may be traced to his dad's prayer of commitment.

WATCH THE CLOCK—Our Push

Are you a procrastinator? Do you push the deadline as far as you can and take delight in the fact that you made it just under the wire? A lot of us are like that. In fact, some people do their very best work under time pressure and actually enjoy the adrenaline rush of getting something accomplished at the last possible moment.

Our world has a predetermined, non-negotiable deadline. At a certain minute, the deadline will come and then be past. There will be no acceptance of late papers, grading down a few percentage points for tardiness. The day of grace will be over. Our only problem is, we haven't been told the deadline.

Early, the morning of January 17, 1995, disaster struck Kobe, Japan. The Great Hanshin Earthquake brought major devastation to people, property, and public transportation, and left nearly 6,000 dead in one unpredictable instant. One graphic scene televised on Japanese television pictured a large wall clock lying broken and powerless on the floor of a collapsed shopping area. The hands of the clock were frozen at precisely 5:46 a.m.—the very instant in which the lives of thousands of Japanese were also brought to an abrupt end.

On what day, at what hour, at what minute will the hands of this world's clock stop? Only the Father knows. *"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only"* (Matthew 24:36).

Our Heavenly Father, who knew the details of the end from the very beginning, is gracious and full of compassion to all He has made. He has promised to pour out His grace in unprecedented measure before He tips the cup of His wrath. *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh..."* (Acts 2:17). *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"* (Matthew 24:14).





God desires that every person in this world have ample opportunity to hear and receive His message of love. He knows the deadline He has set for this world as well as the deadline He has determined for each individual on this planet. All our days were numbered before even one of them came to be (Psalm 139:16). He knows when this heart of mine will beat for the last time. He knows when my neighbor will draw

her last breath. He knows about that shocking accident that hasn't yet happened. He knows how long we have to evangelize our world. He knows and He commands us to "work for the night is coming when no man can work."

As I listened to my elderly Japanese neighbor sing a beautiful, mournful ballad from her childhood, I didn't know that she would die in her sleep a few nights later. As my daughter walked the aisle as flower girl at the young couple's wedding, I didn't have any idea that the groom would die of an aneurism at the age of

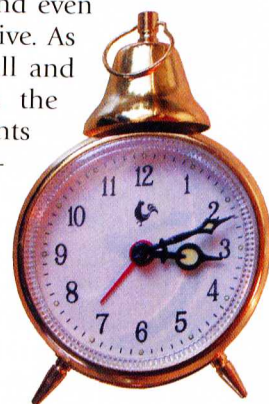


Ruth McDonald is currently on stateside assignment. She and her husband Donnie, along with children Katie, Evan, Amy and Caroline, presently reside in the Missionary in Residence house on the campus of Free Will Baptist Bible College. The McDonalds plan to return in June to Japan, their mission field for the past 20 years. A talented musician, Ruth also enjoys reading and writing.

twenty. When my family sat around at a neighborhood barbeque, we didn't realize that the young housewife who ate with us would be dead of cancer within weeks. As we opened the gift of a beautiful baby doll for our child, we didn't know that our thank-you note would not reach the giver before he went into eternity. But God knew. He arranged for each of those precious Japanese people's lives to intersect with that of a Christian.

We read in Acts 17: 24-28 that our God who made the world and everything in it has determined the exact times for its inhabitants and even the exact places where they should live. As we, His children, respond to His call and follow His plan, He places us in the sphere of influence in which He wants us. His Holy Spirit is leading, nudging, directing us to those He most urgently desires to reach today.

Who do you have opportunity to influence today? The clock is ticking. For them. For you. For all of us on planet Earth.



WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR with the second greatest commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Norm and Becky Wretlind have taken this commandment literally. Their book chronicles the story of how, as a couple, they learned to reach out to the people in their physical neighborhood for the purpose of evangelism, giving inspiration for their readers to do the same.

Have you noticed? Neighborhoods have changed. Gone are the days of sitting on the front porch sipping lemonade, enjoying leisurely conversation with the folks next door or from across the road. It's rare to see people outside anymore. Factor in the busy lifestyle of most Americans, along with their desire for privacy, and it leaves you wondering how a Christian family can have an impact on the people around them.

In a word, the Wretlinds believe it must be intentional. Christians often give a myriad of reasons why they neglect to reach out to their neighbors. The authors even identify a *Top Ten* list of why Christians fail to show hospitality. Then, with Scripture, they effectively dismantle the excuses and rationale we use to justify our reluctance.

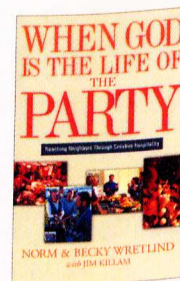
The Wretlinds' instrument of choice for jumpstarting neighborhood evangelism is to host a holiday neighborhood party. Moving from the theoretical to practical, step-by-step instructions are given for planning, executing and

following-up a neighborhood event in order to get acquainted and plant spiritual seed.

Relationships with unsaved neighbors can then be gradually cultivated and bridges of friendship built. When Christians are obedient in this area, God will open doors of opportunity to openly share their faith. Over the years, the writers have witnessed the salvation of many of their neighbors. In one neighborhood, a church was even established as a result of neighborhood evangelism.

Although the Wretlinds' efforts have been successful, they are careful to explain the risks and sacrifices required in opening a home and family in this way. As in all spiritual work, a couple must agree on their objectives and bathe each activity in prayer.

I do not endorse every method the writers have employed, but I sincerely believe their motives are correct—that is, to win their neighbors to Jesus. Perhaps the Lord has especially burdened your heart for those who live close to you. If so, this book would be a valuable resource.



**WHEN GOD IS THE
LIFE OF THE PARTY**
by
Norm and Becky Wretlind
with Jim Killam
NAVPress \$11.99

—DEBBIE BURDEN

WALK into our Neighborhood

by Lea Edgmon and Kristi Johnson
missionaries in Alpedrete, Spain



“WALK FOR YOUR HEALTH,” the women’s magazine headline nags us. The article reminds us that walking will help us lose body fat, improve our level of fitness and reduce our risk of heart disease. If you are like me, your first reaction is a sigh and a promise to do that *some day*.

A few months ago, missionary teammate Kristi Johnson and I decided to get moving. Now we walk together a couple mornings a week. We’d like to invite you along on a trek through our town, Alpedrete, Spain. Come on. You’re sure to see something new, and you won’t even have to break a sweat.

Kristi and I start out from my apartment in the center of town and head over to a neighborhood of large single-family homes. We like to stroll through this part because traffic is lighter. On our way, we pass the private British school, reminding us of a wonderful outreach tool the Lord has given us. The fact that we speak English gives us many chances to build relationships with people we

would never meet otherwise. Currently, Tim and Kristi are teaching English to seven children. They’ve taken several opportunities to discuss their faith with some of their students’ parents.

morning as Tim and Kristi drop off Alejandro, they seize a chance to chat with fellow parents and give a good testimony. These conversations usually lead to the question, “What are you doing in Spain?”



One of the first ways God allowed us to serve the community of Alpedrete was through the public library. Kristi and I volunteered to do an English story hour. Parents were thrilled with an activity that would reinforce the English their children were learning in school.

As we walk towards the Johnsons’ neighborhood, we pass parents that Kristi knows through her involvement in AMPA (the Spanish equivalent of PTA) at her son Alejandro’s school. Every

and open doors to share—many times to correct people’s misconceptions about Protestants.

Let’s head back to the center of town. On the left-hand side of the street, we find the Cultural Center and, on the right side, a park. Anthony and I rehearse with the Community Choir in the Cultural Center. Friendships made in the Choir have led many choir mates to attend the “Café y Algo Más” evangelistic outreaches, enabling them to hear clear presentations of the Gospel.



LEFT: Kristi’s English classes help build relationships with unbelievers.
ABOVE: Lea and Kristi volunteer for English Story Hour at the public library.



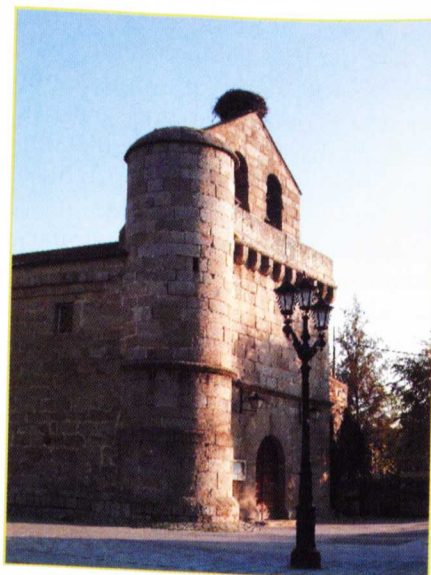
ABOVE: Many have heard the gospel through the ministry of "Café y Algo Más."

LEFT: Anthony and Lea sing in the Alpedrete Community Choir.

RIGHT: The Catholic Church in Alpedrete was built during the fifteenth century.



Lace up your shoes; take a stroll around your neighborhood.



Kristi also goes to the Cultural Center for piano lessons. God has given her opportunities to explain her beliefs to her piano teacher. Across the street, at the park, we will likely run into parents and children we've come to know simply because they play there with our children. We jokingly call it *stroller evangelism*, but it's really all about taking advantage of every opportunity God presents us to share who we are and the change Jesus makes in our lives.

We need a good workout today, so we will walk past the town hall plaza. On the right-hand side of the plaza is the Catholic Church, built shortly after Columbus discovered America. In the center is the town hall. We have done our best to build good relationships with the local government as well. A group of students who came one summer helped us in this area by doing some community clean up projects. We pray positive contacts

like this will make the way smoother for our future church to one day obtain needed permits.

It's time to head back up the hill to my apartment. Inside, we find my husband Anthony working on an article for a local paper. Our landlady is the editor. From time to time, she asks Anthony to write about different things "from an evangelical perspective."

Here I am, fresh from our walk and I am thinking of...*what else but...* making brownies (to share at community choir practice, of course.) Even something with as many carbs and calories as this yummy American treat can be used by the Lord to soften the hearts of those who are antagonistic to other religions.

We hope you enjoyed the morning workout walk into our neighborhood. We moved into Alpedrete specifically to share Christ. We praise the Lord for the doors He has opened. Sometimes the Lord

uses the *everyday* in our lives to give Himself the greatest glory.

Lace up your shoes; take a stroll around *your* neighborhood. What everyday opportunities do you see? Where does God want you to plug-in and make His name known?

Lea Edgmon (r.) and Kristi Johnson (l.) are currently on stateside assignment. They are sure their Alpedrete neighbors miss getting a good



laugh from watching them huff and puff their way around town. Kristi is the wife of Tim and Mommy to Alejandro and Ana. Lea is married to Anthony and is called *Mamá* by Emily and Marc. The Edgmoms and Johnsons have served in Spain for six years.

“...they are white already to harvest”

Pray for Tim and Di Keener as they continue their language learning in Nantes, France. Pray for them as they study in the University's language program. Ask the Lord to guide their sons Eli and Ethan. Eli is attending the local Maternelle and Ethan is being cared for in the day while the Keeners are studying. Pray the Keeners will begin to make meaningful and lasting friendships with the French.

Pray for Sam and June McVay as they return to Spain for their 3rd term of service. Thank the Lord for time to share their ministry on their stateside assignment. Pray the Lord will blanket them with safety as they travel.

FRIDAY

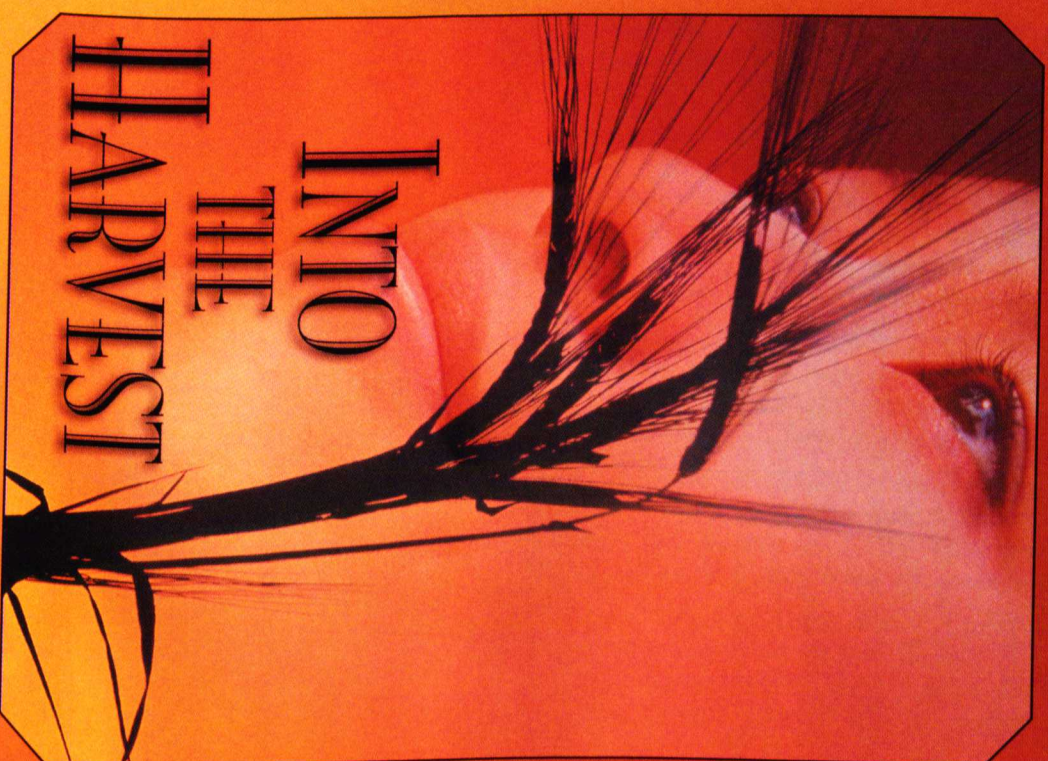
Pray for our Regional Directors: Dale Bishop, Stan Bunch and Clint Morgan. In addition to their normal missionary responsibilities, these men act as liaisons between the home office and the missionaries. Pray for wisdom, discernment and time management skills.

Pray for the Bible institute in Ribeirão Preto as it begins its 32nd year of preparing students for God's work. Ask the Lord to give wisdom and a superior ability to communicate to the professors as they teach, minister and guide so the students may become more effective in ministry.

Pray for the Easter and Mother's Day programs taking place in various countries in which FWB missionaries minister. Pray for those who will participate in the dramas and the musical groups. Many unsaved family and friends will hear the gospel for the first time during these programs. Ask God to nurture the seeds planted.

Pray for *The Hanna Project*, a nonprofit relief and development organization which provides a legitimate platform to enter restricted access countries. Ask the Lord to give great wisdom and guidance to *The Hanna Project* board of directors as they strategically plan to send Christians to these countries.

WNAC PreEaster Week of Prayer for International Missions March 21-25, 2005



“Lift up your eyes...”

MONDAY

Pray for the director of mobilization and recruitment Eddie Payne and staff members Judy Lytle and Alicia Bunch as they prepare the E-TEAMs and overseas apprentices for summer ministries. Ask the Lord to touch the hearts of those who will be serving Him in this ministry. Pray these mission trips will impact the lives of participants.

Pray for missionaries who are in language school. Ask the Lord to give them understanding and unusual ability as they aspire to grasp the fundamental and complex elements of their adopted language so they may communicate the gospel more fully.

Pray for the Fellowship of FWB Churches in Brazil scheduled to meet on Good Friday, March 25. Ask the Lord to blanket this meeting with His wisdom, direction and grace.

Pray for those who will be traveling in April to Kazakhstan for the Central Asia Women's Prayer Conference, their first women's fellowship. Ask the Lord to move in the hearts of each attendee.

TUESDAY

Many missionaries are seeking financial and prayer support. Ask the Lord to burden churches and individuals to partner with missionaries in both prayer and financial support.

Pray for General Director James Forlines as he leads International Missions throughout 2005. Ask the Lord to give him vision and discernment as he oversees. Pray also for his assistant Tracy Jennette as she works with him to organize ways to clearly communicate the Lord's direction of International Missions.

Pray for the World Mission Offering which will be received on Sunday, April 28. This offering enables the International Missions office to enhance missionary support and strengthens the mobilization efforts of the denomination. Ask the Lord to touch hearts to give generously to His work.

Pray for Public Relations staff members Cheri Ham, Web media coordinator; Deborah St. Lawrence, print media coordinator, and

“...and look on the fields...”

Brian Ellison, video media coordinator, as they work to communicate the various ways FWB reach the world through International Missions. Pray for General Director James Forlines as he leads as the interim Public Relations Director.

WEDNESDAY

The International Missions Board is scheduled to meet April 11-13. Ask the Lord to oversee and direct every aspect of the meeting so International Missions ability to reach the lost for the Kingdom will be enhanced.

Prayer Summit 2005 is scheduled for March 31-April 2 at Camp Garner Creek in Dickson, Tenn. This is a great opportunity for believers to gather in a concert of prayer and learning. If space is still available, you may register on-line at www.fwbgo.com or call us toll free (1-877-767-7736).

Pray for Director of Stateside Development, Doug Little, as he travels to various churches to articulate the vision of the International Missions office and express the vital need of prayer and financial support. Pray the Lord will bestow an extra portion of strength and wisdom to Doug and pray the Lord will burden people to give generously to spread the gospel. Also pray for his assistant, April Bybee, as she helps coordinate missionary services and conferences.

Pray for the final months of Tom and Nancy Hughes' ministry in Brazil as they prepare to retire in August 2005. Ask the Lord to continue to use their ministry to impact Brazilian lives even as retirement draws near. Thank the Lord for their steadfast service for the Kingdom!

THURSDAY

Please pray for Rui Xavier, the new pastor of the Jardim da Palmeiras FWB Church in Uberlândia, Brazil. Ask the Lord to embelish him with grace and wisdom as he leads the church. Thank the Lord for his willingness to serve. Pray for Director of Financial Operations, Rob Conley, and bookkeepers Gladys Gragg and Geneva Walker as they work with Rob to direct the financial aspects of International Missions.

BONUS IN THE WORD

IN the beginning
the heaven
2 And the
form, and

BY JOAN WARREN

I. We pursue that which we love.

What are some evidences of our love for the Lord? (Record your insights from these verses.)

Psalms 100:2—

Hebrews 10:25—

Proverbs 3:5—

John 14:23—

Matthew 25:40—

Psalms 42:1—

What can hinder our love for Him? (Record your insights from these verses.)

2 Timothy 4:10; 1 John 2:15—

Matthew 6:24—

Luke 22:5, 6—

Luke 18:1—

PURSuing HIM

II. We must pursue (seek Him) when we have sinned.

How do we pursue Him? (Record your insights from these verses.)

Deuteronomy 4:29—

2 Chronicles 7:14—

1 John 1:9—

What is His response when we pursue Him? (Record your insights from these verses.)

Deuteronomy 4:19—

2 Chronicles 7:14—

1 John 1:9—

III. My Personal Pursuit

Is my love for God evident? In what ways?

What issues in my life hinder my pursuit of Him?

Write a response prayer: "Lord, I thank You for Your relentless pursuit of me. Help me pursue You..."

Joan Warren is a WAC leader and Bible teacher from Oilton, OK.

WHAT DO YOU PURSUE?

A beautiful home filled with beautiful things—
Do you dream this will all come to you?
Or a fancy new car to bring you great pride—
Is this the goal you pursue?

Do you work to achieve great fortune and fame.
And long for high praise from the crowd?
Is your life taken up with pursuit of these things?
To gain them would make you so proud.

Ah, but what of pursuit in the harvest of souls?
Have you time there to work and to pray?
Do you long to gain stars for your soul winner's crown
To give to the Savior one day?

The comforts of life are a blessing from God—
We should give Him the praise that is due.
We can do this each day while we live on this earth
As His will in our lives we pursue.

The riches of earth and the praise of the world
Will vanish and all pass away
But the things we do here for the Lord Jesus Christ
Are the things that forever will stay.

—Ruthann Hall
Nashville, TN

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

PROMOTE: Let Lucy and Marge pave the way for the March program. Skits are found in the 2005 Program and Plan Book.

SING: "I Won't Come Down," an original song by Judy Delong complements the March program. Lyrics are printed in the Program and Plan Book. Download the music from the WNAC website. "Into the Harvest," a song by Doug Little, is included in the WNAC Pre-Easter Prayer Packet.

OBSERVE WNAC Pre-Easter Week of Prayer. If Easter in March catches you by surprise, observe the Week of Prayer for World Missions in April, typically International Missions Month.

ANNOUNCE. Make women aware of WNAC related events during the months of March and April. The 2005 WNAC Retreat (March 3-5) in Branson, MO; IM World Prayer Summit (March 31-April 2) in Dickson, TN; Sisters Prayer Fellowship for Revival of the Nations of Central Asia (April 19-21) in Kazakhstan; Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offering (April 24). Cover these events in prayer, asking God to energize, encourage, and enable women.

NOW AVAILABLE

\$8.00

PLUS SHIPPING AND HANDLING
Order yours today!

LET US PURSUE

**2005 WNAC
PROGRAM &
PLAN BOOK**

SERVICE

BUILD a wall. Decorate or furnish wall decorations for a local nursing facility, parsonage, or room of the church.

FOCUS on needs in your neighborhood. Encourage women who live in the same area to plan some sort of neighborhood outreach. The book, *When God is the Life of the Party* offers suggestions for this.

CELEBRATE Easter through a community service project.

STUDY

UTILIZE the mini Bible study on p. 17.
HIGHLIGHT the book review on p. 12.
Discuss ways that you could go into the neighborhood and minister through your home.

PRESENT an overview of beliefs of Buddhism and Shintoism, the religions of Japan.

NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Bath towel sets.
Please no phone cards at this time.

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

MISSIONS

HIGHLIGHT church building projects. (Nehemiah Project in Spain, new churches in Central Asia, property needs in Clarksville, TN, Fredricksburg, VA, and Sugarland, TX.)

SEND an Easter greeting (e-card or email to a missionary or chaplain.

READ the modern Nehemiah story together (p. 7). Locate Tashkent on a world map. Pray for God's power and protection upon this tenacious group of believers.

OUR WEBSITE
www.nafwb.org/wnac
Contact us:
wnac@nafwb.org

DOWNLOADABLE MISSIONS STUDY COURSE

LOOKING FOR A MISSIONS STUDY? *Path to God's Glory* comes with a leader's guide and session sheets. It's free; it's downloadable. (Adobe Acrobat Reader required). It's for individuals or small groups.

Find the study at www.pathtogodsglory.com under the Path to God's Glory menu. This is a non-FWB church website.

PRAYER

GLEAN ideas from the PreEaster Week of Prayer packet. If your WAC group has not received a packet, call 1-877-767-7662.

PARTNER in prayer with women attending the Central Asia Women's Prayer Fellowship, April 19-21. Women in this region wear headscarves (1 Corinthians 11). Purchase or make inexpensive scarves as prayer reminders.

SEND a representative to the World Prayer Summit 2005, March 31-April 2. Call FWB International Missions (1-877-767-7736) for information.

PRAY for church building projects worldwide.

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

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for all you gave to Desert Hills Free Will Baptist Church. God has blessed us with our own building and we have so much room to grow. God bless you.

Sarah Howard
Bend, OR

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for remembering me as I am away from home. Your gifts are always helpful and put to good use. Thank you for all of your prayers and for your concern for college students. You are a blessing to me and I am sure you are to many others as well. WNAC women are truly generous and dedicated to serving Him.

Keri Bartlett
Castaic, CA (FWBBC)

Dear WNAC,

My sister and I would like to thank you for your generous gift and especially your prayers. God has definitely answered my prayer and met a need that I had through your generosity. God's timing is always perfect, and it is so sweet to trust in Jesus.

I (Brooke) am graduating from Southeastern this year and I covet your prayers as I seek God's will for my future. Please know how much you are a blessing to my family. We are very thankful for all you do.

Brooke and Sarah Raper
Windsor, CO (SFWBC)

Dear WNAC,

Cristina and I would like to express our gratitude for what you have done for us in 2004. Thank you for your

prayers and your sacrificial giving. May God bless you in all that you do for His kingdom. Thank you so much.

Matt and Cristina Price
France

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the gift card and phone cards. You'll never know how much it meant to me. Last week it arrived on a day that I really needed it. I couldn't help but burst into tears of joy. Thank you all so much.

Kyla Guin
Colorado Springs, CO (SFWBC)

Dear WNAC,

Jan/Feb 2005 issue is good. I especially enjoyed "I Found Love" (Xin Ya Zhang's testimony) and "Reading, Writing, and Restaurant" (Shannon McWhorter). Tracy's (Jennette) article was good, too. I'm happy to see more practical stuff in the magazine. We sure need more "acting" and "doing" and less "preaching." Thank you also for the Provision Closet. I wish I had one here in Belo Horizonte! I've been to several stores shopping for a mattress pad and sheets, but got discouraged after I saw the prices.

Rejane Eagleton
Brazil

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for the financial support that you have generously given to my missions account. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is greatly appreciated. May the Lord richly bless all of you for the hard work you do to further the kingdom of God.

Kristen Wilson
Brazil

HELP! I'M A MOM

bright ideas for mothers from mothers

Potty training tips.

1. Wait until they are ready. Don't be afraid to quit and try again later if they haven't made some progress in a month or so.

2. Begin by taking them to the potty as a fun thing until they actually go in the potty—then make a big deal out of it.

3. Some of my kids were what I call dribblers, in that they went a little bit every 15 minutes. Others would wait until their bladder was full and go about every hour. Knowing your child's pattern

will help you remember to take him/her to the bathroom about the time you think they should have to go again.

4. Don't use Pull-ups around the house. Reserve them only for going to town, church, at night etc. (Otherwise, you'll just get lazy and rely on them when you are busy.) I've even used the cotton underwear with rubber pants over them so children can still feel they've wet their pants but it doesn't soak through.

5. I always waited until spring to train my children because there are fewer clothes to pull down or remove.

6. Cut out all drinks after 6 p.m. except for a drink right before bedtime.

I know everybody probably already knows these tips, but hope it helps.

Becky Walker, Heads FWB, Cedar Hill, TN

NEXT ISSUE: Preteens and modesty. What principles should you teach? What guidelines should you follow?

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



* Nine women (and three small babes) from the Third Church of Angre in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa met November 6, 2004, to organize as Women Active for Christ. The group, who plans to meet monthly, selected a patterned cloth for uniforms, identifying them as a group. These active women have already involved themselves in labors of love. They presented a Christmas program of songs, Scripture and a skit. The group also planned and prepared the all church meal, December 26, 2004.

* Women Active for Christ at First FWB Church, Wagoner, OK, each brought fruit and a basket, Friday evening, December 3, as they gathered to prepare fruit baskets. The following day, they delivered their finished products to shut-ins, elderly, and needy in the community. This newly-organized group of 21 women had so much fun assembling the 23 baskets and were so blessed by the response that they plan to make 50 this next Christmas season.

* The Ladies Bible Class at Bradley Freewill Baptist Church, Bradley, WV, demonstrated a typical day in an African medical clinic during a November 2004, churchwide missions fair. One woman posed as a maternity patient; another role-played a clinic helper. A third woman gave



PICTURED: 1. Women of 3rd Church of Angre, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. 2. (l-r) Glenna Murphy, Retha Adkins, and Sheila Williams participate in Bradley, WV, WAC missions fair. 3. WAC of First FWB Church, Wagoner, OK, with Christmas baskets they prepared for the community. 4. & 5. WNAC bookkeeper Martha Harris hints at future plans concerning her retirement.

Scripture. The group distributed missionary prayer cards of Alice Smith and the Verlin Anderson family who are involved in community health evangelism. This well-received event focused on a specific ministry in each of seven fields represented (Japan, Africa, Spain, Cuba, Brazil, Uruguay, France) and included a typical food from each country.

✿ December 2004 ended a longtime labor of love as Martha Harris, the WNAC office bookkeeper, retired. Martha came to WNAC at a critical time and has served the office faithfully for the past ten years. Martha's plans include fishing and spending time with her already retired husband, James.

CORRECTIONS

SEP/OCT 04. The organizational meeting of Arkansas' state WAC occurred at the Willoughby Church in Warren, AR, not in Willoughby, AR.

NOV/DEC 04. The name of Beulah Morlan was incorrectly listed as Beulah Martin.

CoLaborer regrets these errors.

Is your group involved in a special project or noteworthy endeavor? Share your

LABORS OF LOVE

SEND NEWS AND PHOTOS:
EMAIL: sarah@nafwb.org
MAIL: P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002



Debbie Griffin



Doug Little



Angela Emerick



Vicki Sturgill



Fern Phillips



Lynette Morgan

PURSUE HIS HEART

2005 WNAC NATIONAL RETREAT

MARCH 3-5, 2005

Chateau on the Lake
Resort Hotel
Branson, MO

THURSDAY (March 3)

4:00-7:30 P.M.

REGISTRATION AND CHECK-IN

7:30

Pursue His Heart in Intimacy (Part 1)

Congregational singing

Welcome: **Marjorie Workman**

WNAC Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Special Music

Offering

Message: **Debbie Griffin**

Missionary to Japan

Fun Time: **Shirley Jackson**

Missouri State WAC President

11:30

QUIET TIME

FRIDAY (March 4)

9:00-10:15

Pursue His Heart in Worship and Praise

Congregational singing

Prayer

Concert: **Doug Little**

Director of Stateside Development

Free Will Baptist International Missions

10:15-10:45

BREAK

10:45-12:00

Pursue His Heart for the World

Congregational Singing

Prayer

Special Music

Presentation: **Verla Fletcher**, Coordinator

Angela Emerick

Student Missions Representative

Vicki Sturgill

Missionary to Brazil

Fern Phillips,

Former Teacher in Brazil

Missions Offering

FREE TIME

12:00-7:30

Pursue His Heart in Intimacy (Part II)

7:30

Congregational Singing

Prayer

Special Music

Message: **Debbie Griffin**

Missionary to Japan

11:30

QUIET TIME

Saturday (March 5)

9:00

Pursue His Heart in Prayer

Congregational Singing

Prayer

Special Music

Message: **Lynette Morgan**

Missionary to Cote d'Ivoire/Central Asia

Closing Prayer

GOD OF ANOTHER CHANCE



DEBE'S DELIGHTS

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

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

I wrote my friend telling her how a member of my family had confessed a sin. I shared my heartache over the situation. I asked for her advice. Her words are still engrained in my mind, "Not only do we serve the God of a second chance, but we serve a God of another chance." I know that statement to be true because I have read 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He is the God of another chance.

I began to think about this God of another chance. He gives me another chance to trust Him. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). Every day He gives me opportunities to trust Him—another chance. The old hymn says it best: "Simply trusting every day, trusting through a stormy way; even when my faith is small, trusting Jesus—that is all."

The God of another chance gives me another chance to test Him. My favorite phrase in "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" says, "how I've proved Him o'er and o'er." I truly have done just that. I have had chance upon chance to prove

(test) God. Malachi 3 records God's dealings with Israel's failure to pay tithes. In all of the scolding, He makes a marvelous statement, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." I have tested God time and time again. He has proven true.

The God of another chance gives me another chance to testify of Him. "...declare among the people his doings" (Psalm 9:11). If I began right now to share the blessings of the Lord upon my life, I could not live long enough to tell it all. Sad to say, I don't always take the opportunities He offers to me to testify of His goodness, greatness and grace. "He's been so good to me: My needs He has supplied, my longings satisfied; He's been so good to me. The Lord's been so good to me." If I would only sing the chorus of Doug Little's song, I would be taking advantage of another chance to testify of Him.

He is so much more than the God of a second chance. Most assuredly, He is the God of another chance.

The SISTERS' PRAYER FELLOWSHIP FOR REVIVAL OF THE NATIONS OF CENTRAL ASIA APRIL 19-21, 2005

One Central Asian church leader shares His expectations...

FOR CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN:
"Men come together all the time and the women stay at home. Women have an active part of ministry. We feel we need to do something for them. Women are active and need a bigger vision for church planting, for the nations. We want to bring them together; they will take things back to their churches, to their husbands. We want to see a big prayer movement."

FOR AMERICAN WOMEN:
"We want them to know what God is doing in C.A. They will listen, participate, pray. They can get the fire and take it home."

Pray for these US women traveling to Central Asia.

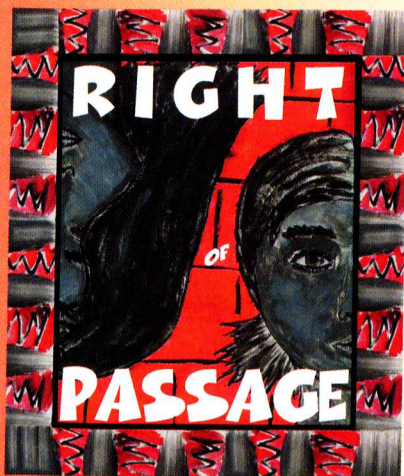
Belinda Adaire
Barbara Bowen
Cathy Corley

Angela Emerick
Karen Ferguson
Sarah Fletcher

Ellen Hingst
Shirley Jackson
Lynette Morgan

Jody Sullivan
Debe Taylor
Marjorie Workman





GROWING UP CHRISTIAN IN CENTRAL ASIA

MALLS, in-vogue fashion, the latest hits. You'll find these things throughout Central Asia. However, for young people growing up Christian in this region, these things hold little attraction. They don't desire to be like Americans or other Westerners, they desire to be like Christ.

BACKGROUND. Central Asia is part of what used to be referred to as "behind the iron curtain" or eastern bloc communist countries. The region consists of several former Soviet republics including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. For many years, churches in this region had to meet in secret. Now, churches are officially recognized, but persecution does still exist in some areas.

NO TEENAGERS. In Central Asia, the concept of teenager is unknown. People usually classify themselves as children, young people, and adults. Young people would include persons ages 13 or 14 to ages 24 or 25. Churches don't have youth groups, they have young peoples' groups.

ALL ABOUT CHURCH. A Central Asian Christian's life revolves around the church and young people are actively involved in its ministries. They work in church soup kitchens and in summer camps. Many volunteer time at a Christian orphanage. These young people plan and lead Bible studies and weekend retreats. Recently, two girls sponsored a day camp during a school break. Few have grown up in the church. Many have come to faith in Christ in the past few years. Central Asian Christians are committed to evangelism.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY. Family and friends are important. It's part of Central Asian culture. Young people often meet in groups at someone's house. Not wanting ungodly influences, Christian young people tend to hang together. Rather than go the mall, they prefer to go with friends to the mountains. This group emphasis sets the tone for their relationships. Most Christian young people aren't into dating. They interact within the group; then, in time, couples get married.

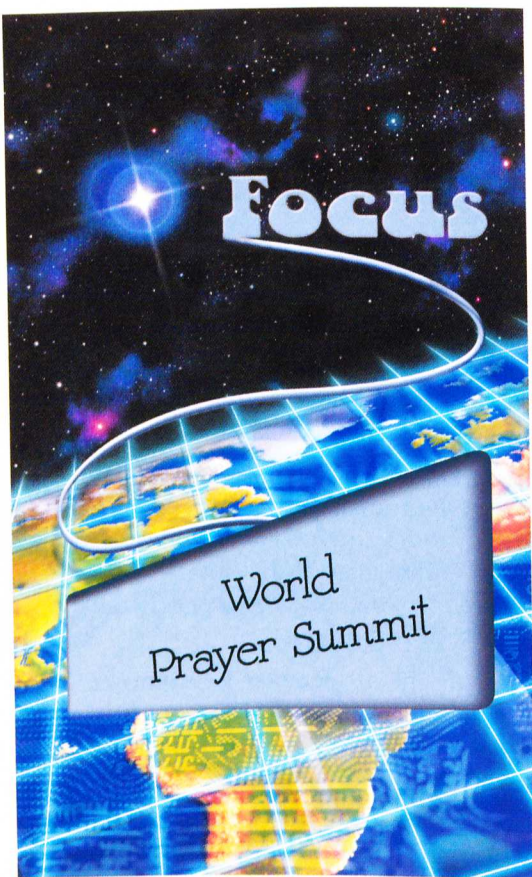
SCHOOL. School can be a challenge to faith. With few Christians in this region of the world, believers at any age find themselves standing alone. With no FCA, Youth for Christ, or even a mention of religion in the classroom, schools in Central Asia are godless places.

NO CARS, NO CASH. Most young people depend upon public transportation. In fact, in one city, no one in the whole church owns a car. The lack of extra spending money makes giving to the church even more valuable.

HIGH COMMITMENT

The commitment level of Christian young people in Central Asia is high, probably because faith is not easy. Unlike the apathy that exists among so many church teens in America, Christian young people there possess a fire and enthusiasm for the gospel. And it's contagious. The church in Central Asia continues to grow.





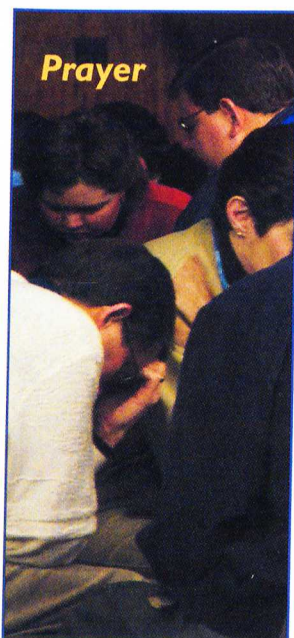
Pray:

- for individuals who who will attend the World Prayer Summit.
- for an outpouring of God's power and overshadowing of God's presence during the event.
- for FWBIM personnel as they prepare and lead the weekend.
- for Dr. Charles Shepson and workshop leaders as they seek God's guidance and His message for this group of intercessors.
- for participants to gain a deeper awareness of the significance of prayer for world evangelism.



“PRAY FOR US.” God’s servants, from the days of the Apostle Paul until now have voiced this request. Yet, how many Christians fail to respond because they feel awkward, inept, and ill-equipped in prayer. Sensing this need, Free Will Baptist International Missions personnel envisioned an event that would assist and encourage persons to pray, not only for missionaries, but also for a harvest of souls throughout the world. World Prayer Summit 2004, January 16-18, drew around 100 participants from several states. Open to pastors and laity, men and women, the conference included both general and breakout sessions. Its weekend schedule also provided time for private, small group and corporate prayer. Speakers focused on the need for prayer for the world and offered creative approaches and methods for prayer. The responses of attendees confirmed the value of this type of workshop/retreat. World Prayer Summit 2005, March 31-April 2, will feature special speaker, Dr. Charles Shepson. Workshop leaders include former missionary Tom McCullough, missionary Ruth McDonald, and IM Stateside Development Director Doug Little. This year’s Thursday evening through Saturday afternoon Summit will convene at Camp Garner Creek Retreat Center, in Dickson, TN. WNAC encourages prayer leaders, as well as any woman with an interest in intercessory prayer for missions, to attend. All groups are asked to cover in prayer this gathering of people with such world-changing potential.





Other Prayer Concerns



2004 Prayer Summit attendees said....

I learned new dynamics for making my prayers more effective.

*I was again reminded that the battle is the Lord's and
He moves when His people pray.*

*My praying has been shallow in regard to my missionaries.
From now on I will be more focused.*

It gave me ways to show people how to pray for missionaries.

*It helped me remember the importance of praying...specific
prayers for [missionaries] and not just blanket prayers for them.*

It has shown me that my prayers do matter.

*This was an unbelievable opportunity to learn so much about
prayer and experience prayer in new ways.*

*How wonderful to have a time of true peace and quiet dedicated
to learning more about prayer.*

*The Prayer Summit allowed me to realize that the most effective
means of supporting missions is through communion with God.*

*Prayer Summit 2004 was a break from life on earth. It was like
stepping into another world where there were suddenly no distractions—an upper room experience in itself.*

*I came very discouraged, but I've been refreshed,
refocused, and redirected.*

I was challenged to be the prayer warrior God wants me to be.

—Pray for families of victims and for survivors of the recent tsunami in Southeast Asia.

—Pray for open doors for evangelism as Christian missionaries and relief workers aid in this enormous disaster.

—Pray for the family of Oklahoma pastor and former Japan missionary Jerry Banks who was killed in an auto accident at the onset of a missions trip to Mexico.

—Pray for rapid completion of church buildings in New Brunswick, Canada (Jeff Crabtree) and Sierra Vista, AZ (Jerry Rayburn).

—Pray for missionary Dexter Guin (Colorado Springs, CO) as he conducts a Sunday school campaign culminating with a big day the last Sunday in March.

—Pray for new missionary George Lemelin, as he ministers to Chippewa Indians on the White Earth Reservation in Ogema, MN.

—Pray for the persecuted church around the world.

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18

CULTIVATING a Garden of Grace

adapted from the 2004 WNAC Convention seminar, HGTV-WNAC Style,

by Joyce Little

LEARNING TO GROW IN GRACE and extending grace to others is much like cultivating a garden. It begins down on our knees breaking up the soil. It takes not only planting beautiful flowers, but also watering, and weeding.

Living plants placed in the ground and forgotten will die, yet how preposterous to create a lovely garden using artificial or silk plants and flowers.

Every morning, we should ask the Lord to cultivate our hearts, making them sensitive to His divine leading for the day.

Though beautiful to gaze upon at a distance, up close, the artificial becomes obvious. Grace is an ongoing process; grace must be genuine.

Just as offering a cool drink of water refreshes a thirsty gardener, extending grace to a sun-parched soul refreshes faith. When I was a little girl, our mother suggested that we give the postman a cool drink

of water on hot summer days. I learned early the blessing of giving a cup of water on behalf of the Lord.

The Scripture tells us to continue to do "good works," working out our faith. We do not earn our salvation. Grace is a gift from the Lord. But we can learn how to flesh out the redeeming grace of God in our own lives. The greatest difference between grace and good deeds is in who receives the recognition and glory. When we extend grace to others, we

of the fruits of the Spirit, grace is strongly associated with these qualities. Our garden must be cultivated with divine grace in order to produce spiritual fruit. Every morning, we should ask the Lord to cultivate our hearts, making them sensitive to His divine leading for the day.

EXTEND THE GRACE OF GOD TO OTHERS—

THROUGH DIVINE APPOINTMENTS

It all began with a one-dollar set of soap powder cubes. In my daily quiet times, I ask the Lord to use me in whatever way He would see fit for that particular day. One day, early in our married life and ministry as I drove past a neighbor's house, I noticed a car in the driveway. I thought this unusual since both the husband and the wife worked. I pulled into my drive, went inside my house, and set out to take care of household duties. But I could not stop thinking about the car in the driveway next door. I began praying, asking God what He wanted me to do.

are ambassadors of grace on behalf of the Lord Himself. Others can tell when we are being pretentious. Blessings only come from authentic Christians.

We must spend time in the Word in order to flesh out a walk that resembles Christ. When we grow in grace, we are not only growing in our faith, but also in our walk as believers. Though not listed as one

"Go and visit Pam," God said. I'd visited right after the birth of her daughter Nicole. I didn't know why God wanted me to visit Pam. "Oh, God. I can't go right now. I don't have a baby present."

"Go visit Pam." I didn't want to go empty handed. I remembered that someone had recently given me a set of bath powder cubes. "Okay, God. I think I will take a personal gift to Pam."

I wrapped up the simple, very inexpensive gift, walked across my yard and knocked on Pam's door. When she came to the door, I could tell she had been crying. I was alarmed, hoping nothing had happened to the baby. I told her that I had been praying for her and wanted to drop by and see if she was okay. She burst into tears again and shared with me her story. Thus began the journey for Pam to receive Christ as her own personal Savior. The garden of grace was being cultivated.

THROUGH OUR WORDS

It is impossible to measure the power of spoken words. How much has the world been impacted by a simple conversation between two people? The Bible says that "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11). When we extend grace through our words, we speak blessing and affirmation into a fellow believer's heart.

Florence Littauer, in her book, *Silver Boxes*, writes that giving words of blessing to others is like handing someone a silver box. As a teacher, I keep a silver box on display in

my classroom to remind me of the power I possess in the words I share with my students each day. Words can bring life and words can bring death.

Pastors. Extend a gift of words to your pastor. Decorate a silver box. Have members of the congregation write words of blessing for the pastor. Collect and place these in the box, then present it to him. Instruct him to read one message a day as long as they last. Do the same for your pastor's wife. She also needs to know you care.

GRACE TO FORGIVE

Extending words of grace to those who have wronged us is challenging. Forgiveness is seldom easy.

We must ask God to empower us to quickly forgive another when we have been offended. "A soft answer turneth away wrath..." (Proverbs 15:1).

Church family. Before you head to church, ask God to direct you to those who may need an encouraging word.

Ask God to lead you to those who may need your prayers. Offer to write down the nature and time of the request. Remember to pray for this believer. After spending time in prayer, write a simple note of encouragement letting them know that you have been praying.

Those who testify. Use a planning calendar to write down the names of people who publicly share their personal testimony. Follow up with a simple note of encour-

agement to that brother or sister. Satan surely has voiced discouragement for their stand for Christ. Remind them of God's faithfulness.

THROUGH OUR ACTIONS

New Arrivals. Nothing does more for a Christian's spirit and offers greater blessing to the testimony of Christ than giving anonymously. A great place to start is in the church nursery.

Why not write an anonymous note of encouragement for a new parent and slip it in the baby's diaper bag? If the family has financial needs and you have the means to help, put a five, ten, or twenty dollar bill down in the diaper bag and say nothing. What a blessing to know that you've possibly been part of an answer to prayer.

Upon the arrival of a newborn, take your camera to the hospital. Ask to take a picture of the baby with the mother. Or have your picture taken, holding the baby. Develop or download the picture and send it to the mother. Share your commitment to love her child and do your part to introduce this precious one to Christ.

Birthdays. Celebrate the birthdays of those in your church family. Remind individuals that the day they were born was a special gift from God. Call and sing Happy Birthday over the phone to a child or senior citizen. You will probably make their day. Send birthday cards, making your message personal. Include some stickers or fast food gift certificates in children's cards.

Crisis times. Help someone within your church family during a time of crisis. One of my most humbling experiences occurred when I broke my leg and wore a full leg cast for over a year. Very faithfully, a certain lady in our church showed up and ran the vacuum cleaner for us. I would wake up to its hum. This precious lady extended grace to me and my family over and over. Yes, we definitely felt undeserving, unmerited favor.

Guest Speakers. If your church's guest speaker is not staying in a home, consider making their motel or hotel room a home away from home. If the speaker is a woman or if an evangelist is blessed to have his wife with him, go ahead of time, turn on a lamp and place fresh flowers in the room. Perhaps a basket of fruit, healthy snacks and *CHOCOLATE* could also sweeten their arrival.

If the stay is an extended one (over two days), consider a gift basket with coupons from community businesses to use at their leisure.

IN OUR HOMES

Just as the widow of Zarephath ministered to Elisha, my desire has been to minister to the ministering. Everywhere I go, I try to pick up ideas to share with those who enter our home.

Preparation. Think of the places in your home that guests will see and where they will sit. Prepare ahead by walking through their visit. Begin at the front door. Welcome them in with a smile and a hug. Light on...front door open...praise music playing. Set the tone for the atmosphere of grace as they step through the door.

Overnight guests offer more grace opportunities. Think of ways to pamper the persons God brings under your roof

Just for Men. Write a welcome card. Include a calling card so he may keep in touch with those he loves. Place the cards on the nightstand under a lighted lamp. You will grace his life and his wife's.

Send flowers to a speaker's wife to enjoy during his absence. (I've



Grace can be personalized when God's Riches Are Creatively Expressed.

pleasantly received a couple of these arrangements. These people truly let me know that they appreciated my husband coming to their church. Don't you know I was proud of what Doug was doing to build the kingdom.)

Just for Women. Extend grace and blessing to a female guest before she arrives. Write a welcome note and place it on her pillow. If she will be away from children, consider attaching a calling card. Provide stationary and stamps. (I hand-make varied sizes of note cards, cutting them with creative patterned scissors. I stamp them with gold, bundle them together with a gold ribbon and place them on the foot of the bed.)

Type a personal note or write a verse and place it in a pretty picture frame. I welcome our guests with Psalm 19:14, *"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord..."* This serves as a gentle reminder that we want to speak only words reflecting God's grace in our home.

Make a basket of toiletries available in case she's forgotten something.

Offer a hot, renewing bubble bath. Make the bathroom an oasis.

If you have a garden tub, consider the following. Draw a hot, bubbly bath, light a simple candle, play some gentle classical or praise instrumental music, pour a chilled glass of fruit water, and roll up a current women's magazine for reading. Invite your lady guest to enjoy a long, leisurely rest. This is one way to tell your guest she matters to you. She will feel graced by the love and care you've extended.

Missionaries. Arrange a manicure or pedicure for a missionary or ministering guest. You could do this yourself, or make an appointment for her at a shop.

When financially possible, take a new missionary shopping and buy her a dress to wear on deputation. Or give a gift certificate for this purpose.

Multiple Missionaries. When we've been fortunate to have more than one missionary family at our church, I've hosted luncheons in my home where missionary women could take their shoes off and relax. I choose simple menus and use bamboo trays with plastic lace place mats. Guests can take trays with them and mingle all over the house, catching up and renewing precious friendships, getting



Cultivate a garden of grace in your everyday life.

acquainted and cultivating friendships of grace.

Upon departure, place a basket by the front door filled with inexpensive, clear gift bags containing such things as small loofa boards, foot cream, and a nail brush. Include the Scripture, *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace..."*

After a guest leaves, immediately put a note in the mail (before they get home), thanking them for the blessing and pleasure of having them in your home.

IN THE WORKPLACE

If you work in the public arena, make your workspace a grace place. When coworkers enter your workspace, intentionally make a statement of your faith through your words, actions, and reactions. Jesus said in the New Testament that if

He is lifted up He will draw all men unto Himself. Let Christ be seen in your walk and in your work. If you have a personal working space, frame or post Psalm 19:14.

THROUGH OUR EVERYDAY LIVES

The Bible is rich with instruction on cultivating grace in our lives. Grace is the state in which you and I receive God's favor, the divine influence upon our heart and its reflection in our walk with Christ. Extending grace to others involves a willingness to do simple acts of kindness on God's behalf. Perhaps we can all be prompted to explore some ways in which we, as believers and sisters in Christ, can cultivate grace in our daily walk with others.

Grace is often explained as **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**. However, grace can be personalized

when **God's Riches Are Creatively Expressed**. This kind of grace doesn't mean just spending money, but rather spending ourselves to touch another person's life on God's behalf. Lift Him up. Begin on your knees, with heart and arms reaching heavenward for direction. Cultivate a garden of grace in your everyday life.



Joyce Little attends Donelson FWB Church in Nashville, TN. Her husband Doug works for FWBIM as Director of Stateside Development.

Joyce finds her mission field in Nashville's Public Schools where she teaches English as a Second Language to children from all nations of the world. The Littles have enjoyed 26 years of pastoral ministry and both share a passion to win the peoples of the earth to Jesus Christ.

What is Grace?

Grace is forgiving when it doesn't seem we can.

Grace is denying ourselves for the sake of friends.

Grace is loyalty when we really want to flee.

Grace is giving up our wants for someone else's needs.

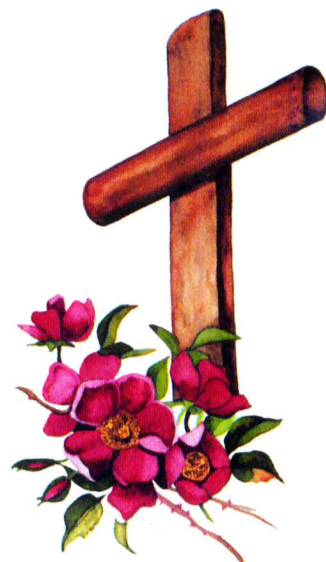
Grace is remaining faithful when the world says run away.

Grace is bowing upon our knees to humbly pray for others.

Grace is showing love to the undeserving.

Grace is Jesus Christ upon the cross

Giving us eternal life through His great selfless love.



—Marcie Walters
Ovett, MS

BEHIND THE SCENES

A LOOK INTO THE LIFE OF A FWB DIRECTOR'S WIFE



ANITA FORLINES, wife of FWB International Missions

Director, James Forlines, claims a bountifully rich Christian heritage. She holds wonderful, almost euphoric memories as a preacher's daughter. Growing up, she never knew of the struggles or challenges of ministry. Her parents, Owen and Christine Ganey, now both deceased, chose to accentuate positives and live their faith with joy. Anita credits her parents as the greatest spiritual influences on her life. Their faith and trust in God and in people are qualities she desires for herself and for her family.

Anita came to know Christ at age five in her parsonage home. One of her most cherished memories is leading one of her own children to Christ in a parsonage, as well. She counts "When the Roll is Called up Yonder," a catalyst that led to their son's conversion, among her favorite hymns.

Married since 1977, the Forlines have three children: Daniel (25) teaching at an international Christian academy in Moscow; Rachel (21) pursuing an English Education degree at Free Will Baptist Bible College; and Rebekah (20) studying business at FWBBC.

Anita considers her current teaching position in the FWBBC Teacher Education Department an honor. A student there from 1975-1978, as a young wife, Anita suspended college studies to work and later stay home caring for her children. When the youngest reached school age, Anita returned to school, graduating from Lyon

College in 1992. She has since earned a Master's Degree in reading from MTSU.

Anita's interests range from education to domestication. She's a people person who loves her occupational field, whether teaching, doing research, or learning on her own. She enjoys scrapbooking, stamping, cooking and decorating for dinners or events. She plays the piano, watches HGTV, and absolutely loves being home.

Anita considers her role in ministry as one of an encourager. She enjoys traveling with her husband, getting to know missionaries "up close and personal," especially desiring to encourage missionary women. She also tries to encourage the IM support staff. She believes that God has called her husband to FWBIM, and thus her, to the task.

From pastor's wife to denominational director's wife, her ministry role has changed considerably since moving to Nashville in 1998. For the first time in her life, she is no longer part of a pastor's family. The Forlines are members of Cofer's Chapel FWB Church, where Anita says she's still trying to find her niche. It's been a time of searching and trying to redefine her life.

Still her husband's partner, human refuge and biggest fan, yet, due to James' heavy travel schedule, the two are often apart. She fre-

quently finds herself home alone, assuming many new responsibilities. She views this as part of her role as help-

meet and a contribution to the cause. Her loneliness is a small part of her service, allowing her to depend upon the Lord. When major things have happened while James was away, Anita says, "God has supplied what I needed."

For example, when Anita's father died, James was in India. Obtaining the news through a secretary's email, James was very concerned for his wife and managed to phone her. As they talked, she heard a knock. God had led a three-generation family from their former pastorate to her door.

Though Anita admits concern as her husband travels through potentially dangerous areas, she is consciously thankful for traveling mercies and God's protection.

Anita offers the advice of missionary Laura Belle Barnard, who said that one in ministry should have the hide of a rhinoceros with a heart of love. She desires prayer that her children will always put God first in their lives, that God would enable James for the task at FWBIM, give her strength to daily trust and be a godly example, and equip their family to withstand the darts of the evil one as they pursue their passionate commitment to world evangelism.



I WANT TO BE A MISSIONARY

Words FOR WOMEN



Executive Secretary-Treasurer

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

I was so excited. Real live missionaries were coming to our little country church. What would they look like? Would they act differently than the people in my church? What would they wear? For several weeks, my pastor had been talking about missions and missionaries. Now two were coming to our church.

Zalene Lloyd* and Volena Wilson came, spoke and left an unforgettable impression on a junior age girl back in the early fifties. Many missionaries have crossed my path since those first two women, but none have triggered the same excitement. First encounters are lasting and important to young minds. Volena even spent the night at my house. I listened with awe to her stories. I wanted to be a missionary.

From that experience, I began dreaming of going to Bible College to become a missionary. In GTA (Go Tell Auxiliary) and YPA (Young People's Auxiliary), the two youth programs sponsored by WNAC, I learned a lot about missions. My pastor and youth director encouraged me, giving me opportunities to memorize scriptures and work at the altar with young people. I attended evangelism classes and by the time I was a teenager, I was teaching a Sunday school class. Eagerly I shared my faith and took a stand at school—refusing to play basketball in shorts or practice the senior play on Wednesday nights. I was planning to be a missionary. One day, I would go overseas to do great things for God.

In college I took missions courses under the late Laura Belle Barnard, former FWB missionary to India. I learned and experienced the power of prayer, the importance of establishing an indigenous church, and the realization that the Kingdom is greater than Free Will Baptists. The college's Christian service program provided me opportunities to teach classes, work with delinquent youth, and serve as youth leader in a local church. While working at my job at the Jewish synagogue next to the college, I sometimes exchanged dialogue about the Old and New Testaments with the Rabbi. Once, I was even reprimanded for sharing Jesus stories with the Jewish kids. I was training to be a missionary. I was anticipating doing great things for God.

Forty years have passed since college and I have not gone overseas. Instead, I became

first a pastor's wife with all its opportunities and privileges, then a college dean, affording me many opportunities to encourage, confront, guide, admonish, and teach. My heart's desire was to mentor a younger generation of women to faithful service and Kingdom building.

What happened? What about my plans as a missionary? I learned an important lesson in discipleship. We do not have to go to the jungle or the desert to be a missionary. We do have to be obedient wherever He leads. Acts 1:8 tells us that the world is the field. We are to be witnesses wherever we are, whether in our Jerusalem (home), Judea, Samaria or throughout the uttermost part of the earth (overseas). It means keeping our priorities and interests in order. Christ must have free reign in our life to place us where He wills.

Being a missionary means serving in small and simple ways as we walk through life. Naaman, captain of the king's army was cleansed of leprosy because a little maid was willing to speak up and tell her mistress about the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 5). A little boy's lunch surrendered to Jesus in the desert where there was no food, filled five thousand men plus the women and children with a family style fish dinner (Matthew 14, Mark 6, John 6).

Few believers knowingly achieve great things for God. But Jesus said in Matthew 25, those who feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in strangers, clothe the poor, and visit the sick and prisoners are the ones truly serving the King.

What are the implications of Jesus' words? We are all Kingdom builders. Some just happen to serve in foreign countries—we call them missionaries. In Luke 11:35 we read "take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness." We are to be light to a dark world wherever we are. This could mean being more generous in sharing our material goods. It may mean investing more time pursuing His plans. For a single, it may mean surrendering marriage for maximum service for God. Often we express a willingness to do great thing for God, but resist the Lord's commands to do seemingly small things. As Rick Warren suggests, let's bear as much fruit as possible given our gifts, opportunities, and potential—wherever we are.

*During the writing of this article, Zalene Lloyd (Breedon) was promoted to glory

*"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields:
for they are white already to harvest."*

— John 4:35

II THE HARVEST

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April 24, 2005

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