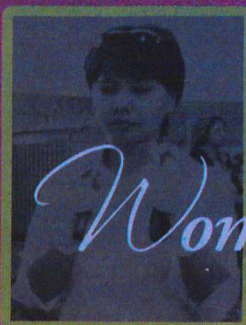


COLLABORER

November • December 2005



Joy Snatchers

ONE MORE CURVE

Make it Personal

A gift of great joy

**PEACE IN THE
MIDST OF THE
STORM**

Women Nationally Active for Christ

Labor

of my **heart**

TESTS

"Katrina was a big, vicious storm, it must be said. But Katrina was not the worst case scenario. Katrina was a test."

(TIME, September 12, 2005)

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is not a test. This is the real deal."

(New Orleans mayor C. Ray Nagin)

Was it or wasn't it a test? In the wake of recent hurricanes, conflicting reports and unanswered questions abound. Who, if anyone, should shoulder responsibility or accept blame? Even greater issues—the loss of homes and towns and lives—have left Americans wondering and weary.



Sarah Fletcher

Yes, it was a test. Hurricane Katrina was a physical test, a pop quiz in emergency management, an exam to see whether remedial work since 9/11 has proven effective. The retest of Rita showed improvement.

Hurricane Katrina was a test of character. Violence and widespread looting in both Katrina's and Rita's aftermaths scored low marks in morality and integrity. Christian Emergency Management founder Mary Marr quoted Dr. H. B. London as once saying, "What we are in any great event is what we have become prior to that event." Seeing what some in America "have become" was troubling.

Katrina was also a spiritual test. Overwhelmingly, the body of Christ responded. Those in hurricane ravaged areas testified that response and relief from local churches sustained them when government agencies could not get through to help.

However, Katrina's greatest tests loom ahead. Soon the American tendency to forget anything over two weeks old will rise its uncaring head. Media will move on to newer, sensational topics. The barrage of relief efforts and one-time gifts will cease as consciences soothe and citizens absolve themselves, having "done their part." Houses will be rebuilt and possessions regained, but what about lives? No doubt victims of these storms will face acute stress disorder—98% of those involved in 9/11 did. What will we do with their hurt?

This issue of CoLaborer invites us to pursue peace and joy, timely subjects for this season and for all storms of life. Hurricanes are not the only storms in the forecast. Political storms and emotional whirlwinds can rise without warning, claiming wide paths of devastation. In any storm, peace and joy are life-sustaining elements. Bottled water can soothe parched lips and wet thirsty tongues, but Christians can minister soothing words of spiritual healing and joy drawn from the wells of salvation. Franklin Graham noted, "The government can give people a house, but the church can give them a second chance."

The real deal? Yes, Katrina was real. Will we be real in our concern? Will we genuinely care for the displaced individuals God places in our lives? Pursuing joy and peace, will we share our finds with the hurting and the stressed?

Whether along the Gulf Coast, in war-torn Cote d'Ivoire, or within the murky waters of human relationships, the storms of life are real. Though we cannot always evacuate, we can find shelter in the One who whispered, "Peace, be still." We can "fear not." For into a stormy world one night, an angel proclaimed tidings of great joy to all people, bringing promise of peace on earth.

CoLABORER

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**OBSERVE WNAC
PRETHANKSGIVING
WEEK OF PRAYER**

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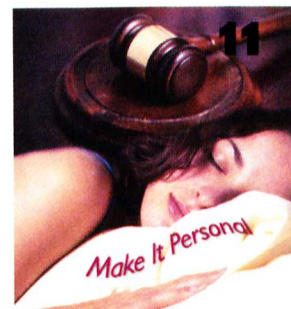
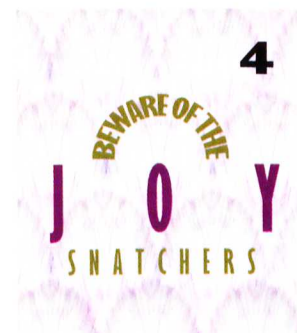
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COVER PHOTO: Bells at Central Asian Sisters' Prayer Fellowship
PHOTO CREDITS: p. 8—Katy Taylor; pp. 26-29—Danny Conn, J. L. Gore.

J **BEWARE OF THE** **Y**
0
S N A T C H E R S

by Joyce Little

I certainly did not want to miss out on joy. After all, a life full of joy was one of the blessings I expected when I surrendered my life to Christ.

I believe, at times, I counterfeited joy. I served the Lord with fervor thinking I was doing God a favor, helping Him out since He was so busy saving the world. I became the eternal optimist. I would see and speak of the sunny side of things, but keep the shadows inside my heart. Trying to make joy work, I sought to live by Winnie-the-Pooh's great wisdom: "If you can't say somethin' nice, don't say nothin' at all." I know that God called me to serve Him and I continue to do just that. But in my zeal to serve God and find joy, I almost overlooked it.

REASONS FOR JOY HEAVEN'S VIEWPOINT

A biblical study of joy reveals that joy is not a commodity that can be possessed. Joy is a result of seeking first the Kingdom of God. The Old Testament is full of scenarios when the Israelites celebrated joy. They really knew how

to party hearty. Yet, as with our twenty-first century feasts, many times their celebrations were self-centered. More perfect examples of joy can be found in God's words to His people. We are His joy.

THE LOST FOUND

Jesus' teachings to His followers contain reasons for joy. In Luke 15 we read the parables of things lost. The lost sheep: *"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after [the ONE] which is lost until he finds it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."*

The lost coin: *"Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."*

The lost loved one: The prodigal son. The Father throws a party when a wandering son returns. *"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother [my son] was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."* What a reason for joy.

Each of these lost/found parables point to a greater joy: salvation for our lost souls. *"...O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation....Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted" (Isaiah 12:1-3). "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psalm 51:10, 12).*

A PRODUCTIVE LIFE

In Ecclesiastes 5:18-20, we read, *"It is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and*

wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart."

What are the joys of our heart? Are we bearing fruit? Do we cultivate a desire to win the lost for Christ?

THE WORD OF GOD

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jeremiah 15:16). After languishing over a decision, there is no greater joy than to find that God's Word has an answer and gives direction.

ATTITUDE OF JOY THE HEART'S CHOOSING

Joy is not an emotion; it is not an experience. Joy is an attitude of the heart's choosing. Though many pursue it, only believers and followers of Christ can truly possess joy.

Galatians 5:22 names joy as the second part of the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit results from cultivating a life totally dependent on God and His Word. What goes in must come out. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

How can we ensure that our fruit will be tasty and beautiful to behold? By protecting the field in which the fruit is cultivated—our heart.

It is in times of uncertainty that the real test of the heart comes, like the sifting of wheat or the fiery purifying of gold. Can a nugget of joy be found? In an effort to be candid and honest, I confess. As I flesh out this journey to find joy, I often battle with joy snatchers. What are joy snatchers? They're the O's that come "in between."

BEWARE OF JOY OBLIGATIONS

Jesus first. Yourself last. And, Oh! Obligations. One of the surest ways to lose our feelings of joy is to become wrapped up in obligations.

Christian women face society's daily routines in much the same way non-believers do. We take responsibility to properly care for our family. This care spans everything from cradling the infant to carpooling the kids to ball practices, piano lessons, gymnastics, and whatever else cries for our support. If we work outside the home, we recognize that working women should also be dutiful and responsible to their employers. Added to that mix, as believers, we definitely should be involved in supporting our local churches. We find

ourselves obligated beyond our own human strength, crying out in exhaustion, "Oh, God, please bless me as I serve You."

BEWARE OF JOY OPPOSITION

Jesus first. Yourself last. And, Oh! Opposition. Opposition is sometimes blatant, but more often it's subtle. Isn't it just like Satan to entice us into believing that opposition must mean, "don't go there"?

"Don't stand up for what is right," whether it be at home, in the workplace, or among the comraderie of friends.

We may stand determined to weather the storm, but without the Lord's help, the storm will weather us. A number one way Satan defeats us is through feelings of being overwhelmed. This type of opposition will definitely and very quickly snatch our joy and reveal what is in our hearts.

Sometimes opposition to Christ may come to us in the form of a God-fearing believer.

BEWARE OF JOY OPPORTUNITIES

Jesus first. Yourself last. And, Oh! Opportunities. People often feel led to direct us concerning what tasks we should or should not do. They may even believe that God told them we should do something.

However, we should never feel pressured to make a certain choice, no matter how pure and noble, without first taking it to the Father's throne. We can be sure that God will call our heart to the same. Sometimes silence is His answer. Our service must be out of a pure heart and out of obedience to His calling—but not necessarily the result of a special calling.

God doesn't come to our door or phone us as a telemarketer giving us this "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity to serve Him. He does not tell us to "use it or lose it." His Word tells us that He speaks to us in a still, small voice. If we abide in His Word and cultivate a daily conversation with Christ, He guides our every step. Jesus first.

Have we lost opportunities to really make a difference in the kingdom of God because we were so busy serving? Did we ask the Heavenly Father what He would have us do? When someone extends us an opportunity to serve, we should also examine our motives. Will we be serving our own sense of pride? Yourself last.

BEWARE OF JOY OBSTACLES

Jesus first. Yourself last. And, Oh! Obstacles. Now, these can be real joy snatchers—but only if we allow them. Obstacles are those unforeseen boulders in the road or the solid walls we run smack into. Health. Financial

difficulty. Personal loss. Tragedy.

Obstacles are potentially the greatest joy snatchers of all. We often start out on top of the challenge determined to make the Lord proud. We seek to hurdle through a certain obstacle to show the world how wonderful it is to serve the Lord. He must have a plan to use this for our good. We put all of our energy into proving to the Lord that we trust Him instead of just trusting Him. We make the obstacle an action requiring response. As the old adage declares, the proof is in the pudding. We forget that the only real source of joy is Jesus Christ, and not what we do with the obstacles.

BEWARE OF JOY OBSESSIONS

Jesus first. Yourself last. And, Oh no! Now, we're getting deep and personal. Oh! Obsessions. You may be thinking, "Did I read this right? Anyone knows that believers should not be obsessed with anything." But deep in our

hearts we must admit that we struggle with issues others really cannot see. Perhaps it's perfectionism. A perfectionist would find it impossible to find time to pursue a spirit-led path to joy. She might make mistakes along the way. "Better to not try and never fail than to try and not succeed" is the perfectionist's motto.

Possessiveness is a mother's curse. From our wombs our souls cry out for our children. To let go feels as if the walls of our heart are being torn apart. But maybe God is calling us to let go, so that He can give back. Children are not necessarily the only objects of possessiveness. Some husbands find it very difficult to serve the Lord in a leadership role in the church because of the possessiveness of their wives. These women have

great difficulty in letting go and trusting. This is not choosing joy; it is choosing bondage.

Perhaps some of us struggle with the obsession of possessions. It could be that our financial circumstances have dictated fewer possessions, fueling our desire for possessions. Some of us have allowed possessions to possess us. Possessions require care, and a good steward takes good care of what God has given

**GOD DOESN'T COME TO OUR DOOR
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IF WE ABIDE IN HIS WORD
AND CULTIVATE A DAILY
CONVERSATION WITH CHRIST,
HE GUIDES OUR EVERY STEP.**

her. But sometimes God doesn't give; we just take it for ourselves. So the bondage begins.

Dealing with the past burdens so many Christian women today. True, there are hideous things that some people have forced upon others—abuse, abandon, and such. To speak of those things brings instant pain, as if it were rehashing that very moment. But, there is a place where the past can be healed. That place is found only in practicing the presence of Christ and experiencing the joy that He alone can give.

CELEBRATE
JOY
OMNISCIENCE

Jesus first. Yourself last. And what about O? Celebrate omniscience. Make an adjustment in our perspective. Place our trust in Jesus, the Omniscient One. Only He knows what joy snatchers loom in our future. Turn to Him. Psalms 16:11 says, *Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*"

He knows us even better than we know ourselves. The familiar gospel song asks, "How long has it been since you talked with the Lord and told Him your heart's hidden secrets?"

CELEBRATE
JOY
OMNIPRESENCE

O, celebrate omnipresence. The gospel song continues, "How long since you knew that He cared for you?" What a comfort to know that Jesus is always present with us. No matter what the in between, Christ's presence gives us hope and offers us peace. Zephaniah 3:17 assures that, *"The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."* Hebrews 13:5 confirms that this mighty, caring God in our midst will *never* leave nor forsake us.

CELEBRATE
JOY
OMNIPOTENCE

O, celebrate His omnipotence. Nothing is impossible when Christ is our champion. I am humbled before His omnipotence. Isaiah 40:28,29 reminds us, *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."* He has all power at His will; he offers us power—power to choose joy.

Jesus first. Yourself last. Omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience in between. With His omniscient hand He guides us. His omnipresence comforts us. And we are safe because of His omnipotence.

Whatsoever things are true. Whatsoever things are just. Whatsoever things are of good report. Think on these things. Don't be anxious for anything but with thanksgiving make your requests known. His omnipotence gives peace beyond comprehension. His omniscience knows what lies ahead. He brings joy in the journey. His omnipresence assures us we are not alone. He is the center of our joy.

When the joy snatchers come our way offering their self-focused diversions, beware, then be glad. *"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart"* (Psalm 32:11). Joy comes in the morning.

KEEP GRATITUDE THE ATTITUDE

10 Thanksgiving Ideas for Children

1 THANKSGIVING PAPER CHAIN On fall color strips write, "I thank God for ____" letting children complete the sentence (one item per strip.) Add strips to chain as children find more reasons for thankfulness.

2 WORD OF THE DAY Use a thesaurus to find words meaning thanks. Post a new word each day, generating excitement for the word and its meaning.

3 TREASURES Have children collect small nature items. Let each child place treasures in a stemware glass or clear bowl. Use as individual table decorations for T-Day feast.

4 HIDE AND THANK Play a game. Children hide. Person who finds must thank the child for something, then join in the finding.

5 CALENDAR THANKS Starting on the 1st, find a corresponding number of things to thank God for. (2 cars on the 2nd, 6 cousins on the 6th).

6 PENNY FOR YOUR THANKS Each time a child says thank you, let him/her put a penny in a decorated jar or bank. Count money on Thanksgiving day and give to your family's missionary or a ministry effort.

7 E-THANKS Let children send thankfulness emails or cards to special friends or relatives.

8 HYMN HUM Choose a thanksgiving hymn to hum each night during family devotions. Readers can follow words as they hum.

9 PRAISE POETS Create a Thanksgiving poem, adding a new line each day. Read the poem during your Thanksgiving day celebration.

10 THANKSJOURNALING Keep a Thanksgiving journal encouraging family members to write blessings or thanksgivings. Read the journal together at your feast. Continue each year, writing, reading and remembering blessings of past and present.



Joyce Little lives in Old Hickory, TN and attends the Donelson FWB Church. Both Joyce and

her husband Doug are committed to Great Commission ministries. Doug serves as Director of Recruitment for FWB International Missions, while Joyce daily reaches out to children of many nations in her English as a Second Language public school classroom.

God used some signs, a sale and Saturday guests to deliver His answer.

Just One More Curve

by Katy Taylor

You never know what blessing may await around the next curve. For one missionary family, it was a beautiful dining table and chairs.

Joel and Hope Nason's dining room furniture had seen a lot of use. Its unmatched chairs were coming apart. The battle-scarred tabletop needed constant protection from hot dishes and wet glasses. With three children, the couple longed for a more carefree surface. And a larger table. Their dining room could accommodate it. Wouldn't a large table be wonderful for the frequent gatherings of family and church folks in their home? The Nasons had window shopped, but prices on tables they liked were too high. And, as in most households, only a certain amount could go toward the purchase of a table. However, God had one ready, not too far away, and we would be part of its Saturday delivery.

This was no usual Saturday. It was Operation Saturation Day in Laconia, New Hampshire. My husband Rudy and I were visiting, staying in the Nasons' home.

Early that day, people of the Heritage Church and the New Durham church, pastored by Joel's father, Rev. Jim Nason, gathered at the church. The springtime sun shone brightly throughout the morning as groups passed out flyers in specified areas of Laconia, inviting people to visit Heritage church.

After a delicious fellowship lunch at the church, the crowd started to disperse. A few families left to attend a birthday party. Most of the men went home. The rest of the ladies, including Pat Nason and me, decided to spend the afternoon seeking treasures at yard sales. We set out in three cars, and caravanned to several sales.

With a dinner planned that evening at her house, Hope Nason needed to run an errand. Her little girls got in the car with Pat and me, and the four of us headed back toward the house.

When we came to a "T" in the road, another yard sale sign caught our attention. Surely we had time for one more sale. Following the signs, we made several turns and rounded quite a few curves. At one point, we almost gave up finding the place. One last sign tempted us to take just one more curve.

There it was—a yard full of various items, and on our side of the road. As we scanned our surroundings, some beautiful dining chairs caught our eyes. These were sturdy, solid-built chairs with beautifully carved backs. A sign on one of the chairs stated that the table was inside. The price was unbelievable.

Purchasing the small items we'd chosen, we hurried back to report our find. Upon hearing about the table, Joel and a few others went back with his mom to see the set. Eventually Hope returned home,

then left to go see too.

By that time, it was getting late and the sale was closing out its last day. Yet, before sunset, the table which God provided was on its way to the Nason home.

With everyone's help, the old table was moved aside and its chairs put out on the porch. We proudly placed the new table and chairs in the center of the dining room. Someone commented how perfect they looked there. Joel, Hope and the kids expressed thankfulness and gratitude. God had answered this family's prayer for a table. He had led Pat, the girls and me to the place.

That day will always be a special memory for both the Nasons and our family. We discovered that sometimes we have to go a little farther down the road, around yet another curve to find the blessing God has waiting.

Katy Taylor attends the First Free Will Baptist Church in Pontiac, MI, where she serves with her husband Rudy. The mother of three children—Joshua, Rebekah, and Lindsey—Katy enjoys teaching, reading and sewing.



I never met my Grandma Phillips, she died long before I was born. Not until my father died did I realize just how much I had learned from this great lady.

To Grandmother's House We Go

Years ago, we returned to my father's family home for a last visit. Both the house and furnishings were for sale, my grandfather having long since passed away. In the back room, tucked in a box of things no one else wanted, I found my treasure—an old rolling pin. Tiny nicks graced the worn roller and the black paint on the handles was just a memory. One of the handles was loose and cracked. Yet, I wanted that rolling pin more than anything. It had belonged to Grandma Phillips, I was told, and yes, I could have it. I was overjoyed, since I owned no remembrance of her—not even a picture.

I used Grandma's rolling pin for many years. With each use, I would think about its owner and wonder what she was like. I knew she hadn't been well for a very long time before her death, but I liked to envision Grandma strong and sturdy in the kitchen working hard for her family. I wondered how many times she had pulled out that rolling pin to make a treat for her children or a meal for a neighbor in need or even a pie for a church supper.

Oh, How the Wind Does Blow

Lost in my thoughts one day while rolling out a pie crust, the unthinkable happened. The pin's cracked handle finally gave way and broke off in my hand. I was devastated. Still, I knew I could take it to my father. He'd surely put a new handle on it and all would be well again.

My father did repair the rolling pin. Except for its shiny wood, the new handle looked just like the old one. He returned the rolling pin to me on a Sunday afternoon. The next day he entered the hospital to die only seven weeks later.

After my father's death, I spent a lot of time at my mother's. Late one night I couldn't sleep so I went outside. I sat for a long time on the back porch, staring at the field my father had mowed and the garden he'd planted. Then, I went to his workshop and realization hit me. Fixing the rolling pin was the last thing my father did for me. What a treasure this gift had become for it now tied me both to my father and my grandmother.

Now Grandma's Cap I Spy

I know now that I inherited much more than a rolling pin. I see traits in me—traits which Grandma passed on to my father and his family. Her sense of humor is recognizable in my Aunt Tootsie's laugh; Uncle Conley is one of the funniest men I know. Aunt Pauline's home always shines because Grandma taught her the importance of a clean house. She surely taught work ethics to Christine and Lester and the value of education to Charles and Evelyn. Yet her greatest legacy for me has been her generosity, the trait I saw most in my father.

My father was the most giving person I have ever met. It wasn't that he was always there with a handout, but I think he was the original giver of a hand up. My dad was forever bringing home the strangest items. Someone needed a few dollars and offered to sell him this or that—like the golf clubs when no one in the house played golf. There was the battered old suitcase—the kind with stickers all over it, and the ancient Polaroid camera. Some of his purchases we've kept, but, to this day, have not found a use for them.

My father expressed his generosity in other ways. He gave respect for respect, kindness for kindness. He gave love and joy uncondition-

Over the River and Through the Woods



The Treasure of Grandma's Rolling Pin

by
Alice Grant

ally. He modeled the generosity of my grandmother.

The Pudding's Done

Now I am a grandmother. I'm proud of my grown children who are raising their families differently than others. Observing my grandchildren, I don't see attitudes of wanting what everyone else has or needing to be better than someone else. I see my grandchildren making sure someone else goes first or gets the best prize. I see a desire to help others—even in the youngest of them. I see giving.

Hurrah for the Pumpkin Pie

The Bible says that God loves a cheerful giver. I think he also loves the one who teaches others how to give. Someday I hope to meet my Grandma Phillips. I want to thank her for the rolling pin, but I also want to thank her for teaching generations of pie bakers and fathers what it means to give. And the rolling pin? I hope it passes to future generations, whom I pray will remember this grandma, too.

"Over the River and Through the Woods"
was written in 1844 by Lydia Maria Child.



Alice Grant, Lancaster, OH, is a pastor's wife and a grandmother of 13. She serves as local WAC president (New Lexington FWB Church) and clerk of the Cornerstone Conference. Alice recently acquired another treasured rolling pin belonging to her mother who passed away last year. Alice plans to keep the pins rolling. She and husband Jim are presently renovating their 100 yr. old, 25-room house into a Bed and Breakfast.

THANKSGIVINGS

WNAC supports Bible Institutes and seminary students in four places worldwide through its Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship Fund. Recipients from Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, recently wrote expressing their thanksgivings.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am sending you this letter asking that you receive, in the Lord, my sincerest gratitude for your support in prayer and finances that you have never ceased to give on behalf of my training at F.A.T.E.A.C. (Christian and Missionary Alliance Seminary) in Abidjan. May the Lord bless you a hundred fold.

I am nearing the end of this school year by help from the Lord and from you. I am happy to inform you that all goes well with my studies. I am hoping to finish next year and I continue to count on your generosity in the future as you have been faithful in the past.

Please receive, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the expression of my deepest appreciation and my sincere thanks. May the Lord bless you richly.

In Christ,

Robert Houessou

Sisters in Christ,

I would like to transmit to you my sincere gratitude for your spiritual and financial support. Through you and other brothers and sisters in Christ, I was able to pay the total seminary fees (602.280 F CFA) for the 2003-2004 academic year. By the grace of God, the fees for the 2004-2005 academic year were equally paid.

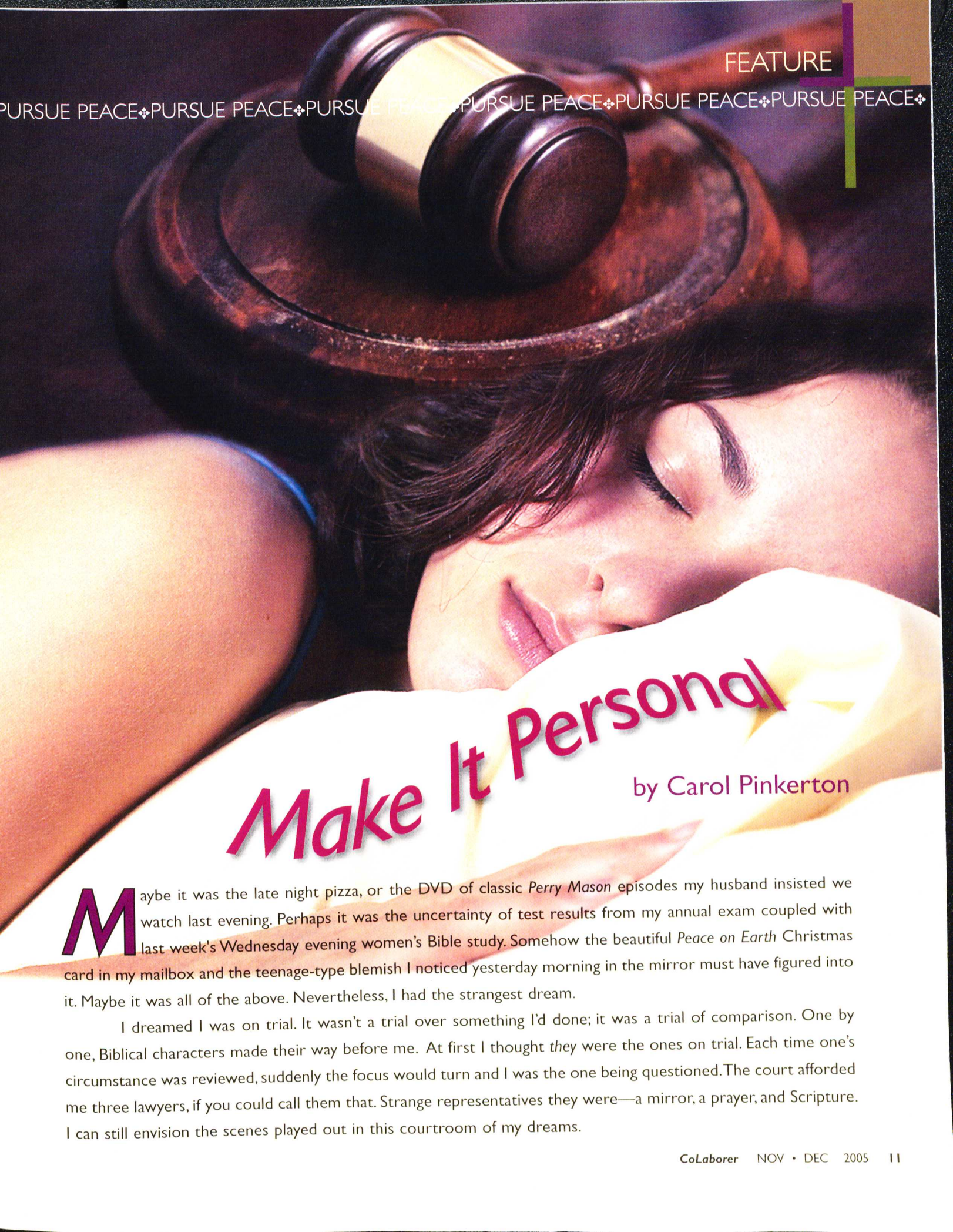
In spite of difficulties encountered in satisfying some primary needs, the Lord has so far been faithful. Concerning my academic work, the end of year results have not yet been released, but I hope for good results.

I am glad to inform you that I have already got the title for my Master's thesis. The next step is to present the plan of work to be done to the academic board for their appreciation. Therefore, I need your prayers for an excellent plan. Pray also for my third year which began in September.

I very much appreciate your care for the progress of God's work. Thank you.

In Christ,

Philip Bonsu

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair sleeping peacefully. A large wooden gavel is resting on her forehead. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a serene atmosphere.

Make It Personal

by Carol Pinkerton

Maybe it was the late night pizza, or the DVD of classic *Perry Mason* episodes my husband insisted we watch last evening. Perhaps it was the uncertainty of test results from my annual exam coupled with last week's Wednesday evening women's Bible study. Somehow the beautiful *Peace on Earth* Christmas card in my mailbox and the teenage-type blemish I noticed yesterday morning in the mirror must have figured into it. Maybe it was all of the above. Nevertheless, I had the strangest dream.

I dreamed I was on trial. It wasn't a trial over something I'd done; it was a trial of comparison. One by one, Biblical characters made their way before me. At first I thought *they* were the ones on trial. Each time one's circumstance was reviewed, suddenly the focus would turn and I was the one being questioned. The court afforded me three lawyers, if you could call them that. Strange representatives they were—a mirror, a prayer, and Scripture. I can still envision the scenes played out in this courtroom of my dreams.

YOU'RE ON TRIAL

Court is now in session. Brace yourself for truth and total honesty. As we explore the lives of biblical characters, be advised, the focus may turn inward, toward you. Lawyers are here to assist you. Please be serious. This experience can be life-changing. Allow the Holy Spirit freedom to move in your heart.

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS

Since it's almost Christmas, let's begin with Mary. Mary of Nazareth, please come to the stand. A bit of background information is necessary. Consider the political climate of her time.

Jews are oppressed; Romans (foreigners) are in charge. Taxes continue to rise. Life is in constant turmoil. Then, in the fullness of time, God sends the Prince of Peace.

A young, obscure peasant girl from Nazareth, Mary appears to be sincere and serious about living for the Lord. Although frightened at the sudden appearance of the angel, Gabriel, she is quick and anxious to be obedient even without understanding—how she could be with child, not having been with a man. She shows full confidence in God's plan for her life, knowing well the consequences and talk of others who will neither possess her confidence nor understanding. Her reply, *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word,"* exemplifies total submission.

Mary rushes off to see her cousin Elizabeth, even before she talks with Joseph, her intended partner for life. Going to see Elizabeth, who lives some 40 miles away, takes effort. Where is Mary's mother? Isn't there anyone in Nazareth with whom she has confidence and can discuss the angel's visit?

The trip to see Elizabeth is well worth her effort. She is greeted with welcomes such as "Blessed art thou among women" and "mother of my Lord." Mary responds by magnifying the Lord.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Now it's time to get personal and search your soul. Look into your mirror; be honest with yourself—God is. Bow your head in prayer or search the Scriptures for principles that relate to life. Here are your questions for cross-examination.

- When I am without understanding or when I know untrue comments will be said, where do I go for help?
- Had I been there, would Mary have come to me?
- What type of a mentor am I?
- The Bible says Elizabeth and Zacharias were righteous before God and walked blameless in all the command-

ments and ordinances of the Lord. Do I have these same qualifications?

Hear these concluding remarks. Take time now to thank God for the godly influence of others upon your life. Ask God if He wishes you to help others in this way. Remember Mary's circumstances. Yet, her faith and trust remained firm. Make God's peace personal. Regardless of your circumstance, sing the same words which the angels sang to shepherds so long ago. *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"* (Luke 2:14).

LOIS, EUNICE AND TIMOTHY

Bring the whole family to the stand. What a heritage we find in Grandmother Lois, mother Eunice, and son Timothy. Author Edith Deen, in *All the Women of the Bible* says these three "represent the strongest spiritual trio stemming from the maternal line of any family group in the New Testament."

Early training is important both by word and by example. And it's going on in this family. Because of this in-house training, the Apostle Paul, single and childless, loves Timothy as his own son, speaking of him with genuine pride.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Joy, honor and responsibility accompany the roles of mother, grandmother, aunt, Sunday School teacher, nursery worker, etc. Whatever your role, as a woman you touch the lives of many. Now, Get ready to soul-search these questions.

- Does my life reflect God's Peace?
- What am I teaching by the way I speak, act, react or by the way I dress?
- What values do I uphold?
- Am I a model to be followed?
- Can I say, "Do as I do and do as I say," rather than "Do as I say, not as I do"?

Hear these conclusions. Train children to listen and obey God's call for laborers in His field. Grandmothers, mothers and friends, be willing to allow children to answer such a call. Model the motive of Proverbs 4:11, *"I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths."*

SAPPHIRA

Sapphira, please come to the stand. We know little about this female. We find her account in Acts 5:1-10,

but the story's fairly brief. It seems that she and her hubby attempt to trick the Lord's servant, Peter.

Maybe they just want to raise their social standing both in the church and in the community. Is it possible they conspire together in this little white lie? Or, as some suggest, maybe it's her idea and hubby is just going along. For the record, it's not the first time this has happened. (Eve was first tempted, then gave the fruit to Adam.)

Regardless of Ananias' and Sapphira's desires, their motives are wrong. They want to pretend to give all while keeping some for themselves. Deception never works. Ananias falls dead. Sapphira persists in the "lie unto the Holy Spirit" and also falls to her death.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

It's time to consult with your lawyers: the mirror, prayer, and His Word. Ponder these questions.

- Is there evidence to suggest that my name could be Ananias or Sapphira?
- Have I ever attempted to get away with just a little twist to the truth—a white lie to the pastor, my husband, children, co-worker or supervisor?
- Have I lied to the Lord?
- Was it (the lie) worth it?
- Have I ever been caught?
- Is my influence with my husband or my family pleasing to God?
- Do I build-up or tear down?
- Am I discontent with my place at home, in the church or on the job?

Now for the conclusion. Remember in the end, the true, just God will judge. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). Learning to be content can be a long, hard class, but it's worth the effort. Inner peace is more valuable than anything the world offers.

PETER

Let's explore a little masculine side. Peter, please come to the stand. Here we have a verbal, hard-working fisherman; one of the twelve who walks with the Lord. He's seen the unbelievable happen at the simple command of Jesus: feeding 5,000 from five loaves of bread and two fish; telling a paralyzed man to get up and walk; healing all manners of sickness; raising the dead; changing the stingy heart of Zacchaeus into a generous one. All this and much more—Peter is right there. He even walks on water. He's a totally loyal follower and he voices this to the Lord. But the Lord



knows. Before the rooster sings, Peter will deny Him not just once or twice, but three times. And Peter does. Later, Jesus restores Peter. Not once or twice, but three times He commands Peter to care for His sheep. And Peter does. Praise God.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Pleasing God brings perfect peace. Isaiah 26:3 declares, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Gear your mind for this self-exam.

- Have I ever promised or said something that would have been best unsaid?
- Is my word true?
- Am I a friend only in good, smooth times?
- Do I actually hurt with others?
- Am I for real?

Look at the lovely lady in the mirror and be honest. We all have been (or are presently) in the same boat. We promise and we fail. Psalm 34:13-14 says, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

Just as the Lord restored Peter, He desires to use us also. Peter heard and followed the command of Christ recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 to go into all the world. Seek peace, pursue peace, then go in peace—to our Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.

THE THIEVES

Both of you come to the stand. Yes, there are two at Jesus' side. Both are tried and found guilty. They have earned their judgment. One continues to rant and rave at Jesus on the center cross. He is not alone; most of the crowd that day responds in this fashion.

The other thief is a bit more quiet. He knows he is receiving his doom. He has no money, no position, certainly no high social standing. His days of impressing people are finished. Time for him is ticking away. He has only a prayer for the one on the center cross, "Remember me..."

We all know the glorious answer, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." He only has a prayer.* Yet, Jesus offers grace and eternal life. We don't have to wait until paradise for peace. God gives it now, even in a sin-filled world.

*Please NEVER say, "All I can do is pray." Prayer warriors are few and far between, but what a power they represent. Praise God for the sisters who pray faithfully.



MAKE IT PERSONAL

You, too, are on death row. You've been charged. All people everywhere are guilty (Romans 3:10, 3:23). Yet, God's everlasting love provides an escape. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). If through faith and trust in full obedience to Jesus Christ you have been set free—liberated from death unto life—then, answer these questions.

- So, what am I doing about it?
- Like the woman at the well, have I returned to town sharing the news?
- Am I instead, hiding the good news of salvation under a bushel basket?
- Time is short. Am I redeeming it, because the days are evil?

Jesus said, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"* (John 14:27). Pursue peace.

CLOSING REMARKS

Hear these closing remarks. Peace. It's such a little word. Peace can be as strong as a three-fold cord, or as fragile as a soap bubble. The world talks constantly about peace. Many times peace agreements are broken before the ink dries on the printed form. The Bible commands us to *"follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"* (Hebrews 12:14). Knowing the Truth (Jesus Christ) will set us free and give us not only peace in this troubled world, but eternal, everlasting peace.

Court is adjourned. Go, delight yourself in living God's peace daily as you share the Prince of Peace with many others.

JUST A DREAM?

That's when I awoke, transitioning from deep sleep into deep thought. Maybe this wasn't just a random dream, filtered through myriad experiences of the day. More likely, God's Holy Spirit was personally probing my heart. Is He speaking to yours? Make it personal. Pursue peace.



Carol Pinkerton and her husband Jerry are veteran missionaries to Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, currently on stateside assignment. a creative communicator, Carol's colorful "For Female Eyes Only" emails have kept supporters aware of the feminine side of missionary life. She is an encourager of women and a lover of children.

Just Peanuts...

Longtime Cote d'Ivoire missionary Carol Pinkerton offers these peanutty holiday recipes and spiritual reminders. *(Peanuts are a staple throughout West Africa.)* All the ingredients are familiar and obtainable—for just peanuts.

For the beginner, a quick way to cook peanuts—not greasy.

DEEP FRIED PEANUTS*

(Small things count.)

Deep-fat fry raw shelled peanuts (with red skins on). Be careful not to overcook as peanuts continue to brown while cooling. Drain & salt while hot.

SUGAR PEANUTS*

(Sticking together makes work easier and brings more fun.)

Mix and boil: 2 C. sugar and 1 C. water. Add: 4 c. raw peanuts, with red skins left on. Boil until the nuts are dry, stirring frequently. The sugar forms on the nuts. Turn out into trays and bake in a low oven (250) 15 minutes or until completely dry.

Option: Add cinnamon to sugar water.

PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE**

(Nice to share with friends—like the Gospel)

2 C. sugar
3/4 C. evaporated Milk
2 Tbsp. light Karo Syrup
1/8 tsp salt
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 C. peanut butter

Mix first four ingredients in heavy sauce pan. Bring to boil and cook on high heat, stirring constantly until mixture reaches soft boil stage (10 min.) Remove from heat. Add vanilla and peanut butter. Beat until cool—this will take a while. Pour into buttered dish.

PUFFY PEANUT-TAFFY BRITTLE***

(It's easy to break when you're spread thin.)

Butter large, shallow pan (15 x 10 x 1).
Blend in large, heavy saucepan: 2 C. sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, 1 C. light corn syrup, 1 C. water. Cover: bring to boil then uncover. Cook over high heat until long thin threads of syrup spin from a spoon when lifted from syrup (234 degrees).
Slowly add, stirring constantly and keeping mixture bubbling all the time, 3 cups shelled roasted peanuts (if salted, rub off with towel). Continue to cook over high heat, stirring constantly for 8 minutes.
Stir in 2 tablespoons butter or margarine. Continue to cook about 2 minutes longer, or until syrup is light and golden and 1 teaspoonful separates into brittle threads when dropped into cold water (300).
Remove from heat. Stir in 2 tablespoons vanilla. Quickly sprinkle 2 teaspoons baking soda over surface of mixture. Stir thoroughly and vigorously until mixture is light, puffy and well blended (about 15 seconds). Pour immediately into prepared pan; spread thin; cool completely.

*From WILD BOAR ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR, Cooking in West Africa, by Harriet Hill and friends.

**From Sandra Payne, former FWB missionary to Cote d'Ivoire.

***From JUNGLE CAMP COOKBOOK

A gift of great joy

by Kathi Mooney

I love Christmas. I love shopping at crowded malls, wrapping gifts, making candies, decorating the tree and everything else that has to do with the season.

As a child, I was blessed with family who shared the same excitement. Yes, we did all these fun things, but we never lost focus of the Christ of Christmas. That alone has made all the difference for me.

It's the most wonderful time of year, or so the song goes. For followers of Christ, shouldn't it be? But for some, Christmas is a sad and lonely time; for many it's bittersweet. For others, the holidays are a most dreaded time of the year.

How can we help others know a joy that brings renewal to the heart—joy that remains long after the last gift is opened? How can we rediscover the joy of Christmas?

Return to where it all began. Come with me to Bethlehem. Let's experience together the joy the shepherds felt that first Christmas.

Wonder of It All

Consider the wonder of His love for us; the God of all creation left the splendor of heaven, knowing His destiny involved laying down His life for you and me. John 1:14 tells us that *"the word was made flesh and dwelt among us."*

Consider the wonder of His birth—born of a virgin, laid down in a manger, in a stable where horses and cattle were housed. A king born a pauper for you and me. A multitude of angels, endless numbers, praised the Lord in unison as shepherds' hearts surely quivered, quickened, and rejoiced all at the same time.

Can you imagine the earthshaking experience this must have been? We don't know every detail in this drama, this wonder of wonders, but we do know the shepherds went quickly to find the babe.

Can you imagine the awesomeness of that moment? Over and over, they must have said, "How wonderful, how marvelous." I am sure at times it seemed surreal.

Can we begin to comprehend the wonder—of His redeeming love, His lowly birth, His sinless life, His horrendous death, and His life changing resurrection? Oh, the wonder of it all.

Worship of It All

Whom do we worship? This time of year, our first thought might be a baby in a manger. But He is so much more.

Luke 2:15 records that the shepherds hastily left what they were doing and went to find the *"Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."* The angel's announcement left no doubt. There was something extraordinary about this child.

Scripture and song remind us He has many names. Some call Him wonderful, meaning marvelous and amazing; others call Him Lord, Mighty King or Most Powerful Ruler. He is Master, which says to us He controls, owns and rules over all.

He is the Great Shepherd who leads and cares for His sheep. He is the Rock of Ages, who remains strong yesterday, today and forever. He is Almighty God with limitless power. His name is above all names, blessed Redeemer, glorious Lord, Emmanuel—God is with us.

Yet, a few short words can never define His majesty. Recognizing who He is, let us worship Him with all our hearts.

When the shepherds saw their Christ, they returned, glorifying and praising God. They began blessing Him, celebrating Him, exalting Him, honoring Him, lifting Him up, adoring Him, enshrining and magnifying Him. We can rejoice knowing whom we worship.

Will of It All

How we celebrate Christmas is ultimately up to us. As with every area of our Christian life, we will get out of the season what we put into it. Until we glimpse the wonder that he left His throne to die for us—until we "bow down before Him, love and adore Him," call Him wonderful and really mean it, we will never experience the shepherds' joy.

They could have dismissed the angel's words and stayed out in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks. Instead, the shepherds chose to go to Bethlehem. They found the Christ, they worshiped Him and their lives were forever changed.

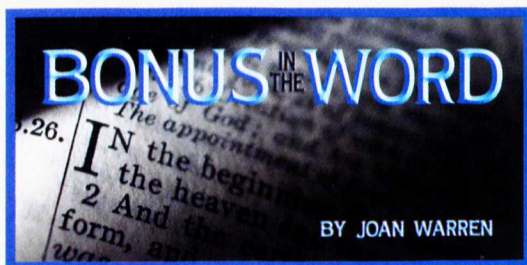
So it is with us; we must decide how we will celebrate our Saviour's birth. Will it be with an ungrateful attitude, dreading all the season has to offer? Or will we take the path of the shepherds and return rejoicing?

The angels declared, *"Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people"* (Luke 2:10). Christmas can be the most wonderful time of year when we embrace the joy of the Lord.

Remember and reflect on the birth of our Lord and Savior. refuse to allow the stress of this world's celebration rob you of this gift of great joy. Allow the joy of that first Christmas morning to fill your heart to overflow. This year and the years to follow, may we meet in Bethlehem.



Kathi Mooney lives in Ashland, KY. This mother of four, grandmother of four, works as an OB/GYN Physician's Assistant. She and her husband Michael attend the Heritage Temple FWB Church where she serves as WAC vice-president. Along with Christmas, Kathi loves wintertime and snow.



Pursue Spiritual Fitness

The heart is the source of life and strength. It includes our entire emotional nature and understanding. As the heart is, so is the woman.

I. Heart Problems Hinder Spiritual Fitness

- A. Psalm 101:5b
- B. Psalm 101:4
- C. Proverbs 26:23
- D. Proverbs 12:8

II. The Remedy for Heart Problems

- A. Proverbs 23:26
- B. Ezekiel 11:29
- C. Ezekiel 18:31a
- D. Proverbs 3:5, 6

III. Evidences of a Healthy Heart

- A. Proverbs 25:13
- B. Psalm 27:3
- C. I Samuel 2:1
- D. Psalm 57:7
- E. Psalm 111:1

Are you heart-healthy? In the space below, identify any hindrances and/or needs. Create a personal heart fitness plan or regiment to pursue.

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



PRETHANKSGIVING WEEK OF PRAYER

HELPS FOR OBSERVING THE WEEK.

BOOKMARKS

Personal use options:

MAGAZINE: Pull out the centerfold (pp. 17-18). Cut apart bookmarks. (Laminate for best results.)

DOWNLOAD: Joy of the Harvest PDF file is available for download from the WNAC website: www.nafwb.org/wnac. Print on cardstock. Cut apart.

Pray for each day's requests. After the week, keep bookmarks in your Bible or journal, praying often for these aspects of missions ministries in prayer.

Distribution options:

ORDER: Cardstock quality bookmark sheets may be ordered from the Home Missions Department for distribution among women in your church or WAC group.

COLOR COPY: Run two-sided copies (pp. 17, 18) on a color copier, using cardstock or heavyweight paper.

B/W COPIER: Copy p. 18 only to make prayer sheets for distribution.

PACKETS

WAC groups should receive a packet containing information and helpful materials for observing the week of prayer. If your church or women's group has not received a packet by Nov. 1, please call toll free 1-877-767-7674 to obtain yours free.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, JOY, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

—Galatians 5:22



"They that
sow in tears
shall reap
in
JOY.
Weeping
may endure
for a night,
but
JOY
cometh in
the morning."

—Psalms 126:5, 30:5b



"The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty;
he will save, he will rejoice over thee with JOY;
he will rest in his love, he will JOY over thee with singing."

Zephaniah 3:17

"Likewise,
I say
unto you,
there is
JOY
in the
presence
of the angels
of God
over one sinner
that repenteth."

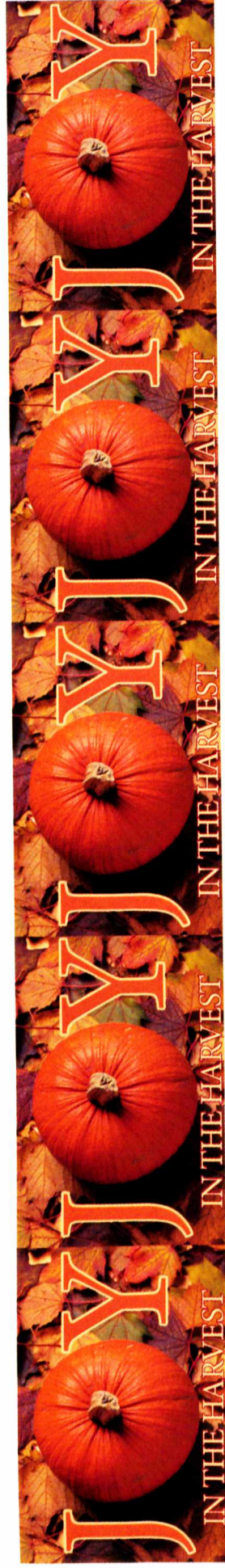
Luke 15:10



"Sing unto the Lord, bless his name:
show forth his salvation from day to day,
Declare his glory among the heathen,
his wonders among all people.
Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:"

—Psalms 96:2, 3, 12a





DAY ONE

HOME MISSIONS MINISTRIES

Pray today for

Church Extension Loan Fund, providing finances for construction of first buildings for mission churches.

Home Missions Staff, promoting church growth and evangelism through revivals, camps, mission conferences, and other meetings.

Chaplains, ministering to military personnel and their families worldwide.

Publications, offering helpful materials for evangelistic efforts, missionary communication and missions education.

Missionaries, planting Free Will Baptist churches in North American regions.

DAY TWO

HEALTH OF MISSIONARY FAMILIES

Pray today for

Rest to counter the mental stresses and physical taxes of church planting.

Strength to face countless responsibilities involved in organizing and building a new church.

Hedges to protect families ministering in areas where satanic forces are prevalent.

Healing for missionaries who suffer from severe physical health problems.

Comfort for missionaries currently experiencing the loss of loved ones or facing care issues of elderly family members.

Stability in marital and family relationships as spouses and children also minister.

DAY THREE

PLACES OF WORSHIP AND OUTREACH

Pray today for

Guidance as missionaries seek and acquire meeting places for mission churches.

Acceptance of missionaries within their communities and welcome attitudes toward these new churches.

Affordability of rental space feasible for a mission church, whether in a school or a storefront.

Approval by local authorities concerning codes and regulations in renting, purchasing, or constructing a facility.

Acquisition of key people to help in all aspects of the building process.

Unity as church members choose outreach methods and programs effectively suited for their needs and area.

DAY FOUR

FAITH EVANGELISM

Pray today for

Implementation of FAITH Sunday school evangelism programs within home mission churches.

Involvement of both adults and young people in these weekly times of instruction, invitation and celebration.

Preparation in the hearts of those who will be contacted and that FAITH teams will be welcomed into homes.

Clarity as leaders instruct learners and as all FAITH participants memorize and share Scripture.

Acceptance of new people who may come to church as a result of FAITH visits.

Salvation of souls as well as growth and maturity in FAITH participants.

DAY FIVE

CROSS CULTURAL MINISTRIES

Pray today for

Acceptance by Free Will Baptists toward individuals in America who are of a different culture.

Receptiveness of internationals to the message of the gospel and to the efforts of Free Will Baptists.

Effectiveness of cross cultural pastors, ministering to an ever-growing number of internationals in the USA.

Availability of facilities for cross cultural worship, often difficult to obtain for newcomers with limited funds and limited familiarity of the region or area.

Expansion of present ministries to Hispanics, Koreans and Slavics and greater vision for ministries to other ethnic groups.

SPRINGBOARD

LEADERSHIP

UTILIZE. Check out resources in the PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer Packet mailed to your group. Also visit the WNAC website for downloads and information.

PARTICIPATE. The Christian Emergency Network encourages Christians everywhere to adopt a PRAYER/CARE/SHARE mentality in light of recent hurricane losses. Lead your group to participate in practical care of individuals whose lives and homes have been ravaged.

INCREASE. Individual WNAC membership fees increased from \$10 to \$15 (as of 2005 Convention). This is the national fee. Individual district or state fees may vary. Please contact your treasurer for an exact amount.

PRESENT. Use the humorous skit, "Stolen Joy" as a churchwide promotion or program introduction for November. Use Lucy and Marge to create December interest.

KEEP. Scrapbook pictures and favors from WAC meetings and special events as a visual record for future generations.

PLAN. The 2006 Program and Plan Book (pictured below) is now available from WNAC for \$8.00 (plus S & H). If you have never used this vital resource, consider this investment for your group.

OUR WEBSITE

www.nafwb.org/wnac

Contact us:

wnac@nafwb.org

STUDY

CONSIDER using Bonus Word (p. 16.)
READ the review of *Great Women in Christian History* on p. 22. Let women name some great Christian women.

SHARE in the education of future missionaries and Christian workers. Promote the annual Paul J. Kettelman offering for FWBBC.

SERVICE

RESEARCH opportunities for your group to extend care to hurricane victims or evacuees.

BRING joy to shut-ins or elderly. Schedule individual or group visits. Include a joyful scripture card in holiday baskets or food drives.

SCHEDULE a Black Friday Drop and Shop. Volunteer to keep children allowing working mothers this day off for shopping.

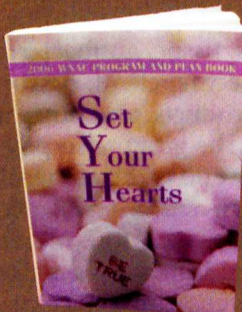
MISSIONS

SHARE the FOCUS ministry of George Lemelin and the update concerning the new road funded by WNAC offerings.

PRAY for Cote-d'Ivoire missionaries as they seek God's direction concerning new ministries.

NEED a project? Find suggestions on p. 9. Questions? Email: Steve Lytle steve@fwbgo (FWBIM) or Richard Atwood richard@nafwb.org (FWBIM). Either can be reached by phone at (615)-731-6812.

NOW AVAILABLE FOR 2006



skits
ideas
promotions
projects
information
installation
emphasis
enlistment

the WNAC Program and Plan Book \$8.00 plus shipping

WNAC NEEDS

PROVISION CLOSET. Cookware (sturdy pots and pans), blenders, food processors, queen and full mattress pads.

WNAC OFFICE. Finances to cover increases in regular monthly expenses: rent, insurance, utilities.

AN INVITATION TO PRAY

Who: WAC leaders, prayer chairmen, women with a heart for intercession.

What: FWBIM Prayer Summit

Where: Camp Garner Creek Retreat Center, Dickson, TN

When: March 2-4, 2006

Why: To gain greater vision and effectiveness in prayer.

If you truly believe that prayer is vital, consider sending your prayer leaders to this event. See registration information on p. 21.

PRAYER

OBSERVE the PreThanksgiving Week of Prayer for FWB Home Missions, November 14-18. See information on pp. 16-18.

DISTRIBUTE bottles of water as prayer reminders for those affected by the hurricane.

PRAY for peace in war-torn Cote d'Ivoire. Pray also for peaceful resolutions in Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

MAKE Christmas prayer lists of "What You Really Want For Christmas." Exchange lists and give each other the gift of daily prayer for these requests.

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



PICTURED: (LEFT) Unusual centerpiece welcomes Jerry and Carol Pinkerton at Happy Home WAC (MO). (RIGHT) Women present gifts for WNAC computer at the Missouri State WAC Retreat.

● Happy Home FWB WAC, Ava, MO, called a special meeting, August 8, to honor Jerry and Carol Pinkerton for their missionary work in Cote d'Ivoire. Many in the church came to learn more of their ministry. A fruit centerpiece designed by Craig Altman (with help from his wife Robin and friend, Penny Cooper) added festive flair to the occasion.

● FWB Women in Cuba recently paid for renovation to the bathrooms at the Cedars of Lebanon Seminary in Pinar del Rio, Cuba. The women, who use the facility for their annual meeting, saw the need and adopted this monumental project. Selling handmade crafts, they raised 8000 pesos (\$180 USD). Average monthly income in Cuba is only 200 pesos.

● Missouri Women Active for Christ responded to a need in the WNAC office, giving \$3000 to underwrite the balance of recent G-5 computer and accompanying software purchases. Groups placed their offerings in CD

cases and presented them at the Missouri State Retreat in August. WNAC specifically uses this computer for production of *CoLaborer* magazine and its other publications.

● WNAC acknowledges the passing and homegoing of two state leaders. Longtime voice in Mississippi WAC, Miss Eva House was welcomed into heaven in early August.

Texas State WAC Secretary Nell Stell went home to be with the Lord, September 18, after a short but intense battle with cancer. Nell was heavily involved in local, associational, and state-wide WAC work as well as other FWB ministries. Over 400 people, including 11 FWB preachers, state officers, and other area pastors, attended her funeral.

● Women from Michigan recently sent a truckload of goods for the Provision Closet. Gifts included quality linens, small appliances and several specific items collected by young people.

● Soul's Harbor FWB WAC, Pensacola, FL organized a Hurricane Katrina relief drive. After prayer on a Wednesday night, churchfolk assembled over 200 care packages containing flashlights, tissue, antibacterial wipes, insect repellent, personal hygiene products, and other useful items. The group also prepared over 200 care packages of snacks, gum and mints. Packages were taken to Gulfport, MS, for distribution in restricted neighborhoods requiring police escort and for use in community relief efforts at the Gulf Coast FWB Church.

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

FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK...FEEDBACK

Dear WNAC,

A few months ago, the ladies at our church wanted to try to save money by not continuing our subscription to *CoLaborer*. I brought this issue up at our meeting last week and outlined the many benefits of *CoLaborer* magazine, as well as helping the National Office financially. Fortunately, it didn't take them long to realize that it is a valuable tool in our WAC meetings, as well as in our personal lives. Therefore, we would like to continue our subscription.

Donna Jewell

Cornerstone WAC, Perry, GA

Dear WNAC,

Words such as *Congratulations* or *Great Job* come to my mind in trying to describe the July/Aug edition of *CoLaborer*, but they do not adequately surmise my feelings as I read the pages. Instead, my heart was filled with joy and blessed more than I can say with the articles on our Free Will Baptist men and women in uniform, as well as the coverage of the Sisters Prayer Fellowship in Kazakhstan. I wept as I discovered anew the many blessings that God has bestowed on Free Will Baptist women through your efforts. It is my prayer that every Free Will Baptist (men and women) will read this issue. It is truly an honor to our Lord. Thank you again for all you do to carry on His work.

Jean McCraney

Decatur, AL

Dear WNAC,

I received my *Co-laborer* the other day. The article on Psalms 139 is exactly what I need to give to my daughters without them thinking I am preaching to them. It is awesome, wonderful, perfect the way God uses things and people in our lives. The article really touched my heart.

Brenda Dixon

Mechanicsburg, OH

Dear WNAC,

Daily I am reminded of the kindness and generosity of WNAC. There is something from the Provision Closet in every room in our house here in France. Thank you for being such a blessing to so many people.

Robert and Judy Bryan
St. Nazaire, France

Dear WNAC,

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed your magazine. It was my pleasure to contribute to the *Soldiers* series of articles. Thank you for the opportunity. I look forward to reading your magazine in the future.

Tabitha Crowley
Clarksville, TN

Dear WNAC,

Thank you for your gifts to our account and for all you faithfully do on behalf of your missionaries. For more than 20 years, our family has been blessed by your ministry. Thank you for caring and extending Christ's love in many tangible ways.

Steve and Becky Riggs
Nantes, France

Dear WNAC,

Jarvis and I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your generosity and lovingkindness toward us as home missionaries. I enjoy so much being a part of our Texas Women Active for Christ, and when I receive personal blessings from the national level, I see first hand how effective this godly organization really is.

On behalf of all Free Will Baptist missionaries both foreign and home-based, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your gifts to our account.

Jarvis and Kelly Reed
Conroe, TX

Dear WNAC,

Thank you so much for your recent donation to our account. We never cease to be amazed at the continuous support of the women of our denomination. Thanks again for your faithful support of missions, both home and foreign.

Steve and Lori Torrison
San Jose, Costa Rica

Dear WNAC,

We are so grateful for your gifts these past few months. They have freed us to focus on learning the language and culture of the French people. Thank you for your dedication to fulfilling the Great Commission.

Matt and Cristina Price
Albertville, France

Interested in growing?

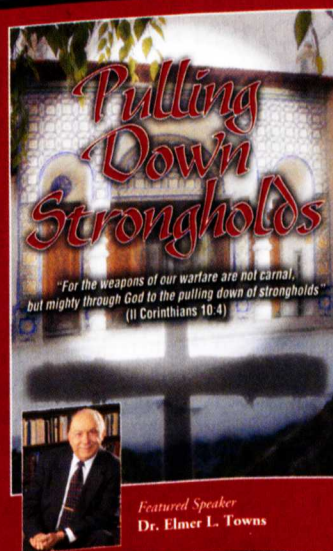
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To register online: Go to www.fwbgo.com



DEBE'S DELIGHTS

Debe Taylor
WNAC President

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

Wal-Mart: The Learning Place

Standing in the checkout line recently at Wal-Mart, I overheard a conversation between the cashier and the customer just ahead of me. To listen to the customer, the cashier could do nothing right.

First of all, the customer was very aggravated that the cashier had called for a price check. This shopper totally overlooked the fact that she had picked up a shirt with no price tag. She was taking no blame.

After receiving a price and the necessary bar code information, the cashier gave the lady her total. Pulling out a Wal-Mart card, the customer mentioned that she did not know how much was still on the card.

Guess what? The card would not scan. A call went out for a manager. Time passed. The customer was really miffed. Acting as though the cashier were trying to ruin her day, she made quite a few snide remarks. Manager arrived—amount on card was deducted from total—lady proceeded to write a check for the balance.

Then the proverbial "fat hit the fan." The young cashier asked the lady for her driver's license. Now the customer was outraged. Never before had she had to show her identification when writing a check at Wal-Mart.

The poor cashier tried her best to give an explanation of the new policy, but her words fell on deaf ears. Transaction completed, thankfully the lady moved on.

As I moved ahead, the young cashier asked me, "How are you?" At that very moment, God spoke to my heart. I responded, "Forget about me—how are you?"

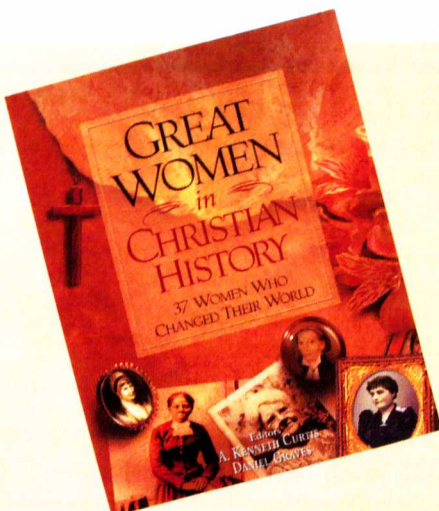
Looking as though she might cry, she replied, "I've had better days." She apologized for my lengthy wait in line. I laughed and said, "I have more time than money." In the few minutes I was at her register, I did my best to share the love of God.

In Matthew 5:13-14, Christ said that His disciples were to be salt and light to the world. Salt because we live in a decaying world. Light because we live in a dark world.

The words of the previous customer had left this young lady wounded and feeling inadequate. She was discouraged and down. Right there in Wal-Mart, she needed someone. God placed her in my path that I might be what He has called me to be—salt and light.

As I left the store that day, I wondered how many times I have missed God-given salt and light opportunities. Usually in a hurry with a hundred things on my mind, I am not always perceptive or receptive to the Holy Spirit's leading. Unfortunately, I often make it "all about me." My Wal-Mart learning experience reminded me that it's not about me at all. It's all about Him.

*Lord, let Your love pour
from my salt shaker;
let Your love shine
from my candlestick.*



"...WOMEN have had a tremendous influence on the spread of the Christianity and indeed on the entire tone of civilization. They have served God's kingdom as martyrs, wives, mothers, writers, educators, missionaries, charitable workers and protesters, among other things..."

from the Introduction

You may have heard the names Susannah Wesley or Harriet Beecher Stowe, but have you ever heard of the China trio, who "gossiped the Gospel" throughout the Gobi desert? Or Irene Ferrel whose martyrdom in the Congo stirred many to missionary service? Or Perpetua, a new Christian and new mother whose baby was taunted before her in hopes she would renounce Christianity?

Editors A. Kenneth Curtis and Daniel Graves have compiled thirty-seven short stories, easily read, easily remembered, that will enlarge your heart and appreciation for women of the Kingdom through the centuries. Though WNAC might not endorse every woman's story, the impact of this book far outweighs any criticisms. It's a great tool for Study Chairmen and great reading for everyone.

GREAT WOMEN IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY \$16.99 CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS, INC.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES facing Christian teens in America today? Everyone seems to agree we lead a pretty difficult life in modern society. Just look at me.

I was saved when I was four years old. I go to church every Sunday and Wednesday. I help teach first-graders in Sunday school. On Tuesdays, I go on FAITH evangelism visits. I have been a part of the Truth and Peace Leadership Conference and E-TEAM student missions, as well as several mission trips with my church. I am saving myself for marriage. I have never touched alcohol or drugs. I am a good kid.

Are you concerned about me? You should be. Sure, the issues facing American teens who grow up Christian may not sound as dramatic as the more talked-about problems in today's world. However, they need to be addressed. What are the issues we face?

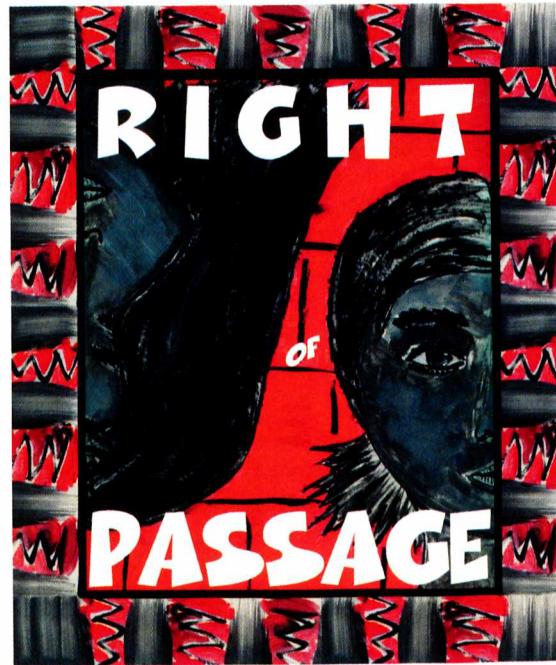
To begin, there is the issue of **THOUGHTLESSNESS**. We are the church brats. We know all the stories and we have all the right answers. Yet do we ever stop and think about what we actually believe? Do we have an answer for the questions that we might be asked outside of Sunday school? What do we say when someone questions, "How can you know that Christianity is the only truth?"

Although "Jesus Loves Me" is a great song, "because the Bible tells me so" is not a good enough answer for someone who does not even believe that the Bible is true. The Word of God is the absolute truth, and it can stand up under hostile scrutiny. Can we say the same for our faith?

Secondly, **F**EAR is a huge problem for Christian teenagers. Let's suppose that our faith is strong. We

GROWING UP CHRISTIAN IN AMERICA

by Hannah Fletcher



know what we believe and exactly why. Yet we avoid witnessing to agnostics or anyone who might ask us difficult questions. We are afraid. Or perhaps we use the excuse that if they ask us hard questions then they do not really want to be saved. What a horrible excuse!

An agnostic is not someone who has rejected God. On the contrary, they are searching for the truth. They are looking for God. We have the truth, so why are we afraid of witnessing to the very people who are seeking it?

I have been able to talk with several agnostics, and yes, they do ask some rather difficult questions. If our faith is strong, however, we do not need to worry if we can answer them. The Holy Spirit, the source of all wisdom, is living inside us. If we have made our faith our own, what have we to fear?

I rejoice whenever I get to talk to these skeptics because most of

them are seriously thinking about what they believe. It's refreshing to see someone taking faith seriously. Maybe we church brats can take a cue from the agnostics.

Yes, **C**OMPLACENCY is a definite issue that church-grown Christians my age face everyday. We go to church every week, but we have heard everything before. We follow all the rules, but only because it is easier than getting into trouble. We aren't doing anything bad, but are we doing anything good?

As Christians, we need to be growing daily in our faith. Is our faith getting any deeper? Or are we content with just getting by? God blessed us by giving us such a godly atmosphere to grow up in. Are we doing anything with that blessing?

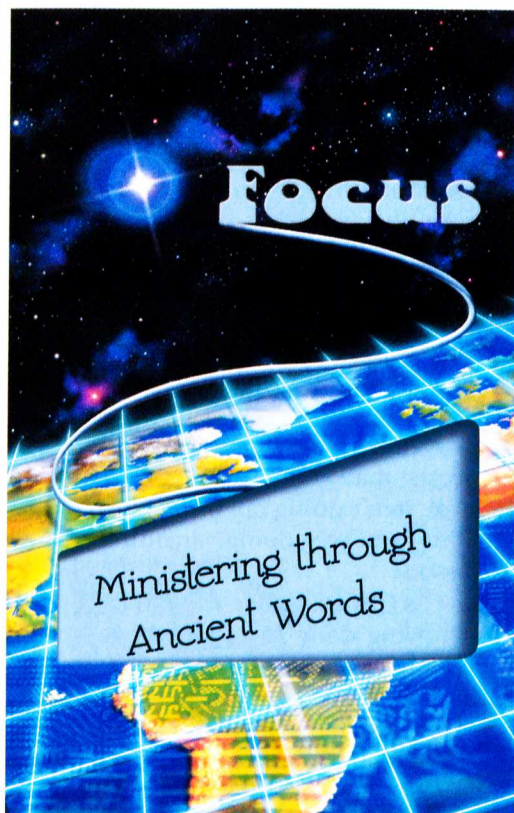
Imagine what would happen if we lived seriously for God from the very moment we accepted Him. God could use us to accomplish mind-boggling things if we would only decide, once and for all, to live our Christian lives to the fullest.

We get distracted; we forget to walk in His Word, and what suffers is the advancement of His Kingdom. Our mediocrity affects more than just our own lukewarm Christian walks.

What could we be doing to build the Kingdom of God if we were not leading such apathetic, tepid spiritual lives? The answer? We could be doing so much more. Christ died to give us a life more abundant. But are we living that life?

Hannah Fletcher attends Donelson FWB Church, TN. A senior at Nashville School of the Arts, her passions include theatre, truth, and speaking up for her faith. The Right of Passage logo above is her self-portrait.





Pray:

—for the removal of ancient walls of spiritual resistance and resentment in the minds of the Ojibwa.

—for opened eyes to the truth and softened hearts to the Gospel.

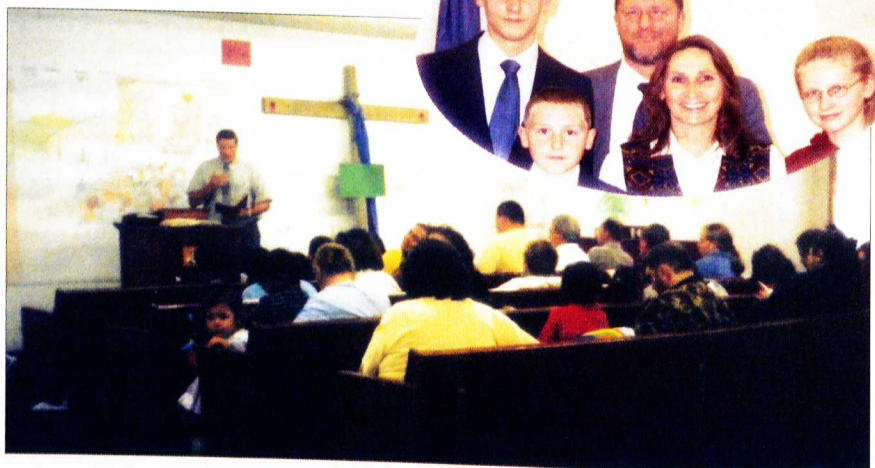
—for protection against demonic influences as the Lemelins visit those who are hostile to Christianity

—for finances to begin construction of a permanent building for Harvest FWB Church.

—for growth of new believers: Lafonda, Jessica, Betsy, Moriah, Darlene, Liz, Wayne, and Ron.

—for the salvation of several men who are experiencing the Holy Spirit's conviction.

—for opportunities during the holiday season to preach the message of the resurrected Christ.



"Ancient words ever true, Changing me and changing you . . ." Words of this song resonate with Ojibwa worshipers at the Harvest Free Will Baptist Native American Mission Church. For believers here, ancient words hold special meaning. There is a land of ancient rites, ancient ways, and ancient religion. Yet, in this mystic, rustic, poverty-stricken setting, the ancient words of God's Word are changing lives.

Ancient Ties

The missionary heartstrings for George and Kathy Lemelin's ministry among Native Americans are laced with family ties. Kathy, who is Ojibwa, now lives among her people on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. However, the Lemelins' long journey to White Earth took them from coast to coast.

George was saved in 1981, while in the Army, stationed at Ft. Lewis, Washington. Kathy, also living in Washington state, was saved shortly thereafter. Both found their way to the same church where they met, married in 1988, and served the Lord for many years.

When the family moved to Wisconsin ten years ago, God allowed their path to intersect with FWB Home Missionary Carlie Lloyd. The Lemelins soon became an integral part of this mission church. George answered the call to preach and served as Brother Lloyd's associate pastor until he enrolled in Southeastern FWB College.

During the Lemelins' college years in North Carolina, God spoke to them about mission work among Native Americans. Encouraged and supported by their host church, Fellowship FWB, Dunn, NC, the family headed for Minnesota in May 2003. In early 2004, the Lemelins came under the umbrella of FWB National Home Missions.

Though their journey has taken them west to east, south to north, God has faithfully prepared the way. George's French Canadian background established him as a friend of the Ojibwas. Kathy's Native American heritage enabled the family to occupy and purchase reservation land. Harvest FWB Church now owns 37½ acres in White Earth, Minnesota's largest reservation.

Ancient Lands

The untamed ancient Northwoods of Minnesota presented obstacles for ministry. The newly acquired property needed clearing. No road



existed to the future church site. And the dirt road to the Lemelins' home proved impassable by car during rainy seasons.

Attendees of the 2005 WNAC Convention addressed these needs. A special Tuesday morning offering provided ample funds for both graveling the road to the Lemelins' home. Remaining monies helped mark a road to the church.

Women Active for Christ from the Daisy FWB Church, AR, literally paved the way. In contact with the Lemelins, this group traveled to Minnesota the last week in July to assist the missionaries in Vacation Bible School. Four men from the church who accompanied the group went to work, blading and graveling the road. Using the tribal bulldozer, this crew also razed trees, cleared brush and cut a road to the church property.

The Lemelins plan to begin construction as soon as funds are available. Their goal is to strategically develop a mission compound, complete with church, Christian school and housing facilities for students and workers.

Ancient Prejudice

Traditional and cultural attitudes keep many Native Americans from a relationship with Christ. Native peoples associate Christianity with "white man culture." They resent that the Christian religion was once forced upon them; they often resist efforts to evangelize their people. This longstanding prejudice has blinded their eyes to the truth that Christ died for all men.

Ancient Religion

For this reason, many now practice ancient worship rituals. This widespread return to Native American worship accounts for a rise in superstition and the occult. Among the Ojibwas, occult practices are common, along with self-cleansing purification rites. "The lack of truth is unbelievable," says Brother Lemelin. The concepts of sin and judgment are unknown.

Native Americans have long been the unreached peoples of North America. Mission work among Native Americans is akin to international mission work, since each tribe claims allegiance to its own nation. Few Ojibwas know the biblical account of creation or the story of Christ's death and resurrection. Most families own no Bible.

Ancient Words

The ancient words of the Bible remain the anchor for modern-day ministry at Harvest FWB Native American Mission Church. The church currently meets Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings

in a storefront building in Ogema, MN, and on Sunday evenings at a community center in neighboring Nat-Tau-Waush, a village known for its violence. Home Bible studies through the week provide avenues for long-term relationships. Establishing trust remains a huge issue

Not all people living in

the Northwoods are Native Americans. However, the Lemelins feel a special calling to minister among the tribal peoples. Their vision includes establishing not only a church, but also a Christian school and eventually a college for training Native American believers—enabling others to hear and embrace the timeless message of the gospel revealed through ancient words.

"Ancient Words" by Lynn DeShazo, c. 2000, Integrity's Hosanna Music. ASCAP.



Other Prayer Concerns



—Pray for M-Team missionaries Darren Portell and Shane Davison traveling from France to speak in Mississippi churches in November.

—Pray for four young Brazilians: Rafael, Tiago, Edmar and Fred, who feel called to fulltime ministry. Pray that God would supply a Brazilian pastor for the 1st Church in Belo Horizonte. Ask God to grant a US entry visa for missionary Rejane Eagleton before the year's end.

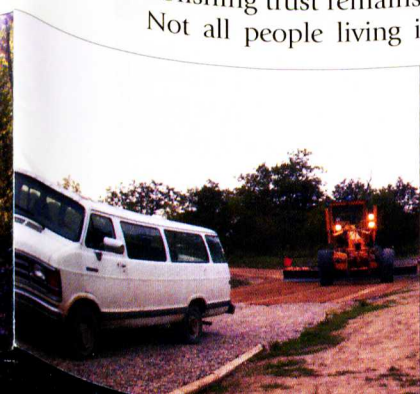
—Pray for financial support enabling Chuck Stewart to begin ministry in Spain and allowing Jeff and Susan Turnbough to return to Spain in summer 2006.

—Pray for more national pastors and leaders in Uruguay.

—Pray for missionary outreaches and special services worldwide during Christmastime.

—Pray for the persecuted church around the world (Sunday, November 13, is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church.)

—Pray for Christians involved in disaster relief efforts.



RIDING OUT
REACHING DOWN
LIFTING UP LYNN BREWER

EXERCISE FOR THE HEART

WE HAVE JUST FINISHED RIDING OUT KATRINA, A LEVEL FIVE HURRICANE.

Residents along the Gulf Coast of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana will remember the name Katrina for as long as we live. Our nation will probably remember that name, too. The devastation has been far reaching and will certainly be long lasting.

Each day as I listen to the newscast, I hear stories of people in distress who have lost all their possessions. Everyday the headlines in the local newspapers remind me of the tragedy that plagues our area. Hurricane Katrina has profoundly challenged our nation.

"He was moved with compassion, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). As Jesus showed compassion to those around Him, the entire country has shown compassion for the people of the Gulf Coast.

John Andrew Holmes is credited with saying, **"THERE IS NO EXERCISE BETTER FOR THE HEART THAN REACHING DOWN AND LIFTING PEOPLE UP."** This exercise for the Gulf Coast involved cases of water,

hot meals, monetary donations, helping hands, and many prayers. A heartfelt thanks goes to thousands who have given of their time and resources to help us rebuild.

My friends, Debbie and Val, are principals with me in the same school district. Val's home is fine but her school was totally destroyed. I spoke to Debbie today so we could make plans for ways our teachers can help Val's teachers replace valuable teaching supplies.

Debbie's school is fine but she lost her house. I was so hurt for her and her loss. At the end of our conversation I asked Debbie how she was doing personally. Debbie put everything into perspective. She said she gave her heart to God as a child. Debbie explained that even though she felt her heart's desire was for God to be above all else in her life, she had never been put to a test. Losing everything in Katrina reminded her that *everything* is His. Debbie is comforted knowing that God is first in her life and her treasure is not in all the "stuff." What a great thought!

Putting our hope into wealth, building our lives around ways to accomplish this ambition, we have

in the midst of the storm
PEACE
in the midst of the storm



been drawn away from spiritual pursuits. *"But godliness with contentment is great gain"* (1 Timothy 6:4). Instead of being preoccupied with our station in life, let's praise God for who He is.

"FATHER, I WANT TO BE a woman who seeks after your knowledge. Show me Your ways that I might acknowledge You as God. Help me to see that you are all I will ever need. Amen."

Lynn (Gore) Brewer lives in Hurley, MS. A 1979 FWBBC graduate, Lynn is principal of East Central Upper Elementary and the daughter of Mississippi FWB Executive Secretary, Rev. J. L. Gore.



IN GULFPORT
WE RECEIVED FAR CATHY WHITE

MORE THAN WE GAVE

SEEING THE DEVASTATION FROM HURRICANE KATRINA, OUR CHURCH FAMILY KNEW WE NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING. It had only been a year since we'd experienced Hurricane Ivan, the

worst hurricane in our area, so we were quite aware of the needs of our Gulf Coast neighbors. We began making calls and receiving donations. Supplies started pouring into our church. In less than

a week, we filled the fellowship hall with supplies and assembled a team of 33 people ready to share God's love.

Our Labor Day destination was Gulfport, Mississippi. We loaded



nine trucks and trailers and headed out to help. I could sense from the very beginning that God was going to use us to accomplish His work. As we made the trip to Gulfport, the devastation continually worsened with each mile we drove. We met J.L. and Dot Gore who guided us to the Gulf Coast Free Will Baptist Church which sustained severe damage. We immediately started cleaning the fellowship hall while others worked putting tarps on the roof and cleaning all the debris on the church grounds. We left supplies for the church families.

We drove down a couple of streets close to the church and gave supplies of food, water, and diapers to several families. We met one little boy who told us that he did not have any food at home. I wish you could have seen the excitement in his eyes as we gave him a bag lunch, food and supplies. In my heart, I knew that our trip was suc-

cessful even if we did not help one other family.

Next we proceeded to a distribution site where the military were passing out MRE's (meals ready to eat). Since they did not have many personnel at the site, we were able to help pass out ice. They had no



water or other supplies but we did. We joined the line and passed out cases of water, food, diapers, paper towels, toilet paper, etc. Once again, God had placed us in the right place at the right time. As cars drove up we would ask what they needed. We would then put those supplies in their car.

One lady was so moved by the generosity that she could not even speak. Tears of joy just rolled down

her face. We later learned that she needed diapers for her baby.

We were able to pass out supplies for four or five hours—until we ran out of water. Just as we were getting ready to leave, another truck and trailer pulled up with more water and food. A group of people from Orlando had come to help those in need. Once again, God perfectly orchestrated everything according to His plan. We stayed and helped the other group pass out most of their supplies before we headed back to Pensacola.

We were exhausted but thrilled that we had taken this opportunity to be used by God.

GOD IS SO GOOD TO US. We returned home, feeling that we received far more than we gave.

Cathy White lives in Pensacola, FL, with her husband Nathan and five-year-old son Caleb. The Whites are active in the Beulah FWB Church.



A PICTURE OF GOD'S PEACE DIANE CONN WE WORSHIPED HIM

WHEN MY HUSBAND HEARD THAT MASTER'S MEN had mobilized a group to work on the Gulf Coast FWB Church in Gulfport, MS, he volunteered the two of us to cook for them. I have to admit, this seemed a daunting task. Conditions required us to cook outside in the heat. As a further complication, the water in Gulfport was still unsanitary. Dysentery was reportedly a very real problem in the area.

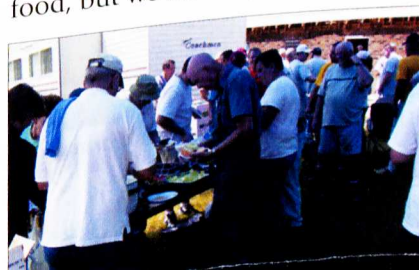
A couple from our church, Bob and Joann Epperson, decided to go and help us. Retired from the

pastorate, they own a motor home. This provided us a very comfortable place to sleep.

For our first meal, the Eppersons, Danny and I, Mrs. Dot Gore from Mississippi and Maranda Lieupo from Tennessee all got involved in peeling twenty-five pounds of potatoes. Cooked outside on an open flame, our mashed potatoes went well with the fried chicken and ham. We not only ate good food, but we also enjoyed great fel-

lowship. We fed between 50 and 60 people at each meal.

People from several states came to help. I was so impressed with how hard the men worked, repairing the roof of the church in only two days. We ladies cooked, sorted clothing given from across the country, organized donated goods and visited with people in the community who came seeking assistance.



EVEN IN HARD AND UNCERTAIN TIMES, God faithfully sends his peace and comfort. On Wednesday evening, we served dinner a little earlier so we could hold worship services outside before dark. We worshiped Him together singing praises. My husband Danny

gave a short devotion from Psalm 46, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." At the end of service, an older gentleman in the group began singing several hymns. What a beautiful picture of God's peace in the storm.

Diane Conn is Florida WAC secretary, West Florida WAC president, and WAC treasurer at Soul's Harbor FWB, Pensacola, FL, where her husband Danny serves as pastor.



LESSONS FROM JOB AND KATRINA KAREN FERGUSON

OUR GOD IS SUFFICIENT



HOW IRONIC, WHILE STUDYING THE STORMS OF JOB'S LIFE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL, WE'VE FACED SOME SMALL ONES OF OUR OWN. Still recovering, helping and supporting victims of Hurricane Katrina, Houston residents braced for Rita, a class five hurricane that promised to hit September 23 or 24. Fortunately, the lessons gleaned from Katrina afforded us opportunity to prepare.

We're accustomed to hurricane warnings in Houston. Yet, because storms rarely cause their predicted devastation, we do not always take impending danger seriously. However, Katrina made believers out of many of us. Learning from those who refused to evacuate in New Orleans, many decided to "be safe rather than sorry" and headed for higher and drier ground.

Mixed emotions hampered decisions to leave. "Is it really necessary? Aren't we far enough away from the coast? Shouldn't we stay close by, so we can return quickly to repair our homes?"

Many left to protect their children from fear. Children here are aware of Katrina's devastation since Houston's schools have enrolled so

many children from New Orleans. They've heard the countless stories of loss of life and separation from families.

Others chose to leave for comfort's sake, dreading a one-to-three-week loss of electricity. Some took opportunity to visit family. Others evacuated for the sake of loved ones who feared for their safety. Our phones rang non-stop with calls from concerned families and friends asking us to please leave. "Nothing is more important than your safety."

Some were very afraid. "All circuits were busy," ATM machines emptied, gas stations closed, and people packed into stores trying to load up on every supply imaginable to wait out the storm.

We were told to take our valuables with us. With limited time and limited space, things suddenly fall into perspective. What is most important? Things can be replaced; lives cannot.

After canceling Sunday services, we secured our church as best we could. Leaders called all members, making sure everyone had a place to stay if they chose not to evacuate. Most did choose evacuation, including one couple in our

church, barely settled in Houston after Katrina's devastation.

Long and slow lines of traffic clogged every major road out of Houston. Our twelve hour trip to visit our pastor son in Amory, Mississippi, turned into a 21-hour trek. Our pastor and others who headed north faced tripled driving time.

We prayed we would be spared from the hurricane; thankfully we were. Yet, we did not wish the storm's path moved to another area, especially one still suffering from Katrina.

Psalm 56:3, 4 says, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me."

AT TIMES LIKE THIS, we remember that God is sovereign and His will is best. Our God is sufficient to meet every need.

Karen Ferguson, Houston, TX, is president of Texas Women Active for Christ. She and her husband Frank attend the Westfield FWB Church in Katy, TX.



WHAT NOW? PRAYER. Keep praying for souls affected in the storm. **CARE.** Keep abreast of needs through the website: www.onemag.org. **SHARE.** Higher Ground, a magazine specifically designed for sharing hope after Katrina is available at nominal cost from www.highergroundkatrina.com (not a FWB publication).

(The Prayer, Care, and Share concept originated with the Christian Emergency Network.)

in the midst of the storm PEACE in the midst of the storm

LIVING IN
WAR-TORN
COTE D'IVOIRE DEBBIE ANDERSON

ARE YOU AFRAID?

IN JULY OF 2000, WE ARRIVED IN COTE D'IVOIRE, WEST AFRICA, TO BEGIN OUR FIRST TERM AS MISSIONARIES. Since that time, our family has lived through three evacuations, a military uprising in which rebels took over more than half the country, several coup d'etat attempts, and three temporary border closings during which we could not leave the country. Ministry has been curtailed by curfews and occasional airport closings. Many times we have avoided certain regions because of riots or demonstrations. Some days our filled backpacks waited in the closet, in case our vehicle was stolen and we had to walk to Ghana's border.

In spite of this, probably 90% of the time we are safer in the interior of Cote d'Ivoire than in some large cities in America. The other 10% of the time, we know potential dangers far greater than most Americans will ever face.

Living in a politically volatile country requires constant research of information, vigilance, and prayer. This is the plight of many missionaries serving in African countries and other places around the world.

People often wonder and ask us if we are afraid. Although we've witnessed heart-wrenching events and experienced tense moments, our family is at peace serving in Cote d'Ivoire. I do not awaken in fear at night, worrying that God will not watch over our family.

The Lord has given our family several principles that help us cope and rest in peace.

1. BE CERTAIN OF GOD'S WILL. Because we know God called us to Africa, we consider it the safest

place for us to be. This does not mean that He cannot direct us elsewhere, nor does it mean that tragedy will not happen in our family. It simply means He is with us as we follow Him.

2. PREPARE FOR THE WORST, BUT DO NOT DWELL ON IT. Shakespeare said in *Julius Caesar*, "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once." Our family is not brave by Shakespeare's standard, but we have learned to keep bags packed and evacuation paths in place without torturing ourselves daily that the worst is at hand. What could happen is only what could happen, not what will happen.

3. RECOGNIZE THE SOURCE OF FEAR. There is a holy fear of God that we should all seek. The Lord has also placed in us a common-sense fear that prevents us from playing with snakes or fire. In contrast, a different kind of fear comes from Satan. We must learn to identify it and eradicate it from our lives. Fear of what others think and fear of death are often from the enemy's camp.

According to Hebrews 2:14, 15, Jesus took on humanity and died so that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." To let the fear of death be the primary guiding force in our lives is to be in slavery. God never intended for us to live that way.

4. TRUST GOD. We have placed our eternal souls and destinies in His hands, yet sometimes we do not trust Him for the mundane issues of life. He is trustworthy in

times of war; He is faithful in times of peace. Sadly, as Christians, it is easy to quote Scripture and claim that we have faith in God, but at times our actions do not back up our words.

IN THESE PAST FIVE YEARS, my faith in God has grown more than in all the 35 previous years combined. His character and trustworthiness are my peace. For the weak areas of my life in which I do not yet demonstrate faith, I pray as the father of the demon-possessed boy in Mark 9, "I believe, help thou my unbelief."

Debbie and Verlin Anderson and their children are currently in the States on a mandatory evacuation from Cote d'Ivoire. They eagerly await the day they can return to Africa and to their work in Community Health Evangelism.



ON AUGUST 17, 2005, FWBIM RELEASED THIS OFFICIAL STATEMENT: Regional Director Clint Morgan has recommended a strategic withdrawal of missionary personnel from Cote d'Ivoire. His recommendation is based on the continuing crisis, outbreaks of violence due to scheduled elections, the country's insecurity particularly for non-Africans, and confidential information pointing to previously unknown dangers. Your prayers for the national church and the missionary family are needed and critical at this time.

BEHIND THE SCENES

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



"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it..."

Revelation 3:8 aptly describes the life journey of Wanda Powell, wife of FWB Home Missions Director Larry Powell. Through the years, God's open doors have helped define the couple's ministry and given them opportunities for Great Commission service in their home, church, community, and around the world.

Wanda grew up an only child in Southwest Georgia. A local high school event brought her and her future husband together. She was a freshman and he was a senior, headed for Free Will Baptist Bible College. The two were married August 12, 1961.

A business degree from a local college opened the door for Wanda's employment at a Nashville doctor's office, enabling Larry to complete his studies at FWBBC.

After earning a Master's degree from Bob Jones University, Larry accepted his first pastorate in Lake Butler, FL. Now mother to two young sons, Wanda's home became her open door for ministry.

One summer, as veteran missionary Dr. Laverne Miley spoke at the National Convention, God spoke to Larry's heart, calling him into missionary service. Wanda joyfully admits, "Life's never been the same since."

The Powells became Free Will Baptists' first missionaries to St. Croix, Virgin Islands. Wanda originally did not plan to work outside the home, but a needed job at Citibank proved to be God's open door. The position afforded ministry contacts as customers and fellow workers began attending the church which met in their home.

Soon the congregation outgrew their home and they sought to build a church. At a time when all building loans were denied, Wanda's boss worked to get the loan approved. Again, God had provided a way through Wanda's workplace.

Committed to her family, home remained her main door to ministry. While in St. Croix, God blessed the Powells with the birth of a daughter.

A job change opened a door to a new genre of people. As secretary to the president of Esso, Wanda gained many opportunities for witness to those in the oil industry. During this time, the Powells started a Christian school. Both the church and school continue to thrive today.

From St. Croix the family moved to Puerto Rico where they ministered to both English and Spanish speakers. This language immersion opened the door for ministry in McAllen, Texas.

A border town, McAllen provided multiple opportunities reaching internationals, retirees and young families. Wanda opened the door of her home each week to an infant church. A job as Secretary to the Superintendent of Education allowed the growing church open-door access to a school auditorium until they could build. During their 11 years in McAllen, God provided Wanda open-door jobs in real estate (meeting and ministering to newcomers) and childcare as director of the church's daycare.

The Powells in Europe on HM Heritage Tour



**WANDA POWELL
HOME MISSIONS**



Wanda at work in the WNAC office

A call to Cofer's Chapel church moved the family to Nashville, TN. During their tenure, the church relocated, allowing this historic congregation new doors in a new community.

A cottage door opened when the couple moved to Ebenezer FWB Church, Glennville, Georgia. Wanda's love and natural flair for decorating and flower arranging found outlets in The Cottage, a garden/gift store which she managed.

In 2000, the Powells walked through a different door as Larry became the director of Home Missions. His experience as pastor, missionary and church planter give him insights and perspective for this vital role in ministry.

Today, Wanda keeps an open door, often hosting dinners for missions staff and personnel. She's opened her home to WNAC staff as well. And her door is always open to her grandchildren. All three children and families live within driving distance.

God opened a new door this past year as Wanda became volunteer bookkeeper for WNAC. Her excellent office skills, sweet spirit and willingness to serve make her an asset to our office.

Active as WAC co-program and service chairman at Woodbine FWB Church, Wanda delights in serving others. Serving others through open doors is what Wanda does best.

Words FOR WOMEN



Executive Secretary-Treasurer

*Marjorie H.
Workman*

Only One

Tears welled in my eyes as I read the email from Spain missionary Kristi Johnson, "Pray for us and the Edgmons as we send our little ones [Alejandro age 5; Emily age 3] off to school where they are the only children from Christian families."

Immediately my thoughts raced back to my elementary school years. I grew up in the Bible Belt prior to the Supreme Court decisions of the early 1960s declaring school-sponsored prayer unconstitutional. Each school day began with Bible reading, prayer requests and then prayer. We memorized Scriptures, sang Christmas carols, debated different beliefs among the churches represented in the classroom, and invited classmates and teachers to revivals. Evangelists often spoke to the entire student body in special assemblies.

What will school be like for Emily and Alejandro in a non-Christian environment? Will they be able to talk about Jesus? Kids get excited about Christmas. Will they be allowed to speak of our Savior's birth? And what of school in America? The climate in American classrooms today is not the friendly Judeo-Christian atmosphere of my childhood. Students and teachers, will you speak up in your school for the only Truth that can change hearts and lives, even if you are the only one?

Being the only one can provide both challenge and blessing. The Bible records several accounts when only one did the right thing or was singled out for a blessing. Only one leper out of ten whom Jesus healed in Luke 17 returned to thank Jesus and glorify God. A Samaritan, this man seemed the least likely to return. Yet, he was blessed; he was healed; he was not afraid to go back alone. Are we guilty of thankfulness only at Thanksgiving?

Only one blessing should be reason enough for year-round praise.

There were many lepers in Israel during the days of Elisha, but only Naaman was cleansed (Luke 4:15-27). He was captain of the army, a great and honorable man in the eyes of the king, and a very proud man. His pride almost cost him the blessing of being cured (2 Kings 5). Only one sin can rob us of a blessing as well.

Although many widows lived in Israel during the three and a half-year drought and terrible famine during the reign of wicked King Ahab, God sent Elijah to only one. Facing the prospect of death, this one widow was preparing to cook her last handful of meal for herself and her son. But Elijah stopped by and, oh, what a difference one visit made (1 Kings 17). As we follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we may be the one God sends to visit a needy soul. Being the only one can be discouraging or encouraging; do not let fear paralyze your efforts to do good.

The most significant only one event happened at Christmastime. The infant born that night in Bethlehem was the only one Son of God. Through that first nativity, God became flesh. He came to earth to live and die and rise again to save us from our sins. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). In our Christmas preparation—decorating, cleaning, cooking, shopping, practicing music and plays—let's not become so busy that we actually miss the celebration of God's only Son—Christ, the only gift of salvation.

What about you? Are you the only one? The only Christian in your family? At your workplace? In your school? Only one birth has changed the world. Dare to share the true message of Christmas this holiday season.

ONLY ONE

Take this trivia quiz to test your knowledge of **only one people, animals, and things.** (source: www.corsinet.com/trivia)

1. What bird is the only one that can fly backwards?
2. Who was the only US president not elected to either the presidency or the vice presidency?
3. Which continent is the only one without reptiles or snakes?
4. What US state is the only one that grows coffee?
5. What tree is the only tree to grow in California's Mojave Desert?
6. What is the only food that does not spoil?
7. What US state has the only active diamond mine?
8. Who thought he was the only prophet left in Israel?

ANSWERS: 1. Hummingbird 2. Gerald Ford 3. Antarctica 4. Honey 5. Joshua tree 6. Honey 7. Arkansas 8. Elijah

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