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July 2000

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Preacher on Wheels
Jesus: The Ultimate Single Adult
Raising Children for the Lord's Work
The Preacher and Elliott Ness

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

Debt-Free Day

June 30, 2000, marked a remarkable achievement—the National Offices Building paid off its \$1.5 million indebtedness. This remarkable achievement took nine years to accomplish.

The Vision

Talk began in 1985 regarding the need to expand the existing national office building on Murfreesboro Road. Space was limited, ministries were expanding and technology was advancing at a rapid rate.

The Management Committee, composed of directors Herman Hersey (Retirement and Insurance), Roy Thomas (Home Missions), Eugene Waddell (Foreign Missions), James Vallance (Master's Men), Mary Wisehart (Women Nationally Active for Christ) and chairman Melvin Worthington (Executive Secretary), began to explore the possibilities of relocating the offices.

Motivated by a desire to more effectively serve denominational constituents and achieve our global denominational agenda, the Management Committee made their recommendation to relocate the national offices during the 1990 convention in Phoenix, Arizona. The new building would provide the required space for service and support of denominational ministries and symbolize the Free Will Baptist commitment to world missions.

The Vote

Delegates at the 1990 convention authorized the relocation or renovation of the existing national offices. The Executive Committee was authorized to approve the recommendations of the Management Committee in order to expedite the matter.

The Venture

Authorized by the Executive Com-

mittee, the Trustees purchased a building located at 5233 Mt. View Road in Antioch, Tennessee, on September 27, 1990. Wade Trimble (general contractor), Tom Ballantyne (architect), Jane Greenway (Greenway Interiors) and Lisa Steele (Nashville Office Interiors) were selected to work on the renovation of the building.

The Building Committee was composed of the Management Committee, Wade Trimble, Tom Ballantyne and Melody Hood. The building renovation was completed in 1991. Seven national agencies moved into the new office building on August 20, 1991. Dedication ceremonies were held December 3, 1991, in conjunction with the Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference.

The new office provides 30,000 square feet of office and storage area. This allows continued growth into the next century for those agencies occupying the facility. The new building symbolizes our movement, a denomination committed to extending God's kingdom to the ends of the earth.

The building also serves as a resource hub for churches, associations and agencies which comprise the National Association. The building reflects the dedication and vision

of those who would propel the Free Will Baptist movement into the 21st century. More than bricks and mortar, it embodies the spirit, sacrifice and service of our people.

Attention was then turned to selling the national office complex on Murfreesboro Road and paying off the indebtedness on the new property.

The Victory

Delegates at the 1991 national convention in Charleston, West Virginia, authorized a capital stewardship campaign, *A Million More by '94*, to pay off the indebtedness. The campaign called for the speedy sale of the Murfreesboro Road property. On May 21, 1992, a contract was signed on the Murfreesboro Road property for \$725,000.

The Capital Stewardship Campaign goal was \$1 million. The campaign was to be implemented through the denomination's organizational structure. Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington was designated to coordinate the campaign, working closely with the Management Committee. State promotional officers and moderators were selected to coordinate the campaign in state associations. A brochure and video were prepared to promote the campaign.

Free Will Baptists responded by giving generously to the campaign in order to pay off the indebtedness on the new National Offices Building. The debt has been paid. The campaign is complete. The concept which began with a vision and continued with a venture climaxed in victory. Thank you for your generosity in giving to the campaign to pay off the indebtedness. June 30, 2000, marks the D-Day, debt-free date. May God be praised for the great things He has done. ■

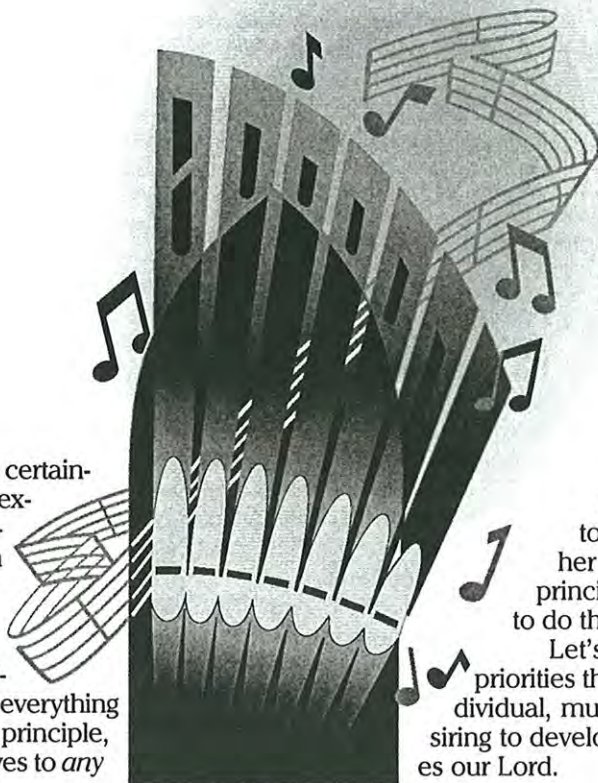
The Secretary's Schedule

July 2000

- 12-13** Pre-convention Meetings
Anaheim, California
- 15** Executive Committee Meeting
Anaheim, California
- 16-20** National Convention
Anaheim, California
- 20-21** Post-convention Meetings
Anaheim, California
- 28-30** Mexican National Convention

Harmony in Church Music

By Lange Patrick



Worship music style is certainly one of the most explosive and often-discussed issues in today's church. The handling of this issue by church leaders is no less controversial. In an attempt to be relevant, some have embraced everything current with little regard for principle, while others have closed their eyes to any change in their tradition.

Still others have taken middle ground and tried to balance new and old by a blending of many styles in one service, or perhaps even separate service times featuring different worship styles for each.

What is the year 2000 worshipper to make of this question of style? Shall we be traditional or progressive, liturgical or charismatic, or perhaps blended? Is it right brain or left brain worship that pleases God? Is it theological or emotional, celebratory or contemplative, spontaneous or formatted? And on the list could go.

Many today are frustrated by an inability to accurately determine what is pleasing to God and what is not. What is optional, what is essential? How then can one find stability regarding this often discussed and disagreed upon subject? As with any issue, we must turn first to our ultimate source, God's Word.

A careful study of John 4 reveals some interesting principles on worship from the lips of Jesus. Among other things, the Samaritan woman wants Jesus to weigh in on an ongoing dispute that had raged for many years between the Jews and Samaritans. Should she worship according to the tradition of her fathers (on Mt. Gerizim) or according to the Jewish tradition (in Jerusalem)? Her question is surprisingly relevant.

Jesus answers her unlike anything we would ever expect. He said to worship in Spirit and truth. He gives her no list, no ritualistic form, simply a principle. In the subsequent text I will seek to do the same.

Let's look at some principles, pitfalls and priorities that I believe will be relevant to any individual, music minister, pastor or layperson desiring to develop a balanced music style that pleases our Lord.

Principle #1

Old is not necessarily good, neither is *new* automatically bad.

Pitfall

1. Carefully avoid judging a song first and foremost by its copyright date.

Our music today is certainly different from previous cultures. Most of the psalms of David would seem like a chant to us today, and would have little in common with the music we associate with our own culture. Yet, David's faith was in the same God we serve today, and *He* is not bound by time, space or culture. Author Drew Conley states,

Christianity didn't die in the 1700's, 1800's or 1940's. Christianity is Christ, and today His mercies are new. There should be a constant stream of new songs expressing fresh experiences of God's gracious work and blessing. Since we have what we need from Him today, our songs should reflect that reality, not merely take us down memory lane.

2. Don't eliminate great music of the past in an attempt to be "cutting-edge."

Some of the greatest tools we have to teach and encourage believers of all ages are hymn study and hymn singing. Not only is much of our theology learned through the use of hymns; but they also give us personal insights into the majesty and greatness of God as well as wisdom from great leaders who have gone before.

Priority

The "new song" of Psalm 98 really conveys the idea of singing with fresh understanding *any* song of faith, be it "new" or "old." Make it your personal priority to sing with new awareness each time your voice is raised.

Principle #2

Any authentic worship style must be biblical (truth) and meaningful (Spirit) (Jn. 4:23, 24).

Pitfall

Any worship style that is over-balanced by either emotionalism or intellectualism is unnatural at best. God created us with both feeling and knowledge. To ignore either is not God's plan. Worship of the head and heart together is most pleasing to God.

Priorities

1. Make sure song lyrics match up to God's revealed Word.
2. Be willing to accept creativity in worship if it engages and edifies the hearts and minds of God's people.
3. Work hard at personal worship privately, and your worship corporately will become more meaningful.

Principle #3

The "how" of worship is ever-changing; the "who" of worship never changes.

Pitfall

In an effort to remain orthodox we sometimes elevate tradition to the level of truth. Rob Hewell gives us a clear distinction between essentials and electives. He says,

When how we express worship becomes a custom to be guarded, then to change means we must do something different. When we worship and allow wise flexibility in how we express that worship, change finds us doing the same thing differently.

This is an important distinction. Don't automatically assume that a change in worship style also represents a theological shift.

Priorities

1. Choose music that edifies and matures believers.
2. Be sensitive to the preferred style of the target audience in various settings while avoiding any unwholesome or inappropriate associations.
3. As T. W. Hunt suggests,
Avoid anything that is obviously evil or inappropriate, retain anything

that is good and trust the Holy Spirit to interpret the gray areas.

Other factors that contribute to the complexity of this issue:

1. *Diversity*: As maturing believers, our spiritual discernment grows as a part of our growth in Christ. The process of graduating from milk to meat affects everything about us, including music. Thus the task of ministering to a wide variety of believers at every level of maturity becomes a daunting task. For the Christian, as in all areas of choice, it is imperative to be in tune with the Holy Spirit's leading in your life.
2. *Entertainment*: Any student of music in worship during the last 30 years would agree that the lines between entertainment and worship are at best blurred. The explosion of the Christian music industry has certainly affected church music—both positively and negatively.
3. *Culture*: Any growing Christian has experienced the difficulty of trying to live, breathe and co-exist within a society that is primarily at odds with the spiritual walk we must daily maintain. No different is the struggle to find balance in music that honors Christ, yet is relevant to where we live.

I conclude with these practical thoughts for daily balance:

1. *To pastors and ministers of music*: Understand that the people you greet every service want and need a fresh encounter with the Lord. Be willing to take the steps necessary to make your worship heartfelt and life-changing, married to your best understanding of God's revealed Word and what God the Holy Spirit would have you do and say in each particular service.
2. *To church members*: Do your best to empathize with the leadership of your church. Understand what a great challenge it is to present to our Lord worship that is pleasing in His sight as well as in the eyes of those in the congregation.
Also, be civil about issues like this one. Understand that healthy debate and prevailing prayer will help you reach personal decisions about this area, but that your conclusions may not be those of your brethren in Christ. Learn to accept these kinds of differences as you would different personality types in your own family.
3. *To all*: Be willing to wrestle with difficult issues regarding worship both in your church and your personal life. Don't cop-out just because the issue is difficult. God promises us wisdom if we ask. Finally, as with all other decisions we face, strive to be so in tune with the Holy Spirit that you are able to discern between music that pleases the flesh and music that pleases Christ. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Lange Patrick serves as minister of music at Faith Free Will Baptist Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina.

Church looks different from a wheelchair

Preacher On Wheels!

By Charles Cooper

As a young boy, I often saw advertisements along the road that said, "See seven states from Lookout Mountain." Years later I went there and stood on top of that mountain and looked through the glass that was supposed to show me seven different states. No doubt someone had figured out that seven states were in view, but from my vantage point it was not really clear what I was seeing.

It could have been seven different states but there were no signs that told me what state I was looking at, so I really couldn't be sure. Just as I could not be sure what a person in a wheelchair was seeing until I started living in one. It was then that I learned the Lord still wanted to teach me some things.

The lessons have not been easy, but they have been very effective, and I feel He wants me to pass on some of the things I've learned to others.

After enjoying good health while pastoring Free Will Baptist churches nearly 40 years, one day it happened. On March 15, 1999, a simple fall from bed in my sleep hyper-extended my spinal cord and paralyzed me. Thanks to so many friends praying for me and good care at the Vanderbilt Hospital Re-Hab in Nashville, Tennessee, for 11 weeks and the in-home-re-hab since, I can now teach and preach from a wheelchair.

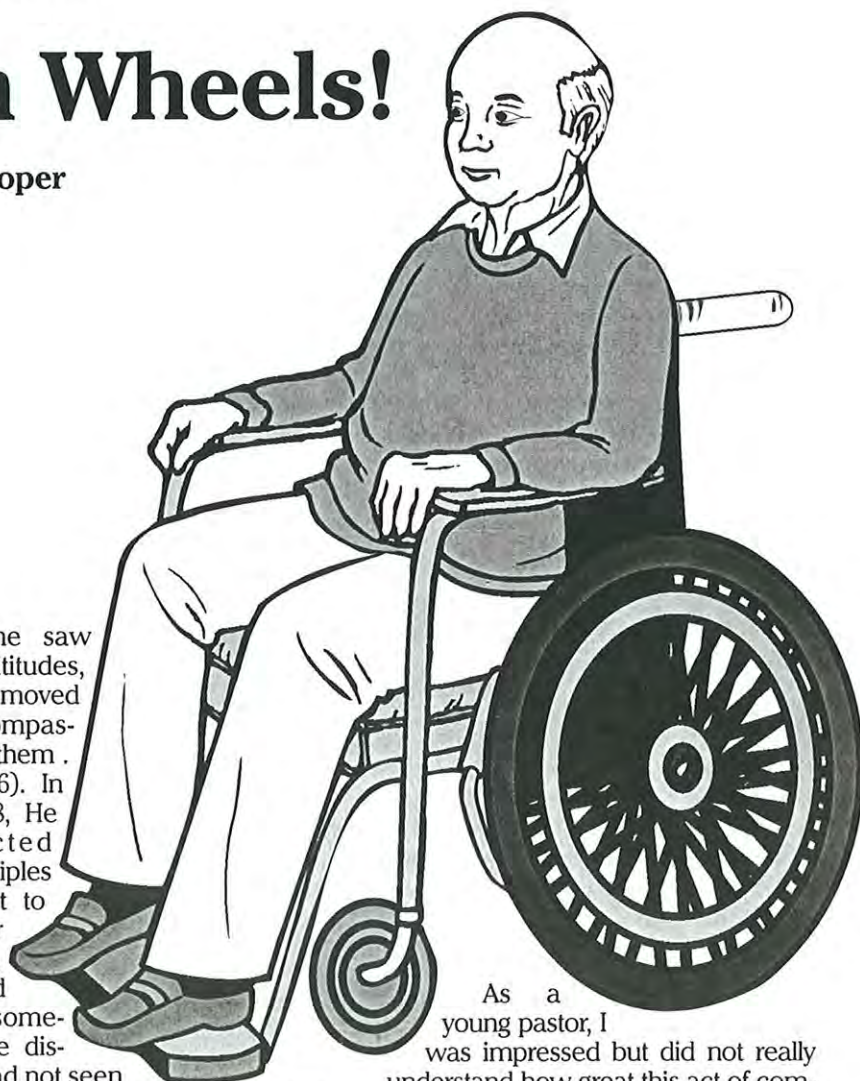
I am praying with others that I will be able to walk again, but in the meantime I just keep learning and teaching and preaching. I hope to help others see things more clearly than I saw them in my years of pastoring.

In Matthew 9, Jesus went about teaching, preaching and healing. "But

when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them . . ." (v. 36). In vv. 37-38, He instructed His disciples on what to do for them. The Lord saw something the disciples had not seen and His compassion called for action. Clear vision is a good thing to motivate anyone to action.

In 1962, long before the law required churches and public buildings to be handicap-accessible, Rev. Bill Childress, a fellow Free Will Baptist pastor in Williamsburg, Kentucky, built a ramp to their new church. "Preacher Bill," as he liked to be called, was moved with compassion and inspired to do this because of a poor (as in poverty), blind, crippled lady from Detroit (Blanch Lindsey) whom he heard sing when he preached a revival in her home church.

Blanch's husband played the piano for her, so Preacher Bill invited them to come sing in the church he pastored in Kentucky. It was then he saw the need and immediately did something about it.



As a young pastor, I was impressed but did not really understand how great this act of compassion was. From my present vantage point, I now better understand the need for our churches to have handicap facilities. Have you tried putting yourself in the position of a wheelchair-bound person?

Many times I have observed those facilities in churches and thought "how nice." But I really did not understand or even question if they were adequate until I needed them. Let me share six things I understand that I never understood before.

Handicap Parking

Some of these places have no more space than a regular parking place with not enough room between the cars to get into a wheelchair. I didn't know they were supposed too.



Where are they located? I have been to one shopping mall where the handicap parking is in front of the steps going into the store. The engineer who designed that one was not in a wheelchair! Where are your handicap parking spaces?

The Ramp

One church I attended (once), had the ramp so steep I could not push myself up it. In fact, it took a strong person to push me. Oh, I know what the answer is to this; we always have someone around to help. I never realized while I was spry and healthy just how much a handicapped person does not want to depend on others to help them with everything, but wants to be as independent as a "normal person."

Some churches have no ramp at all and require us to be carried in. The attention we get is not what we are looking for but is rather embarrassing. One church I attended had a nice ramp, but there was a little step up where it led from the parking area and another when we got to the porch.

Some people in a wheelchair are strong enough to get over a three or four inch step-up, but some people are not. Ramps should be wide enough to accommodate a chair and not so steep that a person with a walker or wheelchair endangers life and limb when using them.

Entrance Door

Some churches have a nice ramp to get you on the porch but have a step-up at the door. Most doors are wide enough, but sometimes the door closer is too strong for a weak person to pull open. Which leads me to something else now that we are inside the church.

Restroom Facilities

I went to one well-equipped rest room where the door closer was so strong I had to call for someone to open the door for me. One beautiful church I



attended had rest rooms at the back of the sanctuary, but the doors were too narrow for a wheelchair. They did have handicap rest rooms in the basement, but to reach them I would have to go outside and around to the back of the church.

In another church the rest room had a handicap toilet, the proper handicap bars and a beautiful vanity for the sink. Too bad I couldn't reach the sink from my wheelchair because of the vanity. The soap dispenser and paper towels were in the right place for a person standing by the sink, but from a wheelchair, forget it.

I never knew why handicap toilets were taller than standard ones, but I learned while in re-hab they are to make it easier to transfer back to the wheelchair. This is important, especially for a weak person.

Some churches have no booth for the handicapped with bars to hold to; one church had a handicap booth, but not enough room to get the wheelchair in and close the door. Privacy is important to everyone, especially to a person with health problems. When building booths, have a person in a wheelchair check it out.

Sanctuary Seating

Have you noticed that some churches have shortened two or three pews giving room for a wheelchair person to get out of the aisle? What a great idea! One of the problems of sitting in a wheelchair in the aisle is being where everyone can see you. We don't go to church to be seen, but to worship, and if you are where everyone is looking at you, it is an uncomfortable feeling.

The Cost

The reason many churches do not have adequate handicap facilities is the cost. When cost is a factor, we always consider what we get for our investment. Since there are not many handicapped people in most churches, it doesn't seem to be a good investment to spend a lot of money to reach such a few.

But maybe there are people in your

neighborhood who would attend if you were better equipped for them. Oh, I know those kind of people can't be much help in the church and, in fact, might be a bother. But could it be possible the Lord placed them in our area so we can prove our love for Him and all people, not just the ones who can do something for us?

Thank the Lord for some churches I have observed with great facilities for the handicapped, but there are many pastors and laymen who need to see what I failed to see for so many years. I have always had compassion for the handicapped, but failed to see what needed to be done to properly minister to them in the churches I pastored.

I know that to update most churches for the handicapped would cost a lot. I also know there would not likely be many handicapped people join your church. But don't forget the story Jesus told of the ninety and nine. Every one is important in His eyes.

Oh, yes! I didn't mention what happened after "Preacher Bill" had the ramp built for the poor, blind, crippled lady. Mr. Brown, who owned the local bank and was one of the wealthiest men in Williamsburg, was also in a wheelchair. He too saw the compassion of the Free Will Baptist pastor and his people, and decided that this was the church for him. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Charles Cooper is a retired Free Will Baptist minister who resides near Cookeville, Tennessee. He's also an evangelist on wheels these days. He served 14 years as promotional secretary for the Michigan State Association of Free Will Baptists.



Jesus: The Ultimate Single Adult

By Joanna Felts



In Hebrews 2:14 we are given a summary of why Jesus came. The writer states that Jesus came so "... that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." His purpose in coming was simple—destroy death and in so doing, destroy Satan's power over God's creation.

Most of us in growing up come to discover that God has a particular purpose in mind for us. Sometimes, we know exactly where this will take us and sometimes we have no idea where the road will lead. Having turned, let's say a late 30-something, I still tell my friends and family, "I don't know what I want to be when I grow up."

Even though I look in surprise at the past and see how God has used me, and while it is not completely clear to

me how He will use me in the future, I know that by following Him and grasping the opportunities he gives to me, I'll never be in the wrong place.

Jesus didn't have this particular problem. He was born knowing the end result of His life—death of His physical body to destroy Satan's hold on death. He was single-minded in pursuit of that purpose.

We often overlook the fact that He chose to follow this path as a single

man. Jesus is God Himself and by that fact, He was present at creation. He knew that the creation of the woman completed the man. He knew and intended that the marriage union He would establish between the man and the woman should bring harmony, love, enjoyment and completeness to the individual.

Yet, when God became man and began to live among us, He chose to live as a single man to achieve His purpose. He was single-mindedly single.

Many times through the ages there have been stigmas attached to being a certain race or creed or sex or age or marital status. Just as He elevated the place of women, children, Gentiles, outcasts and the poor in society, by His very life He destroyed the stigma attached to being and remaining single.

Accepted by Others

His being single, however, in no way held Him apart from other people. Everywhere He went He was a vital part of people's lives. He was not just involved with those who needed Him for the miracles He could perform; He was involved with those who wanted Him for who He was as well. He was a likeable person. He was invited to weddings and dinners, and He even threw a couple of picnics where He provided the food.

People wanted to be around Him. His singleness made no difference to them. He demonstrated God's love to others, not just by dying for them at the end of His life, but also by responding to their need and desire for friendship and companionship during His physical lifetime.

Even with His involvement in the lives of others, He probably experienced times of loneliness. There are many in our world today who are lonely. I have met single people who spend their time focusing on the loneliness in being single. I have met married people who are lonely in spite of their married state. You see, loneliness comes sometimes from a state of being and sometimes from a state of mind.

Jesus must have felt this loneliness often since He was so completely in the world but not of it. Yes, He relied on friendships with His disciples and followers, but when He felt the loneliest, He would go and seek the com-

panionship of His Father.

Joshua 1:5 reminds us that God will not leave us, nor fail us, nor forsake us. Whether married or single, young or old, we must rely on this promise just as Jesus Himself did.

Active in Worship

His being single did not isolate Him from the weekly time of worship either. We find Him entering the temple and participating in the corporate worship of God. He gathered with others to study the law and the prophets and to focus on God's work in the lives of individuals.

We, as human beings, are so contradictory. We say that we do not want to be like everyone else, but then when we go somewhere where others are gathering, we want to know if there'll be someone 'like me' in the crowd.

Jesus was single-minded in the pursuit of the goal for which He had been sent. God has provided a purpose for our lives and we must determine to do His will, regardless of the circumstances or the people surrounding us.

Single people can minister to those who are married and married people can minister to those who are single—let's not allow our marital status to keep us from serving the one true God or fellowshiping with His people.

When I was in college and single, I remember the churches where I was allowed to work and minister. In one church, I directed the children's choir, and the adults of that church accepted me, respected me and worked with me. We all worked together in spite of the fact that I was single and they were married. In my home church, I worked with the youth one summer and the same scenario occurred. I worked with the teens and their families and they with me—disregarding my marital status.

Aware of Differences

Just as Jesus ministered to people in all walks of life and in all situations of life, we need to respond in ministry to everyone around us. Our churches and their married people need to reach out to and fellowship with those who are single. Our churches and their single people

need to reach out to and fellowship with those who are married.

We are the body of Christ, together. I think Galatians 3:28 could safely be expanded to cover marital status when Paul wrote, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Jesus Christ, as a member of the Trinity, created individuals and He created the institution of marriage. He knew the benefits and the joys of marriage and family as well as the constraints of marriage.

If we are married, we are called on to take care of the needs of our spouse and our children. We must take care of them as Christ would care for them or we will have to answer to Him for our actions. If we are single, we are freed from these constraints and there is more time and energy to put into other areas of God's work.

God in His wisdom chose that Jesus should perform His earthly ministry as a single man. That means that the church, His bride, is His immediate family and as such He is committed to taking care of our needs. When we pray, we pray to the bridegroom who answers our needs with stunning accuracy and infinite compassion.

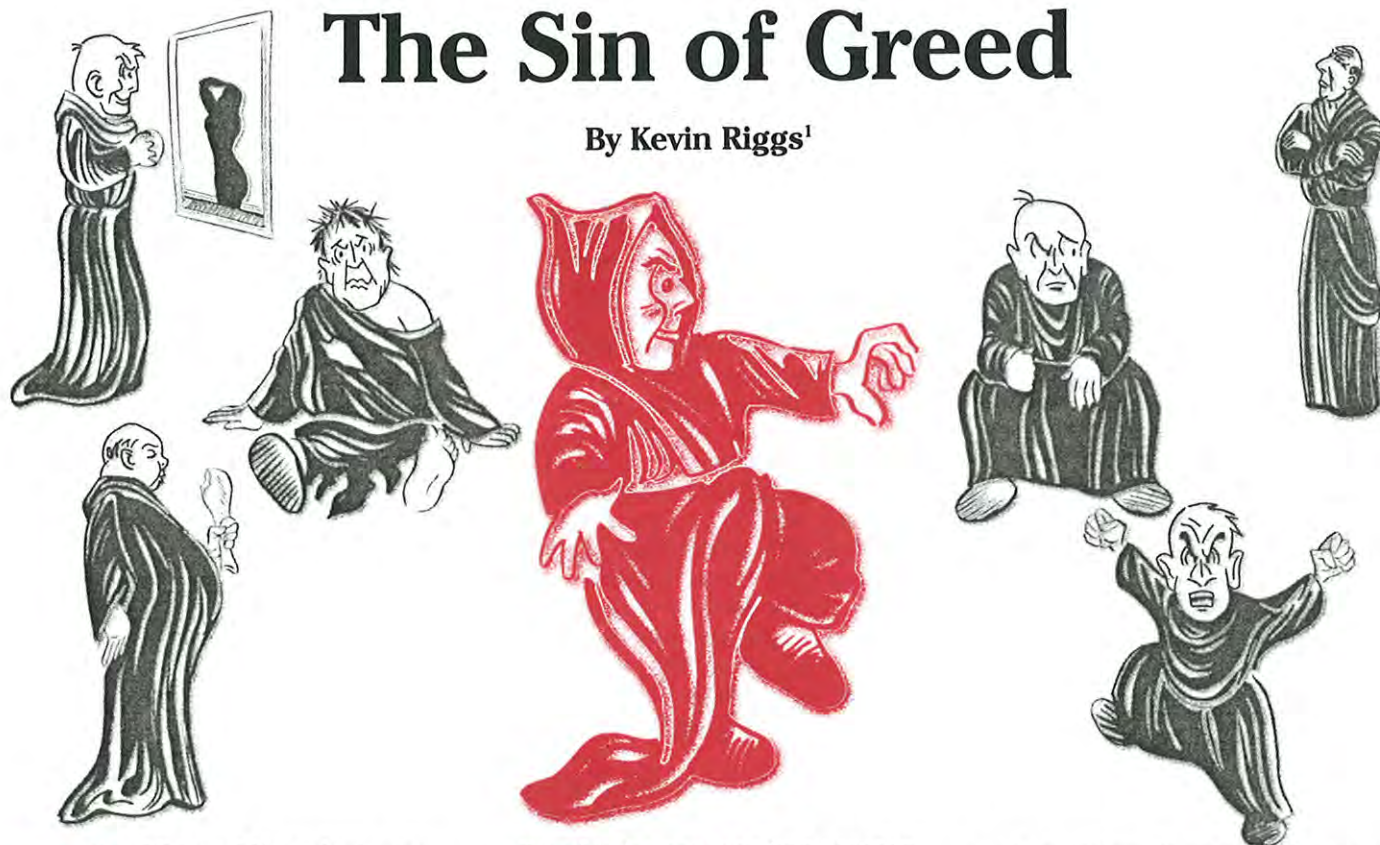
His purpose was to conquer death and bring us to life eternal. He achieved His purpose in conquering death and now waits as we choose the life He offers or the death He wants to conquer. He did it with single-minded singleness so that He can minister first and foremost to us, the church, His bride for whom He waits with patience, gentleness and understanding, and to whom He ministers eagerly and lovingly. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Joanna Felts serves as ministries coordinator at First Free Will Baptist Church in Clovis, California.

The Sin of Greed

By Kevin Riggs¹



King Midas of Macedonia was known for his love of pleasure and great wealth. According to Greek myth the god, Dionysus, granted Midas one wish: Whatever the king touched would turn to gold.

At first Midas enjoyed his new ability and touched everything in sight, changing it into pure gold. King Midas had more riches than could be imagined. However, once he realized all he had was gold—even his wife and children—he became depressed and begged Dionysus to release him from his golden touch.

What he thought was a blessing, in reality was a curse. Midas' greed turned everything into riches but failed to give him what he really needed.

King Solomon, a real life Midas, concluded, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labor, which he may carry away in his hand" (Eccl. 5:10, 15).

Greed is the never-ending desire to have more. It is the love of money and material possessions, and the dedication of one's life to that pursuit. John D. Rockefeller was once asked, "How much money is enough?" He answered, "Just a little more." A "kissin'-cousin" of greed is materialism, and together these cousins may prove to be the downfall of Christians in America.

Greed is the underlying current of all seven deadly sins.² The lazy person wants *more* sleep. Lust is the desire to have *more* sensual pleasure. Anger equals *more* revenge. Pride is nothing but *more* "me, myself, and I." Envy means *more* power and *more* prestige. Gluttony cries out for *more* of everything.

In the Old Testament the word *shalom* is usually translated "peace." *Shalom*, however, means far more than "peace of mind," it also means the opposite of greed. *Shalom* conveys the image of living in a caring community in which there is no need for greed because all people care for one another the way God cares. It means living in a communi-

ty where there is enough for everyone, but surplus for no one.

Don't misunderstand: God does not oppose wealth or hate the rich, and neither does He hold poverty up as scriptural. God blesses some with more so they can be a blessing to others and further the cause of Christ. What God despises is the envy, anxiety, confusion, waste and debt so often accompanying the desire for more.

Consequences of Greed

I have always been taught not to be greedy, but I never realized how dangerous greed could be until I considered its consequences.

Unhappiness

One consequence is unhappiness. More money and more stuff has never made anyone happy. King Solomon was the wealthiest person to ever live, but he was also the most miserable. If money, power and things could make a person happy, Solomon should have been ecstatic. Instead, he cried, "Vani-

ty of vanities . . . all is vanity" (Eccl. 1:2).

On the other hand, Mother Teresa, who owned absolutely nothing in life, always seemed to be happy and at peace with God. What was her secret? She once said, "You will never know Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you've got."

Overworked Society

Greed has also resulted in an overworked society, another dangerous consequence. I don't believe people work harder today than yesterday, but I do believe fewer people are satisfied and enjoy what they do.

People work hard to make a living, but fail to make a life. People work more hours than they should to pay for things they don't need but thought they wanted, and don't have time to enjoy the things they have worked hard to accumulate.

Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15).

Financial Worries

Because of greed, another consequence is financially stretched families. My wife and I have our own financial struggles. One day, however, it dawned on me: The reason there is more month at the end of the money is because I have more stuff than I really need.

I am not alone: The typical household has \$38,000 in consumer debt, equaling \$3.3 trillion nationwide.³ *The Wall Street Journal* reported 70% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck,⁴ and according to a Marist Institute poll, 55% of Americans "always" or "sometimes" worry about their money.

Proverbs warns, "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (Prov. 22:7).

Bankruptcy

A fourth consequence of greed is bankruptcy. Bankruptcies have increased by more than 150% in recent years, 94% of them being "personal" instead of "business filings."⁵

A recent study done on bankruptcy by the University of Texas and the

University of Pennsylvania noted the typical bankruptcy was not a guy under a bridge or a real estate high roller, but rather, "well educated, middle class, baby boomers with big time credit card debt."⁶

One financial adviser wrote, "The 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s have seen lending and borrowing at an all-time high in modern history. We want it all, and we can borrow to get it all, before we can afford it all."⁷

Failed Marriages

The single greatest consequence of greed is failed marriages. More marriages break up over money than any other single issue. It takes about five years after marriage for couples to start feeling the pinch from their checkbook. Furthermore, it is hard to build a strong marriage when both spouses work full-time, and few hours are spent together and with their children.

Overcoming Greed

I will never overcome my desire for more until I recognize my problem is not need but greed. In I Timothy 6:6-19, Paul teaches three principles that have helped me conquer greed and keep the accumulation of stuff in perspective.

Contentment

The first principle is to be content with what God provides. Paul writes, "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (v. 6). To be "godly" means to display a God-like attitude in all situations.

"Contentment" means "self-satisfaction." By placing these two words together Paul is saying satisfaction is not based on self, but on God, and the secret to contentment (being satisfied with what I have) is displaying a Godward attitude.

The phrase "great gain" literally means "very rich." A paraphrase of this verse would be, "But a Godward attitude, which brings contentment and personal satisfaction, makes a person very rich."

What's the secret to happiness? What will make me rich? Living a life pleasing to God, and being satisfied with where I am and with what God has given me. Only when I am con-

tent will the desire to have more go away. Martin Luther said, "Next to faith, this is the highest art: to be content . . . I have not learned it yet."

Beware Wealth

The second principle Paul teaches is to be careful if God does provide wealth. Paul gives two warnings to a person God has blessed with wealth: (1) Don't pursue wealth as the main goal in life (vv. 9-10). (2) Don't put your trust in riches (v. 17).

If God does bless me with wealth, I need to be careful that I continue to depend on Him, and I need to be careful not to make gaining more wealth my primary purpose in life. Money and things have a way of disappearing and slipping through my fingers. Someone said that the reason there is an eagle on the back of a dollar bill is to remind us how quickly money can fly away.

Remember Others

A third principle is to always be considerate of those less fortunate. Paul exhorts the wealthy to be known for their good deeds and generosity, instead of being known for their bank account and where they live (v. 18). John Wesley said, "Make all you can. Save all you can. Give all you can." I need to remind myself that eternal treasures are not found in what I save but in what I give away (v. 19).

Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher and theologian who died in 1855, told the story of a group of thieves who broke into a jewelry store one night. Instead of stealing anything, they simply switched all the price tags. The expensive jewels were now cheap, and the costume jewelry was suddenly of great value. The next day, the thieves returned to the store and purchased the expensive jewelry at a greatly reduced price. The thieves were never caught.

It is easy for me to switch the price tags and devalue what is really valuable and give value to what is worthless. Every day society tries to convince me to place a high price on material things and a low price on contentment. If I give into that temptation, my life will be robbed of meaning and purpose.

Jesus said, "Lay not up for your-

selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

Greed is deadly and results in unhappiness, being overworked and overextended, and it leads to bankruptcies and broken marriages. I need to heed God's advice through the Apostle Paul: Be content. Be careful. Be considerate. Only then will I overcome greed. ■



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

Endnotes

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. Near the end of the 6th century, Pope Gregory the Great, with the help of other church leaders, categorized all sins under seven headings. They referred to these seven headings as the "chief" or "cardinal" sins. They believed from these sins came all the evils of the world. These categories became known as the "seven deadly sins" and include laziness, lust, anger, pride, envy, gluttony and greed.
3. *The Consumer Reports Money Book*, 1995.
4. *Fast Facts on Consumer Credit Problems and Bankruptcy*.
5. Dave Ramsey, *Financial Peace*, 9.
6. Wade Lambert, "The New Faces of Personal Bankruptcy: Baby Boomers," *The Wall Street Journal*.
7. Dave Ramsey, *Financial Peace*, 13.

THE TOGETHER WAY

April 2000

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 74.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 84.00	\$ 941.08	\$ 612.43	\$ 1,553.51
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Arkansas	12,184.57	14,970.06	27,154.63	56,466.26	58,661.38	115,127.64
California	.00	1,177.33	1,177.33	.00	3,390.36	3,390.36
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	130.00	.00	130.00
Georgia	37,801.63	1,943.56	39,745.19	131,104.61	7,547.66	138,652.27
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	8,340.40	1,774.86	10,115.26	40,302.88	8,388.47	48,691.35
Indiana	1,592.76	157.77	1,750.53	5,134.05	534.58	5,668.63
Iowa	120.00	820.00	940.00	295.00	1,978.80	2,273.80
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	237.72	237.72
Kentucky	2,334.04	447.32	2,781.36	5,588.71	4,122.77	9,711.48
Louisiana	.00	155.00	155.00	.00	155.00	155.00
Maryland	.00	196.86	196.86	.00	328.11	328.11
Michigan	7,021.14	521.99	7,543.13	69,865.14	11,829.77	81,694.91
Mississippi	14,429.81	1,072.53	15,502.34	34,723.44	2,749.93	37,473.37
Missouri	33,124.96	13,296.45	46,421.41	159,645.04	55,272.95	214,917.99
Montana	.00	.00	.00	30.00	.00	30.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	351.21	.00	351.21	351.21	.00	351.21
New Mexico	733.32	106.68	840.00	2,435.46	182.76	2,618.22
North Carolina	513.75	2,267.00	2,780.75	4,064.63	9,141.97	13,206.60
Ohio	10,675.46	2,740.13	13,415.59	62,310.80	12,091.97	74,402.77
Oklahoma	56,990.41	10,610.31	67,600.72	220,719.66	40,183.95	260,903.61
South Carolina	98,973.69	.00	98,973.69	215,472.79	.00	215,472.79
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	4,356.29	2,422.33	6,778.62	41,776.23	7,023.38	48,799.61
Texas	9,047.50	430.40	9,477.90	38,721.70	1,354.40	40,076.10
Virginia	562.00	.00	562.00	2,681.06	.00	2,681.06
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	2,497.80	151.36	2,649.16	6,563.13	393.98	6,957.11
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	325.63	10.47	336.10	1,707.03	38.67	1,745.70
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.06	.06	.00	.21	.21
Totals	\$ 302,050.37	\$ 55,282.47	\$ 357,332.84	\$ 1,101,029.91	\$ 226,221.22	\$ 1,327,251.13

Disbursements:						
Executive Office	\$ 1,727.77	\$ 24,877.10	\$ 26,604.87	\$ 7,453.37	\$101,799.50	\$ 109,252.87
Foreign Missions	189,251.98	6,993.22	196,245.20	645,446.31	28,616.99	674,063.30
FWBBC	20,035.96	6,993.22	27,029.18	76,118.17	28,616.99	104,735.16
Home Missions	79,355.14	5,472.98	84,828.12	311,153.91	22,395.89	333,549.80
Retirement & Insurance	319.53	4,256.73	4,576.26	1,610.68	17,419.03	19,029.71
Master's Men	471.13	4,256.73	4,727.86	1,550.72	17,419.03	18,969.75
Com. for Theo. Integrity	50.67	152.04	202.71	710.57	622.12	1,332.69
FWB Foundation	496.55	1,824.33	2,320.88	1,457.74	7,465.31	8,923.05
Historical Commission	27.81	152.04	179.85	98.46	622.12	720.58
Music Commission	16.99	152.04	169.03	72.49	622.12	694.61
Media Commission	43.13	152.04	195.17	146.65	622.12	768.77
Hillsdale FWB College	1,732.04	.00	1,732.04	7,220.03	.00	7,220.03
Other	8,521.67	.00	8,521.67	47,990.81	.00	47,990.81
Totals	\$ 302,050.37	\$ 55,282.47	\$ 357,332.84	\$ 1,101,029.91	\$ 226,221.22	\$ 1,327,251.13

Raising Children for the Lord's Work

By Laura Thigpen

In April of 1997, for the first time, the Master's Golf Tournament was won by a young man of African-American/Asian descent. Tiger Woods has been heralded as the next "great golfer." This young superstar did not just stumble onto a golf course. His father, Earl Woods, in his book, *Training A Tiger*, makes it quite clear that he and his wife brought up their son to be a golf prodigy. He tells about the philosophy, instruction and training that went into preparing Tiger for fame on the golf course.

If a child can be trained to be a champion golfer, earning millions of dollars, how much more important is it that a child given to Christian parents be trained to be a servant of God? A life lived for God's glory is worth more than wealth or fame.

There is no magic formula for bringing up children to serve the Lord, but there are some factors that contribute to the shaping of a life for God's glory. I recommend these seven guidelines to Christian parents.

Have a vision of the kind of person you want your child to be.

Husband and wife must share the

same desires and aspirations for their son or daughter. Both parents must be willing to work sacrificially toward the goal. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, made a covenant with God promising that if He would give her a son, she would give him to the Lord all the days of his life (1 Sam. 1:11).

Similarly, before the birth of our four children, each was given to the

Lord, with the daily prayer that someday each would be used by God to bring glory to Him.

Start this training early.

Instead of a golf club, let a Bible be the first book placed in your child's hands. Let songs about Jesus be the first melodies he hears. Don't let your child remember a time when he didn't go to Sunday School or church. In these first months and years, help your children develop a concept of God and His love.

Develop a close, loving relationship with each child.

Earl Woods (Tiger's father), James Dobson and Josh McDowell agree that relationships based on love and respect always precede instructions and rules. Your children will tend to accept your beliefs because they accept you. Love each son and daughter unconditionally as God loves you and make sure that each one *feels* loved.

What spells love? Primarily, *spending time* with your children. Get to know the uniqueness of your child by playing with him, working with



him, talking with him, listening to him and reading to him. Be there when he needs you; be quick to forgive and encourage and support.

Teach your child.

The Bible speaks clearly to Christian parents. "... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4b). Teach him that the Bible is God's Word, that it is God's guidebook for all of life. Teach not only Bible facts, but principles from God's Word that relate to our daily lives. Encourage him to memorize scripture verses while he is young.

Teach him to pray for his own needs, and also for the needs of Christian workers at home and abroad. Instill in him a Christian world view. Do this by having daily family devotions. Also, take advantage of teachable moments in daily happenings—talk about the things of God around the dinner table, when doing chores, riding to school, hiking or taking a trip.

Make clear to each child the plan of salvation. He must personally accept Christ as his Savior. Remember that the age of accountability varies with each child. After the child is saved, you must help him to mature spiritually and develop his gifts and abilities for Christian service.

Create a home environment conducive to spiritual growth.

You may not be able to change the cultural milieu outside your home, but it is your God-given responsibility to provide a wholesome atmosphere in your home. You must surround your child with music, books, magazines and videos that will enrich his life and be a godly influence for him. Much is available today for the Christian home.

Guard your home from TV/VCR, video games, music and Internet surfing that will negate the truths you are teaching your child. Give your children a sense of self-worth by a word of encouragement, a pat, a hug.

Fill your home with love, laughter and stimulating conversation; eliminate nagging, yelling and screaming. Encourage creative play and constructive activities. You are shaping a life that God can use.

Seek help from others.

The truths and values you have instilled in your child need to be reinforced and confirmed by influences outside the home. Choose a church that teaches and preaches the Word, that promotes the Christian lifestyle you desire for your family, that has an evangelistic outreach, and has leaders and teachers who will be godly mentors for your children.

Send your son and daughter to church camp and daily vacation Bible school each summer. These are places where they can hear God's voice speaking to them. Take advantage of activities provided by our National Youth Conference. These will promote spiritual growth and provide opportunities for ministry.

If possible, provide Christian education for your child at home or in Christian day schools. In Christian colleges or universities your children will be challenged to consider Christ's claim upon their lives.

Live a genuine, Spirit-filled life before your children.

The single greatest factor in preparing your child to serve God is the life you live before him. Not precept, but example makes the most lasting impression on your child. Be the kind of Christian you want him to be. If your child sees you joyfully and sacrificially involved in serving God and reaching the lost for Christ, it will be a positive influence on him when he is seeking God's will for his life.

When my husband and I married over 52 years ago, we had a dream of building a Christian home and bringing up children to love and serve the Lord. They, in turn, would teach their children to know God and live for Him. We have the joy of seeing partial fulfillment of that dream.

Today, our four children and their mates are actively involved in Christian ministry, 13 of our grandchildren (the 14th is still a baby) know Jesus Christ as Savior and are being brought up in a Christian home.

Can we take credit for this? Absolutely not! We give praise to God. It is all His doings. He works in our children's hearts and lives. He gives the desire to live for Him. He gives them

spiritual gifts and calls them into the ministry He has planned for them. He gives to parents the privilege and responsibility of working with Him.

As parents we daily depend on God's wisdom and guidance as well as His power to overrule our weaknesses and mistakes. Bringing up your child for God's glory will not bring instant results, but as Tim Kimmel, a well-known speaker and writer says, "My job as a parent is a temporary (18-20 years) responsibility with an eternal consequence." ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Laura Thigpen is a member of Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church.

Directory Update

ALABAMA

Raymond Rivers to Fultondale Church, Fultondale
Michael Cox to Forestdale Church, Birmingham
Michael Greer to White Rock Church, Phenix City

CALIFORNIA

Millard Sasser to Sherwood Forest Church, El Sobrante
from executive secretary, Florida State Association.

GEORGIA

Burt Hall to New Light Church, Morgan from White Rock Church, Phenix City, AL

ILLINOIS

David Burgess to Oak Valley Church, Geff

NORTH CAROLINA

Bill Fulcher to Faith Church, Maysville from Faith Church, Carrollton, VA

OKLAHOMA

Troy Dobbs to Silver City Church, Silver City from Canadian Shores, Indianola

SOUTH CAROLINA

Frank Sedgwick to Hickory Hills Church, Gresham
Richard Conyers to Lockhart Church, Lockhart
Galen Dunbar to Calvary Church, Georgetown
Johnny Evans to Mill Branch Church, Johnsonville from Freedom Hill Church, Ladson
Joe Cagle to Hillside Church, Florence from New Prospect Church, Pamplico

Being There

By Darrell Holley



Being vs. Seeming

"Esse quam videri," says the state motto of North Carolina. For those of you whose Latin is a little rusty, it means, "To be rather than to seem." With all respect to the Tarheels, this statement did not have its origin with them but in the first century B.C. by the famous historian Sallust.

He said of Cato, a great Roman statesman: "Esse quam videri bonus malebat." That is, "He preferred to be a good man, rather than to seem to be a good man."

If you'll forgive me a short Latin lesson, the Latin verb "to seem" is very interesting. It is the passive form of the verb "to see." It is actually the verb "to be seen." So what does it mean "to seem" to be something? It means for other people "to see" you that way.

Some people desire not to *be* something, but merely to be *seen* to be something, even if they are not that thing, perhaps especially if they are not that thing. They wish to seem rather than actually to be.

Sallust says that old Cato (a noble and old-fashioned Roman, who repeatedly stood up for right in an age that was becoming increasingly corrupt) preferred actually to be rather than merely to seem. Like Cato's society, ours increasingly advocates "seeming" rather than "being." Almost everything in our culture says to us, "It is better to look good than to be good. It is better to be well-liked than to be right."

Example of Seeming

Perhaps you've read F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel about the 1920s, *The Great Gatsby*. It's all about a young man named James Gatz who wants to be famous. Unfortunately, he is the son of poor immigrant farmers in North Dakota. His pious but penniless family, by hook or by

crook, get him to college. But, as Fitzgerald says of him:

An instinct toward his future glory had led him . . . to the small Lutheran college of St. Olaf in southern Minnesota. He stayed there two weeks, dismayed at its ferocious indifference to the drums of his destiny, to destiny itself, and despising the janitor's work with which he was to pay his way through.

St. Olaf's is not for James Gatz. He becomes, eventually, a bootlegger and a swindler. Ultimately, he makes a financial killing and gets to Wall Street—not the first bootlegger and swindler to do so—and makes about a gozillion dollars through various unethical but highly profitable ventures.

Changing his name to the flashier Jay Gatsby, he builds a huge castle of a house and throws lavish parties. His life is empty and meaningless, but he "looks marvelous."

One day, one of his guests, the narrator of the novel, is wandering through Gatsby's house and stumbles into his library. The shelves are full of beautiful books in magnificent bindings. But upon taking several from the shelf, he finds that the pages are still uncut. Gatz, a.k.a. Gatsby, has not read these books—he hasn't even thumbed through them. They are only there for show, "to seem" rather than "to be."

I'll omit all the pitiful events of Gatsby's crass life, which ultimately result in his being shot by a jealous husband while he is floating in his olympic-sized swimming pool. What I'm interested in is how he got there, what led to such a sad, meaningless life. I'm interested in his education.

Remember he spent two weeks at St. Olaf's, an old-fashioned Lutheran college in southern Minnesota. And remember he left after only two weeks. He couldn't believe that St. Olaf's actually believed in people's actually work-

ing. He wanted to skip all that; he wanted to be a "somebody."

He couldn't understand this ridiculous college with its ridiculous attachment to dead writers and dead books. Why didn't St. Olaf's get in the modern world? He couldn't stomach the old-fashioned evangelical, academic life of St. Olaf's, so he left.

Alternative of Christian Education

I've often thought what might have happened if James Gatz had stayed at St. Olaf's for four years or so, and graduated. How might he have been different? What if he had submitted to those old liberal arts which places like St. Olaf's have been advocating for all these years?

Let's suppose he had stayed. Let's suppose he had taken freshman Grammar and Rhetoric. Let's suppose he had suffered through Old Testament Survey and Public Speaking, Introduction to Philosophy and Ancient History, Beginning Greek and Appreciation of Music, Western Literature and Algebra.

Let's suppose he had done that despised janitorial work and had stayed in college. Let's just suppose he had. How might he have turned out differently?

I should hope that James Gatz would never have turned into Jay Gatsby. Over the course of those college years, he would have learned to work hard, to think hard and to pray hard. Especially at a place like St. Olaf's, he would have learned Martin Luther's view of Christian vocation, that old-fashioned Protestant view that "whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God."

He would have learned that, whatever our actual jobs may be, all of us are called to serve Christ and His church. All of us, whether ministers, missionaries, teachers, stockbrokers—or in Luther's words, "cobblers, blacksmiths, or farmers"—all of us should work and live with a sense of Christian vocation.

Perhaps James Gatz would have come face to face with what some have called "the inescapable questions of life." Perhaps he would have come to a knowledge of the old Christian doctrines of Original Sin and the

Atonement. Perhaps he would have come to a personal saving faith in Jesus Christ. Perhaps he would have left St. Olaf's a new man, "a new creature," different from the boy that went in, but not like Jay Gatsby.

Who knows, perhaps he would have come to the conclusion that his calling was to the Christian pastorate. Can you see James Gatz, Pastor Gatz, in seminary, then ordained, and spending 30 years or so serving in little parishes on the Great Plains of North Dakota? Year after year, preaching sermons and giving instruction and bringing comfort and hope.

Perhaps he would have confronted the massive spiritual and physical needs of this world. Picture James Gatz serving as a missionary in New Guinea, spending a long and successful life, paddling from village to village, with the Good News of the Christian Gospel.

Perhaps he might have become a teacher. Can you see him teaching a class of children in a little school on the prairie, teaching them their multiplication tables and our Lord's parables? Or perhaps see him in a parochial-school classroom in inner-city Chicago, teaching students to diagram sentences and to sing the doxology.

I could suggest other avenues that James Gatz might have gone down. With what we know about his abilities, I wouldn't be surprised if he had taken his degree and gone off to a career in banking or a brokerage house, taking his place in the business world. Maybe he would even have reached Wall Street—but this time not as a bootlegger and swindler.

Perhaps he would have had a very lucrative and prestigious career. But it wouldn't have been through junk bonds and insider trading. He would have made his money the old-fashioned way: he would have earned it. And this James Gatz would not have viewed his money as a means for "seeming" but as a means for "being."

This James Gatz would not have left his Wall Street office at the end of the day to hide within the walls of his "gated community" as they're now called. He would have become involved in the life of his city and its people. Can you see him serving in a soup kitchen, helping out at the neighborhood Boys' Club, teaching Sunday School in his

congregation? This James Gatz would have been a different man.

Now before you worry about me, be assured that I realize that James Gatz was a fictional character. He couldn't have done otherwise than what Fitzgerald made him do. But in real life, we have the opportunity of affecting real people with real free wills. In our old-fashioned Christian colleges, our students read and study, research and write, listen and learn.

Unlike James Gatz, they confront the great books and the great ideas of 2000 years of Christian culture. But they discover that they are not dead books by dead authors, but living books full of living ideas—living ideas that flow, ultimately, from the One Who describes Himself as "I am that I am," the One Who doesn't merely seem, but the One Who is.

And they leave such schools, schools devoted to those books and those ideas and that God, as different persons.

Such liberal-arts colleges are still very old-fashioned places. They still believe in biblical moral absolutes and in the possibility of Truth. They ask students to grapple with that most profound—and only inerrant—exposition of Truth: the Holy Scriptures—and to apply those revealed truths to every area of human thought and activity. Then those students leave, to return to a world and a culture that prizes seeming above being, where appearances are more important than realities, where looking good is more important than being good. In the midst of this "crooked and perverse generation," they are challenged not to seem, but to be. ■



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.



By Fran Gist

It occurred to me that I had experienced some form of deranged mentality while the cancer of hatred spread in my mind and heart. But through a small window of sanity, a simple prayer sped toward Heaven and altered events that I wouldn't be aware of for years.

I don't recall the exact moment the small opening occurred. It was just large enough for a prayer to get through. That was enough. The hardness of my heart had been my secret for eight years. I confessed it to my sisters in the county jail first, then to my husband and finally at my church.

I had omitted it from my testimony because I didn't want anyone to know just how black, hard or cold my heart had been. I didn't want to admit it to myself and kept it buried until I could keep it contained no longer. While we think we have been a "good" person most of our lives, Jesus knows the truth and will reveal it to us in His time.

This malignancy began when my younger brother was brutally murdered in an alley in March 1992. Months passed before his murderer was caught and brought to trial. All the while, the cancerous hatred grew. My brother was an alcoholic

and did drugs, but he didn't deserve to die this way.

When my sister called and told me the trial had been scheduled, I made plans to be there. Peggy lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and I live several hours north of there. Everything was arranged and I would leave early because I didn't want to be late and unable to locate the courthouse in an unfamiliar city.

While driving south on the freeway, that moment of sanity occurred and I sent a prayer heavenward. "God, please don't let me see him off of government property."

I had a pistol in my car, completely legal, and I knew I couldn't take it on government property. If I did, I could lose my permit. Miss "Rule-follower" wouldn't take it illegally into the courthouse, yet I would have deliberately killed a 17-year-old boy? How deranged was I?

Oh, Lord, how twisted and sick we become apart from You.

I didn't know God, I knew of God. I knew Jesus died on a cross for our sins and ascended into Heaven to be with God. I knew we were supposed to pray to God but I didn't believe that He heard me. That sums up my entire belief and knowledge of God, at the time.

In planning a cold-blooded murder, I had exhausted every conceivable avenue of how to pull this off. I didn't want to shoot him, I wanted to beat him to death and listen to him beg for his life. Knowing that was impossible, I opted for shooting him.

The truth is that I was worse off than the young man on trial. My heart was colder, harder and blacker than his was. He had lost control of his temper during an argument. I have no way of knowing how much he had drank with my brother prior to the events that would change our lives so drastically.

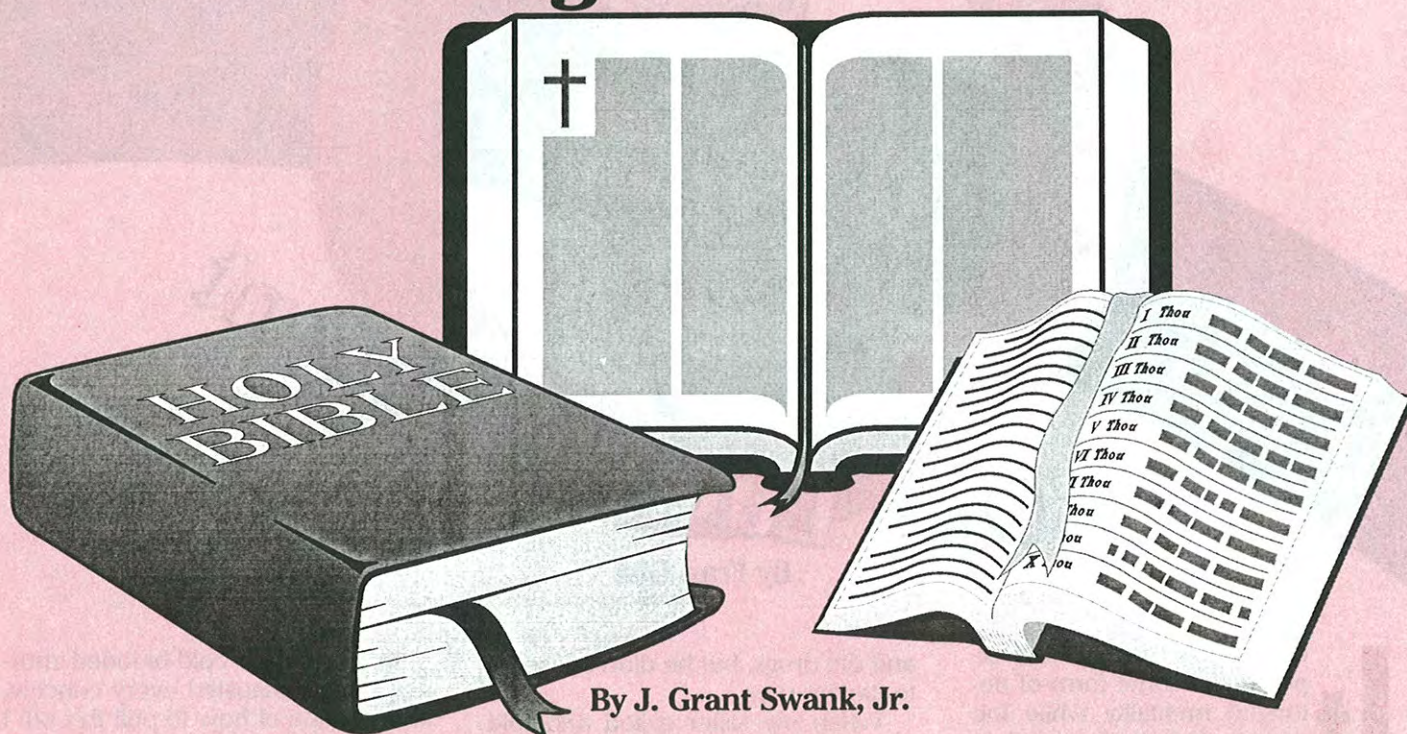
During that one lucid moment, sanity passed through my twisted mind and a prayer, to a God I did not know, reached His ears.

The gun was locked in my car because I wouldn't risk my nephew coming across it accidentally. The car stayed at my sister's home because she was familiar with the route to the courthouse in an adjoining town.

My focus had shifted from murdering the accused to just getting to court on time. I was still in the dark about the events that had transpired. My sister had filled me in on bits and pieces she had garnered during the pre-trial and I didn't want to miss a moment of the proceedings.

(continued on page 19)

Preaching from the Word



By J. Grant Swank, Jr.

Having preached sermons for nearly 40 years, I have tried the various sermonic forms and concluded that expository preaching—preaching directly from the Word—is best. Why?

Expository preaching stays close to the revealed Truth.

There is no other Book like His Book. Therefore, to drift from it is to slide into relativism and personal opinions. To stay close to it is continually to come under its eternal light.

More and more, the revealed Truth is being sidelined for flash and fake. It is being substituted with cute and cunning. Nevertheless, God never set out to communicate such cheap "gospel." He was born and died to set before the mortal mind the divine mind. Therefore, to make a life-long expounding of that heavenly thought is the commission of every Christian pulpit.

Expository preaching opens up heavenly creativities which originate with the Holy Spirit Himself.

To go week after week into the pastor's study in an attempt to come up with one's own imaginative lore and luck is to trudge into eventual boredom. Rightly so. We mere mortals in ourselves simply do not have what it takes continually to manufacture that which nurtures the eternal soul.

Therefore, we must be humble enough as preachers to admit that we need to come under the divine fire. It is that flame which ignites the energies to produce a sermon which can truly bring one's hearers indeed into the holy of holies. It is that igniting from above which evidences an on-going pentecost within the truly obedient.

Expository preaching opens up spiritual nurturing theme upon theme, never to be come upon in any other literature than the Holy Scriptures.

One inspired chapter after another.

er overloads the earnest preacher with enough accents to spin into numerous sermons each week. These truths abound for they unfold the divine nature Himself.

To neglect these revelations is to bring sterility to the Christian holy desk. To zealously attack the scripture's passages with fresh zeal at each sermon preparation is to uncover treasures from above. These are what each generation must feed upon in order to find the daily strength to overcome the trials of our sojourn.

Expository preaching honors the Holy Spirit who inspired the Word.

He is its Author. He is the One who superintended the Mystery. Therefore, the preacher approaches humbly that written Word in an attempt to pray for the incarnate Word to speak anew. With such petitions heavenward, the incarnate Word never disappoints. In fact, He stands at the preacher's door and knocks.

The Holy Spirit will move the preacher's human spirit, verse upon

verse, unmasking concept upon concept, frequently rushing the preacher's brain into such glad excitement as to stir his soul beyond measure. Such a privilege is given only to the studious pastor who gives his best to each sermon prepared and preached.

Expository preaching lifts the Word to laity who seldom read the Word for themselves.

We wish it were otherwise; but even in the most biblical environs, the rush of today's lifestyle truthfully spells a biblically illiterate people. This is sad; nevertheless, stark reality will aid us at this point.

All the more reason then that the student-pastor keep the biblical foundations intact within his own life—then in the formation of his sermons. The stories of Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Daniel, Isaiah, Jesus, Paul—how they need to be told and retold.

The themes of redemption, hope, sanctification, heaven and grace need to be laid continually before the waiting congregation. This is best seen when preaching expositively—jewel upon jewel upon jewel—not from earth's coves, but from heaven's coffers.

Expository preaching grows the preacher himself.

When the pastor spends more time in his secular reading than he does in the sacred reading, his pulpit and prayer closet show it. The leanness is not worth it in the end. In short order, the sensitive pastor realizes what is occurring, then hopefully flees back to the Book.

Living a lifetime with the scriptures deepens the preacher's own wells for divine understanding. More and more the secular age cries out for those Christian pulpits who are mounted by men who truly know the timeless Truth which sets us all free. These preachers first know the Truth in their own experiences; then they relate its gusto to their hearers.

Expository preaching outlasts the sermon.

Hearers take home the Word of God, not simply a current event or a

tickling humor or a flighty bit of zesty "wisdom." Marinating in the sermon-ic themes from scripture continues throughout the hearer's day, hopefully throughout the next week until the next sermon is heard.

When the pastor opens the Word to expound upon it, verse by verse, theme by theme, accent by accent, the people hear, not so much from the human behind the pulpit, but from the Lord Himself.

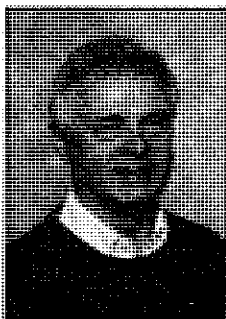
The ever-present Holy Spirit remains faithful to His own revelation. He then works far more meticulously within the souls of the hearers than any onlooker could ever detect—on Sunday and then through the next Saturday.

Expository preaching brings excitement to the pastor himself in preparing and preaching the text.

It is an adventure which weekly becomes especially alluring. There is a captivation about his work that is beyond description.

While other clerical labors may grow stale, the expository preaching enlivens and enlivens with its own magnetism. There is an enticement about it which defines its own eternal definition. In other words, the preacher knows for certain that he indeed has hold of something formed in the forevers—it has come from "out there" and will return to the "out there."

Such timelessness baits for the good of the gospel. It converts the soul. It cleanses church life. It brings heaven down to earth. Expository preaching reveals itself to be its own blessed reward. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend J. Grant Swank, Jr., is a free-lance writer who resides in Windham, Maine. He pastors the New Hope Church.

... Lucid Moment (continued from page 17)

The full impact didn't hit me until last week. It was in sharing the whole testimony with the ladies at the jail where I now minister, that I learned the danger that accessibility to a weapon presented. On the way home from the jail, I knew I must do something with that gun rather than keep it buried in a drawer.

I knew that I would never use it for "self-protection" for which it had been purchased. I knew that I would rather die than be responsible for someone going to hell. I talked to my husband and gave him the gun. It is no longer a problem.

All of this flies in the face of my once-held belief that I need something to protect myself with. I'm sure I would fight, to the best of my ability, in order to live through a life-threatening situation. What I cannot do, is eliminate what might be someone's last chance to receive salvation and discover the wonder of God's love.

It may not make sense to anyone else, but that brief moment of lucidity sent a simple, one-line prayer. Grace and mercy delivered me from committing a horrendous crime. I don't want to risk the possibilities of another episode of insanity such as this one. Nor do I want to be tempted by the availability of a gun, today or tomorrow.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." More than this, I do not need. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Fran Gist serves as the renewal services coordinator with Hands of Liberty Ministry in northern California. Hands of Liberty is an outreach ministry of Liberty Free Will Baptist Church in Cottonwood, California. This ministry focuses on jail and prison evangelism.

Artist Presents Sculpture to Bible College

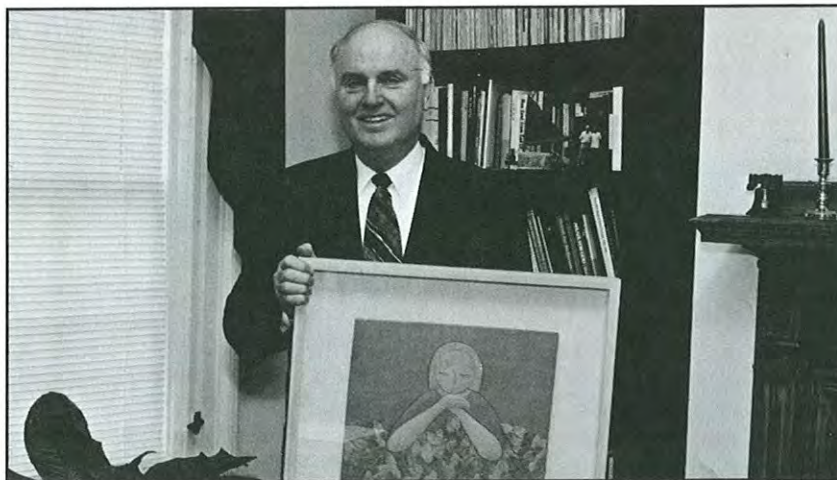
NASHVILLE, TN—Internationally famous artist Kim Shin Ok presented a terra cotta sculpture to President Tom Malone while he was in Korea for the opening of the new Asia Free Will Baptist Theological Seminary in March. The sculpture will be displayed at Free Will Baptist Bible College as a symbol of friendship between the artist and the college.

Kim Shin Ok is a member of the All Nations Free Will Baptist Church of Seoul, South Korea.

Her husband, John Lee, is the church's music director.

A note on the case says, "Our family wishes for you and yours . . . a 21st Century (of) peace, joy, and good will."

President Tom Malone says, "One of the highlights of our trip to South Korea was the privilege of enjoying a meal in the home of Dr. Lee, his wife and son. The evening was completed with some beautiful music and a sweet fellowship among believers."



President Tom Malone with Korean sculpture of praying women.

Preaching Headlines New Mexico Meeting

ARTESIA, NM—Five sermons by three speakers held center stage at the April 6-8 New Mexico District Association which met at Artesia FWB Church. The 32nd annual session registered 33 attendees.

Host pastor Tim Byers preached Thursday evening. Colorado evangelist Roy Thomas spoke twice to delegates. He preached from John 5 on "The House of Mercy with Porches of Grace" and from Ezekiel 34:16 on "Why There Should Be a Free Will Baptist Church in Your Town."

Home Missions Department director Trymon Messer also spoke twice—from Mark 1 on "The Church That Makes a Difference" and from Exodus 3 at the New Mexico WAC Banquet Friday evening.

Delegates voted to conduct a church growth retreat June 29-30 at Glorieta (NM) under the direction of Dr. Roy Thomas.

Moderator Leslie Skeens was elected to his second term, according to Clerk Doris Heard.

The 2001 district association will meet April 5-7 at First FWB Church in Albuquerque.

Bible College Teachers Honored

NASHVILLE, TN—As the 1999-2000 school year neared its close, several Free Will Baptist Bible College faculty members were honored in a variety of ways.

Three were named to the 2000 edition of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*, which recognizes about five percent of the nation's top teachers. They are:

- Suzann Harris (teacher education)
- Byron Deel (physical education)
- Tom McCullough (missions).

Each was nominated by a former student as "a teacher who made a difference." Students who make nominations must, themselves, be listed in *Who's Who Among American High School Students* or be on *The National Dean's List*.

Mrs. Harris has also been recognized by Junior Achievement of Middle Tennessee, who awarded her its Bronze Leadership Award for her pioneering efforts in chartering the College Strategy Partnership between Junior Achievement and Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Since the partnership began in the Fall of 1998, FWBBC students have taught the Junior Achievement curriculum in 265 elementary classes helping to reach over 5,800 students with the message of free enterprise and the importance of education.

On February 1, Coach Byron Deel was promoted to Major in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Michael Karounos, a member of the English faculty, has been notified that his essay, *A Summary Rhapsody: Frost's Flight of the Spirit at Kitty Hawk*, will be published in a forthcoming issue of *The Robert Frost Review*, edited by Earl Wilcox.

South Carolina Church Awards New Scholarship

NASHVILLE, TN—The Temple FWB Church, Darlington, South Carolina, awarded the first Roy Player Missions Scholarship to Darin Miles, a junior missions major at Free Will Baptist Bible College. The award was made in chapel at the college on April 20.

The \$1,000-scholarship will be awarded annually to a FWBBC missions student in honor of the late Rev. Roy Player, founding pastor of the church. The scholarship was presented by the current pastor, Todd Parrish, and Michael Player, son of Rev. Player and a deacon at the church.

Darin is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Donnie Miles, of Florence, South Carolina. He also currently serves as president of the FWBBC student body.



(L-R) Michael Player, Todd Parrish, Darin Miles, Tom Malone

Children's Home Seeks Director

ELDRIDGE, AL—The Alabama FWB Children's Home at Eldridge (also known as Children's Village USA) continues to search for a permanent executive director, according to spokesman Waymon Fields.

Candidates for the position must meet minimum standards set by the state of Alabama in the areas of academics and employment history.

Academic requirements include a bachelor's degree in social work, psychology, administration or a related field from a regionally-accredited college or university.

Work history requirements include at least 24 months of full-time, paid employment in family and children's services, along with progressively responsible administrative and/or supervisory experiences.

Graduate training in administration, education, psychology or social work at an accredited graduate school may be substituted in lieu of the experience requirement with certain restrictions.

Any interested candidates may contact or submit a resume to:

Waymon Fields
P. O. Box 174
Millport, Alabama 35576
or FAX to 205-662-4240

or email mrchfarm@frontiernet.net
Home phone: 205-662-3226
Office phone: 205-662-4241 ext. 111
Applicants are not required to be ministers.

currently

Eastside FWB Church in **Thelma, KY**, reports 147 decisions at Paintsville during a three-day presentation of "Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames." The project was a united effort by nine Johnson County churches. **Harry Frisby** pastors at Eastside.

Members of **Southside FWB Church** in **Darlington, SC**, broke ground this spring for a 3,400-square-foot sanctuary. **Leroy Lowery** pastors.

South Carolina promotional director **Mike Jones** and his wife live in a mobile home that sits in a plowed field. One rainy Saturday, Sister Jones praised God in her husband's presence for a cement pad she expected to get for the mobile home. The next morning, Mike preached at **Mill Branch FWB Church** in **Johnsonville**. After the service, Pastor **Joe Moore** presented a \$3,300 check to them designated for a cement pad.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Beaufort, NC**, committed \$30,000 in faith promises during their February missionary conference. This marks the second year that the 225 active members rose to this level of missionary support. Pastor **Henry Van Kluyve** said the church supports 10 foreign and seven home missionaries.

Anybody seen a wheelbarrow offering in church lately? They had one at **Happy Home FWB Church** in **Andrews, SC**. Pastor **Earl Bittle** rolled a wheelbarrow down the center aisle and collected \$1,000 for the Benjamin Randall special offering. The congregation also honored their deacons' hard work by presenting each deacon with a sports coat.

That sweet smell coming from **South Conway FWB Church** in **Conway, SC**, is the result of the mortgage going up in smoke. Pastor **Tim Larimore** leads the congregation.

Pastor **Ivan Ryan** reports four baptisms at **Arnold View FWB Church** in **Creal Springs, IL**. Attendance pushed over the 95 mark in February.

The **Thomaston Community FWB Church** in **Thomaston, TX**, wants to sponsor a mission church 20 miles away in **Victoria**—and they're serious about it. Pastor **B. J. Davis** said that the church owns a vacant lot in Victoria, a city of 63,000 people. They are prepared to underwrite an annual salary of \$24,000 for two years, plus living facilities for an interested minister. Any takers? Contact Pastor Davis at 361-277-8178.

Pastor **Jack Rollins** retired this spring after 50 years in the ministry, all served in the state of **Alabama**. He pastored in **Lindbergh** and **North Birmingham** 1949-1962. Then he began his amazing 37-year pastorate at **Forestdale FWB Church** in **Birmingham**. He also served as moderator of the **Alabama State Association**.

Marietta FWB Church in **Lyons, GA**, broke ground for a new social hall. Members expected to have the 2,100-square-foot building paid for by the time construction finished. **Irvin Murphy** pastors.

First FWB Church in **Ozark, MO**, received a new van as a gift, according to Pastor **Gary Mitchener**. The congregation then gave their used 15-passenger van to the mission in **Poplar Bluff, Heritage FWB Church**. Missionary pastor **Don Richmann** was quite surprised when a van with his church's name painted on the side rolled into **Poplar Bluff**. Way to go, fellows!

Missouri minister **William M. Austin** died January 22 at age 68. He pastored 28 years in several Missouri churches in **Wright, Texas** and **Laclede** counties until his health began to fail.

First FWB Church in **Chester, SC**, celebrated their 50th anniversary with a full week of activities in their new 450-seat sanctuary. Pastor **James Sanders** said the congregation broke ground on a 9,600-square-foot Christian life center.

Some 184 people were on hand when members of **Liberty FWB Church** in **Lancaster, SC**, moved into their new

facilities. **David Anders** pastors.

Pastor **Gordon Sebastian** reports nine new members at **Peace FWB Church** in **Wilson, NC**.

Members of **Stickney FWB Church** in **New Brunswick, Canada**, called a special appreciation day to honor **Doug DeMerchant** who retired as Sunday School superintendent. **Charles Hurlburt** pastors.

Home missionary **Terry Hardison** reports 12 new members at the mission work in the **Milwaukee, WI**, area. The group set an attendance record with 51 people, and reported four weeks with offerings topping \$1,000 each week.

Pastor **Ken Doggett** baptized 16 converts at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Springfield, IL**. Attendance averages 52 each week.

Here's the good news at **Heritage FWB Mission** in **Shreveport, LA**: Two conversions, three rededications, five new members and four new couples who began attending. Pastor **Ron Parker** said that 30 children rode the bus and van to Wednesday night services recently.

After 40 years as a pastor, **Ansel Smith** retired. He had pastored **Great Commission FWB Church** in **Lancaster, SC**, for the last 16 years. He pastored five churches in the state during his four-decades-long ministry. He also served as state moderator three years, state clerk four years and local conference moderator 10 years.

Sixteen members of **First FWB Church** in **Kingstree, SC**, read the Bible through last year. They call it their "66 Club," which means reading all 66 books of the Bible in one year. **Wayland Owens** pastors.

Pastor **David Carter** has led **Valley Falls FWB Church** in **Spartanburg, SC**, for 20 years. The members appreciate that loyalty and gave the Carters \$5,000 toward the purchase of a home. They also gave him a Toyota 4-Runner to get him to church on time. ■

Commissioned To Teach - (Part I)

By Alton E. Loveless

The task of teaching is left to a few in every church. It is estimated that the average church is operated by 15 to 20 percent of its membership. This means a church of 100 yields less than 20 ardent workers. And to say all are qualified presents still another picture. However, we are commissioned to teach. And teach we must!

In brief, the Christian teacher should have met the following requirements.

1. Know the Savior of whom he teaches.
2. Know and believe the truths of the Bible and study it prayerfully.
3. Know his students, be available for counsel, give time to visitation to better acquaint himself with their needs and problems.
4. Know his lesson well, with preparation evident.
5. Know the learning and teaching process and employ them both.

I. Why Teach?

A. Because the Bible Teaches Teaching

1. It is interesting to note that the word "teach" appears 217 times in the Bible while the word "preach" appears but 147 times.
2. Both the Old and New Testaments reveal the subject. Several of the 217 follow: Deut. 4:10; II Chron. 15:3; Job 6:24; Psalm 25:4; 27:11; 86:11; Matt. 7:29; Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 5:42; Matt. 5:2; I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; and II Tim. 2:2.

B. Because Jesus Believed In Teaching (Matthew 28:19-20)

1. Jesus spoke three times of a harvest:
 - a. John 4:35—He said, "*look on the fields.*"
 - b. Matthew 9:36—He saw the many people and was "*moved with compassion*" for them.
 - c. Luke 10:1—He gave an example of teaching and service as He sent out 70, two by two, to teach others.

2. Jesus not only saw a harvest but mobilized to reach them.
 - a. He saw the opportunity.
 - b. He felt the compassion.
 - c. Organized for the service.
- C. Because As Christians We Are Commissioned To Teach (Matthew 8:19-20)
 1. Since we love Him, we are motivated to:
 - a. Lead our pupils to a knowledge of God's will.
 - b. Lead each pupil to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as his own personal Savior.
 - c. Develop him into a Christian character who will express himself through worship, right living and efficient service.
 2. Since we love Him, we want to mobilize to:
 - a. Reach every family in the community. Nearly one out of every five families in this country moves every year. (This means that of every 100 families around your church, 20 would be new each year.)
 - b. Reach every man in the world for Christ. ■



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

Randall



House

Just yesterday I read a job announcement in a nationally published paper which contained the wording "only degrees from accredited institutions will be accepted." Why would an employer use such wording? Because a degree from an *accredited* institution brings a certain amount of confidence that the degree holder has had a quality education! This is important in a day when one can simply order a degree from a magazine or the Internet.

In almost every other country in the world, the government sets the standards for educational institutions, usually through a Ministry of Education. In the U.S. it is done through voluntary associations called accrediting agencies. The *Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges* and the *Southern Association of Colleges and Schools* are such agencies. By membership in these organizations, we assert our quality and our independence. We actually avoid government interference by maintaining the peer review process we call accreditation. All in all, it is a win-win situation for the college, students and employers for us to maintain membership with SACS and AABC.

Free Will Baptist Bible College is seeking *Reaffirmation of Accreditation* with both AABC and SACS. Teams will visit us from each of these agencies in 2001. This reaffirmation process takes place every ten years when you are a member of one of these bodies as FWBBC is. The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the oldest of the regional accrediting agencies, accredits us. It has been in existence since 1895 and accredits most institutions of higher learning in 11 southern states. The *Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges* specializes in accrediting colleges that provide undergraduate Bible College education. Formed in 1947, AABC accredits approximately 100 Bible Colleges in the U.S. and Canada.

What do accrediting bodies do? Primarily they help assure the consumers of higher education—parents, students, and employers—that an institution is meeting minimum standards. They examine the college in the light of accrediting criteria defined by the institutions themselves, and report on whether or not the institution measures up. This is a rigorous and professional examination of the institution, much the same as the physical examination done by the doctor on his patient. Then, as wise patients listen to the doctor, the college endeavors to implement recommendations made by the accrediting agency. By doing so the entire college program is strengthened.

FWBBC Seeks Accreditation Renewal

By Dr. James Cox
Director, Institutional Effectiveness

Central to the accrediting process is the self-study. Right now we are working on a self-study that the teams will receive and read before they come to our campus. Everyone at the college is involved in some fashion in writing the self-study. The self-study is both a process whereby we describe and

evaluate ourselves, and a document to report our findings. We identify our strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations on how to turn weaknesses into strengths.

During a typical four-day visit, a team of educators from other accredited colleges examines data and conducts interviews to evaluate the quality and accuracy of the self-study and ascertain whether the institution is in compliance with established accrediting standards. The committee offers written advice to the institution, develops a consensus on its findings, and completes a draft report. Finally, the committee presents an oral summary in an exit report to the President and invited institutional officials on the last day of the visit.

The departure of the team from campus does not mark the end of the accreditation process. A committee of elected representatives from other accredited institutions reviews the visiting team report and the response of the institution to the findings of the team. Their decisions are announced at the annual meeting. If weaknesses are not addressed properly, a follow-up report from the college may be required in a couple of years.

The fact that FWBBC is a member of *two* accrediting bodies gives confidence that the college is doing a good job in both our overall collegiate program and specifically in our Bible program. We are a *college*, and we are a *Bible college*.

The benefits of accreditation are manifold.

1. Many forms of financial aid are available only to students attending an accredited institution. Some financial aid is available only to students in regionally accredited institutions.
2. Students can transfer credits more easily to most other institutions. Some colleges and universities will not accept credits earned at an unaccredited institution.
3. Students are more readily accepted into graduate schools. Students who graduate from an unaccredited program may not be admitted at all, or may be admitted on probation or be required to take prerequisite courses.
4. Students seeking licensure in teacher education or other programs may be denied credentials in some states if they graduate from an unaccredited program.
5. Many of the jobs in today's market require a degree from an accredited institution. ■

Free Will Baptist Bible College

The Free Will Baptist Foundation is a ministry of helps. During the past year we were asked to assist several individuals, families, local churches and other ministries. Endowments provided over \$93,000 for 1999 alone and the principal remains to provide additional income each year in the future.

How does the Foundation help individuals?

In one case, a lady who wanted to provide a gift to her widowed sister called our office. This sister and her husband had spent their working years serving Free Will Baptists. The widow's retirement income was limited. Though in her 70s, she worked regularly to provide a few of the extras so pleasant in life.

The caller could not provide a large gift, and feared the little she could provide would be totally consumed if special care or other needs arose. After some consideration a plan was put into action which accomplished the following:

The caller received

- A tax deduction for the charitable gift portion of the transfer.
- Assurance that the stream of income will go to her sister as long as she lives.
- Assurance that the principal of the gift cannot be attached for health needs.

The widow receives

- A regular quarterly income ("gift" from her sister) for life, of which the majority is tax free.
- A constant reminder of her family's love and the power of God to provide.

Free Will Baptists receive

- The remainder following the widow's death (benefits will be distributed according to the donor's directions).

Another time a pastor called requesting help managing surplus funds by his church. As with many of our churches, their surplus was small and they

We Help People

By William Evans

could never tell when some or all of it might be needed. Bank CDs were not suitable for them and savings account interest was very low. Could the Foundation help them? We suggested an arrangement which provided them:

- An agreement invested in government-backed guaranteed investments.
- An attractive rate of interest.
- Quick access with no withdrawal penalty.
- The opportunity to add any amount at any time and as often as they wished, earning the same rate.
- Assurance that the service cost goes to a Free Will Baptist ministry.

The Foundation exists to help our people and ministries achieve their God-given purpose, both today and in the future. Those needs are unique and personal for each. The Foundation seeks to tailor a solution for each individual need.

The financial report indicated a significant growth this year. However, much of that is due to short term funds added to the revocable trust fund.

Our field representative, Brother Frank Giunta, retired in June 1999. As projected when Frank came on board, we did slip into red ink after three years, not nearly as quickly as expected. Since his retirement we have maintained the operation with office staff only. Several have sought the position since his retirement.

At present I am seeking to develop a semi-voluntary staff of key individuals who can be mobilized to help spread the word and explain various gift options.

Leroy and Lou Scudder from northeast Arkansas and William (Buddy) and Martha Morris of Statesboro, Georgia, have stepped forward already. They came for two days of intensive training earlier this month. Fred Warner, representative of Foreign Missions, attended also.

From \$0 to \$8.3 million in the first 20 years. It will be very exciting when a large number of our members catch the vision for how the Foundation can help them and through them help our various ministries.

Will you help us help your church, friends and family in this great task? ■

Free Will Baptist



Foundation

I was about six months ago that I had an overwhelming feeling of void in my life. I had been raised in the Roman Catholic Church but had never really felt comfortable. There seemed to be so much guilt and fear associated with Roman Catholicism that I began to resent church.

As an adult I went to mass on the occasional holiday to please my mother. I knew that I didn't want to raise my children Roman Catholic, but never having experienced anything else, I wasn't sure where to begin. I knew that I needed to find God, both for myself and for my children.



Chris (top left), Shawn, Theresa and Taylor.

Testimony

By Theresa Allen

After going through a divorce, I was faced with the responsibility of supporting and raising my three children on my own. I moved back in with my parents to give the children stability and show them a loving family. There was still something missing.

My children knew there was a God and often asked me questions that I just couldn't answer. After a lot of thought, I decided to start looking for a church. First, I attended a Roman Catholic church thinking that maybe I was too harsh and I needed to give it another chance. Then I attended a Christian Calvary church, but again, something was just not right.

Then like an answer to my prayer, Pastor Keith Bartlett and associate pastor Ray Hollifield knocked on my door. They were from Sloan Canyon FWB Church in Castaic, California. I wasn't home at the time, but my father was so impressed with Keith and Ray that he urged me to at least give it a shot.

I went to the Free Will Baptist church that Sunday and met Keith and Ray. I knew right then that this was the church I was looking for. They opened their hearts to the kids and me and made us feel right at home. Since then I have been hooked. The kids absolutely love learning about Jesus and reading all the stories in the Bible. The entire staff has been nothing but supportive.

Pastor Keith and Ray took the time to meet me at a Christian book store and explained the different styles of Bibles available and helped me choose one for myself and for each of my children. I've

called them with questions, and they are always happy to explain and point out specifically where in the Bible I can look to learn more. I feel so blessed to have them in my life and to have their influence in the lives of my children.

Pastor Keith has brought me to tears on several occasions with his moving lessons and heartfelt preaching. The most moving of all was the day I decided to dedicate my life to God. I had been thinking about it for several weeks and was ready to make the commitment. I believe Pastor Keith sensed that I had some anxiety about having all eyes on me during the invitation.

One morning in Bible study he made it so easy, and it felt so right that I knew it was time to be saved. I have never cried so many tears of joy before, and of course, the entire church was crying too. It was the most incredible experience of my life.

I felt such a burden lifted off my shoulders. The joy was so overwhelming that the tears couldn't be contained. Having a church full of friends who genuinely care for your salvation is such a blessing. I love them all and can't thank them enough for their devotion.

My life has changed a lot since I started attending Sloan Canyon FWB Church. I learned to love God instead of fear Him. My decisions are much easier now that I have a solid foundation in a church and a strong belief in God. My kids tell me about the different Bible stories with such excitement. It's like a whole new world has opened up for us.

I truly believe that God made us all with a void in our hearts that only He can fill. I am so grateful that He spoke to my heart and filled the void. We are so thankful for this new mission church and those there who really care about others. ■

The Sloan Canyon Free Will Baptist Church is known as the Seedling Project and is sponsored jointly by the Home Missions Department, the California State Missions Board and the West Coast Association.

Home



Missions



Garnett Reid

When Table Scraps are Faith's Gourmet Feast

Jesus touches lives in ways and places most people would never expect. According to Matthew 15:21-28 and Mark 7:24-30, He left Israel and traveled northwest to the coastal region of Phoenicia. Even there word spread. A local woman fell at Jesus' feet and begged Him to heal her demon-possessed daughter.

At first, Jesus said nothing in response to her plea. The disciples wanted to get rid of her; she was making too much of a scene, they felt. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Jesus replied to the 12—apparently an indirect rebuff to the woman's request.

In desperation she persisted, bowing and pleading, "Lord, help me." Again Jesus' answer seemed to be a "no," this time in a more pointed reply: "It is not meet (fitting) to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs."

Nothing would deter this broken-hearted mother, though. "True, Lord," she admitted, "yet even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." Jesus commended her "great faith" and gave her what she wanted: the demons immediately left her girl.

This incident has prompted controversy among those who read it. Was Jesus uncharacteristically harsh to her? Why would He call her a "dog"? Did He have something against Gentiles?

Lesson #1: Human need knows no boundaries.

Jesus had journeyed to Tyre-Sidon for some much-needed privacy. Recent disputes with Jewish leaders had engaged Jesus' time and attention; no doubt He looked forward to the retreat. The trip was not an easy one—50 or so miles across rugged mountainous terrain.

The Lord and His companions had

already found a place to stay when a local woman boldly approached Him for help. Matthew describes her as a "Canaanite," a designation familiar because of its Old Testament associations with the Israelites. Mark says she was "Greek," probably meant to distinguish her as a Gentile who spoke the Greek language.

This woman, whom church tradition named "Justa," came to Jesus on behalf of her daughter. A demon had "grievously possessed" (Greek: *daimonizetai*) the girl.

Her example serves to remind today's church that the needs of people span all races, cultures, genders and nationalities.

Lesson #2: The gospel unfolds in history according to God's plan.

After His initial silence, Jesus' reply to the woman's plea was a reminder that the gospel message came first to the Jews. He was not being rude or insensitive to her need; rather, He expressed a fact of history (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 10:5-6; 21:43; Romans 1:16; 15:8). Of all people, the Jews should have welcomed the new covenant.

However the Lord's statement in Mark 7:27, "Let the children *first* be filled," suggests that His offer of the gospel was *not exclusively* to Israel. Gentiles—all Gentiles—are included, as His actions toward the woman soon would demonstrate.

Furthermore, Jesus' priority was not bound up in miracles. He did not come primarily to heal everyone He encountered who was diseased. Instead His mission was to do His Father's will, to accomplish His Father's work of redemption. That plan developed in history from Abraham through his physical descendants, the Israelites, and finally extended to the whole world.

For those Gentiles who may wonder about Jesus' apparent brusque manner toward this woman, remember that He targeted the unbelieving Jews with much more harsh words (Matt. 23:13-26; Jn. 8:44).

Lesson #3: The reach of the gospel embraces all kinds of people.

While the woman accepted the priority of the Jews in God's gospel offer, she knew that Israel's claim on new covenant salvation was not exclusive. The Abrahamic covenant moves beyond Abraham's physical descendants to bring blessing to "all the families of the earth," (Gen. 12:3; 22:18).

In all likelihood, this distraught mother came from a pagan background. As a Canaanite living in Phoenicia, her traditions probably went back to those of Jezebel. Yet somehow, the news of Messiah had reached her ears and her heart.

The relevance of the gospel crosses all sorts of barriers. Jesus said that He had other sheep not belonging to "this (Jewish) fold." In fact, after this incident near Tyre and Sidon Jesus continued His travels in Gentile regions, moving east of the Jordan to Decapolis.

Lesson #4: Genuine faith in Christ always finds reward.

This woman's humble faith compelled her to fall to her knees before Jesus. Her persistent faith would not permit her to take "no" for an answer. Through the eye of faith she recognized Jesus as the "son of David," a key Messianic title from the Old Testament.

Jesus had only recently rebuked Peter for his "small faith," (Matt. 14:31). Now Peter apparently heard Jesus say to this Gentile stranger, "O woman, *great* is your faith." ■

ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PREACHERS



Dennis Wiggs

How to Leave a Pastorate

Today, pastors are staying longer at churches. But every pastorate comes to a conclusion. Many reasons exist for departing from ministering at a certain church: death, disability, resignation, retiring, losing a confidence vote or being asked to leave.

The leaving can be unpleasant for the pastor, his family and many in the congregation. When the spiritual leader finds it necessary to leave a congregation, whatever the reason, scars develop that affect some for years. The young preacher owes it to himself, his family and the church family to leave with as little fanfare as possible.

Leave Graciously

Just out of seminary, I pastored a country church that accepted me as its first full-time pastor. The previous pastor had been instrumental in leading many to Christ in that church and his other half-time pastorate. The Lord blessed the ministry from the first service when a young man trusted Christ as Savior and soon enrolled in a Christian college. A strong youth group quickly developed. I was enjoying the first-fruits of an active ministry.

But after six months, the deacons announced to me that in March of each year the church "voted on the pastor." I yielded without any question. Betty, our son and I went to a rented home while the congregation cast the votes.

About the time we walked into our four-room dwelling, a deacon dialed our telephone number and announced abruptly, "Well, you lost!"

I exclaimed, "Lost, what does that mean?"

"You got three months to find another church," the deacon declared and concluded the telephone conversation. My wife and I were dumbfounded. We just couldn't believe

that our six-month church honeymoon was ending in such a manner.

An older minister who performed our wedding ceremony gave this shocked young preacher some sound advice. "Dennis, don't try to take care of your grief from the pulpit. Just preach Jesus!" Good counsel which I tried to follow for almost three months while waiting for another church to open. Such preaching profited its preacher and congregation.

Young preacher, when the congregation decides for you to leave, don't try to "straighten out the problems." Preach Jesus. Pray and then pray some more. And leave as graciously as possible.

By the way, the church that decided for me to leave after six months has called me back for revival meetings, funerals, weddings and other events. Because I practiced the advice of the older minister, I can return to that church without shame or embarrassment.

Leave Carefully

Be sure every bill is paid, even if you must borrow the money from a lending institution. Seek to have a good relationship with everyone, regardless of what they may have done to you. Prepare the way for the next pastor.

Leave the parsonage spotlessly cleaned. Return every item you may have borrowed. Keep paying your tithe to the church until your last paycheck. These suggestions may sound like compromising. Not true. Remember, you are a man of God. Act that role. You may need that church someday or that congregation may need you. Leave with the door open for future opportunities to minister to that group of people.

Leave Lovingly

Young preachers (and older preach-

ers, too) find it necessary to depart from a ministry that they do not want to leave. A forced exit is usually quite bitter. Hard feelings can develop. Church members, even preachers, can say words they don't mean.

Young preacher, do your best to love those people who "turn against you." Most church members just don't know how to terminate a pastor's ministry. Many of them work in a secular atmosphere where hiring and firing are acted out without compassion.

That attitude often flows over into the church without the membership realizing what is happening. So, brother, just love those people. Maybe through this agonizing experience of leaving, the church may be able to mature into better believers. Maybe they can learn at your expense how to deal more lovingly with the next pastor.

Leave

Whatever the reason you leave a church, be sure to leave. Refrain from speaking disparagingly about some in the congregation. The next pastor just may be able to lead them on to greater spiritual heights. (And, don't be jealous!)

Refuse to call back on Sunday nights to a favorite church member to ask how the services went that day. Turn a deaf ear to what is happening at your previous pastorate. Unless absolutely necessary, don't immediately return for funerals and weddings. Divorce yourself from that pastorate. Set your aspirations and affections on a new ministry. ■

YOUTH UPDATE

The 2000 Truth & Peace Student Leadership Conference

Sheri Alford Spencer, OK	Christie Cross Jacksonville, FL	Cori Justice Clarksville, TN	Mary Lundquist New Castle, IN	Emily Parker Fredericktown, MO	Will Taylor Russellville, AR
Drew Bigley Ina, IL	Teri Deel Mt. Juliet, TN	Rachel Kern Locust Grove, OK	Blake Martin Russellville, TN	Shannon Peterson Alma, GA	Karin Thompson Tahlequah, OK
Katie Bragg Charles Town, WV	Laura Dooley Murfreesboro, TN	Russell Kern Locust Grove, OK	Jill McAlister Farmersville, CA	Adam Phillips Poteau, OK	Megan Thornburg Urbana, OH
Jennifer Brannigan Washington, OH	Matt Dooly Greenwood, AR	Scott Kernan Desloge, MO	Jon McKnight Florence, SC	Becky Pilgrim Locust Grove, OK	Melissa Turnbough Collado Villalba, Spain
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Jennifer Bryan Greenville, NC	Michael Godbold Russellville, AR			Joshua Riggs Joelton, TN	Shannon Watkins Springdale, AR
Paul Bryant Vero Beach, FL	Susan Goforth Locust Grove, OK			Kelly Ross Russellville, AR	Sara Wheeler Catoosa, OK
Amanda Bunch Chitre, Panama	Darin Gwartney Desloge, MO			Alison Segraves Antioch, TN	CaraJean Wilson Danville, AR
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Emily Cook Wheelersburg, OH	Nikki Jennings Russellville, AR	Amanda Little Macon, GA	Sarah Nichols Prior, OK	Ashley Stegall Park Hills, MO	
Brad Cowen Locust Grove, OK	Bethany Johnston Benton, IL	Jessica Locklear Trenton, MI	Blake Parker Locust Grove, OK	Bryan Taylor Fresno, CA	



PHILIPPIANS 3:14

Please uphold these 72 high school students in your prayers as they participate in the 17th annual student leadership conference, conducted by the Youth Ministries Division.



Thomas Marberry

God Has Never Failed Me, But He's Sure Scared Me To Death A Few Times

By Stan Toler

(Tulsa: Honor Books, 1995, 154 pages, paperback, \$8.99).

Dr. Stan Toler is a veteran Nazarene pastor. He is also a well-known and well-liked conference speaker among Free Will Baptists. He is the author of 12 books.

This small humorous book is the outgrowth of more than 30 years of pastoral ministry. More than anything else it is a book about the faithfulness of God. It outlines how God has worked in the lives of many individuals, families and churches. Sometimes God has worked in surprising and unusual ways.

God never seems to do things the way we think He should. He always has His own unique way of resolving problems, and His way is always better.

The first chapter is autobiographical. Dr. Toler tells something of how God has worked in his own life to develop and mold his character. Stan grew up dirt poor in the home of a coal miner in West Virginia. One of the saddest days of his life was the Saturday when the family came home to find their tiny home engulfed in flames. He cried for days.

His coal miner father put his arm around their pastor and said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

The family moved to Columbus, Ohio, in search of a better life, but their financial condition did not improve much. Times were tough; food was often in short supply, but the Lord was always with them.

Stan's father passed away a few years after the move to Ohio, and God sent a very special stepfather, Jack Hollingsworth, into their lives. He saw to it that William Aaron Toler's sons were taken care of. All three of them went on to become Nazarene preachers.

Chapter five is the story of Tristan Blann, a seven-year old cancer patient

in Nashville, Tennessee. Every Sunday morning while Pastor Toler was shaking hands with his congregation, Tristan would come up to him, slap him in the middle of the back, jump up into his arms, and say "Hi, Pastor!"

He was a special young man; he even served as the mascot for the 1991 Vanderbilt University basketball team. Young Tristan died on January 16, 1992. The members of the Vanderbilt University basketball team served as honorary pallbearers.

Dr. Toler uses the story of Tristan Blann to illustrate some of the most basic truths of the Christian faith. He notes that "only God provides the answers to life." We cannot explain why the Tristan Blanns of this world have to live with cancer or why the Helen Kellers of this world must go through life deaf and blind. We do not have the answers; we must trust in the God who is the answer.

Just as God only provides the answers to life, He also only provides the answers to death. Toler writes, "As a pastor, I have stood by the graveside of a stillborn child, and I have been there with the aged saint." God alone provides the strength for the journey.

Chapter six deals with God's guidance. The author recognizes that it is not easy to determine how God may be leading in a particular set of circumstances. There are no magic formulas for determining His will. Dr. Stan does give us some very helpful steps that can help us determine God's direction and guidance.

First, we must be ready when God calls. He writes, "My personal formula for seeking God's guidance has always been pray, read God's Word, listen for His call, go where He calls at a moment's notice!"

Second, we must be sure that God is really the one calling. Greener grass on the other side of the fence

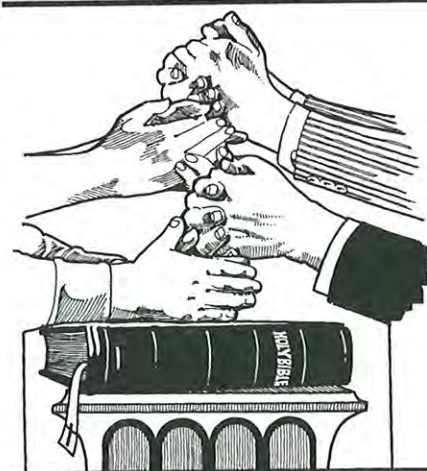
does not constitute the call of God. "Having served in churches in several states over nearly 30 years of ministry, I can tell you that I have applied the words of the great Apostle Paul to each place of service. Paul said, 'I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances' Philippians 4:11."

Third, we must clarify God's guidance. We must be sure that we are correctly understanding and interpreting what has happened in our lives.

Fourth, we must obey God's call. Stan writes, "If God tells you to do it, by all means do what He says, or you will be sorry."

Fifth, we should give thanks to God for His call. "Receiving guidance from God involves a simple child-like faith. Therefore, our response to God's call must always include thanksgiving and praise."

This is an insightful and interesting little book. When you read it, you will laugh; you will cry, and you will learn. It deserves a place on your shelf and in your hand. ■



July 9
National Convention
Day of Prayer



Jack Williams

The Preacher and Elliott Ness

Late Wednesday morning, and I'm stuck in a Chrysler-Plymouth dealer's showroom while the witch doctors from the service department chant mysterious incantations over my wife's '96 Plymouth Breeze. Before they're done they'll rotate this, change that, check suspicious noises and do other nefarious stuff. Then they'll hand me a bill and smile. I'll hand them my American Express card and try to act civil.

In the 15 minutes I've sat at this table trying to look busy, three salesmen asked if they could assist me. Four other customers wait nervously, praying that their cars don't need a major organ transplant—three men and a woman. None of them seem to interest the sales staff.

Must be the blue pinstripe suit and dress boots. Perhaps that ensemble whispers to salesmen, "This man is a Free Will Baptist preacher, and he needs help."

Five guys plus a uniformed Metro police officer begin fondling a \$20,000 something called a Chrysler PT Cruiser. The shiny black, four-door throwback to the 1930s squats on the showroom floor reeking of the Chicago Southside. Any minute now, I expect Elliott Ness and the *Untouchables* to tommygun the front door in search of illegal hooch.

New car showrooms smell so exotic. The leather seats, the polished and buffed vehicles. Behind me, a macho Jeep Wrangler flexes its muscles . . . topless.

A Chrysler 300 sprawls like a big, lazy cat just beyond the snub-nosed PT Cruiser. Its cool gray exterior oozes style and class and understated maturity, in stark contrast to the frisky Wrangler and the surly Cruiser. The Wrangler hopes some cowboy with a rawhide lariat will herd it toward the barn. The Cruiser waits for a honcho

with cash who needs a status boost.

Uh-oh, a red-haired salesman just caught two men cuddling with the Cruiser. He's hustling them with how a 27-year-old designer created the car concept and its jazzy extras. He drops the other shoe. Even if they buy the flashy Cruiser today, they can't drive it home—it's the only one in stock.

The middle-aged men with wandering eyes and unstroked egos must wait 90 days for the factory to deliver their expensive toy. The two egos nod and disappear. No sale. No surprise, either. That's a pile of money when all they can show the wife is a four-color brochure.

Hmm, another ego just asked Red Hair how much it would take to "hold" a PT Cruiser. Only \$500 it seems. He's in the back seat now touching, feeling, smelling, nuzzling. And probably asking himself how he'll explain to the wife why Elliott Ness parks in their driveway.

A second woman enters the showroom. Oh, no, she unholsters a cell phone and talks with everybody she knows in loud, strident tones. Even 30 feet away, she includes me in her half of the conversation.

Why do people who use cell phones in public places think the rest of us want to hear their blatherings? Loud Lady whines about her cat, her car, her children, her unpleasant experience some years back with a not-nice person, and now complains about that "awful, ugly black car" in the showroom.

Well . . . Seems that our PT Cruiser has been sold to a local buyer, chimes Red Hair. But the dealership borrowed it as a showroom lure, er, attraction. Also seems that some naughty person dented the hood over the 150-horse engine.

Ah ha! The Cruiser will visit the body

shop within 48 hours. Then some lucky local buyer can drive Elliott Ness home and explain to the wife.

Looks like two more guys just fell in love. A Yuppie-type wearing khakis and oxblood penny loafers crawled into the Cruiser's front seat. The man has no shame. Just as I thought, here's his tag-a-long buddy. They're conversing in low, seductive tones about her smooth lines and curves.

If their wives only knew. There's not a woman south of the Detroit assembly lines who's been ogled more than that 1930s throwback. And would you look at that. Here's an employee wiping non-existent dust from the arrogant Cruiser. My word, not even the hired hands can keep their mitts off her.

Finally, the pretenders and wannabes leave, and I'm alone in the showroom. I casually walk past the sassy PT Cruiser and kick a tire, a very nice tire. I wonder what's so tempting about the vehicle. I open the front door. Solid. I ease my head inside the little time machine and smell. Umm.

My ego does not need stroking, of course, but I'm sure my wife would enjoy tooling around Music City in this delightful collection of automotive magic. Too bad we owe 28 more payments on her Plymouth Breeze. I'll bet she'd take Elliott Ness home.

Maybe I'll ask that red-haired salesman how much it would take to . . . "Mr. Jack Williams. Mr. Jack Williams. Please come to the service department," interrupts the public address system. Time to pony up.

Ugh. The witch doctors from the service department conjured up a leaking head gasket. Another half-day. Sigh. Old cars are *such* a bother. Wait a minute. My wife deserves the best.

"Hey, Red Hair! Wanna sell a PT Cruiser to a Free Will Baptist preacher who only owes 28 more payments?" ■

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