

Johnson

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

Consider Christ

Musicals, menus and merriment characterize much of the Christmas festivities. Multitudes attend church and pay token homage to the Christmas story as recorded in Luke 2. The attitudes and actions of many people are altered during this very special season.

In the midst of the Christmas celebration people often miss the facts. Caught up in the festivities, they view Christmas as any other holiday. It is difficult for those who understand the biblical focus of the birth of the Christ to comfortably celebrate this event in the same manner as the world.

Christ Our Master

Jesus is often referred to as the "Lord Jesus Christ" in the scriptures. As the lord, He is our master. We owe Him our allegiance, affection and adoration. Obedience to His commandments evidences our love for Him.

Our conversion experience frees us from the bondage of sin and frees us to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. We change masters. Freed from the control of Satan, we are free to yield ourselves to the Lord, our new Master.

Christ Our Mediator

As Jesus, He is our mediator. Paul reminds Timothy of this truth, "For there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

God who is holy and man who is sinful can only be reconciled through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Pictured in the Old Testament sacrifices and presented in the New Testament scriptures, Jesus is the only mediator between sinful man and a holy God.

A mediator is one who mediates between two aggrieved parties. Christ is called mediator because in

man's behalf He satisfies the claims of God upon man.

Christ Our Messiah

As Christ, Jesus is our Messiah. From the early pages of the Bible, the coming of Christ was foretold. The incarnation is one of the mysteries of the scriptures. The Gospel of John was written to present Christ as the Messiah.

John begins his Gospel by stating, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth," (John 1:1-2, 14).

Paul further reminds the Philippians of the truth of the incarnation, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross . . ." (Phil. 2:6-11).

Christ Our Model

Mentoring and modeling are hot buttons in the Christian world. We cry for someone to set the proper example for our children. Hero worship is a gigantic problem for many parents. We need a role model and we have one in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ modeled *submission*. He was submissive to His human parents and heavenly Father. He always did those things that pleased His Father.

Christ modeled *sacrifice*. Paul declares, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," (II Cor. 8:9).

Christ modeled *servanthood*. Mark declares, "But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," (Mark 10:43-45).

Christ modeled *suffering*. Peter asserts, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously . . ." (I Pet. 2:21-23).

Christ modeled *sympathy*. John records the sympathy of Jesus when he pens the story of the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11. When Jesus stood before the tomb of Lazarus, He wept. As our heavenly high priest, He understands and sympathizes with us.

During this special season of the year, let us focus fully on the Lord Jesus Christ who modeled for us submission, sacrifice, servanthood, suffering and sympathy. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

December 2000

4-5 FWB Leadership Conference

6-7 Executive Committee

Family tips that you can use all year long

Help! It's Christmas!

By Recardo and Rebecca Deel



Finally, the last of the school supplies are in the shopping bag. But don't get too comfortable while you breathe that sigh of relief. See that grinning sales clerk across the aisle? He's holding a

sign announcing only 89 shopping days left until Christmas!

No other season causes such joy and grief simultaneously. Children bring laughter and excitement to Christmas, while parents drag around

a heavy load of stress and fatigue. Everyone's schedule shifts into high gear during the holidays. And each year we hope next season will be different. It's time to put tennis shoes on hope by planning the battle—begin-

ning December 26.

Shop Ahead Ideas

Make a list of all gift recipients, and assign a few to each month for 11 months. The goal is to spend December with family and friends, and avoid the mall. Take a few minutes to write hobbies, special interests and sizes beside the names. Decide on a budget for each person, but not a specific gift. Pull money from paychecks, and stash it in an envelope that lists people selected for that month.

When making weekly or monthly purchases, shop for Christmas gifts as well. Take advantage of those sales. Be sure to label all receipts and keep them in the money envelope.

Last-Minute Tips

If you must shop between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve, here are a few tips to preserve your sanity. Take money from paychecks throughout the year and put it in an interest-bearing account, preferably a money market or savings account. Plan for three or four shopping sessions that are about three hours long. Bring only enough cash to purchase the gifts for one session.

Go to stores as early as possible on a weekday. Expect lines of grumpy shoppers, and plan to park a long way from the front door. Smile and enjoy the exercise.

Select two or three stores for all gift purchases. Have your name list ready. Leave preconceived gift ideas at the store entrance. Stick to your budget. Ignore the credit cards. Allow more travel time due to congested traffic. A couple of options for staying out of the mall madness—hand-make gifts or shop on-line at secured web sites.

Juggle Schedules

In reality, gift buying is the easiest area to control during the Christmas season. Juggling the family's varied schedules with church, school and work presents the greatest challenge.

Begin play or cantata practices the first of August. Parts and music must be well learned by Thanksgiving if directors want to avoid sleepless nights in December. Rehearsals should start and end promptly.

If you run the family taxi for these activities, bring a book or magazine to peruse while waiting. Mom and Dad need to work the family ferry as a tag-team effort. Shared responsibility allows each partner time to complete necessary tasks.

Set Priorities

Prioritize the programs and parties to attend. Programs involving your children must take first place. Limit party attendance to two or three per holiday season. Give priority to church functions over work functions.

Since everybody's schedule seems to race at light speed during this time, be kind to yourself. Plan quick, easy meals. Make wise use of the crock pot and pressure cooker. Prepare as much of your meal as possible ahead of time. Consider investing some money in paper plates and plastic utensils and cups.

If you enjoy seasonal decorations, begin your home's transformation process the first of November. String outside lights on the weekends. Make inside changes during the week, one manger scene and one room at a time.

Make a conscious effort to maintain the regular rest routine for your family. Leave the all-nighters to people with time to fight the flu. Avoid scheduling too many activities for one day. Keep a supply of vitamin C and multi-vitamins handy.

Remember the Reason

While navigating the Christmas tide, set aside some time to experience the "real" Christmas. Sing the hymns telling of Jesus' birth. Revisit the shepherds and wise men in Matthew and Luke.

Read Barbara Robinson's book *The Greatest Christmas Pageant Ever*. Let the horrible Herdmans humorously remind you that Christmas is really celebrating our Savior's love.

So strap on those tennis shoes. Pull out the winter coat and gloves. Turn out for choir practice and tune your heart. It's finally Christmas! ■



ABOUT THE WRITERS: Ricardo and Rebecca Deel are members of Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church in Antioch, Tennessee. He is operations supervisor at First Trust Bank. She teaches in the business department at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

BEYOND BELIEF

I SAY WE WAIT 'TIL THIS GUY'S ASLEEP,
SNEAK RIGHT UP BEHIND HIM, THEN BOTH
OF US BELT OUT A BIG, HEAVENLY
FEAR NOT!



A fresh look at Joseph, the forgotten man in the Christmas story

Shifting Our Focus

By David Brown



Sometimes we focus so intently on the central character of a story that we miss what some of the other characters say or do. For instance, I recently watched an old western made in the 1950s. In the opening scene a tall young man walks across the street, says one line to the central character and walks off. Care to guess who that tall young man was? Clint Eastwood in his pre-*Rawhide* days. Most never notice him because they focus on the central character of the story.

I also like to read Louis L'Amour westerns. One thing I discovered in his books is that you see motion faster and react to it faster when you see it out of the corner of your eye than when you stare at it. So while

we focus on Jesus the Savior this Christmas, be alert to the movement of others near the manger. Especially a man named Joseph.

Joseph is not a minor character, just perhaps the most overlooked. His role was important. We have many Christmas songs that either mention or focus on Mary. Until the last 10 years I had never heard a Christmas song that mentioned, much less focused on Joseph.

When you hear sermons on Joseph, he is often criticized for having considered divorcing Mary. For the most part when it comes to the Christmas story, it seems he is the forgotten man. However, upon closer examination, several desirable qualities about Joseph emerge.

Honorable Man

He could have chosen to divorce Mary but he did not. His deliberations concerning whether he would divorce Mary show he was a kind and honorable man. Even if he had chosen to divorce Mary, he would have done so privately.

If he did not believe Mary and rejected the message from God, he could have charged her with adultery in the bill of divorcement. Adultery was a serious offence, a capital crime for which she could have been executed or physically maimed. Many times the nose of an adulteress was cut off. The private divorce referred to would have allowed him to divorce her during the engagement period without stating a reason.

Man of Faith

Men, if our wives came to us and said they were pregnant by the Holy Spirit, I think it would take a visit from an angel of God for us to believe it also. However, to his credit, Joseph did believe and that is what faith is all about. Believing what God tells us is true even if it seems impossible. There are few examples of greater faith in the Bible than Joseph in this situation.

Deliverer of the Deliverer

Mary and Joseph were so late in arriving at Bethlehem that the inn was filled. Maybe one of the reasons they arrived so late was that Joseph hoped the baby would come before they had to leave. Besides, it was probably slow going with a very pregnant Mary riding on a donkey.

So they arrive late and Mary is probably about to deliver as soon as they get to the stable. Who do you suppose delivered Jesus? It is possible they may have found a midwife, but more than likely the first human hands to touch Jesus were the rough hands of a carpenter. Most stables that I have seen do not have a waiting room for the father to pace back and forth while he waits for the birth. Joseph was involved.

Father Figure

While Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, he was a father figure. Wow, this must have been tough. How can you be a father to the Son of God? It must have made it hard to raise the rest of their children. Since Jesus was their first child they, like all parents, expected the rest of their kids to act like the oldest.

The younger children probably got tired of being told to be like their older brother Jesus. They couldn't. He literally was perfect.

Can you imagine a two-year-old who doesn't go through the "terrible two's" or a teenager who doesn't rebel? Still, Joseph presented an example of what a father should be to Jesus.

Glorified Jesus With His Life

Joseph believed that it was important that he do everything he could to help Jesus fulfill His mission, even if it

meant personal sacrifice for him. In my opinion, this goal did cause him much hardship. During the whole time Mary was pregnant, there were many in Nazareth who could not resist spreading rumors about Joseph and Mary and the birth of Jesus. Probably many thought badly of Mary and of Joseph also for having married her anyway.

You see, nobody else in Nazareth got a visit from an angel of God. True to human nature, they believed the worse. I am sure that Joseph had to defend his decision to stand by Mary even to his family as they may have pressured him not to go through with the marriage.

I am not sure exactly how carpenters would have made a living back then, but it seems reasonable to me that his stand may have cost him financially since some may have refused to do business with him. Ironically, this may have meant that Joseph may have done a lot of carpentry for the Roman garrison in town to make ends meet if he could not make a living doing work for fellow Jews.

He endured this kind of abuse the rest of his life, and most Bible scholars believe he died long before he would see his sacrifice come to fruition in the ministry of Jesus. When Joseph died, most people in Nazareth thought he was a foolish man for having stayed with Mary and raising what they believed was an illegitimate son.

Why did he do this? We know he was a man of great faith. I believe he did it because he believed the future was more important than the present. His eternal future personally was more important, as is ours, than the present.

Joseph's home is in Heaven. The future ministry of Jesus was more important to Joseph than the discomforts he suffered for a while in this life. Part of the reason Jesus came was to allow Him to experience life as a human. Joseph provided a warm home life and father figure for Jesus.

However, because of the situation Jesus was born into and the reaction of the community, this family did not live a cushy life. Jesus would understand the emotional and financial struggles of a family. It was many years after Joseph died before those who knew him understood him.

If you assume that Joseph died when Jesus was 18, as some Bible

scholars believe, it was at least 15 years before they had some idea of who Jesus was. Matthew and Luke were not written until 30 years after Jesus died. So for some it may have been 45 years after Joseph died before they realized how wrong they had been about him and what a wise man he truly was.

Sometimes, in our instant society that demands results immediately, I wonder if we are patient enough and wise enough to be willing to lay the ground work for things that will not show fruit for 45 or 50 years. Joseph did and so can we.

Conclusion

We all should strive to have the traits found in Joseph in our lives. Perhaps we may see Joseph in a new light. This Christmas season when we see the nativity scenes we will first of all look in the center for the central figure in the Christmas story—Jesus. I am sure we will notice Mary, usually right behind the manger. This year shift your focus slightly to the left or right and notice Joseph, and remember his contributions to the greatest story ever told. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: David Brown works in member services with the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement.



Brother Duan's Christmas Miracle

By Open Doors News Service

It was the greatest miracle that ever happened to Brother Duan, and he would not have experienced it had his bus not broken down.

Enroute from a northern to a southern province of China in December, he happened to be passing through Henan province when the engine of the bus expired in its futile battle with the cold.

On a whim, Duan trudged off through the fields, leaving the other passengers huddled inside the bus. He was a house church leader in northern China. Now 77 years of age, he still had no home to call his own.

Duan was deeply depressed. He was on his way to mediate a dispute among some leaders and was weary of all the infighting that seemed to be

harming the house churches. And he was lonely.

As he crossed the frozen field, Duan thought longingly of his beloved wife who died long ago. He wished she were alive to listen to him and give her sweet counsel. And then the thought came into his tired mind of their little son, and an even darker cloud settled over his heart.

He found a village and knocked on a door. A little cross was notched on the doorpost.

"Is there anyone here who loves the Lord?" he asked. "I would love some fellowship tonight."

The door was opened by a man in his 50s, and Duan was warmly welcomed. His feet were washed in a basin, the custom of welcoming a stranger among the house church

movement, and he was fed hot congee and steaming vegetables.

He noticed that the people were all excited. It turned out that they would be traveling to a neighboring town to hear a dynamic Bible teacher from one of the bigger cities.

"What's his name?" asked Duan.

"Brother Wang."

As they made their way to the meeting, they told him some of the stories about Brother Wang. It was clear they loved him dearly, and one of the men explained why.

"We were once holding a training seminar here and heard the police were coming. Brother Wang got everyone out, except our main pastor. When the police arrived, Wang dared to bargain with them. He would go to jail if our pastor, whose wife was eight months

pregnant, could go free. The policeman accepted his terms, and Brother Wang spent three years in prison."

"How old is Brother Wang?" Duan asked. When told he was in his early 40s, Duan's face showed great pain.

"What's the matter?" he was asked. "Are you ill from the cart trip?"

"No, I'm not ill," he replied, "just very sad. I once had a son, whom I knew for just two months. He's dead now, but if alive he would have been 42 today."

"My wife called him the 'Christmas Child,' since he was born at Christmas time. I called him 'Isaac,' because we had despaired for so long of having a child."

As they rode in the open cart under the stars, Brother Duan told the incredible story of how he and his wife had been evangelists in the 1950s. They refused to join the Three Self church, and Wu, an old school bully, kept accusing them of political and criminal offenses. It was only a matter of time before they were jailed or killed, and then what would happen to their boy?

One night, Duan's wife heard a strong voice in a vision, saying, "Give your son to your enemy." Knowing nothing about this, Duan read Genesis 22:2 the following morning: "Go get Isaac, your only son, the one you dearly love and sacrifice him to me."

Sharing their impressions, the couple decided on a course of action that had caused Duan to wince in pain every day since. They gave their boy to Wu and his wife, who were childless, even as Wu arranged for the couple's arrest.

It wasn't until 1978, when Duan was released from jail, that he learned what happened to his wife and son. She had died in the terrible famine of 1958, and his son had disappeared along with the Wu family under the rubble of a devastating earthquake in 1975. Said Duan sadly as the little cart approached the meeting place, "God judged me for being so irresponsible with my little son."

As they arrived where the evangelist was to speak, a crowd of 200 people was already packed into the house. Like many others, Duan had to sit in the courtyard and listen to the teacher through the open window.

When Brother Wang began preaching, Duan felt a terrible shock. It was like hearing himself! He began to tremble

with fear. Was he dying? Even the phrases the teacher used sounded familiar.

Confused, he staggered up to the window to see the preacher, causing a commotion as he fell over people. The preacher stopped and there was a moment of shocked silence as the men looked at each other. The crowd was hushed as they realized the amazing physical likeness.

"I'm sorry for interrupting your excellent message," Duan began. "You see, I had a son who would be your age right now. If he had lived, he would have looked and sounded just like you."

Brother Wang began to tremble violently. Suddenly, his legs buckled under him and he had to be caught before he fell. Clutching his pounding chest, he sobbed, "Are you Daddy Duan?"

Everyone wept as father and son were reunited. The preacher told how he had indeed been brought up by Wu, who was so impressed by Duan's act of giving that he had become a strong Christian.

"I'm not your real father," Wu used to say to him. "He's a great man of God, full of grace and love. He gave you to me, and I give you all my love and the encouragement to put God first, just like your real father."

Wang's adopted parents had moved away from the earthquake zone before the tragedy, but both died of cancer in their 60s. Wang became an evangelist and tried to find his real father, but Duan had changed his name so many times to avoid arrest that he had proved untraceable.

As father and son continued to hug and weep, the elder of the church stood up and declared, "It's December. We have seen our sermon tonight: Christ came into the world to save sinners—that is Christmas. Just as Duan handed his only son to the care of his enemy, so God handed over His own Son to us sinners. Let us rejoice in their reconciliation, and ours too." ■

This true story was provided by Open Doors, which delivers Bibles, training materials and other helps to believers in nearly 40 restricted nations. Open Doors also trains evangelists, pastors and church leaders—just like Brother Duan—equipping them to endure and effectively proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Directory Update

FLORIDA

Kenneth Jackson to Traveler's Rest Church, Altha

Ron Burger to Palm Bay Church, Palm Bay from Damascus Church, Marianna

Bob Johnson to Pathway Church, Winter Haven

James Bradley to Malone Church, Malone from Sneads Church, Sneads

Tim Owen to Piney Grove Church, Chipley from Pathway Church, Winter Haven

OHIO

Lovell May to Canaan Land Church, Grove City
Billy Sharpston to Dailyville Church, Waverly from Heritage Church, Columbus

Tim Stout to Heritage Church, Columbus from Canaan Land Church, Grove City

Tony Walker to Lewis Center Church, Lewis Center

OKLAHOMA

Rick Ketchum to Faith Church, Glenpool from Ozark Church, Ozark, AR

OTHER PERSONNEL

Ashley Culp to Mt. Olive Church, Guin, AL, as youth pastor from New Zion Church, Headland (will also serve as administrator at Trinity Camp, Guin)

Matt Coffee to First Church, Melbourne, FL, as youth minister

Brad Williams to Temple Church, Greenville, NC, as music director from Red Bay Church, Red Bay, AL, as music and youth director

Baby or Person?

By R. F. Smith, Jr.



Melissa was eight years old and excited that her mother would soon give birth to a baby. Her excitement was bubbling over as she talked with her aunt about the coming event.

"Hey, that's neat," her aunt said. "You'll soon have a new person in your home."

"I don't want a person," she said, her face turning to a frown. "I just want a baby!"

The eight-year-old fairly well sums up what many people want in Christ and Christianity. They want a baby, not a person. The temptation (at Christmas) is to reduce the Christian faith to a Bethlehem baby without realizing the baby grew to manhood, making certain demands based on the principle of mature love.

Don't read me wrong. The celebration of Christ's birth stands tall in my own experience and observance

of Advent. I like the many actions of celebration that mark this season, complete with parties, family reunions and especially the privilege of special worship opportunities.

But I also know the danger of failing to move from Advent of the God-Baby to events of the God-Person.

As long as we can keep Jesus a baby, we can avoid His teachings as a person. A baby can be handled, controlled, put to sleep and generally manipulated for our own purposes and ends.

But it's rather difficult to exercise that same control and manipulation over a person. He talks back to us through His teachings, calling out the best in us and challenging the highest we have. And that stretches our minds, hurting-like.

Melissa, you're right. There's a difference between a baby and a person. And some parents try to keep babies from becoming persons, nursing them instead of nurturing them, cod-

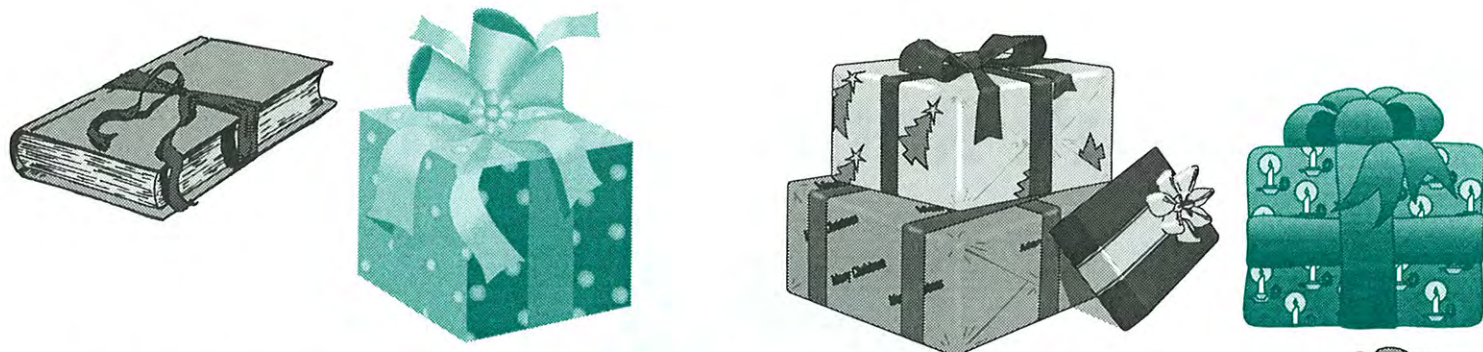
dling them rather than coping with their growing natures, and indulging their wants instead of inspiring them to discover their needs.

But such attempts backfire, producing pigmy parents and pigmy children.

And in the Christian faith the same thing happens. No crib or cross or tomb has ever confined the God-Baby who became the God-Person. He escapes every corner of confinement where our immaturity struggles to contain Him.

Christmas is celebration of the Advent. But growing Christian faith celebrates the events that happen daily to those who faithfully look for new stars shining over old barns of personal experiences. ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. R. F. Smith, Jr., is a freelance writer who resides in Lenoir, North Carolina.



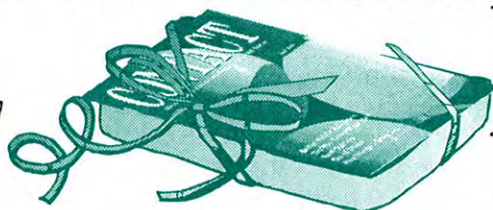
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Don't Retire Too Early

By David Williford



We've all seen the commercial. You know, the ones where the man is walking a beautiful white sandy beach with the wind blowing through his hair while he gazes out over the ocean. He is the picture of peace and contentment. He is young, healthy, vibrant, a man without a care in the world. And he is retired. Financially independent. Totally free of responsibility.

Who of us, contending with the pressures and stresses of the work-a-day world, haven't seen that commercial or one like it and wished that we could trade our responsibilities and jobs for the carefree life of leisure and ease? But is it possible? And, really, is it desirable? If you had the opportunity, right now, to give up your job and opt for early retirement, would you do it?

Early retirement is becoming more and more an option for workers. A recent survey by Charles Spencer predicts that 76% of working Americans between the ages of 50 and 64 will consider taking early retirement.

Average life expectancy at age 55 is 28 years, which means that many early retirees will spend nearly as many years in retirement as they did in the workforce. Careful consideration must be given to several questions when a person begins to look at early retirement.

Why Do I Want to Retire?

What will you do with all that time if you retire? After all, there are only so many fish to catch and deer to hunt. Do you really *want* to play 18 holes a day, five days a week? The way most of us play golf, that could hurt our sanctification!

Solomon warned that life without purpose is exasperating and frustrating, no matter how many toys we possess. If all we want out of retirement is one long vacation, we will soon become frustrated and disillusioned with

retirement.

Some individuals want to retire because they feel they have nothing left to offer. The increasing changes in technology often frustrate older workers who cannot keep up with the rapid pace of technological transformation. Additionally, the increased emphasis on youth in American culture can cause older workers to feel outdated and useless.

We need to learn that being older does not mean our value is diminished. Age brings with it experience and wisdom. Many cultures around the world give special respect and reverence to older people, because they know that wisdom and maturity come with age.

The Bible records numerous individuals who made contributions long after they were what is now considered retirement age. Moses began his most significant time of ministry when he was 80. Caleb fought the Anakim and captured Hebron at 85, and Joshua took over the leadership of Israel when he was between 85 and 90 years old.

Daniel was approximately 80 when Darius set him over the kingdom, and John was still an active senior saint when he wrote the book of Revelation on the isle of Patmos. Because a person has gray hair (or no hair) does not mean he has nothing to offer society in general and the church specifically.

Early retirement does, however, offer the believer the freedom to be more involved in the Lord's work than he ever could while holding a full-time

job. Many of our churches have been helped by retirees who offer their skills and services to their local church after retiring from their job.

Several years ago when our church underwent a renovation, one of our retired men took on the responsibility of overseeing the remodeling project. His presence and ability helped save our church a significant amount of money. Other retirees have more time to visit and help in other areas of ministry than they did while they were working an 8 to 5 job.

In short, if you retire too early, with no concrete plans for how you will spend your time, you will likely find yourself bored and frustrated.

There's a second question that needs to be asked if one is considering early retirement.

Can I Afford to Retire?

Many financial planners say that you will need between 70 to 80% of your pre-retirement income to maintain your standard of living. How will you generate that income? If you retire before age 62, you cannot begin drawing Social Security benefits until you reach at least age 62. However, if you start your benefits early, they are reduced five-ninths of one percent for each month before your "full" retirement age.

For example, if your "full" retirement age is 65, but you elect to begin receiving Social Security payments at age 62, you will receive only 80% of what you would have received had you elected to wait until you were 65.

If you have a retirement program that will provide you \$50,000 income per year, at an assumed inflation rate of 4% you will need \$60,833 income in five years to maintain your standard of living, and \$109,556 in 20 years! Working longer can help build a bigger nest egg, and if you elect to work past your retirement age, you can collect larger payments from Social Security than if you retire at your full retirement age.

All of us dream of eventually relinquishing some of our responsibilities and enjoying a more leisurely life style. There is nothing wrong with slowing down and reducing some of the stress of life as we enter our golden years, but if we are truly going to enjoy those years we will need to find worthwhile activities to replace those that we will be putting aside. We will need financial resources to allow us a comfortable standard of living that will allow us to exist with dignity in our final years.

In short, don't be in too much of a hurry to retire. Your best years are probably in front of you. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend David Williford pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Chipley, Florida. He is moderator of the Florida State Association of Free Will Baptists, and serves on the national Foreign Missions Board.

Leadership Conference

December 4-5

Regal Maxwell House
Nashville, Tennessee

THE TOGETHER WAY

September 2000

Receipts:						
State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 186.36	\$ 73.66	\$ 260.02	\$ 3,467.63	\$ 1,478.73	\$ 4,946.36
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	127.00	127.00
Arkansas	15,648.91	18,600.87	34,249.78	132,477.07	144,862.11	277,339.18
California	.00	.00	.00	.00	7,613.12	7,613.12
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	446.64	.00	446.64	714.55	6,000.00	6,714.55
Georgia	26,197.22	930.83	27,128.05	279,701.25	15,299.72	295,000.97
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	7,083.14	2,008.64	9,091.78	80,309.61	18,775.79	99,085.40
Indiana	1,803.53	170.27	1,973.80	11,801.42	1,797.46	13,598.88
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	625.00	2,748.25	3,373.25
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	487.01	487.01
Kentucky	1,922.04	406.97	2,329.01	13,582.59	9,563.39	23,145.98
Louisiana	40.00	.00	40.00	60.00	155.00	215.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	459.36	459.36
Michigan	22,993.24	2,554.79	25,548.03	219,818.06	29,330.63	249,148.69
Mississippi	7,451.01	904.20	8,355.21	62,997.88	5,403.30	68,401.18
Missouri	44,812.80	11,667.44	56,480.24	365,853.37	124,243.78	490,097.15
Montana	.00	.00	.00	30.00	.00	30.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	351.21	.00	351.21
New Mexico	991.46	75.74	1,067.20	6,069.61	416.87	6,486.48
North Carolina	597.35	2,841.39	3,438.74	12,282.65	22,120.13	34,402.78
Ohio	13,640.05	1,849.04	15,489.09	118,742.08	27,140.67	145,882.75
Oklahoma	64,856.20	7,380.14	72,236.34	517,178.92	98,670.04	615,848.96
South Carolina	39,607.76	51.42	39,659.18	452,290.49	403.13	452,693.62
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	7,724.38	995.13	8,719.51	105,333.29	17,310.78	122,644.07
Texas	10,554.51	366.32	10,920.83	89,550.06	2,776.72	92,326.78
Virginia	478.20	.00	478.20	5,518.04	166.55	5,684.59
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	556.32	67.38	623.70	14,064.16	722.42	14,786.58
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	988.55	8.92	997.47	5,936.35	106.89	6,043.24
Northwest Association	708.86	.00	708.86	708.86	.00	708.86
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.03	.03	.00	.43	.43
Totals	\$ 269,288.53	\$ 50,953.18	\$ 320,241.71	\$ 2,499,464.15	\$ 538,179.28	\$ 3,037,643.43

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 2,115.46	\$ 22,928.92	\$ 25,044.38	\$ 17,629.69	\$ 242,180.54	\$ 259,810.23
Foreign Missions	154,856.29	6,445.55	161,301.84	1,486,139.31	68,079.65	1,554,218.96
FWBBC	17,136.15	6,445.55	23,581.70	176,383.59	68,079.65	244,463.24
Home Missions	83,588.39	5,044.37	88,632.76	674,482.80	53,279.71	727,762.51
Retirement & Insurance	311.53	3,923.40	4,234.93	4,229.59	41,439.79	45,669.38
Master's Men	477.01	3,923.40	4,400.41	3,878.12	41,439.79	45,317.91
Com. for Theo. Integrity	50.84	140.13	190.97	1,057.69	1,480.05	2,537.74
FWB Foundation	240.53	1,681.47	1,922.00	2,856.05	17,759.95	20,616.00
Historical Commission	29.43	140.13	169.56	223.70	1,480.05	1,703.75
Music Commission	11.09	140.13	151.22	165.44	1,480.05	1,645.49
Media Commission	88.42	140.13	228.55	632.43	1,480.05	2,112.48
Hillsdale FWB College	1,590.91	.00	1,590.91	16,227.82	.00	16,227.82
Other	8,792.48	.00	8,792.48	115,557.92	.00	115,557.92
Totals	\$ 269,288.53	\$ 50,953.18	\$ 320,241.71	\$ 2,499,464.15	\$ 538,179.28	\$ 3,037,643.43

Randall House Artist, Ray Sanders, Dies



NASHVILLE, TN—After nearly 19 years served as a staff artist at Randall House Publications, Ray Sanders died August 29. He had struggled with cancer for two years.

Mr. Sanders joined the Randall House staff on November 1, 1981. While his work appears in numerous curriculum books, most of Ray's artwork is featured in the children's curriculum.

Friends and colleagues paid tribute to the artist and Christian laymen at his funeral. A formerly homeless woman told how Ray and his wife took her into their home until she could support herself.

Church youth testified of Ray's loving attitude and encouragement. One mother told how he became a substitute father to her son. Ray loved missions and youth camp work, but his one consuming passion was religious art.

Ray Sanders is survived by his wife, Faye, two children and one granddaughter.

Bible College Honors Retiring Registrar

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College paid tribute to Dr. Charles Hampton and his 26 years of devoted service to the college by declaring Friday, September 29, 2000, "Dr. Charles Hampton Day" on campus.

Numerous guests and members of the family joined the faculty, staff and students in chapel to honor the retiring registrar. Speakers included President Tom Malone, Dr. Robert Picirilli (a colleague), Rev. Ralph Hampton (a brother) and Brian Hampton (a son).

Dr. Hampton, a 1960 FWBBC graduate, joined the faculty in 1974. He became registrar in 1979

and has served with distinction. In addition to his work at the college, he has been active in the Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (TACRAO) and served on national committees of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC).

He was ordained to preach in 1964 at age 26. Hampton completed his Ph.D. degree at the University of Texas at Austin. He is listed in *American Men and Women of Science*. He taught three years at Hillsdale FWB College (1972-74). Dr. Hampton also pastored six years in Oklahoma and Texas.



Charles and Peggy Hampton

FWBBC Hires New Registrar

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College has employed Mr. Frederick J. Burch, a layman from Sterling Heights, Michigan, to replace Dr. Charles E. Hampton as registrar, according to Dr. Milton Fields, academic dean.

Mr. Burch has 25 years' experience in higher education and has taught humanities courses, as well as Western and Asian cultural history. He has taught CAD/CAE applications to engineering students and lectured on the fine arts. He also has served as a presenter of fine arts programs for the Forest City Management Company of Southfield, Michigan.

Mr. Burch earned his Master's at Wayne State University and his Bachelor of Philosophy at Monteith College, Wayne State University.

A member of the Philadelphia FWB Church, Mr. Burch will join the FWBBC staff in early 2001. "He comes to the college prepared spiritually, philosophically and academically," says FWBBC President Tom Malone.

Dr. Hampton served as FWBBC's registrar for 26 years before his retirement in August. "Dr. Hampton's years of service were marked by a love for the college and its commitment to Christian education," the President added.

Reece Keynotes Canada Meeting

HARTLAND, NB, CANADA—Pastor David Reece of Heritage FWB Church in Fredericksburg, Virginia, preached four times during the Atlantic-Canada Association's Bible Conference and annual business meeting. Clerk Jeff Crabtree said that Michigan pastor Milton Worthington joined Reece in the preaching program.

Moderator Fred Hanson was elected to a second term. Nineteen people attended the business meeting; many more gathered for the Bible Conference at St. John Valley Bible Camp.

Delegates adopted the association's first budget, a \$48,900 effort to support the total denominational program.

The association voted to ordain two men to the ministry—a father and son duo, Oral and Matthew McAfee.

In other action, delegates voted to revoke the ordination credentials of one minister because of marital infidelity. He will not be allowed to hold any office in the association until he has completed the restoration process set forth by his local church and the Ordaining Council of the association.

The 2001 session of the Atlantic-Canada Association will meet June 30.

Bible College Freshmen Elect Officers

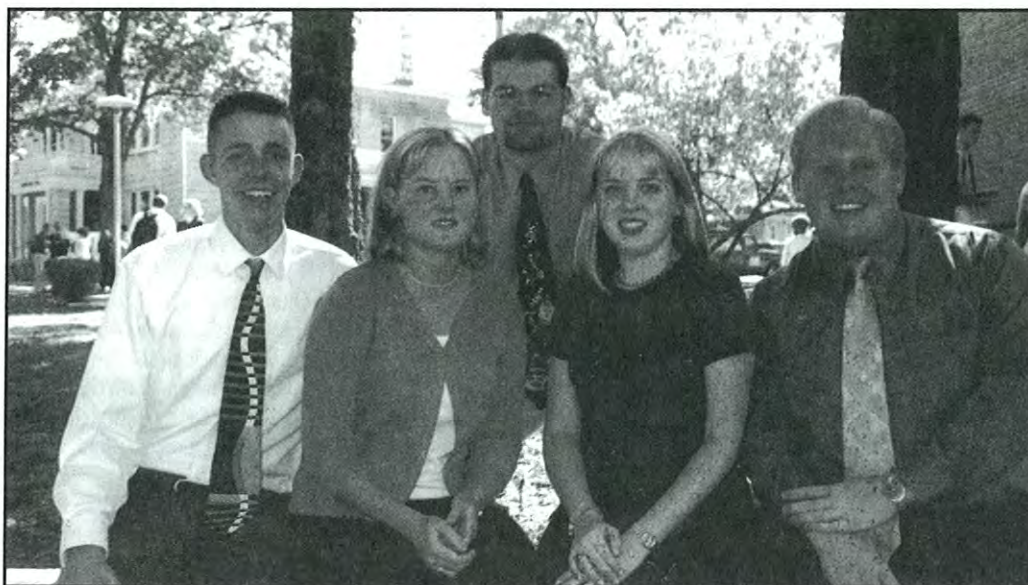
NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College freshmen elected class officers early in the school year and chose a pastoral training major from Florida to serve as president. Paul Bryant is the son of FWBBC alumni and is

from Vero Beach.

Nicole Crowe, an elementary education major from Nashville, will serve as vice-president. Cori Justice, who is also studying elementary education, was elected secretary-treasurer and is from

Clarksville, Tennessee.

Devin Lee, chaplain, is a youth ministry major and comes from Fredericktown, Missouri. Assisting him as worship leader is Joshua Riggs, a missions student from Joelton, Tennessee.



(l) Joshua Riggs, Nicole Crowe, Devin Lee, Cori Justice, Paul Bryant.

Plane Crash Kills FWB Mother, Three Children

REYNOSA, TAMPS., MEXICO—An Aeromexico DC-9 with 100 people aboard crashed at Reynosa International Airport on October 6, killing a Free Will Baptist woman and three of her children. Yolanda de los Santos, 39, and three of her small children died when the jet tore through their home just beyond the airport runway.

The jet had attempted to land in

a thunderstorm which had caused a power loss at the airport. After touching down, the jetliner skidded past the end of the runway, through the airport fence, and plowed through a line of houses along the canal and passed within five meters of the Free Will Baptist Church on the canal.

Pastor Fermin Sanchez and his family were unharmed. The

FWB Seminary, located about a mile from the crash site, also lost power during the thunderstorm, but was not damaged by the crash or the storm.

The 5:30 p.m. jetliner crash destroyed the home of Yolanda de los Santos, killing her and three of her children, ages 5, 3 and 1. Her husband was not home at the time of the crash, nor an older son who was at school.

Yolanda had been scheduled to go to the school for some activity, but went back home because of the heavy rain about two hours before the accident. Yolanda's brother Erasmo de los Santos donated the property for the canal church. He lives next door to Yolanda.

After the planed stopped in the Rhode Canal, all 100 passengers scrambled to safety. The Mexican army cordoned off the crash site. However, Saul Zuniga, son of Pastor Felix Zuniga, managed to get through a back way and communicated with Pastor Fermin Sanchez who confirmed that the church building survived the crash undamaged.



Crash area where DC-9 destroyed home. The Free Will Baptist Church on Canal Road is the two-story structure on the right (Photo by James Munsey).

Georgia Church Dedicates Sanctuary

COLQUITT, GA—Ten months after the congregation approved a proposal to construct a new sanctuary, members of Colquitt FWB Church in Georgia dedicated the completed structure on October 1 with all-day services. Pastor Matthew Pinson led the activities. Guest speaker Dr. Melvin Worthington addressed the congregation twice.

In addition to launching the building program 10 months ago, members also renovated their former sanctuary into a fellowship hall and turned their former fellowship hall into new educational space.

The Colquitt Church began in 1947 under the leadership of Henry Catrett. From September 1947 until spring 1948 the congregation met in the Miller County Courthouse. They then purchased land on Bremond Street and built their first structure.

The church built again in the 1970s and dedicated their new church in 1975. By 1977 the church had constructed a parsonage.

Two of the original charter members from 1947 are still living—Minnie Cobb and Clemmie Williams. Eighteen pastors have served the congregation in its 53-year history.

FWBBC Announces Top 10 Churches

NASHVILLE, TN—Rev. Roy Harris, director of advancement for Free Will Baptist Bible College, says the churches listed below were the college's top 10 supporting churches for 1999-2000:

1. First FWB Church, Albany, Georgia
2. Horse Branch FWB Church, Turbeville, South Carolina
3. Unity FWB Church, Greenville, North Carolina
4. Heads FWB Church, Cedar Hill, Tennessee
5. First FWB Church, Russellville, Arkansas
6. New Hope FWB Church, Joelton, Tennessee
7. Donelson FWB Church, Nashville, Tennessee
8. Bethel FWB Church, Kinston, North Carolina
9. Sherwood Forest FWB Church, New Bern, North Carolina
10. Immanuel FWB Church, Durham, North Carolina

Reverend Harris says, "We commend these churches for their generous and faithful support." He adds, "Every gift from every church is important. We are grateful for the many churches who help underwrite the education of some of God's finest young people."

currently

Great news from Pastor **Zane Brooks** at **First FWB Church** in **Wellington, KS**. One Sunday in August the church witnessed four conversions, watched 14 baptisms and welcomed 20 new members. They also sent 47 people to church camp. Earlier this summer, **Berry** and **Cindy Matlock** came on board as youth directors.

The Vacation Bible School at **Kingsley Avenue FWB Church** in **Greeneville, TN**, exceeded all expectations, according to Pastor **Doyle Pruett**. He reports that 15 youths were converted. Later the pastor baptized 16 converts.

With a 12% growth in Sunday School and worship, Pastor **Roy D. Smith** is all smiles these days. The **New Home FWB Church** in **Tulsa, OK**, logged 130 visitors, 25 new members, eight conversions and seven baptisms. The church's teens participated in a mission trip to Phoenix, AZ, where they distributed 1,500 tracts and invitations to attend home missionary George Harvey's North Valley FWB Mission Church.

After 26 years as registrar at Free Will Baptist Bible College, **Charles Hampton** decided to take early retirement. Dr. Hampton is a 1960 alumnus of the college and taught in three other universities including the University of Texas (Austin), Oklahoma Baptist University and Hillsdale FWB College. He also pastored, taught in public schools and taught U. S. Army dependents in Germany.

Six months ago, members of **United FWB Church** in **West Plains, MO**, broke ground for their new building. Pastor **Glenn Murray** said he expects construction to be completed in late December. The new building and renovation on the present facility will provide additional assembly areas, Sunday School rooms, a gymnasium, fellowship area, kitchen, elevator, nursery, enlarged foyer and a new heating/cooling system. Mayor Joe Evans attended ground-breaking ceremonies and complimented the church for its outreach in the community.

Ohio evangelist **Clovis Vanover** reports 38 conversions in revival services.

Pastor **John Meade** reports seven conversions and 10 new members at **Southwest FWB Church** in **Columbus, OH**. One young man, **Matt Thompson**, announced his call to preach.

Six conversions, six baptisms, four new members and numerous rededications at **Hillsboro FWB Church** in **Hillsboro, OH**, reflect the congregation's effectiveness in evangelism outreach, says Pastor **Randy Smith**.

Members of **Hillview FWB Church** in **Reynoldsburg, OH**, celebrated homecoming by dedicating their new family life center. Liberty Christian Academy began their classes for the first time at the church. Pastor **Bill Hayes** reports four conversions, three baptisms and eight new members.

Pastor **Paul Finney** reports 17 conversions at **First FWB Church** in **Clyde, OH**.

Ten conversions and baptisms at **Antioch Community FWB Church** in **Mt. Sterling, OH**, have Pastor **Jim Blankenship** hopping. The church celebrated their 21st annual homecoming with all-day services.

Pastor **Curtis Booth** says they plan to burn the mortgage at **Gahanna FWB Church** in **Gahanna, OH**, after the congregation rallied to pay off their indebtedness early. Pastor Booth also reports 17 conversions, 14 rededications and 10 new members.

Black Oak FWB Church in **Marshfield, MO**, honored 85-year-old deacon **Lloyd Clift** for his long years of faithful service to the church. Brother Clift has served as song director, Sunday School superintendent and adult Sunday School teacher. He continues to minister in local nursing homes, according to Pastor **Jack Day**.

Hannon FWB Church in **Liberal, MO**, dedicated three acres on which they plan to build a new church. The property was a gift from one of the members. After the May 7 dedication,

construction began on an 11,600-square-foot building with a 4,000-square-foot sanctuary. The educational area will include most of the space. Pastor **George Naumann** expected the work to be completed in November.

Reverend **Michael W. "Mickey" Sanstra** (59) died July 2. He had been in need of a heart transplant. Rev. Sanstra was pastor of **New Beginnings FWB Church** in **Odessa, MO**. He was a former clerk of the Greater Kansas City Association and a past president of the MO-KAN Gospel Music Association. Before entering the ministry 25 years ago, he worked as a computer analyst.

After Home Missions staffer **Richard Adams** preached at **Valley FWB Church** in **West Jordan, UT**, four people were converted and the entire church rededicated their lives. Pastor **Bill Phillips** reports two new families added to the congregation.

Home missionary **Mark Wheatley** reports 19 rededications and eight conversions at **Abundant Grace FWB Church** in **Louisville, KY**. The congregation reached 36 children through Back Yard Bible Clubs this summer.

When members of **First FWB Church** in **Moore, OK**, set aside a Pastor Appreciation Day to honor Pastor **Dan Farmer**, he insisted that he share the day with his pastoral mentor, **Lonnie DeVault**, a long-time Free Will Baptist minister and leader. ■

The pot has been stewing for a long time. But it didn't come to a full boil until December 24, 1999, when the military coup d'état arrived in Côte d'Ivoire without warning. Curfews were announced, stores closed, taxis parked and streets bare as all stayed home inside their fenced yards listening to radio or TV news.

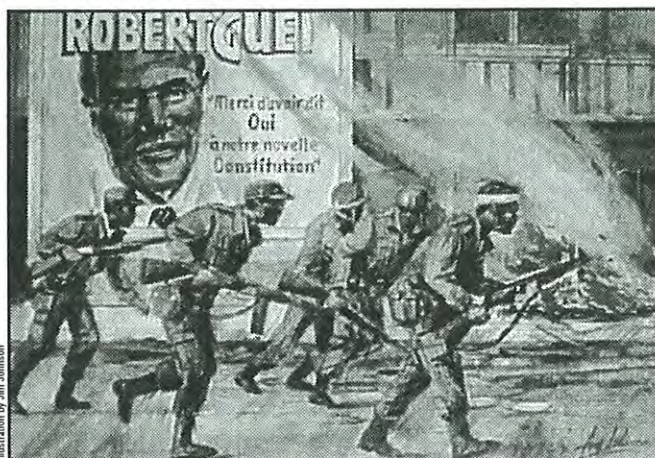
As the number one world producer of coffee and cocoa, financial instability wasn't helped when prices fell faster than the handpicked produce could be taken from the trees. Hard-working farmers chose to gather their coffee beans in the public market places and burn them rather than accept the low, government-regulated prices.

The University in Abidjan has endured many troubles. Student housing is scarce and rooms built for two usually house four, if not more. Students must wait, wait and wait before receiving their government fees. Both students and professors have conducted strikes. People have entered the campus with clubs and gas bombs, injuring some students. Other students have been jailed. Two years ago only medical students received credit for their year's academic work.

Health-wise, the country is not doing well. It has been reported that one in three persons living along the southern coastline is HIV positive. Radio reports say that one teacher dies each week from HIV-related sickness.

Financially, educationally, medically and morally this dear country faces many troubles. All of these ingredients brought the stew to a boil and it overflowed during the military coup last December. It was a tremendous shock to this country which has been the most stable of West African countries for the past 40 years.

Ivorians, in general, have a very high tolerance in order to enjoy peace. "Unity at all cost" could be their motto. Yet, Ivorian people are tired of seeing rumors close stores and barricade roads. They have witnessed soldiers, as well as others, taking private vehicles and ransacking stores.



Initial gratitude over the coup d'état soon faded.

African Stew

By Carol Pinkerton

On a personal note, our truck was parked outside our walled-in yard being washed by a young, Christian man when a convoy of soldiers drove up the street closely eyeing our vehicle. Then they stopped and returned, parking beside our double-cab pickup. "Go get the keys; we're taking this truck!" the soldier demanded. "Oh no, it belongs to the Mission," the young man said. "But I, too, am with the Mission," declared the military man. The soldier decided to take matters into his own hands. He came to the front gate, which was not locked because of the water hose. He pushed it forward to enter the yard and was met by Bear, a 3-year-old, 100-pound dog, barking loudly, and eager to have some new skin to lick! Bear's 80-pound little brother was also there barking. The soldier apparently misread the dogs' welcome gestures. He pulled the gate toward him, closing it and backing away. He got back in their vehicle and departed. Our pickup was placed inside the yard. God and the young man were given much thanks and the nonviolent dogs were given an extra serving at meal time.

Christians are greatly concerned about what will happen next. Much time has been spent on knees in prayer. A great deal of distrust toward leaders exists. Fear reigns. Within months this stable, model country has experienced a military coup, an attempt on the president's life and a one-day journalist strike. What next?

The STEW simmers on. Sticks of contention are placed under the pot, increasing the fire. It is possible more stew will overflow.

History teaches us that during crisis the church is purified and it experiences deep, genuine growth. We want God's will to be done and people in Ivory Coast to come to know the PRINCE OF PEACE.

Carol Pinkerton and her husband, Jerry, have served as missionaries in Côte d'Ivoire since 1971. They are currently working with a national pastor and his wife, seeking to establish a strong church in the capital city of Abidjan.

Foreign



Missions

On September 12 at 5:00 a.m., Free Will Baptists began converging at the Nashville International Airport. This was not a committee meeting, nor were they going to a national convention. They were gathering to change the world for Free Will Baptists and respond to the challenge of Master's Men to take Operation Saturation to Puerto Rico.

This group was about as diverse as you could gather. The youngest was a high school freshman, not yet 15 years old and the eldest was a 75-year-old retired foreign missionary. Our team also included a young couple in their mid-20s interested in short-term mission work, a bi-vocational pastor and his wife, who wants to see their church develop a burden for missions, a youth pastor who plans to take his young people on mission trips as well as a young pastor who received the trip as a surprise from his wife and some churches that love and appreciate him. Then there was a couple in their 50s who had to trust God for the strength to make the trip, a pastor and his son who turned 17 the day we left, and a complete family—father, mother and two teenage sons. Fifteen individuals from four states and seven churches met with one goal and one purpose.

Our trip began with prayer, asking God to bless our efforts. We flew from Nashville to St. Louis and then on to San Juan, Puerto Rico. The first night there was a prayer meeting in Luquillo. God began to work before we did.

While standing outside before church began, we met Ramon, a homeless man with diabetes. He was looking for food or money but he found so much more. Pastor Eddie Hodges from Hendersonville, TN, along with missionary David Roy and others led Ramon to the Lord.

During the following days our volunteers distributed 1,500 packets of gospel materials to neighborhoods, high-rise public housing (18 floors without a working elevator) and other areas. Five of

Puerto Rico Operation Saturation

By Kenneth Akers
Director of Ministry Development

our men had the opportunity to preach, others sang, and had services for teens and children. We went to be a blessing to our missionaries and the people of Puerto Rico, but we received great blessing as well.

We appreciate our missionaries in Puerto Rico—Bud and Ruth Bivens; Chris, Carla, Katie, Jared and Rachel Fannin; David, Connie, Gabriel and Seth Roy. We admire their dedication as they labor away from home, family and friends to serve the Lord. We thank them for their hospitality and how welcome they made us feel.

Iwant to thank each one who participated in this mission trip sponsored by the Master's Men Department. Stanley and Sherry Konopinski, a bi-vocational pastor and wife in Oklahoma. Eddie and Sam Hodges: Eddie pastors in Hendersonville, Tennessee; Sam just turned 17. Bill and Anna Harrison: Bill is president of the Master's Men at Cookeville FWB Church in Cookeville, Tennessee. Chris and Allison Simpkins, a talented young couple from Springfield, Tennessee. Chris played the guitar and dobro and Allison sang. Darin Alvis, a young pastor from Missouri. Jonathan Kell, a youth pastor from South Carolina. Paul Robinson, retired missionary to Uruguay. My family also accompanied me: Sandra, my wife of twenty years, and our sons, Brandon (18) and Ryan (15). ■

Upcoming Master's Men Events:

2001 Deep South Golf Tournament
February 22-24 in Dothan, Alabama

National Men's Retreat
April 19-21, 2001
Trinity Camp, Guin, Alabama

Master's



Men

Five hundred forty-nine Free Will Baptist women from around the world joined together for a weekend getaway September 14-16 in Ridgecrest, North Carolina, to tune up their lives and focus their attention on the Lord.

WNAC president Debe Taylor introduced keynote speaker, Gail Smith who encouraged and enlightened the women's hearts with her inspiring piano music. Gail introduced the congregation to a variety of classical music, great hymns, as well as music that she composed. Gail's recipe for growth comes from II Peter 3:18 which outlines the keys for successful Christian growth.

Throughout the weekend, women were challenged to grow as Christians. Gail presented the analogy between the musician and the Christian. Just as there are different levels of musicians, so there are different levels of Christians—the beginner, the intermediate and the advanced. The Christian, just as the musician, must begin with practice, repetition and perseverance.

The missionary service highlighted the weekend. Five foreign and two home missionaries shared the titles of their favorite hymns and how they played a role in their lives. Each missionary took her turn explaining a time in her life when her favorite hymn ministered to her heart.

Elaine Holland shared how "Have Faith in God" encouraged her over the years. She said that in the most crucial situations, faith in God is the only answer. Her story took the audience back to an incident in Côte d'Ivoire when Ernest, her husband, and Norman Richards were arrested and accused of stealing their own car. Elaine said it was then that she realized how important it is to have faith in God.

The service then took the crowd to Spain with June McVay and Susan Turnbough. June expressed how "Great is Thy Faithfulness" comforted her when trying to understand Anthony and Lea Edgmon's loss of triplets. She explained how God works when circumstances seem dark. As a result of this tragedy, many unsaved people were exposed to God's Word.



WNAC Retreat 2000

By Rhonda McReynolds

Susan shared her emotions of having to let go of her children as they left Spain to attend Bible College. She expressed how "My Life is in Your Hands" comforted her during this time.

Annette Aycock, missionary to Brazil, described how her favorite song is "Each One Reach One." Annette says this is the way God planned it. "Each person tells someone, then they'll tell someone else until the whole world knows about Jesus."

Robyn Osborn is a home missionary to Memphis, Tennessee. "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" is near

to her heart. The Osborns were supposed to start a church in Cordova, but God had other plans. Instead, they were led to Grace FWB Church to pastor.

During the recent loss of her father, Pam Jones, missionary to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, clung to the song, "Oh, What a Savior." This hymn was sung at her father's funeral and has become dear to her—especially the line, "Death's chilly waters I'll soon be crossing, His hand will lead me safe home."

At the close of the service, a missionary offering of \$5,000 was taken for those missionaries attending the retreat.

Friday offered a free afternoon for serious shopping. The women had plenty of time to enjoy fellowship, food and fun during their weekend at Ridgecrest. Attendees enjoyed time to visit the prayer garden, play miniature golf, enjoy a popcorn party, stay up all night, and oh yeah, did I mention shopping?

What better way to end a retreat than on a grace note. Rebecca Pugh wrapped up the weekend with a few words of wisdom.

She explained that just as a grace note adds beauty to the main note in music, so must we bring beauty to God. We can not be the main person in our lives. God only can fill that position. But, as Rebecca said, "The master composer has put us in His grand symphony." We, as Christian women, are to accent Him. ■

Women Nationally



Active for Christ

One of the best benefits available to pastors is the housing allowance. A housing allowance allows pastors to exclude from taxable income a portion of his compensation from the church. In many cases this means he will not owe any income taxes at all if his standard deduction and exemptions offset his remaining income after the housing allowance is deducted.

Self-employment tax, however, is calculated on income plus housing allowance. The housing allowance is even more beneficial when a pastor is buying a home, because he can still deduct the interest paid on his mortgage and the real estate taxes as an itemized deduction on Schedule A.

A housing allowance includes all expenses related to buying or renting a home. This includes the entire house payment or rental, all utilities, taxes, insurance and maintenance. Utilities include basic phone service but not long distance. This also applies to basic cable as the cost of premium channels can not be included. Maintenance includes yard equipment purchases, household cleaning supplies and even furniture purchases.

A housing allowance must be set in advance and be placed into the minutes of the church record or as a separate line item in the approved church budget. He is not permitted to make a housing allowance declaration retroactively, and he can not do so without church approval.

Pastors living in a parsonage can have a housing allowance to cover housing expenses such as utilities, insurance and maintenance, but only if he actually pays them. He can not get a housing allowance if the church pays for these expenses anyway.

Now that the basics are in place, let us explore some misunderstandings concerning how to structure a housing allowance. The first factor in determining a housing allowance is to set the maximum. The simple way to determine this value is to determine the fair rental value of the house with utilities paid and furnished. No matter what the actual expenses are, they can not exceed this maximum amount.

For instance, if the fair rental value of a house furnished and utilities paid is \$15,000 a year, this is the maximum amount that can be set as hous-

Housing Allowance— Christmas Gift from Uncle Sam

By David Brown

ing allowance even if housing expenses are expected to be \$18,000. It is wise to increase a housing allowance when higher expenses are anticipated due to unusual items.

Another misconception regarding housing allowance is that pastors can declare the set amount even if their housing expenses do not add up to the declared amount. Some assume they can claim an \$18,000 housing allowance even if they only

have \$16,000 in actual expenses. In this situation, the \$2,000 difference must be declared as miscellaneous income.

Many pastors struggle trying to set their housing allowance at the correct level. They pour over bills and try to anticipate their planned purchases to take full advantage of their housing allowance. When it is set too low, they lose the benefit of tax-shielded income, but when it is too high they must declare the difference as taxable income.

Between these two scenarios, the latter is best because they can take full advantage of the benefit and there is no penalty for declaring excess housing allowance as taxable income. A simple way to determine a housing allowance is to start with the maximum. Determine the fair rental value of a house furnished and utilities paid. Then it is just a matter of keeping records.

Even if expenses go over this amount, nothing has been lost since this is the maximum anyway. Should expenses be less than this maximum declared amount, it must be reported as miscellaneous taxable income.

Retired ministers may also declare a housing allowance from their denominationally-sponsored retirement plan such as the Free Will Baptist Retirement Plan. Withdrawals from IRAs, 401Ks or non-church controlled 403b plans can not be declared housing allowance. The housing allowance in retirement is limited to actual expenses not to exceed the fair rental value of the house furnished and utilities paid.

The housing allowance benefit is truly a Christmas gift from Uncle Sam for pastors but only if you follow the rules. ■

Retirement

& Insurance



Garnett Reid

Of a Mother, "Daughters," a Father and His Son

In February we began our look at people in the Gospels whose lives Jesus touched. We saw Him impact individuals as different as John the Baptist and the tomb-dweller of Gadara. Life was never the same for the paralyzed man and his four friends once they met Jesus. The Phoenician woman, Zacchaeus the tax collector and the woman accused of adultery—these were just a few of dozens more whose stories bear the unmistakable imprint of Jesus' touch.

Continue the study on your own. You might reflect on those enriched at His birth: the shepherds, the magi, Simeon and Anna. Marvel at His healing of Jairus' daughter, lepers, blind Bartimaeus and Peter's mother-in-law.

Put yourself among the 9,000 He fed with so little, or among the children He blessed or the 70 He commissioned. Be sure not to miss His public clashes with opponents or His private "classes" with disciples when He taught them about the kingdom.

For this final study in our series, I want to move ahead to the place where it all comes together—to Calvary. Amid the collage of scenes unfolding around Jesus' execution, two are often overlooked.

Take a closer look at Jesus' final words to some women: the "daughters of Jerusalem" who mourned His imminent death (Luke 23:27-31), and His mother (John 19:25-27). These encounters reveal two important lessons about Jesus' mission and His Father's plan.

Final Indictment of Unfaithfulness

As Jesus made His way toward Calvary, throngs followed His steps. Included in the procession were a number of women who "bewailed

and lamented him" (Luke 23:27). Typical of mourners in the East, they chanted and smote themselves in grief. These women were likely sympathetic to the Lord and His cause; Luke often notes the prominent role of women who followed Jesus (2:36-38; 7:36-50; 8:1-3; 11:27; 13:10-17).

He then turned and spoke of His concern for them. "Daughters of Jerusalem," pled Jesus, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." "Daughter" is a common figure of speech in the Bible referring to citizens of a particular town (see Isa. 1:8 and Matt. 21:5, for example). Even in His hour of impending death, Jesus' concern was directed toward others.

Verses 29 and 30 reveal the reason for His appeal: the nation, God's people Israel, was headed for judgment. The time is coming, Jesus explained, when, ironically, those without families would be "blessed" because they would not see their children die before their eyes. People would seek death rather than life during those days, Jesus warned, as they cried out for the hills and mountains to fall on them (v. 30).

"For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" He asked proverbially in verse 31. Though explanations of this proverb's precise meaning vary, its sense is clear. If what was now happening to the innocent Son of God was despicable, how much greater will be God's judgment upon the guilty nation who had rejected Him?

Final Incentive to Faithfulness

In the face of Israel's ultimate act of covenant *disloyalty*—the rejection of God's covenant mediator—Jesus, Himself that mediator (Hebrews 9:15), performed one final act of covenant *loyalty*. John notes that several women stood by Jesus' cross (19:25).

The Savior singled out His mother Mary, however, and noted, "Woman, behold thy son," referring to John. Then to John he declared, "Behold thy mother" (19:26-27). These statements resemble legal terminology of the day, specifically an adoption formula.

In contrast to the nation's rejection of its covenant obligations, Jesus showed Himself to be the true servant of the Lord by embracing His Father's covenant demands. What a remarkable scene! Even as He hung on the cross, Jesus submitted to the fifth commandment; He honored His mother by providing for her care.

How appropriate that at Christmas we think of our Savior, His mother, and the joyous privilege we have of submitting to His commandments in a loving covenant relationship. ■

Coming Next Month . . .

- ☛ How to Fight Without Feuding
- ☛ Lessons from a Yard Sale
- ☛ Burn the Ships
- ☛ God Has No Closets
- ☛ Be Still and Know What?

ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PREACHERS



Dennis Wiggs

Last Words of Challenge

It has been a privilege to write these articles for a total of seven years. I am grateful for the cooperation and encouragement provided by the editor and by Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. The majority of the readers have been gracious with kind comments. Most of all, I pray that the young preachers have benefitted from these articles. Since this is the last article in this setting, I heartily recommend the following comments to the young man just beginning his ministry.

Purity

Keep yourself pure. Paul instructed Timothy to "*Flee also youthful lusts*," (II Tim. 2:22). Notice the word "flee." Run from temptation. Look the other way when Satan dangles bait before your eyes. Allow your wife to meet all your needs, as Proverbs 5:18-19 declares. Love your wife. Treat her like a queen. Devote your utmost attention to her. Spend valuable time with your mate. Never allow anyone to replace the relationship between you and your wife.

Preach

"*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*," (II Tim. 4:2). As much as possible, devote each day to the study of the scriptures. Don't get sidetracked with extracurricular duties, such as sports, hobbies, an extra job, etc. Be known in your community as a Bible preacher.

Pray

"Preachers get paid to pray," one church member declared. Maybe so, but a fruitful ministry rests upon the praying preacher. Wake up praying for the congregation. Go to bed talking to the Lord.

Walk down the church aisle on Saturday evenings, laying your hands on the pews where most members sit each Sunday, and calling their names before the Lord. Record names of church members, the unconverted, missionaries, preachers, family members and others in your personal prayer book. Daily seek the Lord's blessings upon these.

Pay

Pay your bills. The community should recognize the man of God as one who pays what is due. That will demand a budget, careful and prayerful spending, low or no debt, and a conscientious effort to live on the income. Tithe your income, trust God, teach your family to live frugally, and pay your financial obligations when due.

Present the Gospel

Everywhere you go, witness of the marvelous grace of God. Distribute gospel tracts. Tell sinners about the saving mercy of Jesus Christ. Win souls to Christ. Center your entire ministry around evangelization.

Plan Ahead

The future financial stability of the young preacher will depend upon his own planning. He must begin early to save for the rainy day and invest in wise investments. Retirement seems a long way off, but age 65 will arrive before you know it. Possibly even disability or death may come sooner than you expect. The young preacher absolutely must plan for the inevitable. Seek financial counsel. Get a plan and stick with it.

Praise the Lord

The scriptures warn us about taking

credit for ourselves. When church members praise you, refer the praise to the Lord Who has given you the strength and ability to accomplish the fruits of the ministry. The community, the church family and especially the wife, do not want to hear the preacher bragging about what he has done.

The greatest praise will be heard when the Lord declares, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." God bless you, young preacher. I love you in the Lord. Be assured of my continued prayer support for you and the ministry God has permitted you to conduct. ■

Dennis Wiggs has published a 135-page book with 75 of his articles printed in *Contact*. The 11 x 8½-inch notebook is divided in four categories: The Family, Personal Finances, The Church, Church Forms. The book sells for \$15. (North Carolina residents please add 6% sales tax.) Shipping and handling is \$3.50 per book. Send orders to Dennis Wiggs at 2709 Oaks Road, New Bern, NC 28560.

Remember
Your Pastor
This
Christmas
Season!

Student & Children
Ministries



National Association of
Free Will Baptists

YOUTH DAY 2001

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Youth Day is coming again! Mark your calendars for this exciting event. This is a day we have set aside as Free Will Baptists to honor our students. However, we don't want to just throw 'em a big party, we want to help them find opportunities to be involved in our local churches. There are a number of ways students can be involved in ministry in our churches, whether it be ushering, teaching, helping with arts and crafts, or some other area in which they may be gifted.

Our students are very capable of being good leaders and February 4, 2001, is just one day we have set aside for you to challenge them in a big way. Let them be in charge of the entire service, or challenge them to learn a drama or musical.

Teach them the significance of leadership and standing up for Christ.



NO RESERVES • NO RETREATS • NO REGRETS

Our theme this year is GO! No reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets. While not all of our students are called to be overseas missionaries, they have all been commanded to take the gospel with them everywhere they go. Help us get this coming year off to a great start by teaching our students the importance of finding God's place for them in His World.

Student & Children Ministries exist to provide ministry help and training from a national level to adult workers students and children through special events, retreats, and conferences.



Thomas Marberry

Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes

Robert J. Morgan

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000, 833 pp., paperback, \$19.99).

Rev. Robert J. Morgan pastors Donelson FWB Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He has a long history of involvement in the work of the denomination. In recent years he has turned considerable attention to writing. This book takes his writing ministry in a somewhat different direction. It is a massive compilation of sermon illustrations that he has collected and used during some 30 years of preaching ministry.

A sermon should consist of a text from the Bible plus explanation, illustration and application added by the preacher. Good illustrations help the congregation understand the message, move the emotions and make the sermon memorable. Well chosen illustrations can transform an average message into one that can make a real difference in the lives of those who hear it.

Many preachers recognize the importance of illustrations in preaching, but they do not collect and organize them in a useful way. Neither do they devote the necessary time and attention to select the right illustrations for each sermon. Effective sermon illustrations require time and attention.

A preacher needs to build a file of useful sermon material including illustrations. As Morgan notes, "Preachers, teachers and public speakers should . . . be storing up a lifetime's worth of stores that inspire, enlighten and motivate people to grasp and live truth." This book can help a preacher illustrate his sermons more effectively.

The hundreds of illustrations in this book come from a wide variety of sources, most of them written. They come from newspapers, books and articles of all types. Some are poetry, some prose. Some are long, some short. They all challenge and move the hearer.

The illustrations in this volume are arranged in various categories according to subject. In the section on

abortion, the author includes this memorable statement, "It has come to the time where the most dangerous place to be in America is not the inner city where gangs threaten innocent lives, or in angry prisons where only the fit survive, but in the womb of a mother who is being told that if she doesn't really want the baby, an abortion is the solution."

In the section on Christmas, we find these words, "Without Jesus to wash us whiter than snow, there can never be a genuinely White Christmas."

The section on marriage includes this rather troubling illustration, "The most consistent research finding about what is different in the communication of strangers and people married to each other is that married people are ruder to each other than they are to strangers. They interrupt their spouses more, put their spouses down more and are less complimentary to each other."

The section on reading includes the story of John Wesley who read thou-

sands of books as he traveled by horseback throughout Great Britain. The illustration concludes with these challenging words, "He told the younger ministers of the Wesleyan societies either to read or get out of the ministry!"

This book is a most useful resource; it contains a wide variety of quality illustrations on many different subjects. It should not, however, be used as a preacher's only source of illustrations. A preacher should read widely on different subjects and collect his own storehouse of useful illustrative material.

In the preface, Morgan explains that "Often the best illustrations are found in the headlines of the morning newspaper or from the life experiences of the preacher." Those illustrations the preacher must collect and preserve for himself. If he needs some guidance on how to select, collect and preserve good illustrations, he needs to buy this book. That may be its greatest value. ■

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- Columns are listed in chronological order.
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|          |                             |                                       |          |                         |                                                                          |
|          |                             |                                       |          |                         |                                                                          |
| <b>L</b> |                             |                                       | <b>Y</b> | Young, Waldo            | January, 12                                                              |
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|          |                             |                                       |          |                         |                                                                          |
|          |                             |                                       |          |                         |                                                                          |
|          |                             |                                       |          |                         |                                                                          |

*Merry  
Christmas!*



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 What a Century!  
 The One-Eyed General  
 Five Things I Gave Up  
 Turn the Horses Loose  
 Of Fathers and Sons  
 The Preacher and Elliott Ness  
 The Baddest Pastor in Town  
 Surefire Rules for Success  
 How to Make a Bed Five Miles High  
 Thanksgiving in America  
 The Cold-Eared Kettle Keeper

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 David L. McGowan  
*"Ezekiel" in The NIV Application Commentary,* Iain M. Duguid  
*The Idea of A Christian College,* Arthur F. Holmes  
*John in the IVP New Testament Commentary Series,* Rodney A. Whitacre  
*New Directions for Youth Ministry,* Wayne Rice, Chap Clark, et. al.  
*God Has Never Failed Me, But He's Sure Scared Me To Death A Few Times,*  
 Stan Toler  
*"Revelation" in The NIV Application Commentary,* Craig S. Keener  
*Las Obras De Referencia y Consulta: Su Utilidad y Manejo,*  
 Eliseo Vila  
*Confirming The Pastoral Call: A Guide to Matching Candidates*  
*and Congregations,* Joseph L. Umidi  
*Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought,* J. Matthew Pinson, ed.  
*Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes,*  
 Robert J. Morgan

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| FWBBC Seeks Accreditation Renewal, James Cox                                               | July, 24      |
| "Brain Storm" Coming To FWBBC, James Cox                                                   | September, 25 |
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| Master's Men Adds Staff Member, Tom Dooley      | June, 24     |
| An Open Door, Tom Dooley                        | August, 26   |
| Puerto Rico Operation Saturation, Kenneth Akers | December, 19 |

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| Frequently Asked Questions, D. Ray Lewis                     | February, 23 |
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| An Open Letter to Free Will Baptists, William Evans          | June, 26     |
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| Commissioned To Teach - (Part I), Alton Loveless       | July, 23      |
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## Women Nationally Active for Christ

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| Tune up Your Life, Marjorie Workman                             | June, 25     |
| Two By Two, Marjorie Workman                                    | August, 23   |
| Women: Vital to Missions, Marjorie Workman                      | October, 25  |
| WNAC Retreat 2000, Rhonda McReynolds                            | December, 20 |

# Newsfront

## National Ministries

|                                                     |                              |                                                           |               |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Artist Presents Sculpture to Bible College          | July, 20                     | FWBBC Plans Academic Olympics                             | September, 22 |
| Bible College Freshmen Elect Officers               | December, 15                 | FWBBC Welcome Days Enrolls 261                            | February, 18  |
| Bible College Graduates 42 Students                 | August, 21                   | Home Missions, Bible College Join Hands to Plant Churches | April, 22     |
| Bible College Honors Retiring Registrar             | December, 14                 | Koreans to Publish Randall House Titles                   | May, 18       |
| Bible College Hosts Distance Education Summit       | June, 19                     | Leadership Conference Meets in Nashville                  | February, 20  |
| Bible College Looking for Teachers                  | June, 21                     | Leadership Conference Set for December                    | November, 18  |
| Bible College Seeks Registrar, Computer Teacher     | November, 18                 | Media Commission to "Raise the Standard"                  | June, 18      |
| Bible College Students Witness 645 Decisions        | August, 20                   | Michigan Steering Committee Meets                         | October, 19   |
| Bible College Teachers Honored                      | July, 21                     | National Managers Burn Mortgage                           | November, 17  |
| Bible College Trustees Propose to Modify Name       | April, 23                    | Nominating Committee Requests Nominees                    | October, 18   |
| Call National Offices Toll Free                     | April, 24                    | Randall House Artist, Ray Sanders, Dies                   | December, 14  |
| Children and Youth Workers Meet                     | May, 19                      | Randall Ministers Fund Established                        | April, 24     |
| Discount Air Fares to National Convention Available | April, 24; May, 19; June, 21 | Reeds Scholarship Fund Set                                | April, 23     |
| Educational Task Force Seeks Answers                | March, 19                    | South Carolina Church Awards New Scholarship              | July, 21      |
| Forrest to Head Pastoral Training at FWBBC          | September, 21                | South Carolina Senior to Lead Bible College Students      | June, 19      |
| Free Will Baptist Bible College Enrolls 318         | November, 19                 | Theological Commission to Publish Journal                 | May, 18       |
| FWB Foundation Delivers Endowment Gifts             | April, 23                    | Theology Symposium Meets in Oklahoma                      | February, 17  |
| FWBBC Announces Top 10 Churches                     | December, 16                 | Theology Symposium to Meet at Bible College               | October, 20   |
| FWBBC Helps Open Asia Seminary                      | June, 18                     | WNAC Retreat Attracts 134 People                          | January, 18   |
| FWBBC Hires New Registrar                           | December, 15                 |                                                           |               |



## Ministers

|                       |              |                 |              |                  |            |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------|
| Chamberlin, Forrest   | March, 20    | Hill, Harvey E. | November, 19 | VanWinkle, J. L. | August, 19 |
| Doggett, Oris         | February, 17 | Kelton, Darwin  | March, 20    | White, J. E.     | April, 22  |
| Halbrook, Alvin Floyd | November, 18 | Meade, Jesse    | June, 20     |                  |            |
| Harper, Maxwell       | October, 18  | Ricks, David    | January, 20  |                  |            |

## Laity

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| Priest, Delmer | April, 23    |
| Sanders, Ray   | December, 14 |



## Churches

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Florida                           |              |
| Pleasant Hill FWB Church, Bonifay | February, 17 |
| Georgia                           |              |
| Colquitt FWB Church, Colquitt,    | December, 16 |
| Idaho                             |              |
| Nampa FWB Church, Nampa           | January, 19  |
| North Carolina                    |              |
| Victory FWB Church, Goldsboro     | October, 20  |



## States

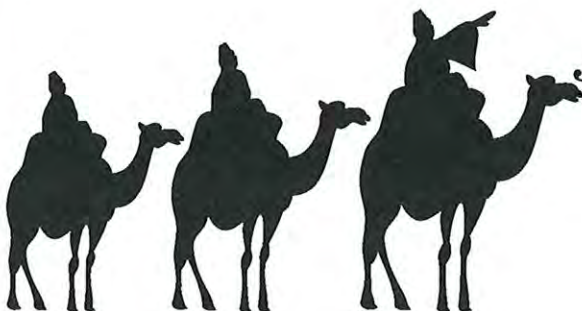
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|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Alabama         | March, 22                | Indiana     | October, 19   | North Carolina | September, 22              |
| Arkansas        | November, 20             | Kansas      | October, 20   | Ohio           | October, 19                |
| Arizona         | June, 21                 | Kentucky    | September, 21 | Oklahoma       | January, 18                |
| Atlantic Canada | December, 15             | Maryland    | March, 21     | South Carolina | January, 20; June, 21      |
| California      | September, 20            | Michigan    | August, 20    | Tennessee      | March, 21                  |
| Florida         | September, 20            | Mississippi | February, 18  | Virginia       | October, 19                |
| Georgia         | March, 21; September, 22 | Missouri    | September, 22 | West Virginia  | January, 19; September, 21 |
| Illinois        | June, 19                 | New Mexico  | July, 20      |                |                            |

## Other

|                                              |              |                                           |              |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------|
| California Christian College Trains Russians | June, 20     | North Carolina Thanks Free Will Baptists  | May, 17      |
| CCC Enrollment at 90                         | November, 20 | Plane Crash Kills Mother, Three Children  | December, 16 |
| Children's Home Seeks Director               | July, 21     | Radio Program Needs Music CDs             | March, 22    |
| Cumberland Association Honors Four Ministers | February, 16 | Revival Brings Veteran Ministers Together | January, 20  |
| Gospeliers Quartet Jubilee Celebration       | March, 19    | Southeastern College Enrolls 180          | November, 19 |
| Group Breaks Ground for \$665,000 Shelter    | August, 19   | Southeastern Sets Camp Meeting            | April, 24    |
| Hillsdale College Enrolls a Record 323       | November, 19 | 2000 State Association Meetings           | February, 19 |
| Kentucky Tornado Damages Homes               | March, 22    | Virginia Children's Home Celebrates       | March, 22    |

## Remember

Free Will Baptist Bible College's



*Paul J. Ketteman*  
*Memorial Christmas Drive*  
**Goal: \$360,000**  
*Give Generously*





Jack Williams

## The Cold-Eared Kettle Keeper

**T**he last Monday night before Christmas 1999. Supper cooling on the stove. The temperature hovers at 28 degrees with a raw wind whistling across Music City. My wife J. J. and I were shopping for paper dolls for my granddaughter. (No snickers from the rowdies, please.)

J. J. went in K-Mart while I hunted a parking space. She said I'd find her in the toy section. As I started inside, a shivering Salvation Army worker caught my eye. I stopped, slipped a buck into his kettle and asked how business was this cold night.

**I'd planned to buy** him a cup of coffee, but some Good Samaritan beat me to the punch. The kettle keeper had been at his post eight hours and had two hours to go.

He was an older man about my height with salt and pepper hair. No gloves and no cap. His red ears and icy hands troubled me as we shook and howdied. I jokingly asked where he left his hat and gloves. When he told me, I almost cried.

His wife was wearing them. She operated a kettle across the road at Harding Mall. She had forgotten her cap and gloves that morning, so he gave her his—then stood all day bare-handed and bare-headed ringing the bell for Christmas shoppers.

**I felt a tug to give** the cold bell-ringer my warm gloves and blue watch cap. But I swallowed, turned to go inside and got past the moment. The thought just wouldn't go away, however, and since I needed my cap and gloves as much as he did, the solution seemed obvious.

Now for all you K-Mart shoppers, a cap and glove purchase may seem like easy pickings. Not! Gremlins had rearranged the store since my last visit, and every shelf bristled with women's shoes or Christmas cards.

I blundered down six aisles of handbags, wrapping paper and women's blouses. All the while trying to avoid the toy department where J. J. trolled for paper dolls.

**That's when I did** the one thing the Men's Shopping Union will never forgive—I stopped and asked a woman for directions. "Men's caps?" she smiled, and pointed to a nook 30 feet away. A nook I'd passed four times which contained nothing but women's handbags. She saw the unbelief in my eyes.

She took me by the arm, walked me to the nook and . . . a hundred men's caps snickered down at me from their hiding place. I ignored the bright orange Tennessee Vols cap and pulled down a dark gray number priced to sell at \$5.99.

By this time, I was three miles from the toy department. Then, of course, there was the matter of gloves for the cold-fingered kettle man.

**No gloves anywhere.** I retraced my steps with the same results—blouses, handbags and Christmas cards. Whereupon (may the Men's Shopping Union forgive me), I asked another woman for directions. She pointed to a rack 20 feet from me in full bloom with men's gloves for \$9.99. How do women do that?

I snapped up a nice black pair and dashed for the toy section. Somebody had moved it. I waved the flag and headed for the checkout counter.

That's when J. J. spotted me. Caught again. I'd planned to sneak in the store, buy cap and gloves on the sly, give them to the cold-eared kettle keeper and leisurely stroll back to the toy section. Didn't a dead poet write something nose-y about the best laid plans of mice and men?

The charge came to \$15.13, which means that J. J.'s gray hair gave me a senior citizen's discount.

**Finally we're out the door** talking with the kettle man. He can't believe it. I'm flat-footed embarrassed because I can't just hand him the gear and walk away. And not for the reason you think.

A half-dozen plastic tags had to be cut off the cap and gloves. Since my Rambo III survival knife was at the office, Kettle Keeper and I struggled to remove all those ridiculous do-dads. It seemed so simple a few minutes earlier.

"You didn't have to do this," Cold Ears murmured. By that time, I wished I hadn't.

**We stopped at Big Lots** on the way home. J. J. went in to search for paper dolls while I guarded the parking lot. A suspicious lady in an Oldsmobile thought I was a mugger. Just before she called security, J. J. returned without paper dolls and vowed to continue the search later. I vowed to let her do it. Alone.

We drove home to a supper of potatoes and cold fish. But when I speared a large piece of fish, it turned into chicken with evil stuff on top which had been recommended by my daughter. This is the same daughter who puts peanut butter in rice, so you can imagine what that dressing did to cold chicken.

By the time I finished my second piece of awful-tasting chicken, I wondered what Cold Ears would tell his wife about the new cap and gloves. If he only knew that I was an innocent male trying to locate paper dolls for my granddaughter before this whole episode got complicated . . .

**That happens a lot in life.** A fellow starts to do a good deed and ends up eating a train wreck disguised as cold chicken. If I see Brother Cold Ears outside K-Mart again this Christmas, I may ask for my dollar back. ■



## CONTACT

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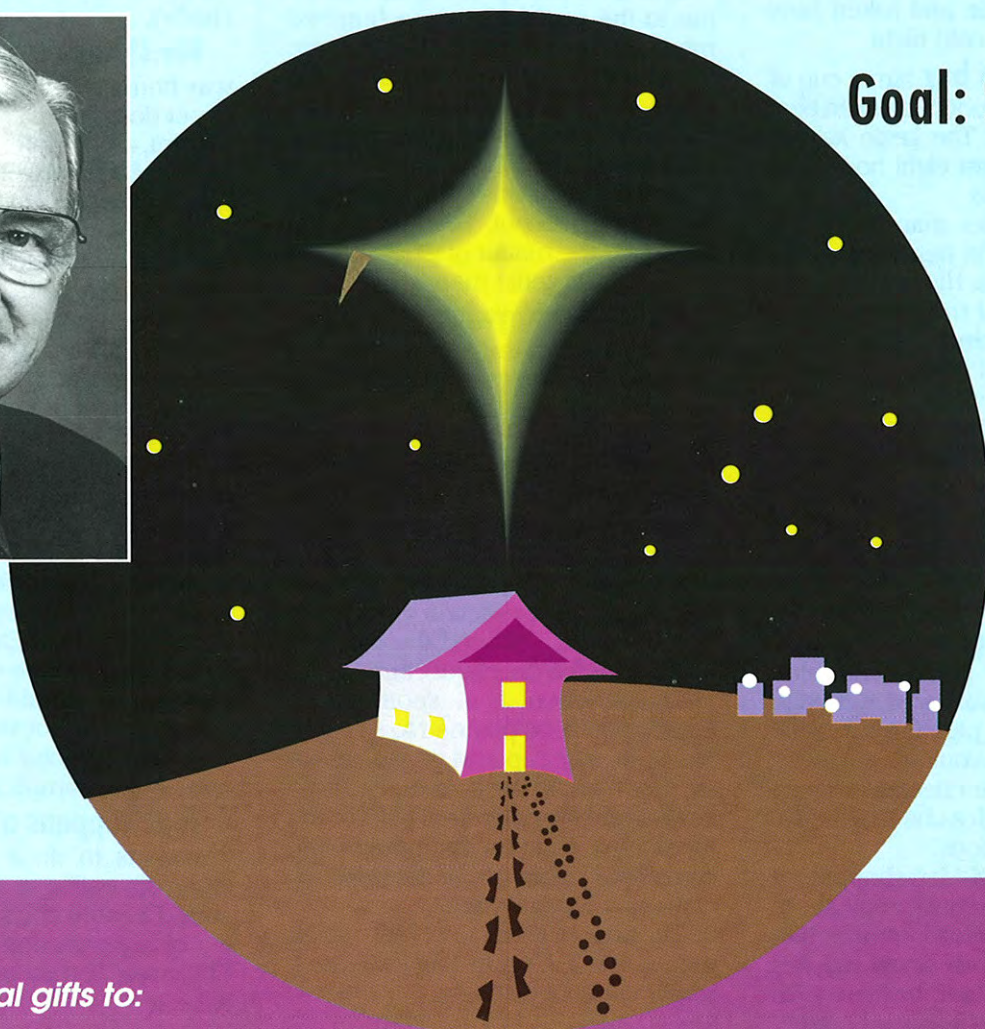
# *2000 Paul Ketteman Memorial Christmas Drive*

**for Free Will Baptist Bible College**



Rev. Paul J. Ketteman,  
FWBBC Public Relations  
Director for 25 years.

**Goal: \$360,000**



**Send memorial gifts to:**

**Free Will Baptist Bible College • 3606 West End Avenue • Nashville, Tennessee 37205**