

# CONTACT



Official Publication of the National Association of Free Will Baptists

March 2000

**Marriage Survival Kit**  
**Dead Men Don't Bleed**  
**Sin of Anger**  
**Weapons of Learning**  
**The One-Eyed General**



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MARCH 2000

VOLUME 47, NO. 3

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# THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

## While We Wait

**O**ne of the blessed truths taught in the Bible is the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Scoffers have doubted* this truth. Peter declares, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" (II Pet. 3:3-4).

*Skeptics have denied* this truth. They boldly denounce this truth as a figment of imagination of those who can not cope with life. They declare that the second coming is a fable not to be taken seriously by intelligent people.

*Sensationalists have distorted* this truth. They have set dates which have passed and Christ did not return. They revised their projections and were still wrong. Jesus reminded us that no man knows the day nor hour in which the son of man will come the second time, (Mark 13:32).

*Saints have depended* on this truth. The second coming provides a hope for the child of God. John ends the book of Revelation with the words, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus," (Rev. 22:20).

*Scripture has disclosed* this truth. Jesus encouraged the disciples with this truth when He said, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," (John 14:3).

At Christ's ascension the angels said, "... Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you in-

to heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," (Acts 1:11).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *walk circumspectly*. Paul says, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise," (Eph. 5:15). The word *circumspectly* suggests that Christians should walk diligently, exactly or perfectly. Careful attention should be given to the way we live our lives.

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *work consistently*. We must work for the night is coming when no man can work. Paul reminds us of this truth when he says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," (Eph. 2:10).

"This is a faithful saying. And these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works..." (Titus 3:8).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *wait contentedly*. Paul declared, "Not that I speak

in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," (Philippians 4:11) and "But godliness with contentment is great gain," (I Tim. 6:6).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *watch carefully*. Jesus admonishes the disciples, "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is... Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning... And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch," (Mark 13:33, 35, 37).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *witness compassionately*. Paul affirms this when he says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," (II Cor. 5:20).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *warn convincingly*. This truth is asserted by Paul, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (II Cor. 5:11).

While awaiting the second coming, Christians should *worship congregationally*. Hebrews admonishes, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching," (Heb. 10:25).

The challenge before us who anticipate the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ is to exhibit faithfulness as we walk, work, wait, watch, witness, warn and worship. ■

### The Secretary's Schedule March 2000

4-8 Family Life Conference  
Brazil

17-18 Georgia State Association

27-28 California Leadership Conference



# A Marriage Survival Toolkit

By Eddie Moody



**T**he divorce rate in the United States has remained stable over the past two decades, with half of all marriages ending in divorce. Nevada has the highest divorce rate followed by Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama and Oklahoma, all in the Bible Belt. All southern states except South Carolina exceeded the national average of 4.2 divorces per every 1,000 residents in 1998.

## The Impact of Divorce

There are many negative consequences of divorce. International studies indicate that people who divorce have a mortality rate 10 times higher than people the same age who are married. Divorced people are also three times more likely to commit suicide.

Children in homes impacted by divorce also suffer. Several studies have detailed the impact divorce has on children's grades and self-concept, but more troubling is the impact on children's life expectancy. On average, children whose parents divorced die sooner than those from homes not impacted by divorce.

Concern over the impact of divorce has resulted in some states abolishing "no fault" divorces and the Governor of Oklahoma has called upon pastors and

clergy to only marry couples who have taken a marriage preparation course.

## The Case for Marital Preparation

But should we offer such courses? The average marriage lasts seven years and 200,000 marriages end yearly after the second anniversary. It seems that the "seven-year itch" is something to look at and it's probably no coincidence that many marriages end after the second year. These seem to be critical periods in the lives of couples that they should be prepared for instead of going through blindly.

But the strongest evidence for marital preparation is derived from the work of Dr. John Gottman of the University of Washington and some of his colleagues throughout the United States over the last 20 years. After conducting interviews with couples before they married, they were able to predict with 95% accuracy marriages that would fail.

Even during the bliss of courtship there was evidence of disastrous ways of communicating (i.e., escalation, criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling) which have been found to be toxic poisons to marriages. Maybe some preparation work prior to marriage would have helped these

couples avoid these pitfalls.

## Premarital Resources

You may be convinced that premarital counseling needs to be offered but at a loss about where to start. I suggest a set of videos published by Gospel Light by Norman Wright called "How to Do Premarital Counseling."

Dr. Wright discusses and demonstrates how to provide effective premarital counseling. He challenges the viewer to set high standards for premarital preparation because the stakes are so high. Individuals who do not wish to do the work to prepare for their marriage don't have to get married at our church.

The series consists of three videotapes, each around two hours. The first two tapes consist of Dr. Wright discussing premarital counseling with counseling sessions interspersed to demonstrate the concept he is discussing. The material can be broken down into six sections.

Section one (realities to present to premarried couples) involves a discussion of how to help couples develop realistic expectations and to understand what commitment really involves.

Section two (goals and structure



for premarital counseling) involves an exploration of the purpose of premarital counseling and excellent questions that should be posed to couples.

In section three (examples of church premarital programs), viewers can see sample approaches used by churches. Dr. Wright also discusses how small churches have joined together to provide effective premarital preparation.

Section four (ideas for planning successful marriages) involves preparing for the first year of marriage. Couples are asked to partner with married couples and begin to work with them. The experienced couple serves as mentors to the new couple.

Section five (exploration of couples' motivation to marry) involves the couple exploring why they should get married now and their reasons for marrying.

In section six (areas of potential conflict in marriage) couples prepare and submit a sample budget and discuss finances.

The remaining material involves sessions with four couples. Some of them have difficult problems. They allow the viewer to see how Dr. Wright skillfully deals with difficult subjects. Although the viewer will not be able to implement all of the skills used by Dr. Wright, they can use some of the strategies in sessions and learn activities to implement in the church to help couples. The videos demonstrate an excellent model of premarital counseling.

## Now That They Are Married

How can you help people in troubled marriages? There are some important statistics to consider when problems arise in a marriage. Seventy-six percent of all second marriages, 87% of all third marriages and 93% of all fourth marriages end in divorce. The marriage the individual is in has the best chance for success.

But how can we help people who have made a mess of their marriage through infidelity and other serious problems? Couples should start by discussing their difficulties with their pastors, but there will be times when pastors will lack expertise and time to deal with couples who have serious problems.

It is important to identify a competent Christian marriage and family

therapist, psychologist, licensed professional counselor or licensed clinical social worker in your community.

If you encounter difficulty finding such a professional, consult with the Christian Association of Professional Studies (830-629-2277; [www.caps.net](http://www.caps.net)) or the American Association of Christian Counselors member registry ([www.christiancounseling.org](http://www.christiancounseling.org)).

Other possibilities are the national referral lists used by Christian psychiatric hospitals like Rapha (800-383-4673; [www.rapha-hope.com](http://www.rapha-hope.com)) and Minirth Meier New Life Treatment Centers (800-NEWLIFE; <http://www.newlife.com>).

It is certainly preferable to help couples strengthen their marriage before they need outside help. A good resource is "Before You Divorce" published by DivorceCare (919-562-2112; [www.divorcecare.com](http://www.divorcecare.com)).

## Review of Before You Divorce

"Before You Divorce" is a five-session video series accompanied by a workbook that allows viewers to keep notes as they view the videos and continue working outside the session. The videos are put together well. The viewer sees experts and people who have experienced divorce discuss what it is like. A narrator summarizes comments by the couples and adds important facts about divorce.

There are five sections beginning with "The Legal and Financial Impact of Divorce." An attorney explains that couples should seek counseling prior to finding an attorney because attorneys tend to shut down communication by telling couples not to talk. Divorced couples explain how their homes became a battlefield, and Larry Burkett describes the financial impact of divorce.

Section two addresses "The Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Effects of Divorce." People talk about how their energy was sapped as they went through the divorce.

Section three, "The Many Effects of Divorce on Your Children" consists of teenagers and adults describing what it was like for them when their parents divorced.

"Forgiveness" is the title of section four. Forgiveness is described as a decision and not a feeling. The biblical command to forgive others is examined and the impact of refusing to

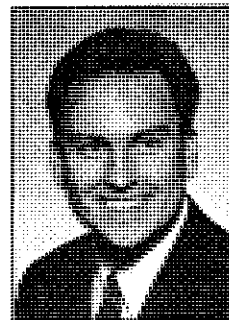
forgive.

In section five, "Reconciliation," the levels of reconciliation are described: establishing a friendship, rebuilding the relationship and restoring the marriage. Experts explain why it is wrong to date before a divorce is final and proper ways to deal with the opposite sex. How to reconcile oneself to God is explained, and three couples who experienced a long separation describe how they reconciled.

The videos are excellent for anyone who is considering divorce. They could be used to inoculate married couples from divorce by helping them see the value of keeping a healthy home. Friends and family of individuals who have experienced or are experiencing divorce will be in a better position to help after seeing these videos. People who have experienced divorce will also benefit by learning how divorce impacts children and the difficulty to expect if they begin to date others and eventually remarry.

The videos would fit well in a five-session Sunday School or CTS format. I suggest they be used as a five-session study to help improve marriages and prepare people to help those who have experienced divorce to remove stigma that may be associated with viewing them.

This is a difficult period in history we live in with attacks coming on the home from every front. However, we are blessed with innovations in technology and training that allow us to present rich resources to needy people. The key is to find the right resources and get them to the right people at the right time. Let's use wisely the resources and the opportunities God has given us. ■



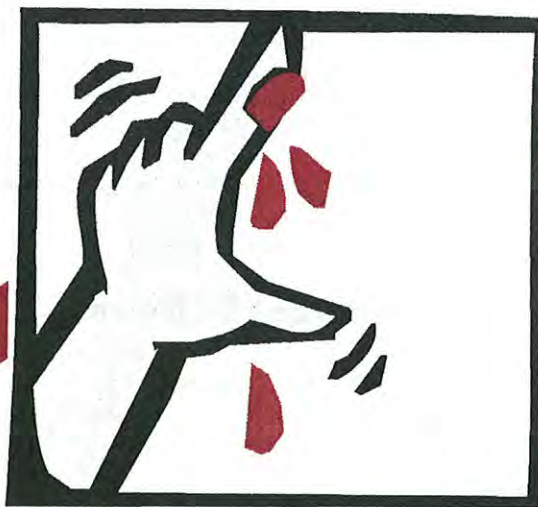
ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Eddie Moody is an associate professor of education at North Carolina Central University. He is a member of Immanuel Free Will Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina.



How in the world did the world get here?

# Dead Men Don't Bleed

By Paul Harrison



**"G**od talk" is increasingly being assigned "behind closed doors" status. I think this is partially a result of our shifting interpretation of church and state. The public square is perceived as belonging to the state, and any mention of God and moral standards must therefore be relegated to the churches or back rooms. Of course, this doesn't apply to profanity.

There are other factors, however, in our cloistering of God. One contributing influence is the perception that belief in God is not intellectually acceptable. Christians are often portrayed either as those who have little smarts or as those willing to check their brains at the church door.

I would suggest, however, that those who deny or disparage belief in God are the ones to be pitied. In the broad stream of both philosophic

and scientific history, they are a lonely band, the new kids on the block. And it is not coincidental that the mass of humanity has believed in the existence of God. Hard evidence and clear logic have led to these beliefs.

For instance, the existence of our beautiful planet, not to mention the intricate solar system, argues for a Creator. Who would ever come upon a wonderfully designed watch and think its synchronized pieces just happened to come together? Any clear-thinking person would reason from the presence of a watch to the presence of a watchmaker. Our amazing world, therefore, stands as a neon arrow pointing to God.

## Nothing is Real

Philosophy likewise argues for the reality of God. The logic goes like this.

Our perception of the world offers only four possible explanations. First, it might all be illusory. It appears to exist, but it really doesn't. I'm tempted simply to dismiss such thinking as foolishness, but for the die-hard skeptic, I'll briefly address such a wild speculation (regular folks may skip the next paragraph or a few more if you hate philosophy).

Descartes' old maxim will work nicely. "I think; therefore, I am." If I doubt the existence of something and I'm wrong, then it exists. If I doubt it and am right, *I must be* in order to be able to doubt. Of logical necessity, our existence is real.

## Always Been Here

The existence of the world offers a second explanation, that it is self-existent or eternal. Nothing has made it. It has always been and will always be.



The problem with this is that it goes contrary to the whole of our experience.

Everything around us is deteriorating, winding down like a tired clock. Things just don't last forever. Accompanying all our scientific breakthroughs is the news that the universe is losing its pizzazz. One day it will play out. Scientists call this principle the second law of thermodynamics. So what we see can't be explained as having always existed.

### World Created Itself

A third option to explain what we see around us is that it is self-created. Some people admit that the world demands a point of creation, but they say that it created itself. The fancy term sometimes used for this idea is spontaneous generation, usually imagined to have happened billions of years ago.

But for all its high-sounding terminology, it makes no sense, as numerous philosophers have pointed out. "For something to create itself, it must exercise causal power on itself before it exists. It must be before it is. To be before it is, it must be and not be at the same time and in the same relation-

ship." The logic is unavoidable. The universe didn't create the universe.

### God Created the World

We are left with the belief that a self-existent being outside of the universe created all that we see and enjoy. The Bible puts it this way: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." I have less trouble believing that a Creator-God made the world than that something created itself or that it's always been or that it's all a mirage.

In the face of such logic, I think God should be readmitted into the public vocabulary. His existence is not an issue of peripheral importance. After all, he is God.

One final note. With such a strong case for the existence of God, why are there any atheists at all? Allow me to answer with the allegorical response of John W. Montgomery, a Christian philosopher of note:

Once upon a time . . . there was a man who thought he was dead. His concerned wife and friends sent him to the friendly neighborhood psychiatrist determined to cure him by convincing him of one fact that contradicted

his beliefs that he was dead.

The fact that the psychiatrist decided to use was the simple truth that dead men do not bleed. He put his patient to work reading medical texts, observing autopsies, etc. After weeks of effort the patient finally said, "All right, all right! You've convinced me. Dead men do not bleed."

Whereupon the psychiatrist stuck him in the arm with the needle, and the blood flowed. The man looked down with a contorted, ashen face and cried: "[My lands!] . . . Dead men bleed after all!" ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Paul Harrison pastors Cross Timbers Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

## BEYOND BELIEF



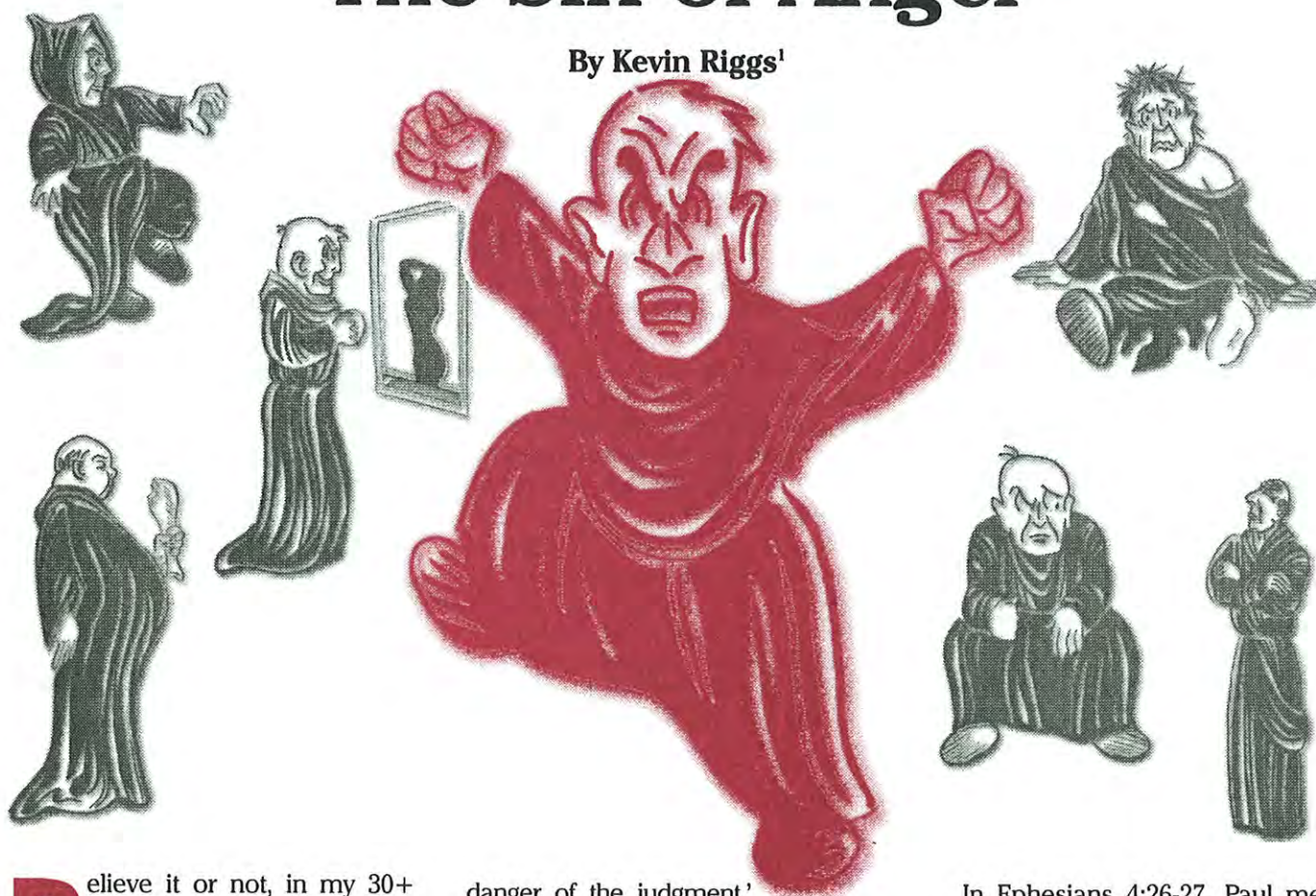
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Part three of a seven-part series on the Seven Deadly Sins

# The Sin of Anger

By Kevin Riggs<sup>1</sup>



**B**elieve it or not, in my 30+ years of life, I have never lost my temper. Don't believe me? Ask my wife, she will tell you the same thing. That's right, I have never lost my temper . . . I still have it, and I know exactly where it is when I need it.

I get angry at the most unusual things: Sometimes my computer and I don't get along, and it makes me angry. I hate being in a hurry and sitting in traffic, or waiting in line at McDonalds while a kid who looks like he should be in junior high fouls up my order. And don't get me started about answering machines and Caller I.D.

Anger is just one letter short of danger, and when I don't control my anger, I am treading on dangerous ground. Jesus equated anger with murder when He said, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in

danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment," (Matt. 5:21-22).

Pope Gregory, and other church leaders in the 500s A.D., knew what they were doing when they categorized anger as one of the seven deadly sins.<sup>2</sup>

## The Sin of Anger

It amazes me how easily I can justify anger. After all, "I had a right to be angry." "Anyone would have reacted the way I did." "It's his fault (or hers) I am so angry." Anger is the strongest of all human emotions, bringing with it remorse in the heart, discord in the home and bitterness on the job. When I get angry I get stronger, my face turns red, my heart beats faster, my palms become sweaty.

In Ephesians 4:26-27, Paul mentions three things about anger. First, he says anger in itself is not a sin. Anger, when funneled correctly, motivates me to do right. But I must confess, most times I become angry at the wrong thing and sin in my anger.

Second, Paul mentions that the issue (or issues) which caused me to be angry needs to be settled immediately. I like to do the opposite. I dwell on what has upset me and the more angry I become.

Third, Paul teaches that Satan uses anger to destroy relationships. Satan can use anger to destroy marriages, and nothing pleases him more than churches (and denominations) arguing and becoming angry at the wrong things.

The early church fathers took the sin of anger so seriously they taught that the angry person would be tormented in hell by being dismem-



bered alive.<sup>3</sup> Maybe if I viewed it that seriously I would be more apt to control my temper.

## What Causes Anger?

Frustration opens the door to anger. After a hard day at work when nothing seems to go right, after a day when the car, the washer and dryer, and the refrigerator all break down, I am ripe to lose my temper.

Thomas Jefferson said, "When angry count to 10, when very angry count to 100." Mark Twain said, "When angry count to four, when very angry, swear."

The best advice comes from Proverbs, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city," (16:32).

When someone hurts my feelings and I dwell on it, I become upset and angry. Instead of reconciling, I am tempted to brood and brawl, gossip and tear down.

The better alternative would be to follow Jesus' advice, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift," (Matt. 5:23-24).

When my children were younger they went through times when they were holy terrors. Misty (my wife) and I would say to each other, "They need a nap." Likewise, there are days when the best thing I could do for myself and those around me is take a nap.

When I am tired, I am irritable and the slightest provocation can set me off. During those times I need to heed the words of my Heavenly Father, "Be still, and know that I am God," (Psa. 46:10).

A fourth thing causing me to be angry is the pressures and stresses of everyday life. No one, not even God, said life would be easy. There are children to raise, bills to pay and projects to be completed. Life can be overwhelming, and if I allow things to build up, I will explode in anger.

## Responding to Anger

Right now, as I write these words, I am not angry at anyone or anything (not even my computer), so it is easy

to suggest ways to deal with anger. I only wish I would follow my own advice. Frequently, I respond to anger by trying to make the other person pay. I am fond of the saying, "Don't get mad, get even." I try to justify equalizing by quoting scripture, "eye for eye, tooth for tooth."

Gandhi, on the other hand, said, "Following the philosophy, 'An eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,' will only leave the world filled with blind, toothless people."

The Bible says, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," (Jas. 1:19-20).

Another negative way I respond to anger is to suppress it. The problem is, suppression leads to depression which can lead to physical ailments. Some believe suppressed anger is responsible for 90% of all counseling problems.<sup>4</sup> Suppression, when it comes out—and it always does—usually results in a tidal wave of anger.

Sometimes I displace my anger and take it out on the innocent. I can get angry at the lady behind the customer service counter, when in reality I am angry at myself for purchasing the wrong size oil filter for my car. I can yell at the vehicle in front of me, when in reality I am angry at my three-year-old who will not stay in his car seat.

The best way to handle anger is to express it in a calm, rational, healthy way. Easier said than done, I know. The worse way is to explode, letting it all out and flying into a fit of rage.

## Controlling Anger

Since Paul said, "Be angry, and sin not..." (Eph. 4:26), then there must be a way to control it. One way is to rely on God's justice instead of our own ability to retaliate. One day God will set things right, so there is no need to fret and worry. The Psalmist wrote, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face," (Psa. 89:14).

When tempers flare during a hockey game, the players are placed in "time out" (they call it a penalty box). When a basketball game gets out of hand, the coach calls a "time out" to regroup and refocus. Thus, one way I can control my anger is by calling a

"time-out," taking time to regroup and reflect.

The best way to deal with anger is to ask God's forgiveness and for His strength to overcome. A hot temper is not a character flaw, but a sin. "An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression," (Prov. 29:22).

It is never right to do wrong, and while I cannot control what others do to me, I must learn to control how I respond. No matter what happens or how I am treated, I must always strive to do good.

Victor Frankl<sup>5</sup> spent years imprisoned in one of Hitler's concentration camps. He was stripped of his dignity, abused and tortured. He was starved and forced into slave labor. Many in the concentration camps did not survive, not because they were put in gas chambers, but because they allowed anger and bitterness to grow, and found survival intolerable. They were literally eaten up with rage against their oppressors. Injustice was too much for them to endure. Therefore, they chose to die. Nobody overtly killed them; they simply gave up living.

Victor Frankl had another answer. He decided to do good for those who wronged him. When asked to scrub latrines with a toothbrush, he would do it twice; once because he had to, the second time because he willed to. He turned the situation in which he was being humiliated into one in which he willingly served others, even his enemies.

By redefining the situation in a positive way, he learned he could overcome his hatred and anger toward his oppressors. Victor Frankl survived the death camps and went on to become a respected, successful psychologist.

I doubt I will ever face the same type evil Victor Frankl faced. That is why his story is so important to me. If he can overcome the anger he must have felt, there is no reason why I cannot do the same. God's Word commands, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil," (Psa. 37:8). ■

1. I would love to hear from you with any comments, questions or opinions. I can be reached via email at gkriggs43@aol.com, or snail mail at 149 Arsenal Dr., Franklin, TN 37064, or by telephone at 615/790-3229.



2. The seven deadly sins are laziness, lust, anger, pride, envy, gluttony and greed.
3. Ernst & Johanna Lehner, *The Picture Book of Devils, Demons and Witchcraft*. The specific punishment for the other seven sins were as follows: The lazy would be condemned to eternity in a snake pit. Those guilty of lust would be smothered in fire and brimstone. The proud person would spend eternity stretched, broken on the wheel. The envious would be placed in freezing water. The gluttonous would be forced to eat rats, toads and snakes. The greedy would spend eternity in cauldrons of boiling oil.
4. Jay Adams is one Christian counselor who believes 90% of all counseling problems are the result of suppressed anger.
5. The story about Victor Frankl was adapted from Tony Campollo's book, *Seven Deadly Sins*. Its use here is in no way an endorsement (or indictment) by myself, or the editorial team of *Contact*, of Tony Campollo (or Victor Frankl) and should not be taken as such.



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Kevin Riggs pastors Franklin Free Will Baptist Church in Franklin, Tennessee

## Directory Update

### ILLINOIS

Bruce Thurman to Waltonville Church, Waltonville from Victory Church, Springdale, IL

### OKLAHOMA

Brad Cartmill to Grace Church, Oklahoma City  
Cody Freeman to First Church, Ada from Thayer Church, Thayer, MO  
Jimmy Holbrook to Harrah Church, Harrah

### TENNESSEE

Terry Forrest to Bethel Church, Ashland City

# THE TOGETHER WAY

December 1999

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 657.55	\$ .00	\$ 657.55	\$ 6,254.50	\$ .00	\$ 6,254.50
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	3,464.14	214.40	3,678.54
Arkansas	32,663.48	16,226.82	48,890.30	205,525.68	183,094.85	388,620.53
California	.00	1,247.26	1,247.26	.00	13,335.01	13,335.01
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	121.52	1,933.67	2,055.19	655.16	13,933.67	14,588.83
Georgia	33,478.34	1,313.02	34,791.36	316,037.08	21,027.13	337,064.21
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	8,698.86	1,741.92	10,440.78	93,383.49	24,348.99	117,732.48
Indiana	1,000.03	102.17	1,102.20	13,672.18	2,758.34	16,430.52
Iowa	90.00	523.50	613.50	450.00	2,848.15	3,298.15
Kansas	.00	89.47	89.47	.00	342.39	342.39
Kentucky	415.00	401.79	816.79	15,059.86	6,248.02	21,307.88
Louisiana	.00	40.00	40.00	180.00	40.00	220.00
Maryland	.00	131.25	131.25	150.00	9,642.39	9,792.39
Michigan	17,668.21	1,541.59	19,209.80	221,305.03	34,330.37	255,635.40
Mississippi	.00	.00	.00	84,291.15	6,186.51	90,477.66
Missouri	41,174.85	10,061.57	51,236.42	504,657.36	148,607.73	653,265.09
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	166.18	43.10	209.28	7,122.26	451.14	7,573.40
North Carolina	707.11	1,482.25	2,189.36	14,984.00	23,583.34	38,567.34
Ohio	50.00	.00	50.00	122,992.46	35,019.32	158,011.78
Oklahoma	65,198.17	12,046.53	77,244.70	628,838.36	125,451.83	754,290.19
South Carolina	92,922.58	.00	92,922.58	536,260.12	.00	536,260.12
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	4,590.37	863.94	5,454.31	142,280.60	19,628.18	161,908.78
Texas	15,899.99	481.20	16,381.19	105,859.35	3,515.40	109,374.75
Virginia	557.67	.00	557.67	9,259.88	60.00	9,319.88
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	4,535.05	149.10	4,684.15	30,432.28	1,193.85	31,626.13
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	241.34	12.78	254.12	3,402.67	158.92	3,561.59
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	34.60	.00	34.60
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.06	.06	.00	.43	.43
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 320,836.30</b>	<b>\$ 50,432.99</b>	<b>\$ 371,269.29</b>	<b>\$ 3,066,552.21</b>	<b>\$ 676,020.36</b>	<b>\$ 3,742,572.57</b>

### Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 2,466.51	\$ 22,694.84	\$ 25,161.35	\$ 23,462.71	\$ 304,209.03	\$ 327,671.74
Foreign Missions	181,771.02	6,379.77	188,150.79	1,795,075.28	85,516.57	1,880,591.85
FWBBC	22,363.93	6,379.77	28,743.70	213,519.34	85,516.57	299,035.91
Home Missions	102,139.03	4,992.87	107,131.90	879,042.73	66,926.03	945,968.76
Retirement & Insurance	558.96	3,883.33	4,442.29	5,198.57	52,053.61	57,252.18
Master's Men	587.24	3,883.33	4,470.57	5,427.86	52,053.61	57,481.47
Com. for Theo. Integrity	342.06	138.70	480.76	883.46	1,859.07	2,742.53
FWB Foundation	123.10	1,664.28	1,787.38	4,001.29	22,308.66	26,309.95
Historical Commission	22.89	138.70	161.59	288.81	1,859.07	2,147.88
Music Commission	6.76	138.70	145.46	260.51	1,859.07	2,119.58
Media Commission	25.93	138.70	164.63	434.69	1,859.07	2,293.76
Hillsdale FWB College	1,291.84	.00	1,291.84	19,292.70	.00	19,292.70
Other	9,137.03	.00	9,137.03	119,664.26	.00	119,664.26
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 320,836.30</b>	<b>\$ 50,432.99</b>	<b>\$ 371,269.29</b>	<b>\$ 3,066,552.21</b>	<b>\$ 676,020.36</b>	<b>\$ 3,742,572.57</b>



What happens to all those once-preached sermons?

# The Waste of the Century

By Don Hix

One day as I pondered what to preach to my congregation for Sunday morning and evening services, I thought about the possibility of the "Greatest Waste" that is being committed in the modern church. We see it happening continually, and we aren't even aware of it.

I remembered that all of my preaching brethren face the same dilemma I do every week. *What do I preach to those folks who have been faithful and listened to me all the years that I have been their pastor?*

That's when I thought of the thing that has become a big waste. We recycle many items in order to avoid waste and to be good stewards. But my mind wasn't on cans that didn't get recycled, plastic jugs that went into the wrong bin or old newspapers blown around by the wind.

The great waste was the hundreds of great sermons that only get used once or twice. If you pastor one church for any length of time, you have to keep developing new material.

A lot of people keep a record of what the preacher's sermon was about last week, last month or even a year or two ago. And they aren't too fond of reruns. Therefore, all those sermons that someone spent a lot of time preparing in prayer and study are somewhere gathering dust.

As I began to think of those sermons and the men who preached them, my heart began to ache for the old days of revival when a local pastor would call another pastor to come for a meeting. One solution might be to involve local pastors more as evangelists for revival meetings.

Now, before you think I'm against full-time evangelists, let me clear that up. I'm not. Over the years I have been blessed and privileged to hear some of the best of God's men who have traveled the length and breadth of this country.

At the same time, I have also been blessed to hear some great pastors preach. And let's face it, not all our pastors will preach at the state meeting or the national convention. This is not because they may not deserve the opportunity, but the simple fact is that we won't all live that long.

So, what do we do with all those once-preached sermons? We could print them and sell them, but somehow, that isn't like hearing them in person. You know what I mean when I say, "You should have heard him when he preached about Elijah." Nothing takes the place of *being there* when the sermon comes straight from the man who put his heart and soul into the message.

No, I don't need more meetings for myself. I currently work at a full-time job, pastor a church and can eat

from the senior's menu at the local restaurant. So even though I'm getting up in years, I stay busy. Yes, I do preach a revival from time to time, as do many pastors.

Over the years, I have found that some of the best meetings God has allowed me to be in were those where I called another pastor to preach his heart to us.

By the way, it doesn't hurt any pastor to get out and preach to some different folks once in a while. He will probably return to his own pulpit with a new fire. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Don Hix pastors Woodstock Free Will Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ohio.

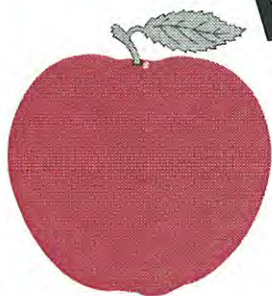




The battle today is for the minds of Christian people

# Weapons of Learning

By Darrell Holley



**I**n 1864, in the town of Marianna, Florida, one of the most pitiful battles of the War Between the States was fought. You may remember that General Sherman was marching through Georgia. One group of that Yankee army made its way south across the Georgia-Florida line, toward the little town. All the able-bodied men were away at the front, and no one was left to defend the town except a few young boys and old men—who came to be called “The Cradle and Grave Militia.” And even they were poorly armed.

These boys and old men with pitchforks and a few superannuated squirrel rifles went into battle against tough, battle-hardened, well-armed veterans of Sherman’s army. Needless to say, “The Cradle and Grave Militia” lost—decidedly—and the town was conquered.

I find this battle interesting not only because my great-grandfather was one of the young men in that rag-tag Confederate militia but also because, despite the bravery of those boys and old men, despite their devotion to their cause, despite their devotion to the Constitution, they lost. They lost because they were out-armed by the enemy.

## No Weapons

In I Samuel 13, we find a similar pitiful tale. Saul had just recently been crowned the first king of Israel. Yet his country was still overrun with Canaanites, the wicked enemies of God and His people. Saul had had a victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead, and he and Jonathan had smitten the Philistine garrison at Geba.

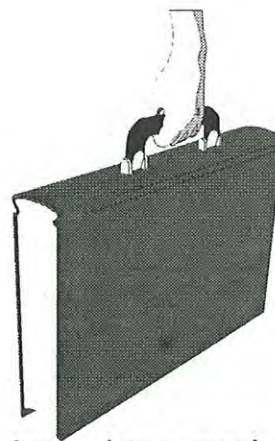


But at Michmash, the Philistines arrived in force with 30,000 chariots, 6000 horsemen and an army “as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude.” And when the Israelites saw them they were “distressed” and hid themselves “in caves and in thickets and in rocks and in high places and in pits.” Even the ones that stayed to fight followed Saul “trembling.”

At first, we’re tempted to blame them for this show of cowardice. Why didn’t they stand and fight? Why didn’t they fight—as David later would—“in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel”? Then we see why.

The Philistines were smart. They were wicked—but they were smart. They knew that if there were Hebrew blacksmiths they might be making shovels and pitchforks today, but tomorrow they could make swords and spears. Philistine policy kept all the blacksmithing knowledge to themselves. “Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears,” they said.

The Hebrew could have his plowshare and his axe—he could buy them ready-made from the local Philistine blacksmith. And if they got dull he could get them sharpened, by the Philistine blacksmith. But if that Hebrew farmer wanted his plowshare



beaten into a sword or his pruning-hook refashioned into a spear, he was out of luck.

Needless to say, he need not go to the Philistine blacksmith for that. No wonder they didn’t want to go into battle. They were unarmed! On the day of the battle “there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan.”

## Our Warfare

Now our battle is not like theirs. In some ways it would be easier if it



were. Our warfare is much more complicated. In this war, we do not "war after the flesh." Our weapons are not physical ones. But nevertheless we can be armed; indeed, our weapons are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

Paul reminds us in Ephesians that we are to be armed: our loins girded with truth, wearing the breastplate of righteousness, wearing boots of "the preparation of the gospel," carrying the shield of faith, wearing the helmet of salvation, and using the sharpened, two-edged sword of the Spirit, "which is the Word of God."

We are to take the scriptures and to use them to "turn to flight the armies of the aliens." We are to be so saturated with gospel learning that we can "[cast] down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." We are to "[bring] into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

This can be accomplished only through Christian education. It begins in our childhood bedtime stories and family devotions. It continues in our pulpits and in our Sunday School classes. There was a day when it continued by and large in the public schools of our land. But much of our public school system has been taken over by the Philistines (though there are some marvelous exceptions—and thank God for them.)

But one area which we *must* provide for is Christian higher education. The education offered in the vast majority of college classrooms in the nation is controlled by the enemies of God. They reject God as Creator and put evolutionary theories in His place.

And we have a nation of people who devalue human life. They reject the authority of the Bible and encourage every man to do "that which is right in his own eyes." And we have wholesale murder and mayhem in the streets. They reject Christian morality and call every imaginable perversion an "alternative lifestyle." And sexual promiscuity and debauchery and the psychological and physical fallout of those lifestyles are rampant.

We are in a battle, and the enemy controls all the blacksmiths. Well, not quite. There are, thank God, a few who have not submitted to this tyranny of ideas, this tyranny of education,

this trick of the Devil to keep God's people ignorant of the means of their own delivery.

The battle today is for the minds of Christian people. Thank God we have a few colleges where Christian education is going on. It begins with the Bible, "the sword of the Spirit," and then it applies the Word of God to every facet of human learning, to all the liberal arts and sciences.

The question is this: Will we take part in this battle? Will we avail ourselves of this opportunity, to engage in this war of mental and spiritual rebellion against the tyrannical powers of evil? Do you want to be a modern-day Paul, able to gainsay the pagan philosophers in our modern seats of learning in our modern cities, as he did at Mars Hill in ancient Athens?

Do you want to be able to turn our nation's culture back to one built on the Word of God, a culture based on the true, the good and the beautiful? Do you want to help turn the political tide of this nation back toward that of a constitutional republic, back to that nation envisioned by our Founding Fathers? Do you want to help end the holocaust of abortion? Do you want to help stop the tyranny of the Philistines who control most of our newspapers, films, television and radio? Do you want to reassert the paramount importance of biblical ideals in a nation that insists on multicultural inclusivity for everyone except people like us?

Do you want to be able to save the young people of our churches who are being silently but swiftly allured to Philistine thought? If you want to do any of these things, you need academic tools, academic weapons. Know that in this battle "there's no hiding place down here." If you go out unarmed, you will most assuredly be defeated.

### An Historical Lesson

In the summer of 1754, the Calvinistic preacher Dr. John Gano came down from Philadelphia to the poor Free Will Baptist churches of North Carolina. He had heard that they believed in the general atonement and free will, and he was bent on stamping it out and turning them all into good Calvinists. The ministers in those little Free Will Baptist churches tried to avoid meeting with him in debate.

As Brother R. K. Hearn, the first modern Free Will Baptist church historian, said back in the 1870s: "They wished to avoid discussion on an unwelcome subject with one who possessed abilities far superior to theirs."

Eventually, the wily Dr. Gano took them on in their own churches, even in their own pulpits. Uneducated and poorly-prepared to defend the doctrines they believed, many of them and their congregations succumbed. By the end of that summer, Free Will Baptist ranks were thinned considerably.

Brother Hearn asked in his little book: "Why did Dr. Gano attack the Free Will Baptists? They weren't the only religious body in North Carolina at the time—there was one other—the Episcopalians. Why didn't he try to invade them with his proselyting preaching?"

And here's his answer: "Dr. Gano knew full well that the ministers of the Episcopal Church were his equals in learning and talents; and, if he attempted such a thing, he would meet his match. Therefore, since the Baptist ministers were men of very limited education, he could succeed with his powerful eloquence in proselyting them and their members."

The threats to our churches and to our people are not limited just to Calvinism—if only that were our only enemy. If we fail to arm this generation, we send them out as lambs to the slaughter. But if we are armed with a truly Christian education, we can be prepared not merely to defend ourselves and the church, but to go on the attack against the enemies of God, against "spiritual wickedness in high places" and to resist the Devil and send him packing. ■

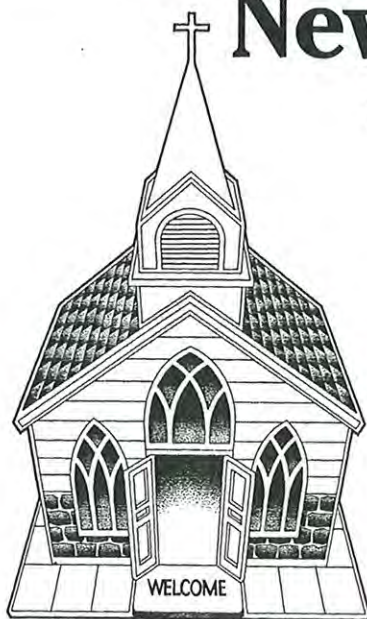


ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Darrell Holley chairs the English and Speech Department at Free Will Baptist Bible College. He is a member of the Free Will Baptist Historical Commission.



# Teaching Old Church Buildings New Tricks

By Eddy Hall



**T**his building was designed for a congregation of 265," one church member argued at a congregational meeting. "The architect told us so. We can't grow any bigger than that in this building."

Over this gentleman's objection, the congregation went ahead and invited a facilities consultant to help them find ways to make maximum use of their building. A few months later they had a remodeling and utilization plan that would allow them to grow to 750 with no new construction.

A church in Warsaw, Indiana, which averages about 450 in two worship services, had spent several years studying options for how to accommodate growth. The best option they had come up with involved two additions totaling \$4.2 million plus interest. Feeling stuck, they asked a consultant for help.

Instead of requiring millions of dollars for construction, their new facility plan calls for a few hundred thousand dollars of remodeling and some utilization changes that together provide enough room for attendance to almost double. After that, a \$1.1 million multi-purpose addition will provide as much growing room as the proposed \$4.2 million construction projects would have.

## *From single-use to multiple-use*

How is it possible to teach "old church buildings new tricks" like this—to make them serve congregations far larger than those for which they were originally designed? It's possible because of a paradigm shift taking place in the way North American Christians think about, use and design church buildings.

Architects have been trained to design single-use church buildings: the sanctuary is used for worship, class rooms for Sunday School, the fellowship hall for dinners, the gym for recreation. Besides that, sanctuary and class rooms are generally designed with only a single session in mind. When the sanctuary or class rooms approach 80% capacity, it is time to call the architect again.

The new multiple-use paradigm doesn't treat the building as fully utilized until multiple sessions of worship and classes are being filled and most of the building is being used for a variety of ministries at various times.

Architect Ray Bowman, author of *When Not to Build* and a pioneer in this approach to church facility use, estimates that nine out of every 10 churches that call him thinking they need to build actually have a better, less costly alternative.

What are some of these new tricks that old church buildings can learn?

## *The full-Sunday-School illusion*

Most churches, when they call in a facilities consultant, say their Sunday School is full or almost full. In my consulting work, I have learned that this usually means that "we have a class in every or almost every available room."

I recently walked through a church like this during their Sunday School hour. All but two of their classes had room to double or triple their attendance in their present rooms. But because all the rooms were in use, the people considered their Sunday School space full.

To fully use their education space, this church will have to make several changes. They will need to buy lightweight folding tables that children's teachers can easily set up or take down during class. They can then use the same space for both floor and table activities rather than using half the room for each. Supply cabinets on the floor will need to be replaced by wall-mounted cabinets. Small classes taught by solo teachers will need to grow into larger team-taught classes.

With changes like these—plus installing folding walls to create more places for teens and adults to meet—



this Sunday School will have plenty of room to double. Before that happens, though, this church will be adding a second worship service and a second Sunday School session. Children's classes will actually have room to quadruple before they need more space.

### ***Too few rooms or too many classes?***

In York, Pennsylvania, is a growing congregation of 650 that could not be charged with not fully using their class rooms. Their Monday through Friday Child Care Center had long since packed out the available rooms and had a waiting list. The children's Sunday School, junior church and Wednesday evening children's program were all approaching the limits of their space.

Yet a look at their children's ministries showed that 191 volunteer workers were needed to staff the children's Sunday School, junior church and Wednesday evening activities. When asked, "Do you have 191 people who are called to work in children's ministry?" the children's pastor immediately expressed frustration at having to recruit workers who were serving out of obligation rather than call, including some poorly qualified for that particular ministry. The results were predictable: regular recruiting hassles, worker burnout and teaching of inconsistent quality.

The solution? The church restructured their three children's programs (Sunday School, junior church, and Wednesday evening) into two—one on Sunday and one on Wednesday. Now only half of the children are using the class rooms during each session on Sunday. Between that and a Wednesday night adult programming change, the children's ministries at York now have plenty of room to grow—without spending a penny on new class rooms.

Even more important, though, is the improved quality of their children's Christian education. Rather than needing 191 adults to staff their Sunday morning and Wednesday children's ministries, they now need 60. The people working with children now are the ones whose hearts are in it. And now all those other workers are free to work in the min-

istries to which God is calling them.

### ***Time, space and food***

Multiple worship services are at the heart of the multiple-use paradigm, but many church buildings are not well-suited to multiple services. After all, they were designed for single services.

What does a building suitable for double services look like? The main requirement is a large foyer or other fellowship area where those leaving the first service can visit with those arriving for the second service without causing congestion.

One concern here is traffic flow, but something even more important is at stake here. By far the most common objection to adding a second service is, "But then we won't see our friends who go to the other service." When a church ignores this need, its attempt at a second service often fails. So why not give those who attend the two services plenty of opportunity to fellowship with each other?

You can do this by providing three things—time, space and food. It's not unusual for churches to allow only 15 minutes between services, barely enough time to get from one place to the other. I recommend that between services churches schedule a third ministry event, a half-hour fellowship time when refreshments are served.

The ideal space for this is a fellowship foyer, though a fellowship area farther from the worship space can work, at least temporarily. If a church doesn't have a foyer large enough to comfortably accommodate double services, sometimes the foyer can be enlarged. Adding on a new fellowship foyer is not inexpensive, but it costs far less than building a bigger sanctuary. And, of course, a fellowship foyer is extremely versatile space that can serve a wide range of ministry uses.

### ***The house next door***

Most older church buildings were not designed for multiple staff. As a result, in a growing church, improvised pastor's offices are often scattered throughout the building, secretaries have too little work space, and the offices may not be welcoming to weekday visitors.

If the church owns a parsonage or

rent house near the church campus, in many cases an excellent solution is to convert the house next door into the church office complex. The new office center usually includes a conference room that doubles as a class room as well as other meeting rooms. Providing a housing allowance for the pastor in lieu of a parsonage is far less hassle—and normally much less expensive—than building new offices.

### ***The payoff***

These are just a few of the new tricks you can teach old church buildings to multiply their capacity to handle growth. The financial benefits of this approach are obvious. Because major construction is postponed, the church buys time to get out of debt then to save up cash for future construction.

Just by earning interest on the building fund rather than paying interest on a mortgage, a church can cut construction costs by as much as two-thirds. And since building for multiple-use requires fewer square feet, a church may be able to cut its construction costs by a total of 75% or even more.

The greatest benefit, though, can't be measured in dollars and cents. The real tragedy of unneeded church building programs is that they drain time, money and energy away from ministry. Time after time a growing church has built too big, too soon only to discover that growth stops. Why? Because the church's focus changes from the ministries producing the growth to building and paying for a facility.

When we teach old buildings new tricks, it doesn't just save money; it helps us stay focused on the real work of the church—reaching out in love to hurting people who need the healing and hope only God can give. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Eddy Hall of Goessel, Kansas, is a church facilities consultant who helps congregations maximize ministry through integrated planning of facilities, finances, staffing, and ministries. He is coauthor, with Ray Bowman, of *When Not to Build: an Architect's Unconventional Wisdom for the Growing Church* and *When Not to Borrow: Unconventional Financial Wisdom to Set Your Church Free* (Baker Books).



# Ten Easy Ways to Improve Your Writing

By Bert Tippet



**T**hese are not rules; they are suggestions—offered hesitantly. Some were gleaned from *The Techniques of Clear Writing*, a classic in the field by Robert Gunning. Others are personal.

## Vary Sentence Length

The operative word is “variety.” I would not campaign for all sentences to be 10 words or less. But some should be. Even non-sentences are sometimes appropriate.

The Apostle Paul illustrates this principle. One of his sentences in 1 Thessalonians 4 is 85 words long, but he closes

the book with a series of short sentences, one only two words long.

A worthy goal would be to keep the average sentence length to 20 words. As former *Newsweek* editor Chet Chaw says, “Use periods. They take no more room than commas and less room than ‘which’s.’”

## Use Descriptive Verbs

To make a narrative powerful, amateurs use adjectives; professionals use verbs. Verbs are the most dynamic parts of speech. They describe the action. Choose them wisely and you will increase the power of

your writing.

For instance, an abridged thesaurus lists 54 different verbs for “eat.” They include devour, bolt, dispatch, gulp, snap, gormandize, bite, champ, munch, crunch, nibble and gnaw. (If you don’t have a thesaurus, get one.)

Note the verb-power in this sentence from my local newspaper: “The Lebanon war *plunged* toward a full-scale conflagration yesterday as waves of Israeli jets *streaked* into Lebanon’s missile-studded Bekaa Valley, *battled* Syrian MiGs and *swept* Syrian anti-aircraft sites.” The adjectives aren’t bad either.



## Build Your Vocabulary

How many words do you know? The average high school student knows 10,000-15,000 words. Your interest in writing indicates that your vocabulary may be nearer 20,000 words. However, in conversations, most people rarely exceed the use of 3,000 - 4,000 words.

The purpose of a good vocabulary is not to enable you to use *big* words, but to use the *best* words. I remember reading the commendation a corporate officer wrote about an employee. He said the employee had rendered "yeoman's service." The term was new to me, but I sensed what it meant. (I looked it up, just to be sure I was right.)

The *Reader's Digest* department, "Word Power," should be required reading for aspiring writers. It will teach you new words and clarify your understanding of words you think you already know.

## Use Illustrations

As in sermons, illustrations in articles are like windows that let in the light. Pepper your writing with illustrations that will allow readers to *feel* what you are conveying. People often remember illustrations longer than observations.

When the federal debt hit \$1 trillion (way back in 1981), reporters had a heyday trying to illustrate how much money that is. Saying it is 1,000 billion fell short. One reporter tried this: "A person counting a \$1,000-bill each second could count \$1 trillion in 133 years."

Another did it this way: If you put that much money in a line of dollar bills end on end, it would stretch around the Earth more than 1,800 times . . . You could make every man, woman and child in Atlanta a millionaire, or you could buy everybody in Minnesota a \$115,000-Rolls Royce Camargue.

## Check Grammar and Spelling

I loathe grammar. I always have. But I learned that, if I am to be read, I must be correct. There are several English handbooks that will enable you to check your grammar easily.

For instance, in both prose and poetry, I have seen the word "trod" misused. (Only Christians seem to use that word.) "Trod" is the past tense of "tread," yet I read:

Dear Lord, help me every day  
As I trod the narrow way.  
You "trod" it yesterday, but you "tread" it today.

For spelling, the little 40,000-entry *Word Book* published by Houghton Mifflin is a handy desk accessory. It contains no definitions, just correct spellings, so it is faster to use than a dictionary.

## Keep Writing Simple

Perhaps you have heard that popular magazines, like *Reader's Digest*, are written on a sixth or seventh grade level. *Roots*, by Alex Haley, is written at under ninth grade level. How do you determine the grade level of a piece of writing? You calculate a Fog Index.

Without going into detail, it will help you to know that a Fog Index calculates only two factors: average sentence length and the percentage of words longer than two syllables. Therefore, keep your average sentence length short (see above) and prefer short, simple words. (However, if a longer word is more correct or descriptive, by all means use it.)

## Write about Things You Know

Beginning writers are advised to stick with the familiar. You will write best about the things you know. Hold off the heavily-researched subjects for later.

In *Effective Feature Writing*, Clarence Schoenfeld suggests you go for "APPLAUSE."

- A—Appeal:** Choose subjects that will help and interest people.
- P—Plain Facts:** State facts, not your opinions.
- P—Personalities:** People are interested in people.
- L—Logical Angle:** Look for a twist that will hook readers.
- A—Action:** Struggle and conflict are basic to life.
- U—Uniqueness:** Look for the off-beat and distinctive.
- S—Significance:** What will this do for your reader?
- E—Energy:** Write with enthusiasm!

Where do you find such stories?

Freelancer Evelyn Witter sold five stories in a year based on things she saw out her kitchen window: a wisp of hay in the barn loft, the old dinner bell, her 12-year-old son doing push-ups, etc. And, she says, there are 22 more windows in her house!

## Keep a Journal

Write down your experiences and observations. Keep a small notebook in your purse or pocket.

Some time back I thumbed through an old journal and recalled my son's first communion. He had been recently saved and I had tried to impress upon him the meaning of the Lord's Supper. I was so proud as he took the bread from the communion plate—until he turned, gave me a puzzled look, and asked, "Are you sure this is Jesus?" Keep a journal. It will be a gold mine of memories and illustrations.

## Attend Conferences

Writers' conferences are helpful in two ways. They are a source of information. They are also a source of encouragement.

## Then, Just Do It

There is no substitute for just writing. And re-writing. Jot down thoughts for stories. Browse your journal for material. Observe people and events that surround you. Then write.

Put your scribbles aside for a day or two, then re-read them. Mark the changes you want. Ask an honest friend to give you an honest evaluation.

But don't quit. If the pen is mightier than the sword, it's because it is harder to master. ■

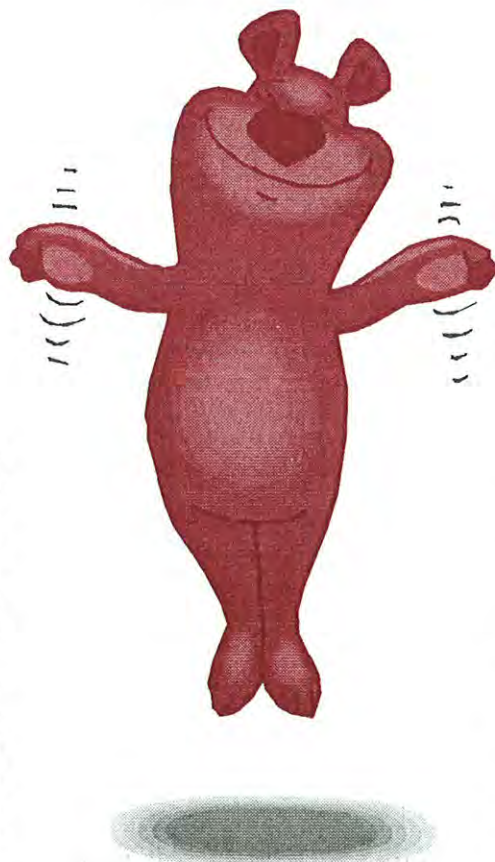


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bert Tippet is public relations director at Free Will Baptist Bible College.



# Perpetual Joy? Who Says?

By Gordon Sebastian



that was carefully designed to make every worshiper feel good.

All of this, plus messages assuring them that following Jesus means perpetual happiness, health and prosperity absolutely guarantees their complete bewilderment when problems arise and their feelings subside.

We may turn our televisions on and see thousands of worshipers in a huge stadium celebrating the religious time of their lives. We may follow the cameraman as he focuses on the joyous crowd with their hands upraised and their tear-stained faces reflecting total bliss. But what we do not see is that same multitude, a month, a year, or several years later, after they have returned to the problems and disappointments of the real world. ■



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Gordon Sebastian pastors Peace Free Will Baptist Church in Wilson, North Carolina. He writes a monthly pastoral column for the congregation.

Reprinted by permission from *The Peace Promoter*, March 1996 issue.

**T**he hospital paged me twice yesterday while I was making my rounds. It was a woman I'd never met calling the hospital for a minister, any minister. I just happened to be available. Both calls were from the same person concerning the same problem.

This dear young believer was perplexed. If joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and if she is a temple of the Holy Spirit, why, then, doesn't she have joy all the time? Does the absence of joy and the presence of depression indicate loss of salvation?

Perhaps to you more mature believers this problem of my caller is no real problem. You learned long ago not to depend on your feelings. You learned to pray when you don't feel like it, to read your Bible when you don't feel like it, to go to church when you don't feel like it, to serve God when you don't feel like it.

You learned to believe the Bible's promises concerning your salvation even when you do not "feel" that you are really saved. In short, you learned that "the just shall live by faith" and not by feelings.

But millions of people in America's church world do not understand this. According to one study of contemporary Christianity in the United States, millions of Christians in our country follow a different Jesus than the Jesus of the New Testament. Today's popular Christ is the one created by a host of slick ministerial marketers who get rich from merchandising a new

gospel—the "health-wealth-success gospel" that's being propagated by so many televangelists.

According to this study, these ministers merely cater to what the populace wants. Today's contemporary Christian is tired of the Jesus found on the pages of the Bible. He is too demanding. They want a cosmic Christ, whose only desire is to meet all their needs and supply all their desires. Their Christianity, therefore, is a Christianity of perpetual happiness, health and success.

So, guess what we can expect to find in the wake of such pulpit poison! Communities full of bewildered church members who don't have the foggiest understanding about their standing with the Lord. They had a blast at first. The happy countenances of their new friends at church, the love they felt in this new environment, and the joy they experienced in a highly-charged emotional worship service



## Educational Task Force Seeks Answers

NASHVILLE, TN—The Educational Task Force authorized by delegates to the National Association in Atlanta (July 1999) launched its first series of meetings in December 1999, according to Chairman Melvin Worthington. The exploratory session met December 10-11 after the Leadership Conference to formulate plans and set parameters.

Members elected Georgia pastor Matt Pinson as clerk. When the task force is ready to present its findings, the final report will be drafted by Bill Davidson, Douglas Simpson and Matt Pinson.

The task force will seek to address concerns raised by six questions:

1. Why aren't our colleges attracting 90%+ of Free Will Baptist college students? What can we do to attract our students to our colleges?
2. How can we cooperate more and foster greater complementarity and sharing among our colleges?
3. How can we cooperatively employ creative, entrepreneurial means to increase our level of educational effectiveness (e.g., educational technology, adult education, cross-cultural education)?

4. What steps must we take to establish a Free Will Baptist seminary to educate our pastors more effectively for ministry?

5. How can we better fund our educational institutions?

6. How do we view Christian education as a denomination?

The purpose of the task force, as understood by its members, is two-fold: (1) to define the educational needs and problems with the current system, and (2) to formulate a strategy with which to address them.

In order to find answers to the six questions and to fulfill its purpose, the task force approved three committees: the Survey Committee, chaired by Tim Eaton; the College and Seminary Committee, chaired by Randy Sawyer; the Funding Committee, chaired by Dan Parker.

Each committee was assigned specific responsibilities, and each informed the other task force members how they plan to proceed—some with surveys, some with campus visits to other institutions, some with study of literature in the field and more.

The Educational Task Force will reconvene in January 2001.

## Gospeliers Quartet Jubilee Celebration

NASHVILLE, TN—The Gospeliers Quartet will celebrate their Jubilee Reunion March 4-5, at Cofer's Chapel FWB Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

While they waited in registration lines at Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1950, four freshmen started harmonizing: Bobby Jackson, Eugene Waddell, Ray Turnage and James Earl Raper. Robert Picirilli, who was already in school and part of another quartet, joined them the next year. This quartet, known as the Gospeliers, has ministered off and on since that time.

The name "Gospeliers" was used at least two years prior to that time as the name of the official college quartet under "Pop" Melvin.

The Jubilee Celebration has been scheduled on the weekend before Bible Conference at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Quartet members invite friends both past and present to join them as they celebrate 50 years of service.

Cofer's Chapel is located at 3915 Franklin Road in Nashville. Jubilee Reunion service times are as follows:

Saturday, March 4	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 5	10:00 a.m.
	6:00 p.m.



## Dr. Darwin Kelton, Minister-Musician, Dies

ATKINS, AR—Sixty-two-year-old Darwin Kelton, a Free Will Baptist minister and musician, died at his home in Atkins on December 12, 1999, after an extended illness. Dr. Kelton was ordained to preach in 1974 in Fresno, CA, where he chaired the music department at California Christian College.

After teaching two years in Florida (1976-78), Reverend Kelton began pastoring First FWB Church in Berryville, AR. He served in Berryville, then at First FWB Church in Atkins, Hatfield FWB Church and Pine Hill FWB Church in Star City until declining health required him to cease from full-time pastoral duties. He served as minister of music at Union Grove FWB Church (Atkins) until his death.

A gifted musician both vocally and instrumentally, Kelton began his first radio program at age 16.



He would later sing with gospel quartets, direct choral groups, teach guitar lessons and guide music programs on the collegiate and local church levels.

Evangelist Wade Jernigan said, "Darwin never lost his sense of direction. He always did his duty and not once lost his drive."

Pastor David Bishop of Union

Grove FWB Church lauded Kelton for "his example of perseverance under extreme circumstances."

Born near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1937, Brother Kelton brought warmth, energy and a sense of awe for the things of God to his ministry. He always had an encouraging word for colleagues and others whose lives he touched.

Funeral services were conducted December 14 at Union Grove FWB Church with Reverends David Bishop, Wade Jernigan and Bill Johnson officiating. Six Free Will Baptist ministers served as pallbearers.

Dr. Kelton is survived by his wife of 41 years, Mary Kelton; two sons, Dr. Mark Kelton of Springfield, MO, and Scott Kelton of Delight (AR); four grandchildren; and one brother, Norman Kelton of Dallas, TX.

## Ohio Church Honors Pastor Chamberlin

PORTSMOUTH, OH—After 41 years as pastor at Porter FWB Church in Portsmouth, something finally happened that caught Reverend Forrest Chamberlin by surprise. Family and church members organized a "Celebration of Faithful Service" day on November 28, 1999.

Pastor Forrest and Evelyn Chamberlin were cited for more than 50 years of ministry, the last 41 years at the Porter church.

A news release from the church said, "Faithful, dedicated, respected, humble and clean living are words that come to mind when Tary and Evelyn Chamberlin are mentioned. They continue to support our denominational efforts by opening the church and their home to the various agencies."

The special service began with "Tary" and Evelyn called to the front of the church to be presented with flowers. As they sat together on the front row surrounded by seven children, five daughters-in-law, one son-in-law, 14 grandchildren, one grandchild's spouse, two fiances of grandchildren and the congregation, many tears were shed in praise and

thanksgiving for the pastor and his wife.

As Tary and Evelyn sat back to observe what would take place that Sunday morning, Dave, their oldest son, taught the Sunday School lesson. Dave led the remainder of the service and Deena (daughter) played the piano. The entire family (30 individuals) sang for their parents and grandparents, "What a Day That Will Be," and "He's Been So Good To Me."

Their five sons, (Dave, Dwight, Doug, Denny and Dale) sang "Boundless Love" and "We'll Cast Our Crowns At His Feet." Three Grandchildren (Jennifer, Jill and Luke) sang "Out of His Great Love." Leah (granddaughter) sang "My

Adonai." A grandson (Wes) quoted one of Tary's favorite poems, "The Touch of the Master's Hand."

Neil Gilliland, former church member at Porter, gave the morning message. He related Brother and Mrs. Chamberlin's life and ministry to the fruits of the Spirit. At the close of the service, Dale and Doris (son and daughter) sang "I Want to Stroll Over Heaven With You." A meal at the church fellowship hall followed the morning service.



Forrest and Evelyn Chamberlin with their seven children.



## Maryland State Votes To Dissolve

MIDDLETOWN, VA—During its 32nd annual session, delegates to the Maryland State Association voted to dissolve their association, ask the Virginia State Association to accept two of its quarterly meetings and allow Maryland's Mid-Atlantic Conference to function as a free-standing district association. The vote came on June 24-26, 1999, according to Maryland moderator David Reece.

Reverend Reece said, "The dissolution had been considered for several years. The separation was friendly, and all parties concerned ask God's best for the others."

The Maryland State Association was composed of two quarterlies in Virginia (the Central Virginia and the Northern Virginia Confer-

ences) and one conference in Maryland (the Mid-Atlantic Conference). The Mid-Atlantic Conference includes churches in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Moderator Reece commented, "The Mid-Atlantic Conference simply grew up and wanted to do something great on their own."

The moderator appointed two committees to assist in the process. One committee negotiated the dissolution between the quarterly meetings while the other negotiated the inclusion into the Virginia State Association. Both committees were successful.

A final committee meeting on November 18, 1999, directed that the remaining assets of the Mary-

land State Association be disbursed between the quarterly meetings. With that action, the Maryland State Association ceased to exist.

The Northern and Central quarterlies joined the Virginia State Association, and the Mid-Atlantic Quarterly became the Mid-Atlantic District representing directly to the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

"It was time," said David Reece. "There is great work to be done by both groups. We thank God for the opportunity."

As the Maryland State Association dissolved by vote, its fourth state mission project went self-supporting—Waldorf FWB Church, led by Pastor Jim Fairchild.

## Preaching Highlights Tennessee State

GREENEVILLE, TN—Seven sermons in three days marked the 62nd annual Tennessee State Association, according to Promotional Director Charles Thigpen. The November 8-10, 1999, meeting which convened at Oak Grove FWB Church in Greeneville registered 209 people, including 104 ministers.

Nashville pastor Stanley Outlaw (Woodbine FWB Church) delivered the keynote address Monday evening. Tuesday evening belonged to Mountain City pastor Frank Woods (First FWB Church), while Randall House general director Alton Loveless preached Wednesday morning.

The Tuesday morning Bible Conference featured sermons by Pastors Bill Greer (Keystone FWB Church in Johnson City) and Sterl Paramore (Cookeville FWB Church).

The Tennessee WAC heard sermons by Home Missions Department director Trymon Messer and Foreign Missions Department director James Forlines.

Moderator Terry Eagleton, assistant moderator Robert Hobbs and clerk Eugene Workman were re-elected by delegates.

The 2000 state association will meet November 13-15 at Donelson FWB Church in Nashville.

## Georgia Re-Elects Smith Moderator

METTER, GA—Delegates to Georgia's 63rd annual state association elected Fayetteville pastor Paul Smith to his fourth term as moderator at the November 18-20, 1999, session, according to Clerk Terry Pierce. Reverend Smith pastors Trinity Fellowship FWB Church.

Two hundred three people registered for the meeting, including 60 ministers and 16 deacons.

Clerk Terry Pierce said, "We had a great state meeting with great reports from our camping ministry that reported more than 700 youth in the programs."

Delegates raised over \$1,000 to support the publication of a theological journal to be produced by the National Association's Commission for Theological Integrity.

Delegates approved a \$500,000 state budget, including a \$200,000 cooperative plan budget.

A resolution passed citing the faithfulness of Bill Lofton for service on the Christian Education Board. The C. E. Board presented Lofton with a plaque.

The association theme was "Doing Business for God." Pastors Burt Hall (White Rock FWB Church), Bobby Taylor (Deep Creek FWB Church) and Henry Shellman (Trinity FWB Church) joined with missionary to Japan Dale Bishop to develop the theme in four sermons.

Foreign Missions Department general director James Forlines preached during the Bible Conference.

The 2000 state meeting date has been moved from November and will meet March 16-18 at First FWB Church in Albany.



## Kentucky Tornado Damages Homes

OWENSBORO, KY—A powerful F-3 tornado that caused \$70 million damage ripped through Owensboro January 3 damaging more than 2,277 homes and destroying 101 others. The homes of six Free Will Baptist families were damaged, according to Pastor Tim Hall of First FWB Church, two of them extensively.

Pastor Hall said, "Our church has extended support to the families. The community involvement has been phenomenal."

First FWB Church had adopted a flooded North Carolina family that lost their home in Hurricane Floyd. North Carolina promotional director Jim Marcum sent an email to pastors in his state reminding them that more than \$12,000 had come from Kentucky to flood victims. Marcum suggested that North Carolina churches receive an offering for the tornado-ravaged Kentucky church family.

First FWB Church is in a building program. Early reports indicated that the church building was undamaged.

Pastor Tim Hall said, "This has been a very trying time for our city, one that we've never encountered before."

## Virginia Children's Home Celebrates

DUFFIELD, VA—Harvest FWB Child Care Ministries conducted its third annual Christmas celebration on December 18, 1999, at Stickleyville Elementary School, when 17 donors from across the region gathered to make Christmas come alive for residents of the home.

The contributors set up Christmas trees for each child and put an array of gifts underneath each child's tree. Donors spent the afternoon with their child, eating, singing and exchanging gifts.

Martha Stone, advancement director, said, "This is the best event of the year. It gives donors an active part in our ministry. Before coming to Harvest, many of our children never had a Christmas tree or celebrated Christ's birthday in traditional ways."

Dustin Neeley of Church Hill, TN, provided holiday music and led the donors in an active rendition of "The 12 Days of Christmas."

Executive director Newl Dotson said, "I can't believe the generosity of the community. Today an estimated \$5,100 in gifts were

given to our children."

Participants in the event included churches from Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia, as well as donors and service organizations from North Carolina and Georgia.

Harvest Child Care Ministries will soon be breaking ground on the first phase of their Campus Development project. A 20-bed Emergency Shelter will be constructed on the Stickleyville property. The shelter will serve children who are in critical situations, including abuse and neglect.

Robin Neal, who will head up the program, said that this type of service had been needed for some time. "The construction should be completed sometime in the fall of 2000."

The ministry is a non-profit home for children and seeks to provide a loving home-like atmosphere to children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected. The home serves children ages 5 to 18.

## Alabama State Registers 194

MONTGOMERY, AL—The 80th annual Alabama State Association met November 11-12, 1999, at Light-house FWB Church in Montgomery. Promotional director Rick Cash said that 194 people registered for the two-day meeting.

Delegates gave a \$643 offering to assist North Carolina flood victims. Moderator Richard Bowers led the business session. Delegates adopted a \$450,000 ACTS 1:8 budget.

Since employing a full-time promotional director in 1995, Alabama's missions giving has increased 75 percent.

During the Thursday night service, attendees spoke with missionaries Jamie Lancaster (Uruguay) and Mike Corley (Russia). Foreign Missions Department director James Forlines preached the sermon.

Seventy people attended the annual Alabama WAC Banquet and heard home missionary Fred Jones speak.

The 2000 state association will meet November 8-10 at First FWB Church in Florence.

## Radio Program Needs Music CDs

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO—An hour-long weekly radio program that covers the Rocky Mountain area plans to spotlight Free Will Baptist music groups, according to Pastor Jim Mertz of Harvest FWB Church in Colorado Springs.

Pastor Mertz has been given the opportunity to host the 60-minute program each Sunday on a Christian radio station at no cost. The program airs through a satellite hookup along the Front Range of the Rockies from Wyoming to New Mexico and the surrounding area.

Mertz said, "Since Free Will Baptists are not well known in the area, I plan to use Free Will Baptist music groups on the program such as choirs/ensembles and quartets who have produced CDs."

Free Will Baptist musicians are encouraged to send CDs to Pastor Mertz. He may be contacted at:

Pastor Jim Mertz  
2418 Norwich Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80920  
Phone: 719-598-4679  
Fax: 719-262-9682  
E-mail: jimmy@evestamail.com



# currently

**Correction!** The December 1999 "Currently" column identified **Rejoice Christian School** in **Owasso, OK**, as "the largest Christian school in Metropolitan Tulsa." The school should have been identified as "one of the largest." We regret the error and are happy to print the correct information.

The **First FWB Church** in **Rolla, MO**, underwent a complete face lift from the basement to the rafters, according to Pastor **Jim Parker**. Every room, including the sanctuary and all class rooms, got a new beginning. Special recognition was given to the late **Bertha Kesler**, a member who bequeathed funds to be used for remodeling. Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the dedication message.

More than 200 people made decisions for Christ during a six-day Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames drama at **First FWB Church** in **Batesville, AR**. Pastor **Bobby Shepherd** reported that the community-wide outreach attracted 350 attendees each night.

Some 190 people attended a pastor appreciation evening at **First FWB Church** in **Mt. Vernon, IL**. Pastor **Ronnie Mitchell** celebrated 10 years with the congregation.

Seventy-two people helped Pastor **Dennis Haygood** dedicate the new **Southpark FWB Church** in south **Huntsville, AL**. The congregation secured the building and five surrounding acres, and moved in last fall.

Home missionary **Fred Jones** reports 28 conversions at **Prattville FWB Church** in **Prattville, AL**. Some 107 people attended fifth anniversary activities.

The 25th annual **Alabama** Missionary Conference included services at 63 churches from Dothan to Florence. Twenty-six missionaries and conference speakers traversed the state January 8-30.

Home Missionary **Bill Phillips** says that 19 separate complaints have been filed with the city of **West Jordan, UT**,

in an effort to stop the work of **Valley FWB Mission**. This is a critical time for the struggling congregation since their building lease payments will increase by \$2,500 in April.

Pastor **David McDougal** led 50th anniversary activities at **First FWB Church** in **Seminole, OK**. The church organized in 1949 under the leadership of **Dennis O'Donnell**. They built new facilities in 1956, kept growing and built and relocated in 1987. Thanks to the faithfulness of members, the congregation that started in a rented oil workers' Union Hall is now positioned to minister throughout the city.

Members at **First FWB Church** in **Jacksonville, AR**, report 60 days of growth. This includes 19 new members, 14 rededications, four conversions and three baptisms. **Chuck Stewart** pastors.

New building and new name—that's the word from **Mt. Zion FWB Church** in **Durant, OK**. Pastor **Frankie Hill** said that the congregation purchased a building one block east on University Boulevard, moved to the new building and renamed their church the **University FWB Church**. Dedication services were conducted last fall.

**Oklahoma's Union Association** gave more than \$28,000 during their fall missions conference. After the sale of some property, the association gave \$7,000 to home missionary **Stephen Robinson's** account, \$10,000 to the **Edmund Land Fund (Brad Hanna)**, \$1,000 to foreign missionary **Mike Cousineau's** account and \$10,000 to the **Hillsdale College** chapel project.

The Blue Knights, a ladies volleyball team at **Bethel FWB Church** in **South Roxana, IL**, won the state championship, according to Pastor **Bill Crank**. Youth from the church attended a two-day student conference in Missouri that focused on loving God. Several members in the Life Chain at Alton stood in the rain carrying signs sup-

porting life.

**Peace FWB Church** in **Granite City, IL**, conducted a service to honor members who were veterans, according to Pastor **David Malone**. The veterans were escorted into the sanctuary under the military flag in which they served. U.S. Congressman **David Phelps** gave certificates of appreciation to the veterans.

Pastor **Russell Wolfe** reports seven new members at **Bakerville FWB Church** in **Bonnie, IL**.

Eleven new members and three baptisms helped new pastor **Cecil Parrish** feel welcome at **Waltonville FWB Church** in **Waltonville, IL**. The congregation participated in a city-wide Thanksgiving service.

The Jubilee Homecoming Celebration at **East Belmont FWB Church** in **Belmont, NC**, attracted record-breaking crowds, according to church reporter **Barbara Miller**. Long-time Free Will Baptist minister **Roy Rikard** preached the jubilee sermon. **Burel Bryant** pastors.

Pastor **Jon Cannon** reports 65 people in service, a record for the **Victory FWB Church** in **Mascoutah, IL**. Pastor Cannon also baptized 10 converts.

Four **Illinois** churches joined forces to begin a Saturday morning radio program on station WGGH, according to Pastor **Kenneth Edwards** of **Harmony FWB Church** in **West Frankfort**, one of the cooperating congregations. The others include **Pittsburg FWB Church**, **Johnston City FWB Church** and **Arnold View FWB Church**.

Thirteen more **Korean** pastors made decisions to become Free Will Baptists, according to Korean Cross-Cultural Ministries director **Paul Park**. He indicated that 39 other Korean pastors will join soon. Dr. Park resides in **Anaheim, CA**.

Home missionary **Paul Collins** reports 70 people at the first anniversary service at the **Harrisonburg, PA**, mission. ■



# Answer the Roll Call

By Ida Lewis

**O**n Roll Call Sunday, March 26, the annual process will begin to count the churches, attendance and number of souls saved in each church on that day. This also includes the number of associations, districts and states represented across America, Mexico and its territories. While Roll Call gives an overall picture of average attendance on Sunday, it definitely shows our potential.

The day points to the number of states with no Free Will Baptist churches or perhaps only a few. This accounting can be a wake-up call for our denomination if we act upon it. It isn't just about seeing how many people we can pack into a church building on a specific day. It is an excellent opportunity to bring as many unsaved and unchurched people as possible under the sound of the gospel.

**T**argeting a *special day* can be one way of bringing in those who may not otherwise come to church. The most important element is to see how many souls can be reached for the Lord on this day.

Winning the lost is the most important task for us, and establishing Free Will Baptist churches plays an important part in that process. As you know, the Home Missions Department is responsible for approving and sending out home missionaries to plant Free Will Baptist churches throughout North America, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, along with the continuing work in Mexico.

**S**everal different approaches are being implemented in planting churches. For example, in Wisconsin, home missionary Terry Hardison is being helped by family members who go to make up *The Milwaukee Team*. His two daughters and sons-in-law, who are both preachers, are helping to establish the Milwaukee church. From that church, they plan to establish more Free Will Baptist churches.

In Castaic, California, home missionary Keith Bart-

lett is being helped by efforts of several Aquila and Priscilla workers who are working in the areas of teaching and music from the beginning of the church planting process. They also plan to plant more churches from this core church.

**A** number of our mission churches are now being aided by Aquila and Priscilla workers, and more tentmakers (bi-vocational pastors) are also coming under the Home Missions Department. The Cross-Cultural Ministry is reaching those from other countries who are coming to our American doorstep.

**H**ome missionaries Odis and Mary Nell Whitehead of Faith Chapel FWB Church in Jacksonville, Florida, are excited to announce the birth of a new church in the Mandarin section, one of the fastest growing areas of Jacksonville. The Whiteheads went to this city as home missionaries in December 1988, and had their first service January 1, 1989. The Faith church is now self-supporting and is in the process of mothering a new Free Will Baptist church.

In July 1999, the Whitehead's son-in-law Tommy Capps and wife Brenda and family, along with one other family from Faith Chapel, began this new mission church. This church is sponsored by Faith FWB Mission Church, and several other churches and individuals. This is yet another way of establishing new churches.

**P**lease take some time and consider what you as an individual or church can do to help start more Free Will Baptist churches to reach the lost for Christ. Please pray and seek the Lord's guidance and then move forward. Much time has been spent over the last few months in recounting all the progress of the 20th century. What will be said concerning the efforts of Free Will Baptists in winning the lost in the days of the new millennium? Let's move forward and get it done! ■

## Home



## Missions



# Is Anybody Listening Out There?

By Alton Loveless

One of the most untouched subjects in Christian communication is how to motivate your audience to listen.

Studies reveal that 9% of our time is spent writing, 16% reading, 30% speaking and 45% listening. And just like you, students can and will select what to hear. It is interesting to ask a group of people to write down what causes them to turn a speaker off in their minds.

You might also compare that with the 10 worst listening habits of students as determined by the Department of Rhetoric at the University of Minnesota. That list provides some interesting data for those of us who speak and want to get the message to the center of the target.

The first bad listening habit given was that students found the subject uninteresting. A lot of us store up mental images of *How dull can this be?* to use in moments of boredom. However, one can introduce the little thought of, *How much can I use from this subject?* Needless to say, the good listener is a sifter, a screener, a winnow of the wheat from the chaff, always hunting something worthwhile or practical which he can store and use in the days ahead.

G. K. Chesterton put it beautifully, "In all the world there is no such thing as an uninteresting subject. There are only uninterested people."

The second bad listening habit was criticizing the speaker's delivery. The bad listener always finds something to belittle a speaker in his mind. *Is this the best he could get? This man can't even talk. All he does is read his notes. He doesn't even look at his audience. What a terrible voice!*

A good listener moves with the attitude, *This person knows something I don't know, or he wouldn't be up there.* Remember, learning and listening are an inside action on the part of the listener. The speaker is doing very little of the learning. The message is 10 times more important as the clothing in which it comes.

Third, a poor listening habit was getting overstimulated. Some people get so excited about people or things that they can't control themselves. This is triggered when a speaker begins to develop his topic and suddenly the listener feels the speaker has walked rough-shod on one of his pet biases or convictions. Then he will sit there and gnash his teeth figuring out the best possible way to embarrass the speaker.

All too often that person has sat for 30 minutes, found an opportunity to query the speaker, only to have him return in complete wonderment with, "Didn't you hear my answer to that question minutes ago?"

A good listener withholds evaluation until comprehension is complete. In smaller words, *Hear the man out before you judge him.*

Bad listening habit number four was listening only for facts. Researchers say listeners listen with about 25% efficiency. Most people who listen only for facts get a few, garble a shocking number, but completely lose most. The good listener tries to get the gist of each main idea. It can be noted that facts can be retained only when they make sense, and they make sense only when they support a generalization of some kind.

The fifth poor listening habit was outlining everything. Many people think note-taking and outlining are synonymous. There is nothing wrong with outlining if the speaker is following an outline pattern of organization. Unfortunately, most speakers don't outline and before we realize that fact, most of a lesson is gone and we find ourselves frustrated while we try to determine his discourse points.

One good way to take notes is to draw a line down the middle of a paper and write at the top *facts* on one side and *principles* on the other. Listen to the speaker for a few minutes noting facts then write a one sentence summary of what he is trying to get you to understand. Keep an attitude of, *I'm ready, produce, speaker, produce.* ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Alton Loveless is general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department.

Randall



House



**T**he Church that Jesus Christ came to build was always to be characterized by "newness"—to be ruled by "a new commandment," to be comprised of "new creatures" for whom all things are to "become new" and who would one day inhabit "a new heaven and a new earth."

The Free Will Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees and administration have been considering expanding the college's name for many years. It was being discussed by the board when the current President, Dr. Tom Malone, was chairman. Dr. Malone has reported these considerations for the past three years in his report to the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

Now, after much prayer and several years of deliberation, the Free Will Baptist Bible College Board, with President Malone, has agreed unanimously to recommend that the college's name be expanded.

The recommendation is:

#### PALMER COLLEGE:

The Free Will Baptist Bible College

**S**o, why should we consider modifying the college's name? The short answer is to further God's purpose.

FWBBC's mission statement says that its goal is "to equip men and women through Bible-based education, to serve Christ and His Church." That mission and that goal is as strong today as it was in 1942 when our college was founded.

About five years ago, then Foreign Missions director, Eugene Waddell, began making the National Association aware that the name, Free Will Baptist Bible College, was causing our graduates to be excluded from access as missionaries to many of the world's least evangelized countries.

Upon learning this, the FWBBC Board and administration began to consider a name change. President Tom Malone has kept the denomination informed concerning the consideration of this modification.

Also, the move to a new campus, planned for 2002, indicated that the timing was right to modify the college's name.

**T**he name "Palmer" may be new to many present-day Free Will Baptists. But, in fact, the name is as old as Free Will Baptists in America. Paul Palmer was an English subject, who was regularly referred to as a "Free-Willer." He provides the link between current Free Will Baptists and our British forebearers, the English Arminian or General Baptists. Palmer established the earliest Free Will Baptist Church on American soil in the year 1727. He was a pastor, evangelist, church planter, and theologian.

His life and ministry exemplified in both mission

## Trustees Move To Modify Name

*By The Trustees and President of Free Will Baptist Bible College*

and ministry what Free Will Baptist Bible College has been and continues to be today. Approximately 85% of the churches that make up the current Free Will Baptist denomination are rooted in his ministry. It seems appropriate that his labor in bringing Free Will Baptist

theology and practice to America should be honored in this way.

**S**ince the recommendation requires the college's name to be changed in the charter, the Board will seek the approval of the National Association of Free Will Baptists (NAFWB), in accordance with the Charter of Incorporation and By-Laws. It requires that the change be presented to the NAFWB in regular session and voted on a year later.

**T**he college remains 100% Free Will Baptist and 100% a Bible college.

- We are Free Will Baptists...one of whose founding fathers in America is a man named Paul Palmer.
- We are a Bible college...committed to equipping men and women through Bible-based education, to serve Christ and His Church.
- We are the Free Will Baptist Bible College... owned and operated by the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

The President and the Board are determined that the college stay true to its mission of serving Christ and His Church. Its mandate is to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature..." (Matthew 28:19-20). In carrying out that mandate, the college will continue to be the channel for the denomination's pastors, missionaries, and other Christian workers. ■

Tom Malone, President

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#### Dates to remember:

- Bible Conference, Mar. 5-9
- Welcome Days, Mar. 23-25

# Free Will Baptist Bible College





Garnett Reid

## Opening Act

**I**ntroductions are important. Whether as preface to a book, overture to a symphony or greeting to a relationship, initial impressions may influence outcomes for good or ill.

In this light, John the Baptist fills a unique role in history. He introduces Jesus. While that sounds simple, their relationship actually incarnates the relationship of the Old and New Testaments. We will likely fail to understand how these two testaments go together if we fail to understand how these two men give testimony to each other.

John consummates the old covenant, coming in a ministry of preparation and promise. Jesus inaugurates the new covenant, providing completion and fulfillment. While John *reveals* God's righteousness and *exposes* human sin, Jesus *provides* God's righteousness in place of human sin.

In this study, we begin to explore four areas of the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist as presented in the gospels. *First, consider words of assurance from Jesus to John.* These words come in response to a pair of questions John asks Jesus. When the Lord approaches him for baptism in Matthew 3, John objects and inquires, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?"

Matthew's narrative prefaces this question with the observation that, "John forbad him (Jesus)" (3:14). The verb translated "forbad" is a strong word, giving the sense that John "kept trying to prevent" Jesus from receiving baptism. John's intent is understandable. He, not Jesus, needed to confess and repent of sin. If anything, the situation calls for the opposite; Jesus should baptize him, John contends.

Demonstrating His gentle but insistent patience, Jesus assures John that His request is the right thing under the

present circumstances: "Suffer it to be so now" (3:15). The Lord's purpose in submitting to this ritual cleansing is to demonstrate His obedience to the Father's righteous demands ("to fulfill all righteousness") and to provide an example for others by identifying with their needs. Matthew records the result of Jesus' appeal with the simple words, "Then he [John] suffered [permitted] him." John baptized Jesus.

This incident helps to provide us, as it did John, with assurance regarding what Jesus wants. When I read that "John forbad" Jesus, my first response is amazement: how could anyone say "no" to the Lord, whatever His demand? Then I realize how often I do the same thing.

Jesus comes to me with His plan for my life, only to hear my objection. Too frequently my name fits just as well as John's: "But *Garnett* forbad him." I suspect yours fits there sometimes, too. Patiently He assures me, though, "suffer it to be so now."

Not only do we resist what He asks of us, but in turn we also raise the same question John asks of Jesus: "Lord, you are who *you* are, and you want *me* to do this for *you*?" Again, out of His vast store of patience, He tenderly works with our wills until we say, "yes," and permit Him to do as He pleases.

John's second question prompting an assuring answer from the Lord occurs in Matthew 11:3. Herod Antipas had imprisoned John because John had denounced Herod's illicit marriage to Herodias (see Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29). During most of Jesus' first year of ministry in Galilee, John was confined to the fortress of Machaerus east of the Dead Sea. He sends two disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"

That John should raise such a question is understandable for two reasons. First, suffering people ask hard ques-

tions. Just ask Job or Jeremiah—or even Jesus Himself (Matt. 27:46). Second, most of the "works" Jesus had recently done which John had heard about were miracles of healing (Matt. 8-9) not the thunderings of judgment John had earlier prophesied (Matt. 3:10, 12). Those would come later.

We should not conclude from his questions, however, that John has thrown in the towel of faith, that he has given in to his circumstances. Jesus' response (which we will consider next month) indicates that such is not the case. Instead, John is wrestling, as we do, with those shadows of doubt which are themselves testaments to our belief. If he has questions, John is right to voice them to the only One with sufficient answers.

Likewise our hesitant faith can withstand honest inquiry. The gospel rests on solid footing, made even more secure when it emerges intact from the assaults of doubt. When the spirit of this age attempts to indict your trust in Christ and His word, ask God for wisdom from a heart disposed to believe. He promises to answer that plea (Jas. 1:3-5). No wonder Jesus assures John, as He does today's inquirer, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," (Matt. 11:6). ■

Next month: *John the Baptist, Greatest and Least*



# ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PREACHERS



Dennis Wiggs

## Sermon Resources

**T**he young preacher must be a preacher! Preaching demands preparation—adequate preparation, Holy Spirit-anointed preparation, preparation that produces spiritual fruit. Such fruit does not just happen. The young preacher absolutely must devote constant attention to sermon preparation. When one sermon is completed, the mind and heart must begin to plan the next message. Attention to sermon preparation and preaching can be divided into four essential categories.

### Library

First, young preachers must be readers. Read three books at a time—one in the study, one in the vehicle and one at home. I personally prefer to underline words and statements with colored ink. Keep a record of the books you read. Write a few words of description about the book. Read all types of books.

Second, purchase books regularly. Not just any and every book, but books that can benefit the ministry. Contact pastors Jeff Manning or Earl Hendrix for a suggested list.

The Bible should receive the major attention. However, commentaries on the entire Bible and on individual books greatly assist sermon preparation. When preaching expository sermons, the young preacher will want to purchase several books on that specific book of the Bible or subject matter. Over a period of years, a large library can be developed.

Some preachers purchase books of sermons. They may produce an idea for a sermon or a series of messages. "But a sermon is like a toothbrush—use your own," so wrote Floyd Bresee.

### Files

A filing system reserves material

for use during the entire ministry. File at least these categories:

1. *Illustrations*
2. *Subject matter from A to Z* (such as abortion, divorce, suicide, cults, etc.)
3. *Bible doctrines*
4. *Current subjects* (such as new trends, church music, magazine articles, etc.)
5. *Personal information* (copies of letters, church operation, etc.)

The filing system can be as simple as a cardboard box, as practical as a two- or four-drawer filing cabinet, or as complex as a computer software program. The key to a good system is to be organized. Be able to put your hand on whatever you are looking for in a matter of seconds. Filing material on a daily basis will keep the system ready to use whenever needed. (As you open the mail, file that which you may use later. Drop the rest in the trash can.)

### Sermon Notebooks

Some preachers use the index card, others use the 7" x 9" notebook, while others use the 8½" x 11" notebook. Size does not matter. Simply determine the size and stick with it. By the 20th year of preaching, several notebooks will be packed full of sermons. Be sure to write on the back where and when the sermons were preached.

Young preachers who preach through books or subjects of the Bible will accumulate hundreds of typed messages quickly. If a Sunday School class needs a teacher one Sunday, the young preacher will be able to turn to the subject matter in a notebook and adequately teach the class.

### Prayer Closet

E. M. Bounds wrote several books on prayer. The young preacher

should get all of these books, read them regularly and throughout the entire ministry. Bounds' books give excellent direction in sermon preparation. His writings usually bring heavy conviction to the man of God. Practicing his powerful plan produces better preachers. ■

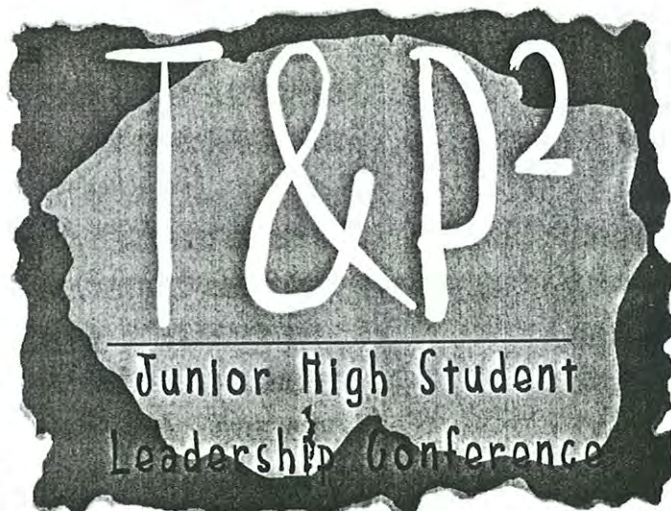
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# YOUTH UPDATE

Perhaps you've heard of Truth & Peace or even the National Youth Conference, but what about T&P2?

T&P2 is a junior-high student leadership conference, designed just for 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade Free Will Baptist students. The extended weekend program will challenge students to set goals for God and then equip them to reach them!



First, they'll learn to seek God and His goals for their lives, next, we'll prepare them to run the race, and finally, we'll equip them to be winners for Christ.

I Press  
Toward  
The  
Goal...  
Phillipians  
3:14



Spread throughout the conference will be numerous opportunities to create new friendships, mold teams into fine-tuned machines, and laugh a lot. Using powerful, intense speakers and challenging activities, we'll help your junior-higher to Press Toward the Goal!

March 9-12, 2000

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March 16-19, 2000

The Oaks

Greeneville, Tennessee

March 30-April 2, 2000

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Conference Registration is only \$79. Call 1-800-877-7030 for a brochure.

Sponsored by the Youth Ministries Division.





Thomas Marberry

## The Idea of A Christian College

Arthur F. Holmes

(Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987, 106 pp., paperback, \$9.00).

**T**his is a classic book in the field of Christian education that has just been reprinted after being out-of-print for a number of years. The author is professor and chair of philosophy at Wheaton College. He is the author of several books in philosophy and apologetics.

This book is designed to answer the question, "Why do we need Christian colleges?" This is an important question that needs to be asked and deserves to be answered.

Christian higher education is an expensive proposition. Every year Christian individuals, local churches and denominations invest millions of dollars in Bible colleges, Christian liberal arts colleges and seminaries. Parents and students spend thousands of dollars in tuition, fees, and room and board at various types of Christian educational institutions each year. Is a Christian education really worth all of that cost? This author's answer is a resounding "yes."

Holmes focuses most of his attention on the Christian liberal arts college. Most Christians recognize that Bible colleges and seminaries exist for a specific reason. They train pastors, missionaries, music directors, youth directors and others who feel the call of God to enter some specific church-related vocation. The need for Christian liberal arts institutions may be more

difficult for people to understand.

Although it may train Christian workers, the basic purpose of a Christian liberal arts college is to produce educated Christians. An educated Christian is a believer who understands the teachings of the Christian faith and applies them appropriately in every area of life.

As Holmes explains, "The educated Christian exercises critical judgment and manifests the ability to interpret and evaluate information, particularly in the light of the Christian revelation."

An educated Christian operates in a Christian context and approaches life from a Christian world-view. He interprets life from a Christian perspective rather than a secular perspective.

Many students today (even Christian students) never have the opportunity to learn a Christian world-view. As the author notes, "... we live in a secular society that compartmentalizes religion and treats it as peripheral or even irrelevant to large areas of life and thought. Public education and large segments of private education are consequently thoroughly secular."

The Christian student who obtains all of his education in secular institutions may never learn to analyze and evaluate life from a truly Christian perspective.

According to Holmes, the term "liberal arts" is difficult to define and many Christians may not really un-

derstand it. It normally includes "... a broad, general education that ranges across the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, and religion is increasingly considered as one of the liberal arts."

It emphasizes intellectual development and stresses good reading, writing and critical thinking skills. It strives to prepare people to make sound value judgments.

This book confronts some of the difficult issues in Christian higher education such as academic freedom. Academic freedom is the freedom of teachers to teach and students to learn without fear. It includes the opportunity to explore, discuss and evaluate unpopular ideas and opinions in a classroom situation. Some may find that threatening, but Holmes argues that it is essential in preparation of truly educated Christians.

This is a book that many Free Will Baptists need to read right now. The National Association voted last summer to create an Educational Task Force to study this important issue. Free Will Baptists want to improve our existing educational program. We want to provide the kind of quality educational program that our young men and women deserve. This book can help us do that. ■





Jack Williams

## The One-Eyed General

**To** tell the truth, he had two eyes and he really wasn't a general. He wore a dark lens to cover what doctors called a lazy eye. Wade Jernigan hung "The General" moniker on him for reasons known only to him, and it stuck.

His name was Darwin Kelton, a Free Will Baptist preacher who ran with the big dogs when he strapped on his guitar. I met him one hot July day in 1969 after pulling a U-Haul trailer 2,000 miles to Fresno, California. He had the key to my campus housing and shouldered most of the work unloading the U-Haul. It seemed that he was always helping somebody carry a big load.

**The General's music.** Darwin was a senior at California Christian College that semester. He'd already created a powerful campus singing group called "The Second Milers Quartet" and produced an album. To this day, that's the most beloved singing group in the state among Free Will Baptist churches. Darwin sang lead and three other preachers sang with him.

After starting to graduate school, he taught music at CCC. It was amazing to watch. Folks loved to sing for him—small groups, large groups, soloists. He brought a warmth to the teaching process that coaxed the best from everyone.

**The General's family.** I never saw a man more proud of his two boys. He took time to talk with Mark and Scott, to roughhouse with them, play basketball with them, and include them in his ministry. Both boys learned to play musical instruments. All that attention paid off, too—Mark earned his doctorate and teaches at a Christian college; Scott, a high school athletic director, is pursuing a master's degree.

Then there's Mary. They were married 41 years. Darwin called his Por-

tuguese wife his "Porta-Goose." Mary kept the boys on a tight rein and their father in stitches with her special brand of humor.

I was there that Sunday at Clovis FWB Church when the singing Kelton family debuted. Darwin almost burst with pride. One son played the piano, another the bass guitar, Mary handled the alto and Darwin stroked the lead guitar. They created a unique harmony that only family groups can generate.

**The General's humor.** After a campus clean-up day, Darwin and I loaded his truck with bright yellow covers from unused student handbooks and were headed to the city dump when a highway patrolman pulled us over. He glanced in the rearview mirror and grumbled, "Oh, brother, we're in trouble now."

A heartbeat later, he said with a straight face, "I sure wish you were driving. Then you'd have to explain this to Wade (Jernigan)."

What needed explaining was several hundred of those bright yellow covers littering one of Fresno's busiest streets. After the courteous officer helped us pick up the yellow plague, he wrote a ticket and handed it to . . . Darwin, because he was driving. I laughed all the way to the dump where he tried to run off and leave me.

Then we drove back to campus where I snickered while The General and the college president discussed that ticket.

**The General's attitude.** I was never in a church, association meeting or social gathering where Darwin was not welcome. When he arrived, he made the fellowship better, the music livelier. He was a good man in a tight spot, because he would always cover your back.

He was a man who listened care-

fully. He listened to students, and they loved him. He listened to pastors, and they trusted him. He listened to me, and that surprised me . . . because he had more experience and skill in numerous areas.

**The General's faith.** There was more to Darwin than his guitar magic. In my opinion, his finest quality was a child-like faith in God and things holy. He was one of the few men I've met who believed everything God said even when he could not explain it and didn't understand it.

His was a joyous, rollicking, open-handed, hallelujah kind of faith. He prayed simple prayers that reached Heaven in one-syllable words. He preached simple sermons that dropped in the dust and walked home with you. He believed with an intensity and a real-ness that was spooky.

His was a living and daring faith that pushed him 3,000 miles from Fresno to teach two years in a Bible college in the mid-1970s. That same faith launched him into his final series of pastorates in Arkansas, which is a whole other story for another time.

**The General's death.** The General died hard, but he died well. His faith held true right up to his final breath. His heart began dying (literally) a few years ago, and we all said goodbye in 1997. But he didn't die then. That happened two years later on December 12, 1999.

Just as the invitation started in hundreds of Free Will Baptist churches at 11:45 a.m. Sunday morning, Darwin's faith climbed the last hill into the waiting arms of Jesus.

You know, I wouldn't be surprised if Heaven's string section hit a grace note at noon Sunday when The General and his lead guitar checked in. ■




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