

CONTACT

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March 2001

The JFL Story
Censorship and You
Traditions
Some Win, All Lose

inside

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

The Horror of Hell

One of the most solemn doctrines in the Bible is that of eternal punishment—the doctrine of Hell. During recent years little has been written on this subject in spite of its prominence in the Bible.

Jesus addressed this subject more than any other in the New Testament. He spoke far more about Hell than He did about Heaven. We dare not neglect this subject in our preaching and writing.

The Place

The Bible identifies Hell as a *place*. Luke records the words of an individual in Hell as he pleads from a place of torment (Luke 16:27-28).

Peter declares, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell . . ." (II Peter 2:4).

John says, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them . . ." (Rev. 20:13-15).

The Portrait

Luke 16:19-31 provides a detailed account of a man in Hell and gives us insight into the horror, hopelessness and helplessness of those there.

Consider the rich man's *daily merriment* (v. 19). He enjoyed the fine things of life. To him life consisted of things and pleasures. Every day was a banquet.

Consider the rich man's *dying moment* (v. 22b). The Bible simply says, "... the rich man also died, and was buried." Barnes notes that wealth does not secure one from death. The rich, as well as the poor, go down to the grave.

Consider the rich man's *described*

misery (vv. 23-25). Hell is a place of *punishment*. The man cries out that he is tormented in the flame. Hell is a place of *pain*.

Barnes says, "The suffering of the wicked in hell will be indescribably great . . . Remember that all this is but a representation of the pains of the damned, and that this will have no intermission day or night, but will continue from year to year, and age to age, without any end . . ."

The *permanence* of Hell adds immeasurably to the torment. There is no possibility of ever getting out. Ryle contends, "Once in Hell, men are in Hell forever."

The *partition* that separates man from God is one of the devastating things about Hell. Lenski says, "The sense of the statement is that death decides forever, it is either Heaven or Hell."

Barnes concludes, "There will never be any escape from those gloomy regions. There is a gulf fixed—fixed, not movable. Nor can any of the damned beat a pathway across this gulf to the world of holiness."

Consider the rich man's *desired mercy* (v. 24). He wanted Lazarus, the beggar, to come and put a drop of water on his tongue in order to cool it.

Consider the rich man's *disturbing memory* (v. 25). He was challenged to remember that in his lifetime he had lived sumptuously. One of the horrors of Hell is the ability to remember what one had and what might have been had they responded to the call of God.

Consider the rich man's *deadly mistake* (v. 30). He disbelieved, disregarded, despised and disobeyed the writings of Moses.

Barnes says, "God gives us sufficient warning to prepare for death. He has sent his Word, his servants, his Son; he warns us by His Spirit and his providence; by the entreaties of our friends and by the death of sinners . . ."

Consider the *divine message* to the rich man (vv. 27-30). He requested that someone be sent to warn his five brothers lest they end up like he did. He was reminded that his brothers had the writings of Moses and the prophets. If they would not believe them, they would not believe if someone returned from the dead and told them.

Barnes concludes, "God will give us nothing farther to warn us. No dead man will come to life to tell us of what he has seen. If he did, we would not believe him."

The Population

The Bible gives a comprehensive list of those who will populate Hell in I Corinthians 6:9-12, Galatians 5:19-21 and Revelation 21:8.

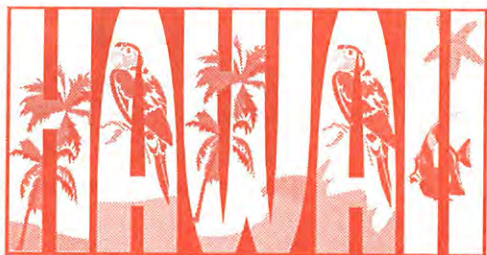
What about you? Are you a believer? Have you placed your faith in the finished work of Christ for salvation? God has given His Son, the Scriptures and His Spirit to bring men to Christ. He will give nothing else. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

March 2001

- 10 Arizona District Association
- 14-17 Georgia State Association
- 15-17 Illinois State Association
- 25-28 Mexico Arbitration Committee

A small boy's investment in missions paid big dividends.

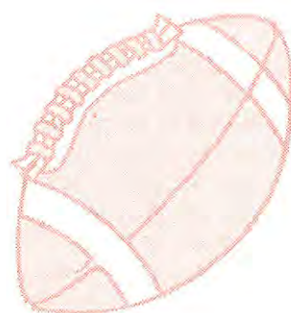


, an Offering

and

JFL

By John Hollis



I just finished signing scores of JFL certificates in preparation for our Junior Football League banquet. I, along with other coaches, worked with 100 boys this year. There were three football teams (6th, 7th and 8th grade) in our program here in Effingham, Illinois. In the last 10 years I have been assistant coach, defensive coach, head coach, offensive coordinator for all three teams, and president and vice-president of the JFL organization.

A few weeks ago we held our 10th Annual JFL (Junior Football League) Sunday at Crossroads FWB Church where I pastor. Ten players attended the first one we held. This year, 150 guests attended. Our son Johnny, a senior at Free Will Baptist Bible College, was our special speaker. Fourteen came forward to pray during the invitation.

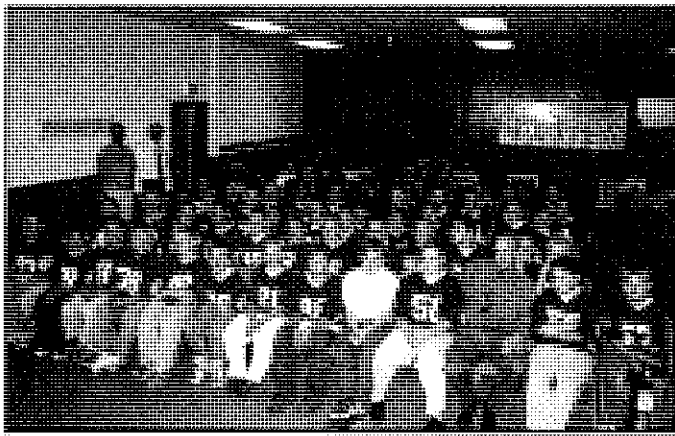
Over the years we have seen players, parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters of players come to Christ.

Coaches and players unfamiliar with church have heard the gospel message for the first time.

In these JFL years I have seen my own sons, Johnny and Jared, and others from our church school participate and excel. I have influenced the JFL organization to discontinue Sunday games and encouraged game/team prayer and clean-up of coaches' and players' vocabulary. It has given me opportunities to share the gospel with teams year after year.

Each season "costs" 10 weeks, three hours a night Monday-Thursday, and 10-hour days on Saturdays. I also have the privilege of being on the sidelines with players and coaches for the local high school varsity games on Friday nights, and Freshman and Sophomore games as I am able. I also serve as a liaison between JFL, high school and parents.

Yes, we set another attendance record this year for our



The JFL boys all came to church.

young church with 224 present on JFL Sunday. Our ladies decorated the church with football decor. Every boy was awarded a certificate and homemade cookies. More importantly, they were shown and told that they were loved.

How did this all come about? It is all interwoven back to when this pastor/coach was a small boy in a mission church. It is amazing how that giving to missions comes back to you. As new residents of South Roxana, Illinois, my parents were excited about a new Free Will Baptist church being started by Brother Wallace Malone.

As a small boy I recall a plea from our pastor to give to a new work in Hawaii. We did not have much as a family or small church, but we gave. I remember giving to this far-away work myself.

Years later, God called my own family to start a Free Will Baptist church in Effingham. At the same time a military family (Robertsons) in Hawaii was preparing to move back home to Illinois near Effingham. Mike's wife and children began to attend the Free Will Baptist church in Hawaii pastored by Brother Luther Sanders. As a result, Mike and most of his children were saved in that church.

The Robertsons came home before we opened the Free Will Baptist church in Effingham and became involved in an Independent Baptist church and Christian school. At first they turned us down as far as helping in the new work we had begun. Later, they visited, then became a very faithful part of our church.



Johnny Hollis speaks at JFL Sunday 2000.

Mike serves as a church board member, Sunday School teacher, song leader and treasurer. His wife, Pat, was instrumental in helping get our Christian school started, and she teaches in our church and school. Yes, the gift given by a little boy to a mission in Hawaii has returned great dividends, but it doesn't stop there.

Mr. (Sgt.) Robertson hired back into the military working as a civilian and worked in different places around the world. Because he would be gone for weeks, sometimes months at a time, he wanted his young son, Anthony, to be occupied and supported by a male figure.

He enrolled him in the Park District Flag Football program. Mike asked me to attend games and support Anthony in this activity. He hoped it would help fill the void of his absence.

Now that our family would be involved and going to games, I enrolled our oldest son, Johnny, and later Jared, in the same program. I became an assistant coach. This was my first involvement in any type of program like this.



Some gave their hearts to God.

As the boys grew older, they moved into the full contact Junior Football League. That is how I came to have a great family in our mission work and record attendance each year on JFL Sunday.

A little boy giving to a far away mission never dreamed there would be any connection to his life's work as a home missionary, pastor and coach. God's work and ways are amazing! Isn't it something how He moved the William Hollis family at the right time, Brother Malone started a Free Will Baptist church, Brother Sanders influenced the Robertson family, and brought it all together. I may soon retire from coaching but will never forget this and other events God has wrought through missions and football. Aloha! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend John Hollis pastors Crossroads Free Will Baptist Church in Effingham, Illinois.

Censorship and the Christian

By Paul Harrison



Turn the television set on any evening and you can see couples engaging in various levels of love-making. According to one study, at a rate of 13 to 1, these scenes present non-married lovers.¹ Any night will also do for viewing violence. The Entertainment Research Group reported that among all major releases, including G and PG rated movies, 62% featured violent fight scenes, and 39% showed "graphic deaths."²

The language on the tube generally fits the scenes depicted, but sometimes writers inject profanity for no apparent reason. Michael Medved observed: "the Hollywood establishment inserts vile speech in nearly all such projects [comedies, romances, or adventure movies] without rhyme, reason, or proper warning to the public."³

Many video stores have backrooms displaying "mature" material where basically anything goes. The

same is true of printed matter. Nothing seems to be off-limits, for this is America, the land of the free.

Our national indulgence in free speech and press has carried with it devastating results. Family life has suffered. Public morals have declined. Ozzie and Harriet families, once common, are now the exception.

Undeniable Links

Like cigarette manufacturers, many media moguls deny any connection between the content of America's intake and societal problems. Common sense, however, points to a direct connection. Referring to studies that link violent pornography and actual violence, Charles Peters said: "This strikes me as about as surprising as the news that hungry men want to eat."⁴

In the 1891 obscenity trial *United States v. Harman*, Moses Harman was convicted for publishing *Lucifer*,

the Light-Bearer, an expose of sexual perversions.

In that case Judge Philips wrote: "No ordinary mind can subject itself to the repeated reading and contemplation of such subjects and language without the risk of becoming indurated to all sense of modesty in speech and chastity in thought. The appetite for such literature increases with the feeding. The more it is pandered to, the more insatiable its craving for something yet more vicious in taste."⁵

What the judge asserted of literature applies to every medium. As society grapples with the problem, different solutions have been offered. Boycotts of sponsors of offensive programming have been launched. V-Chips can block some programming. Parents can turn off anything they find offensive.

Recently a group of leaders wrote "An Appeal to Hollywood." Signed by over 70 individuals, including Jimmy

Carter, Gerald Ford, William Bennett, Norman Schwarzkopf, Naomi Judd and Os Guinness, the document called on media executives "to develop a new voluntary code of conduct," one aimed at "renewing our culture and making our media environment more healthy for our society and safer for our children."⁶

The "C" Word

It is interesting that on this subject, almost everyone avoids any suggestion of censorship. The universal opinion among those who address this topic seems to be that we must be open to all sorts of solutions except any that would include any form of censorship. Propose what you will, but freedom of expression must be preserved.

What is avoided as a plague may be the closest thing we have to a cure. Censorship is not a dirty word. Perversions of print and film, gratuitous violence, offensive language—these misguided expressions of freedom can be avoided by outlawing such material.

We've been told the problem is insoluble, but in reality, it's not as complicated as we've been led to believe. The law can be our best friend here, and I suggest we employ it.

It is only right that government be involved in policing the marketplace. It is government's responsibility to protect. The government, the Apostle Paul wrote, "is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he [the ruler] does not bear the sword for nothing" (Rom. 13:4). In other words, the government must make determinations as to what is good and what is bad, and then encourage the one and discourage the other.

Objection 1: Extremism

Whenever anyone suggests censorship, opponents present a number of objections. These objections should be taken seriously, so let's look at some of them. First, there is the charge of extremism. "Only ignorant, right-wing, fundamentalists would ever suggest such a thing," they say.

In addition to the irrelevance of this *ad hominem* charge, it simply is not true. Plato believed in censorship, calling freedom a "heady draught."⁷ Blaise Pascal said: "It is not good to be

too free."⁸

Samuel Johnson, the great essayist and philologist, said: "Every society has a right to preserve public peace and order, and therefore has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency."⁹

In our time, Irving Kristol, co-editor of the *Public Interest* and columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* favors censorship, as does Charles Peters, editor of *Washington Monthly*.¹⁰

Charles Krauthammer, editor of the *New Republic*, wrote in *Time*: "Many are prepared to make expression a bit less free in order to make their community a bit more whole. . . ."¹¹ Many great thinkers have considered censorship not only a viable option to curtail society's tendency toward corruption, but the very solution itself.

Objection 2: First Amendment

A second objection says censorship violates the First Amendment. The First Amendment, adopted in 1791, says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

In their most literal and expansive meaning, these words would secure freedom for any speech, including screaming "fire" in a crowded theater. We should ask, however, what the founders meant.

In 1792 fourteen states had ratified the Constitution. Thirteen of these fourteen provided for the prosecution of libel, and all fourteen made blasphemy or profanity statutory crimes.¹² At the very time these states accepted the First Amendment guaranteeing free speech, they also kept on their books statutes prohibiting saying or writing certain things.

With this in mind, United States Supreme Court Justice William Brennan said: "In light of this history, it is apparent that the unconditional phrasing of the First Amendment was not intended to protect every utterance."¹³

Again, in *United States v. Harmon*, Judge Phillips wrote: "It is a radical misconception of the scope of the constitutional protection to indulge the belief

that a person may print and publish *ad libitum* [to his liking], any matter, whatever the substance or language, without accountability to law. Liberty in all its forms and assertions in this country is regulated by law. It is not an unbridled license. Where vituperation or licentiousness begins, the liberty of press ends."¹⁴

Such restrictions on the First Amendment are as old as that amendment. The Supreme Court has always allowed limitations on speech and press. We've always had laws against perjury, libel, incitement to violence, divulging military secrets and threats. We outlaw TV ads for cigarettes, and we don't allow religious indoctrination in public schools.

If our freedom of speech and press is not absolute, what was the purpose of the First Amendment? Justice Brennan answered: "The protection given speech and press was fashioned to assure unfettered interchange of ideas for the bringing about of political and social changes desired by the people."¹⁵

Brennan cited the Supreme Court case *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, which stated: "There are certain well-defined and narrowly limited classes of speech, the prevention and punishment of which have never been thought to raise any Constitutional problem.

"These include the lewd and obscene It has been well observed that such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality. . . ."¹⁶

He concluded: "Obscenity is not within the area of constitutionally protected freedom of speech or press."¹⁷ Simply put, the First Amendment does not prohibit censorship. Only in the last 50 years or so have the courts seen such a prohibition.

Objection 3: Complexity

A third argument against censorship is that it involves too many complexities to work. Who's to draw the line of what's legitimate expression and what's illegitimate?

This problem of administration of

censorship is more imaginary than real. Judge Robert Bork in his book *Slouching towards Gomorrah* includes a chapter titled "The Case for Censorship."

He writes: "Is censorship really as unthinkable as we all seem to assume? That it is unthinkable is a very recent conceit. From the earliest colonies on this continent over 300 years ago, and for about 175 years of our existence as a nation, we endorsed and lived with censorship. We do not have to imagine what censorship might be like; we know from experience."¹⁸

We also do not have to search for a definition as to what should be allowed and what outlawed. In a most tidy fashion, Justice Brennan wrote: "[t]he standard for judging obscenity . . . is whether, to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interest."¹⁹

The problem is not that our courts cannot make the fine distinctions called for in order to censor material. The problem is they will not. They have decided that individual freedom must not be curtailed.

A 1948 Supreme Court case dealing with the publication of scurrilous literature makes this crystal clear. In that case, Justice Stanley Reed concluded: "Though we can see nothing of any possible value to society in these magazines, they are as much entitled to the protection of free speech as the best of literature."²⁰

It was not that the Court could not judge the value or lack thereof of the literature in question. Rather, having made the obvious determination that it lacked value, they refused to impose that judgment.

One of our root problems has been to elevate freedom to a place it does not deserve. Freedom is not a virtue, though we have lauded it as such. It is rather a form of power which must be wielded in a virtuous manner if it is to issue in good. As a ruler can use his power in a wicked way, so we can use freedom wickedly.

We may sing, "Let Freedom Ring," but we may better sing, "Let Virtue Ring." Freedom may indeed be needed, but it is not enough. It must be coupled with right choices, or, like so

many of God's gifts, it becomes the instrument of our downfall. Jesus did not say that freedom leads to truth but rather that truth leads to freedom.

Christian Response

So what can we do? First, we should humble ourselves and pray that this disease in our land may find a cure (II Chron. 7:14). While we surely must strategize and plan and do a hundred other things, these will only be effective if blessed by God. Remember, the heart of the king is in the hand of the LORD, and He turns it however He pleases (Prov. 21:1).

Next, avoid trashy literature, corrupt programming and offensive movies. Carrying depravity in our bosoms, we easily speak against things which we then proceed to practice (Rom. 2:21). We must realize that to condemn a media production and then indulge in it is hypocritical.

Finally, we can be active in seeking censorship of the media. We can write our leaders and pen well-crafted articles, urging officials to take action. We can discuss these issues in the market place. Persuading people is the key to making the needed changes, and persuasion comes primarily through well thought out words.

We can also enter the arenas where relevant decisions are made. We should encourage our young people to enter the fields of law and politics and media. Having entered these arenas, they may find themselves to be voices crying in the wilderness, but their Christ-dedicated efforts can make a difference. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Paul Harrison pastors Cross Timbers Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He serves on the Commission for Theological Integrity.

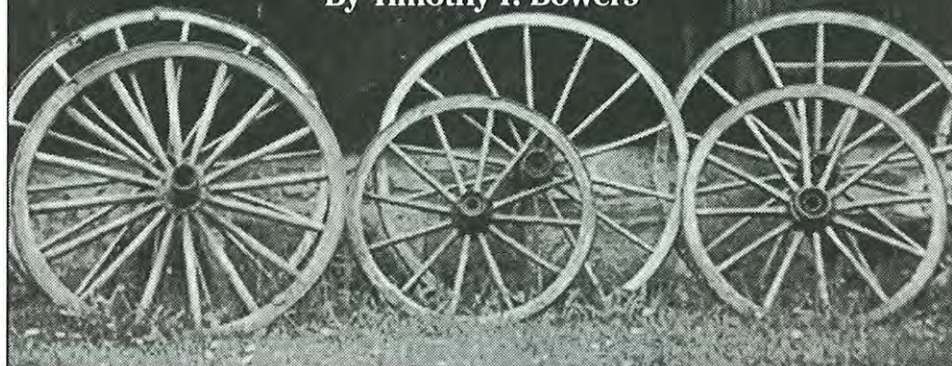
Endnotes

1. Michael Medved, *Hollywood versus America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992), p. 112.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
4. Quoted in "Political Scientist Calls for Common Sense in Pornography Issue," by Reo M. Christenson, in *American Family Association Journal* (Nov./Dec. 1998), p. 19.
5. Quoted in Rochelle Gurstein, *The Repeal of Reticence: A History of America's Culture* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), p. 52.
6. "An Appeal to Hollywood," *Light* (Nashville: The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Winter 2000):5.
7. Plato, *The Republic*, in *The Great Dialogues of Plato*, trans. W. H. D. Rouse (New York: A Mentor Book, 1956), p. 361.
8. Blaise Pascal, *Pensees*, trans. A. J. Kraitsheimer (New York: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 45.
9. Quoted in James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1946), p. 268.
10. "Political Scientist," p. 20.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.
12. *Landmark Decisions of the United States Supreme Court*, eds. Maureen Harrison and Steve Gilbert, Landmark Decision Series (San Diego, Calif.: Excellent Books, 1991), 1:26.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
14. Quoted in Gurstein, p. 184.
15. Quoted in *Landmark*, p. 27.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Robert Bork, *Slouching towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996), p. 141.
19. Quoted in Gurstein, p. 250.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

It began with teens cruising the countryside in wagons.

Traditions

By Timothy P. Bowers



Alvin and Ethel

In the early part of the 20th century in the upstate of South Carolina, an eager group of teens cruising the countryside in a couple of horse-drawn wagons were looking for other teens to attend an all-day camp meeting. In this group was a gangly young fellow named Alvin and a young lady by the name of Ethel.

That day began a loving relationship which the Lord blessed for more than 55 years until Alvin's death in 1982. Their story isn't much different from many others who survived the Great Depression while raising seven children, all the while remaining faithful to their church and their God.

Bobby and Joyce

The story continues in 1956 with a young lady, 16 years old, named Joyce. A sailor named Bobby, home on furlough attending Sunday School, noticed Joyce. The two didn't hit it off at first but soon began dating.

In April 1958, on Joyce's 18th birthday, the couple stood in the living room of a preacher's home and exchanged wedding vows. Those vows have lasted for more than 40 years, and the couple has served the Lord faithfully as pastor and wife for 36 years.

Timothy and Jackie

And finally, there is the story of a

teenage fellow who spotted the "new girl" in church from his seat in the choir loft. At the urging of his friends, when the choir came down, he mustered the courage to sit beside her for the remainder of the service.

A few weeks later, with his voice cracking and palms sweating, he asked the 14-year-old girl named Jackie to go steady. She said, "Yes." Ten years later with voice still cracking but even sweatier palms, he asked Jackie to be his wife. She again said, "Yes." They have been married for almost 10 years.

Rest of the Story

What do these stories have in common? The first couple are my grandparents, the second are my parents, and the third is my wife and me. While putting together a family history, between the moonshiners and the Civil War deserters, I discovered the story of my grandparents finding each other at camp meeting.

My parents met in Sunday School. That is when I realized that my wife and I meeting at church was carrying on of a family tradition.

Alvin and Ethel Bowers, my grandparents were faithful Christians. They believed in the sanctity of marriage. They were committed to each other, to their church and to God. My parents also have a committed relationship to each other and to the Lord.

I have learned from them to trust

God and seek His will in my life. These are the traditions I am most thankful for—commitment and faith in God. I hope that the traditions of faithfulness and longevity are also repeated in the third generation marriage.

In a time when people meet and marry so quickly, and with divorce at such an alarming rate, the time has come for Christians to take stock, to look at the choices they make when selecting partners. With the exception of places like Wal-Mart, if you want to buy shoes or furniture, you go to either a shoe store or furniture store.

If Christians are looking to find mates, they should be looking in a Christian mate store. No, the "Christian Mate-Mart" doesn't exist yet, so other solutions must be found. To some, including me and my family, that is the local church. For others, it is a youth camp or maybe a Christian college.

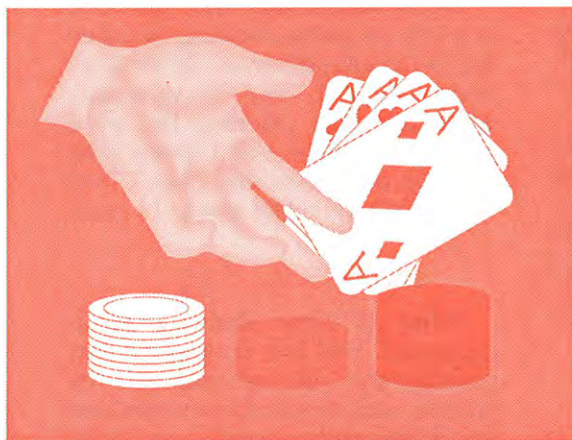
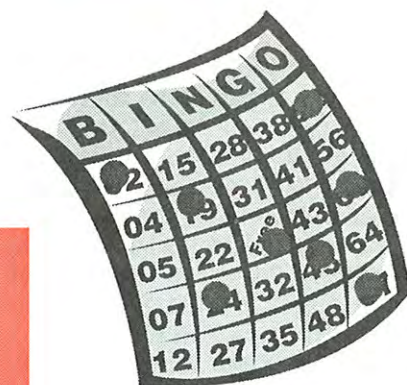
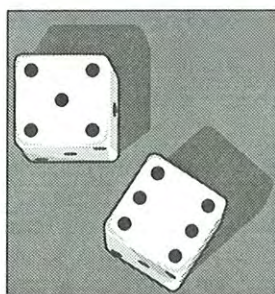
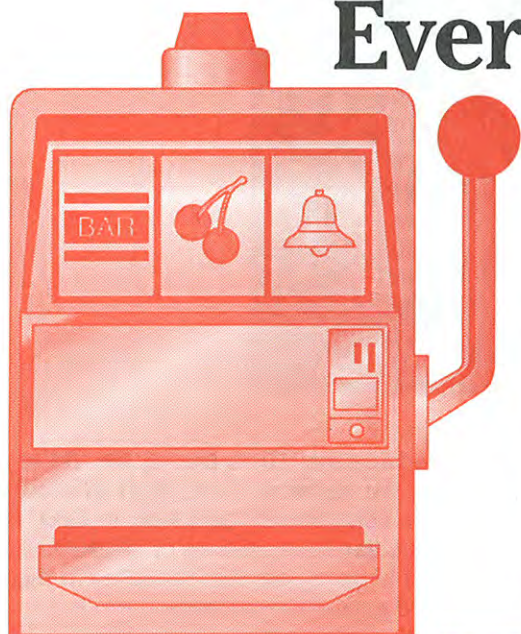
We must remember that it was Christ who gave the example of what love really is. A better picture of lasting love has never been known. Choose a mate who exemplifies Christ, and you will have laid the cornerstone for a lifelong love. ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Timothy P. Bowers is the youngest son of Reverend Bobby Bowers who pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina.

Gambling steals from every pocket, takes from every home.

Somebody Wins, Everybody Loses

By Jonathan Yandell



I was 3:30 Tuesday morning, a time when most sane people are sleeping, but I was up and so was Las Vegas. I was traveling with friends, one of whom said he knew where the best and cheapest breakfast in Nevada could be found—at a casino restaurant. My friend was right.

The breakfast was outstanding, and the price was right because he paid. To get to the restaurant, however, we had to walk through the casino and what I saw there was even more memorable than that thick slab of ham, three eggs and toast.

It was my first time in a casino. As we walked past the slots, I was amazed to see a few dozen bleary-eyed folks cranking those one-armed bandits two hours before sunrise. Not being a gambler myself (I learned my lesson years ago when I lost 20 hard-earned and much-needed dollars at a rigged carnival game), I was intrigued by the sight.

Gambling's Other Side

After breakfast, we walked around a bit and what I observed I will never forget. There amid the lights and mu-

sic I saw the other side of the gambling industry. Smiles were nowhere to be found. Instead, weary, angry people plugged coins into machines almost mindlessly, some playing three or four machines at once.

They alternately sucked on cigarettes or cigars and swigged their beer or cocktail while sitting mesmerized by the spinning wheels, hoping for a payoff. Several openly cursed their losses.

So this is Las Vegas? I asked myself. *Where are all the happy people I've seen on television? Where are the big winners? Who are these people who look like they haven't showered or*

shaved for three days?

I shook my head as we headed out the door to continue our trip. It seemed to me that the "city that never sleeps" needed a nap—a long one—and a reality check.

Everything I saw there reinforced my long-held conviction that gambling is a dead-end street. Sure, somebody wins, but in the long run everybody loses. I've known many gamblers and even talked to a few big winners, but when all is accounted for, everybody ends up a loser.

Today gambling is more popular than ever. With the advent of state lotteries, the social stigma of gambling has been removed. In fact, we don't even call it gambling anymore, it's "gaming."

Sounds innocuous, even innocent, doesn't it? But in truth, gambling—even for occasional recreation—dishonors God. Let me explain.

Traps the Greedy

First, what the Bible calls "covetousness" (an insatiable desire for more) is at the heart of gambling. The dream is to hit it big and be the star of one of those overnight rags-to-riches stories.

Yet, the Bible teaches that "Those who want to become rich bring temptation to themselves and are caught in a trap. They want many foolish and harmful things that ruin and destroy people. The love of money causes all kinds of evil" (I Tim. 6:9,10a NCV). The facts bear this out.

Wherever gambling goes, misery and crime follow. Studies show that when gambling is introduced into a city or state, divorces increase,¹ domestic violence and child abuse spiral,² the number of compulsive gamblers skyrockets,³ and crime in general—such as theft and prostitution—rises as well.⁴

The love of money gives birth to all sorts of evil. It's no wonder God included "You shall not covet . . ." (Ex. 20:17a NKJV) in the Ten Commandments.

Exploits the Vulnerable

Second, gambling exploits the most vulnerable members of our society. Scripture warns us, "Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor" (Zech. 7:10a

NKJV). Yet, gambling preys on the poor without mercy. Study after study demonstrates that it is the poor who lose the greatest share of their income to gambling.

Duke University researchers found that five percent of lottery players account for half the money spent on ticket sales. People in that five percent spend an average of \$3,500 per year on lotteries.⁵ State sponsored lotteries are essentially a tax on the poor and ignorant who believe the slick commercials that entice them to try and scratch their way to wealth.

But wait, someone objects, the state lotteries and taxes on gambling winnings help our schools! Hardly. California's state lottery was sold to the voters on that premise, yet years later, our public schools continue to perform poorly in deteriorating and overcrowded facilities. Somehow the promises never pan out.

The reality is that for every dollar the state receives in gambling revenues, it spends at least three dollars in increased criminal-justice, social-welfare and other expenses.⁶

Distorts Christian Stewardship

In addition, gambling grossly distorts Christian stewardship. The Bible indicates that we will one day give an account of how we have invested our time, talent and treasures (see Matt. 25:14-30).

Are we prepared to explain our contributions to an industry that is built upon the very vices scripture condemns? Are we willing to defend the waste of God's resources on our covetous desires? How are we going to justify even a recreational involvement in an industry built upon lies and exploitation?

I've found that Satan often packages his most destructive enticements in shimmering paper and golden bows, and I know the temptation to open such a pretty package is great. But the glitter on the outside is only a thin covering on the corruption inside. Yes, somebody wins, but in the end everyone loses.

However, there is one sure thing in life, and it's not a gamble. Jesus said, ". . . lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where

your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:20,21 NKJV).

Want to be a winner? Invest yourself in the things that last. Give Jesus Christ your heart, your life and your resources. The payoff on that investment is out of this world, guaranteed! ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jonathan Yandell pastors Garden Grove Free Will Baptist Church in Garden Grove, California.

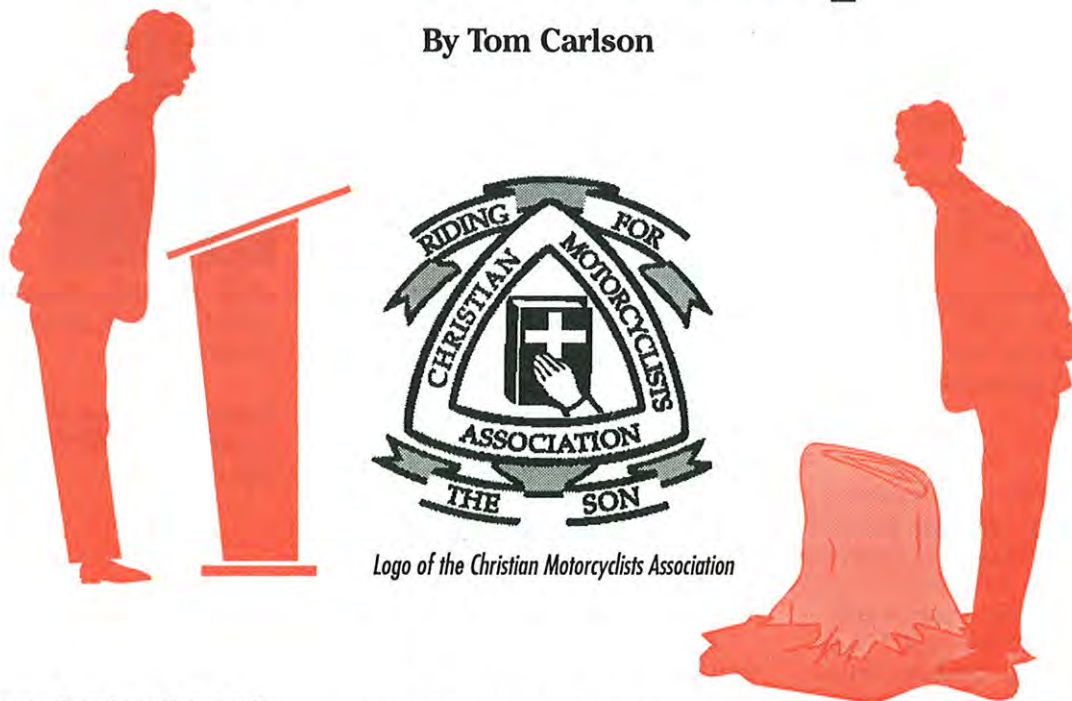
Reprinted by permission from *Rejoice*, publication of Garden Grove Free Will Baptist Church, October 15, 2000, issue.

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1. Mississippi State Health Department, Bureau of Public Health Statistics, "Vital Statistics Mississippi, 1994."
2. Curran, Jr., Maryland Attorney General J. Joseph, "The House Never Loses and Maryland Cannot Win: Why Casino Gaming Is a Bad Idea," October 16, 1995, pp. 32-33.
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5. "Lotteries Exploit Poor," *The Pastor's Weekly Briefing*, March 26, 1999, p. 1, quoting from a Duke University study.
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From an Oak Pulpit to a Tree Stump

By Tom Carlson



Logo of the Christian Motorcyclists Association

The grill was heating, the cook breaking 10 dozen eggs in preparation for scrambling, while two helpers prepared pancake mix and opened packages of bacon, all in readiness for Sunday morning breakfast. This was the last day of the motorcycle camp-out.

Sunday Bikers

A few steps away the preacher, in a voice that reached across the campgrounds, shouted, "Rise and shine! Church starts in 15 minutes."

Shortly, there came the sounds of tents zipping open as sleepy-eyed bikers slowly made their way to picnic tables where the service was about to begin.

They joined in as best as they could to the chorus, "*This Is The Day The Lord Hath Made*," followed by a verse each of "*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*" and "*Amazing Grace*." The message was short and to the point, for bikers aren't used to being in church.

"Just as you see that the best care is given to your bike by taking it to the best mechanic and putting the best fuel and oil in it, so you have another important decision to make. This is about your personal life.

"There is a Master Mechanic for your problems and He has the tools to change the way you run. That mechanic is Jesus. He has the parts to make your life worth living."

What! someone says, A preacher at a motorcycle rally on Sunday? Not in church and in the pulpit?

Early Traditional Ministry

I pastored 32 years, and my wife Gloria worked in Sunday School and Woman's Auxiliary. Eighteen of those years were spent pastoring Free Will Baptist churches in Missouri and working in local and state associations. The Lord led us to Idaho where for 13 years we pastored the Jerome FWB Church.

I've had missionaries (home and foreign) in our churches and encour-

aged members to support missions both with prayer and finances. I admire our missionaries for their dedication to God in going to the highways and hedges, but I never thought I'd trade my oak pulpit for a tree stump.

Big Change Coming

Feeling that my time was completed in Jerome, I was confident that another church would call me. I contacted several pastors and state coordinators, but there were no responses. I continued to pray.

I have ridden a motorcycle most of my driving life. One day while returning home on the cycle, the Lord impressed Luke 14:16-24 on my mind. The thought being, "It is time to use this motorcycle for God on the highways."

Since the Free Will Baptist denomination has no outreach program in this area, I searched for help. I soon learned of such an organization, the Christian Motorcyclists Association. It's

a national organization whose purpose is to reach motorcycle riders for Jesus.

What about my oak pulpit and my suits? What about the comfort of the heated/air-conditioned churches? God had changes in mind that surprised us.

New Colors

As Gloria and I went to motorcyclists' chapter meetings, rallies, rides and camp-outs, we found no three-piece suits, nor four walls with a steeple on top. Instead there were black leather jackets, vests and chaps. The vest and jackets all had a patch on the back.

The patch (also known as colors) is an insignia identifying the organization to which you belong. There are exclusive motorcycle clubs, outlaw clubs, elite clubs and local state clubs.

We acquired our vest and Christian Motorcyclists Association patch. It reads, "Riding for the Son." Where do we wear our colors? Everywhere! Our colors identify us as Christians. The other riders are always watching to see if we walk the walk and talk the talk.

It takes time to gain the confidence of cycle groups. It took two years of groundwork and demonstrating Christ's love for this motorcycle club before we were permitted to have a church service with them.

We were excited. After eight years of wide-open spaces and preaching from tree stumps, motorcycle church attendance has grown from four to an average of 52. In this rally, two were saved and 17 rededicated their lives to Jesus.

Earning Respect

We work with several organizations at the same time and with riders of all brands of motorcycles. Some clubs took as long as five years

before giving us permission to have services with them.

We saw the directors of two organizations saved, a lady healed of cancer and a director answer a call to the ministry. There have been numerous salvation decisions and rededications. This is an almost untouched mission field.

Nowhere have I found an oak pul-



Tom and Gloria Carlson with their 1993 Gold Wing Honda motorcycle.

pit, but everywhere I find God's grace and power to change bikers' lives. He knows their hurts and supplies their special needs.

These weekend riders are guys and gals from all walks of life who would not set foot in a traditional church for anything or anyone. From the roughest to the most sophisticated, we have gradually gained their respect and earned the right to share Jesus with them.

Gloria and I travel as many as 1,400 miles a weekend (sometimes a three-day weekend). Most of those converted live in areas with no Free Will Baptist churches. Which means there are no arrangements through Free Will Baptist Home Missions for financial help. But this is a great mission field that's already white unto harvest.

We pay our own expenses, which can go as high as \$250 for a weekend with registration, camping fees and travel. A new motorcycle can cost as much as some cars. By the way, we camp in a tent to save on motels.

Please pray for our ministry, for our safety and financial needs. You can reach us at:

Tom Carlson
831 East Ave C
Jerome, ID 83338
Phone: 208-324-4685

If you would like to verify our ministry, please contact my pastor.

Rev. Gene Kissinger
509 East Ave I
Jerome, ID 83338
Phone: 208-324-6924

Pastor Kissinger has an effective ministry at the Jerome FWB Church. He is aware of our ministry among motorcycle riders.

We're "Riding for the Son." ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Tom Carlson is an ordained Free Will Baptist minister who lives in Jerome, Idaho.



Motorcycle camp in Stanley, Idaho.

Has biblical separation lost its appeal to 21st-century Christians?

Why Can't We Be Separate?

By Stanley K. Konopinski

Recently, I was reminded of a friend who told me of his future plans. He said, "Stan, I am tired of this world. I'm tired of the way the world treats God, and I'm tired of the way they treat God's people, so this is what I plan to do. I am going to purchase five acres in the country away from everyone, and live out the rest of my life in close communion with God. Just God and Me."

And that's exactly what he did. He purchased five acres in the country, hired an earthmoving company to build a road from the main highway and clear an area for his mobile home, dug a well, installed a septic tank, and began to live out his life isolated from society. He still worked, but when his eight hours were done, he retreated to his domain.

When we speak of biblical separation, this is not what we mean.

Biblical Separation

Paul, having a true pastor's heart, was concerned about his young church. He knew that association with unbelievers might not cause immediate sinful living, but it would cause problems in the future.

He knew that these associations would (1) sap the foundations of their religion, (2) dampen their zeal for God, (3) cool their fervency for the Holy Spirit (4) change their attitudes toward God to indifference (5) and lead new believers to relapse into the world from which they had escaped.

Paul wrote a strong command in II Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

Pastors have not placed enough emphasis on this principle as we should. Paul laid the foundation for this prohibition, "Do not be yoked together

with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?" (II Cor. 6:14-15 NIV).

Paul told them that there can be no profitable *fellowship* between the righteous and the unrighteous, as there can be no *communication* between light and darkness. Believers and non-believers are subjects of two opposite kingdoms. They have different principles. They aim at quite different ends. They walk on different paths.

Modern Christians are so fearful of standing out in a crowd and being scorned by society that we have allowed our testimonies to become hidden and of little value to the Lord. We have not demonstrated II Corinthians 5:17 in the work place, the community or the family circle. That new creature Paul said we had become is not seen by the world, and that is exactly what he knew would happen.

Observations

Here are some observations from the workplace, the community and the family circle.

Our conversation remains the same. For fear of being labeled, we use the same spicy-dicey words that make our conversations acceptable to others, and we still converse about the same topics. While we cannot avoid conversing with unbelievers, we should never participate in evil conversations, nor use the same vocabulary they use.

The people we choose to closely associate with remain the same. We live and work in close proximity with unbelievers, but we are not to choose them for our best friends, nor are we to spend unnecessary amounts of time with them.

We are to "come out" from among the workers of iniquity, and separate ourselves from their sinful pleasures. Again, for fear of being labeled, we continue to chum with individuals who injure our Christian walk.

Our dress codes remain the same. Modesty is an important word in the Christian's vocabulary. Believers need to prayerfully consider what is appropriate to wear, regardless whether we are young believers or older believers.

The music we listen to remains the same. A wife asked me, "Brother Stan, my husband has been saved for a good while now. Should he still be listening to that hard metal music? Why is he not listening to music that glorifies Christ?"

This had become a point of contention for the couple. They had spent hours in conversation about it. The bottom line is, our listening habits need to change.

Why Can't We Separate?

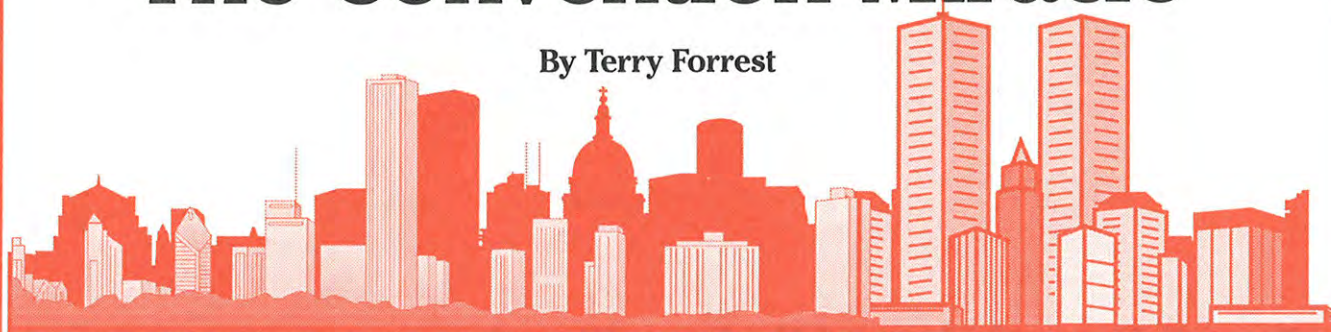
When I was stationed in Brindisi, Italy, (while serving in the U.S. Air Force), I learned that there was a time in church history when the "Appian Way," which was the road from the Italian coasts to Rome, was lined with crosses. Crosses that held the bodies of God's people. They determined it was better to suffer and die, and take a stand, than conform to the ways of the world.

When will the modern church learn this lesson and begin to separate ourselves from the world by our conversation, by our associations, by our way of dress, by our music? It's a question that each believer needs to address and respond to according to the Word of God. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Stanley Konopinski pastors Trinity Free Will Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The Convention Miracle

By Terry Forrest



In 1974 we took a group of young people from First FWB Church in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, to Wichita, Kansas, for the Free Will Baptist national convention. They wanted to travel and have a good time. We had asked the church to provide transportation. They did—a new van. My wife Donna and I and another couple had worked with the youth for months to raise money.

We were placed in separate hotels by the housing people. The kids didn't come to the service Tuesday night. I talked to them Wednesday, reminding them that I wanted them all in the Wednesday night service.

That evening they showed up, dressed to kill. We sat on the arena floor with a couple of our kids while the rest sat in the balcony. When the lights went down to introduce our missionaries, those in the balcony disappeared. My disappointment must have shown.

After the service, Donna asked, "What are you going to do?"

I said that the Bible says, "In everything give thanks," so we stopped in the parking lot and gave thanks that the kids had left, then we went to our motel.

The red message light on our phone was blinking when we got there. The message was from one of our older kids. We called and heard screaming in the background. He said, "Brother Terry, we need you here right now!" Then he hung up.

We rushed the five miles or so to the hotel, expecting the worst. I took the stairs to the fifth floor while Donna took the elevator with our two children. When I came into the hallway, two of our kids met me, crying, took me by the arm and led me to the room where all kinds of agony could be heard. They still had not explained what was happening.

I then learned that the girl who was seated by us during the service had conveyed our disappointment to the rest and they had become convicted that, in view of all our efforts to bring them, they had not honored our one request. What began as remorse turned into repentance. Repentance turned into confession and confession turned into revival.

Some were saved, some were rededicated, one answered the call to preach, two decided they would go to Free Will Baptist Bible College, others began to pray for lost family members. We continued until about 2:00 a.m. In the course of the evening, several of the young people who had never heard anyone shout in church were shouting in the room and the halls.

This sparked a revival that basically continued throughout our nine years of ministry at that church. Many of their friends and family members were saved as we learned the real truth of, "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you," . . . which is my life verse. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Terry Forrest serves as director of lifetime learning and coordinator of pastoral training at Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee.

Powell Named Home Missions Director



ANTIOCH, TN—Reverend Larry Powell (62), a three-time home missionary has been named general director of the Home Missions Department. The Georgia native was elected in December 2000 at the board meeting and relocated to Tennessee in late January. He succeeds Trymon Messer who will retire in May.

In an article published in the January-February 2001 issue of *AIM*, Powell said, "Our backdoor is a foreign missions field. The world is coming to the shores of America. We don't need a visa or passport to engage these foreigners in conversation about Jesus Christ."

Powell said as he began his duties with the Home Missions Department that he plans to emphasize the basics, "Souls for Jesus is our battle cry."

Reverend Powell has served 13 years as a home missionary on three fields. He established a church and Christian school in the Virgin Islands (1967-72), served in Puerto Rico (1973-76) and established a church in McAllen, Texas (1976-87).

In addition to home missionary work, Powell has pastored in Florida, Tennessee and Georgia. He

chaired the Texas and Tennessee State Home Mission Boards, and served on the Board of Trustees at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

He has written a devotional guide for *Depth*. He has been called on frequently to speak in missionary conferences and Bible Conferences.

Brother Powell graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1964 and attended graduate school at Bob Jones University (1964-65).

Converted at age 12, he was ordained to preach in 1960 at age 21. He began pastoring in 1961 and has spent the past 40 years in church planting and church growth.

Larry and Wanda Powell have three children; two sons, Jonathan and Mark, and a daughter, Paige.

Minister Celebrates 50 Years

SPARTANBURG, SC—Reverend Elmer Carter logged 50 years in the ministry by the end of December 2000. The Valley Falls FWB Church in Spartanburg hosted the ministerial celebration for the 73-year-old preacher.

Reverend Carter's son David has pastored the Valley Falls Church 21 years. His grandson Travis, also a minister, serves as the church's youth director.

Elmer Carter, a Tennessee native, has pastored in Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. He was converted at age 21 and began preaching in 1950.

All three of the Carter family ministers preached

during the Sunday morning service.

"Of course, we didn't all preach a full-course sermon," the senior Carter said. He used the same scripture to preach that he did for his first sermon a half-century ago.

Reverend Carter said, "It doesn't seem possible that I've been in the ministry 50 years." He attends First FWB Church in Elizabethton, TN, and does supply preaching for area churches.

Carter's daughter, Dianna, serves as a missionary in Moscow. Another son, Bill, is a microbiologist with the state of Virginia.

Missionary Awarded South Carolina's Highest Honor

COLUMBIA, SC—Governor Jim Hodges presented the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest civilian honor, to 71-year-old Free Will Baptist missionary to India, Carlisle Hanna. The award ceremony took place on November 16, 2000, at the state capitol in Columbia with Reverend Hanna's family present as well as more than 60 pastors and friends.

The idea for the Order of the Palmetto was initiated in 1971 by then Governor John West, and quickly became recognized as the highest honor given by the state.

Brother Hanna received the award as a result of his years of service and dedication to the work of God in India. He was nominated for the award by South Carolina moderator Sherwood Lee, Pastor Buddy Seay, several denominational officials, Senator John Manning and others.

While presenting the Order of the Palmetto to Hanna, Governor Hodges said, "Rev. Hanna has been an humble servant of his faith, his God and his fellow man, and, as such, has been a great ambassador for South Carolina. He is truly deserving of our state's highest honor."

Carlisle Hanna was appointed as a missionary to India in 1951. He began his work in North India going village to village conducting Bible studies and worship

services. He also conducted Bible training schools and retreats.

From his ministry have come pastors, teachers, civil servants and a flourishing hostel outreach for India's children. Since 1972, the Hannas have been the only Free Will Baptist missionaries in-country and responsible for the work in North and South India.

He has worked with relief agencies to dig wells and construct irrigation channels. He introduced the growing of wheat and cattle breeding to provide milk and nourishment for the people.

Marie Hanna, Carlisle's wife, died in April 1998.



Governor Jim Hodges (L) presents award to Carlisle Hanna.

Tennessee Church 'Appreciates' Pastor

ASHLAND CITY, TN—Members of Bethlehem FWB Church in Ashland City set their own time and method to express appreciation for Pastor Randy Corn who has served the congregation since 1995.

One Sunday morning the Children's Church invaded the sanctuary bringing Pastor Corn dozens of handmade cards, a bookstore gift certificate, a dozen roses for his wife and a videotaped interview of the children answering questions about the pastor.

Reverend Corn said, "From that videotape, I learned that according to the Children's Church one of my most important functions is driving the church van."

The next Sunday, the teens expressed their appreciation to Brother Corn. They gave him a gift certificate signed by the entire youth group, as well as a pass to play a round of golf at the Opryland course in Nashville.

The third Sunday at the close of the morning service, the associate pastor announced another special presentation. The adults had conspired with the children who marched down the aisle carrying baskets of presents for the entire Corn family, and a money tree blooming with \$600.

Perhaps the most memorable gift was a print of a painting by East Tennessee artist Lee Roberson depicting a circuit-riding preacher arriving at a country church.

National Convention Announces College Intern Program

ANTIOCH, TN—The Free Will Baptist National Convention is sponsoring a learning program this summer for Free Will Baptist college students. The unique intern program will offer a behind-the-scenes look at convention operations, logistics and organization, according to Dean Jones, convention manager.

The program will allow a selected number of students to work on staff during this year's annual July meeting in Detroit, Michigan. Participants will have opportunity to work in one or more of seven areas: Registration, audio/video production, technical set-up, stage management, exhibition, ushering and publications.

Selected participants will receive pre-convention training and on-the-job experience, as well as room and board during their stay in Detroit on July 12-20.

College students are encouraged to request more information by calling Dean Jones, convention manager, at 615-361-1221 ext. 344.

Delbert Wood Retires at Randall House



Delbert and Wilma Wood

NASHVILLE, TN—Delbert Wood, manager of the printing production department at Randall House Publications for 28 years, retired in late

December, according to Dr. Alton Loveless, general director.

Mr. Wood left a promising career with the U.S. Treasury Department in 1973 to become the denomination's printer. That took a greater step of faith on Delbert's part than some thought, since he took a 50 percent pay cut with

Randall House.

"God has supplied all our needs and much more," Delbert said.

In 1979 Wilma (Mrs. Delbert) Wood began working in the shipping department at Randall House, and later served in the order processing department. She retired in December after 21 years with the national agency.

The Woods plan to spend time with their two daughters and their five grandchildren, travel and fish. Delbert and Wilma are members of Fellowship FWB Church in Antioch.

Mark Trotter, who has worked at Randall House for 24 years, will succeed Mr. Wood as manager of the printing production department.

Dr. Alton Loveless said, "Mr. Trotter has been a steadfast employee for 24 years and is very capable of assuming this new role."



Mark, Angela and Audrey Trotter

Ladies Retreat Attracts 1,353

GOLDSBORO, NC—The 17th annual East Coast Ladies Retreat registered a record 1,353 attendees, according to Vicki Marcum, secretary at Faith FWB Church in Goldsboro where the conference met.

Women from 123 churches gathered for the November 10-11, 2000, meeting. Seventy Free Will Baptist churches cooperated with other local churches for the two-day session.

The conference theme was the "Carousel of Life," based on Jo Jo Moffitt's book, *You Can Have Joy Through the Ups and Downs of Life*. Mrs. Moffitt spoke three times to conferees.

Kim Wolfe, editor of *Beautiful Christian Teen* magazine, also spoke three times. Two women gave testimonials—Gail Barnard, teacher at Bethel Christian Academy and pianist at Bethel FWB Church (Kinston, NC), and Ruth Smith, retreat coordinator and li-

brarian at the host Faith FWB Church.

Vicki Marcum said, "The most important statistic was not the record-breaking attendance but the

fact that three ladies received Christ as Savior during the meeting."

The 2001 retreat will meet November 9-10 at First FWB Church in Raleigh.



Record-breaking attendance at ladies retreat in North Carolina.

Virginia Church Breaks Ground

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA—The Virginia Beach FWB Church expects to be in their new 550-seat sanctuary by early June, according to Pastor J. D. Norris. The congregation literally outgrew its 225-seat sanctuary.

Pastor Norris said, "The Lord has certainly blessed us with phenomenal growth. We've grown from a handful to over 200."

Building Committee chairman Lloyd Dail concurs with Norris, "We're out of room. We need it to serve the congregation. We're overflowing."

The old sanctuary will be turned into a fellowship hall with a full-service kitchen. Sunday School classes will meet in the

old fellowship hall.

Established in 1965 in a Norfolk home, the church purchased 2.8

acres on which to build their first structure which was completed in 1968.



Virginia Beach congregation breaks ground for new sanctuary.

Mexico Arbitration Committee Set

ANTIOCH, TN—During its December 2000 Meeting, the Home Missions Board authorized a five-member group from the Executive Committee to arbitrate between the National Association of Free Will Baptists in Mexico and an Aggrieved Minority regarding release of disputed local church properties.

The five-member group, known as the Mexico Arbitration Committee, will meet with the two parties in Altamira, Tamps., Mexico, on March 26-28.

National Association moderator Carl Cheshier will chair the committee. Other committee members include Nathan Ruble (MO), Gene Norris (MI), Keith Burden (OK) and Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington. J. L. Gore (MS), who was named as an alternate member, will also attend the meeting. Steve Lytle will translate for the committee.

The Executive Committee met with both groups from Mexico in December. As a result of that meeting, the Executive Committee recommended that the Home Missions Board use their influence in the property dispute and that the Home Missions Board authorize the Arbitration Committee to go to Mexico and meet with both groups.

Subsequently, the Home Missions Board approved the recommendation from the Executive Committee, and the Arbitration Committee began making plans for the March meeting in Mexico.

When the Arbitration Committee completes its work in Mexico, they will prepare a report which will be presented to the Home Missions Board.

Reverend Horace Teague Dies

CHUCKEY, TN—The Reverend William Horace Teague (82), a Free Will Baptist minister for 53 years, died November 28, 2000. He pastored eight churches in his home state of Tennessee and one in Michigan, and served as moderator of the Tennessee State Association.

Brother Teague was called to preach in 1943, and was ordained in 1947 by Tennessee's Union Association. He began pastoring immediately at Johnson's Chapel FWB Church. For 20 years he served churches in the east and mid-state.

He left the state for five years to pastor Ten Mile FWB Church in Michigan, then returned to Newport, Tennessee, to continue his ministry.

Veteran minister, Rev. Howard Munsey, said, "Brother Teague was a dedicated man whose life was fully yielded to Christ. He sacrificed for the ministry and suffered in order to preach the gospel. He never complained when it was necessary to get a job in order to continue his ministry."

Reverend Teague is survived by two sons, Reverend Harold Teague who pastors Union Arbor FWB Church in Beckville, TX; and Jim Teague of Chuckey, TN.

currently

Construction on a 350-seat expansion at **Osseo FWB Church** in **Osseo, MI**, should be complete in early summer, according to Pastor **Ray Wilson**. The church organized in May 1998 with 25 charter members. Within two years, they outgrew their original building and borrowed \$150,000 in June 2000 to expand. Officials report 43 conversions, 25 baptisms and 50 new members.

First FWB Church in **Lebanon, MO**, celebrated their 53rd anniversary and dedicated their new family life center. The center, which includes a full-court gymnasium, large kitchen and three classrooms, was dedicated in memory of **Maurice "Bud" Perkins** who helped launch the project and then gave financial support as well. A plaque honoring Perkins will hang in the entrance lobby. **Ken Haney** pastors.

Unity FWB Church in **Lebanon, MO**, logged 20 years of service, says Pastor **Danny Talbot** who has led the congregation since 1989. Two men who were called to preach at the church spoke during afternoon services—**Craig Perry** and **Shane Shockley**. The church organized with 20 charter members, purchased two acres on South Highway 5 and built their sanctuary with basement. Founding pastor **Mike Hutsell** served 1980-89.

Hannibal FWB Church in **Hannibal, MO**, organized October 28, 2000, with 77 charter members. Pastor **Dale Cochran** began serving as missionary pastor in 1987. The church building was recently remodeled. **Frank Webster**, a member of the Missouri Home Mission Board, preached the organizational message.

With 35 charter members stepping forward to join, **Heritage FWB Church** in **Poplar Bluff, MO**, organized into a self-supporting congregation on September 12, 2000. Pastor **Don Richmann** said the new auditorium seats 225 and includes classrooms, nursery and dining area. The church began as a mission in a storefront building. Some 75 people attended the organizational meeting.

Some 150 guests crowded into the **California Christian College** gymnasium in **Fresno, CA**, for the annual celebration banquet. President **Wendell Walley** said the \$15,000 in cash and pledges from the guests will go toward the school's debt-retirement campaign. The banquet theme, "Together We Can," focused on the college's "Debt-Free in 2003" campaign.

"Miracle Day" at the **FWB Home for Children** in **Turbeville, SC**, resulted in over \$41,000 for the home's effort to pay off the loan for the boy's dormitory. Four hundred people attended the day's activities. Superintendent **James Wilhide** said that \$95,000 has been received to eliminate the \$150,000 dormitory loan.

Pastor **Darren Squires** reported 130 conversions in October 2000 at **Socastee FWB Church** in **Surfside Beach, SC**, as a result of a dramatic presentation called "Is That Your Final Answer?" The congregation also began a Spanish ministry.

New Prospect FWB Church in **Pamplico, SC**, surprised Pastor **Brian Toliver** with a new suit and a dinner in his honor. The church recently completed a fellowship building.

Pastor **Kevin Smith** can't stop smiling. In the last two years, the **Arcadia FWB Church** in **Spartanburg, SC**, reported 100 conversions and new members. The congregation purchased 4.5 acres on Highway 295 in order to build in the future. While waiting to build, the church upgraded their current building with new furnaces, air conditioners, paint all around and a sound system.

The congregation at **Mt. Elon FWB Church** in **Pamplico, SC**, honored Pastor **Robert Rose** for his 35 years in the ministry. Rose received a plaque of recognition, cards, gifts and a fellowship meal. He has led the Mt. Elon church nearly half his ministry.

Roy Harris, campaign director for the relocation at **Free Will Baptist Bible College**, said in mid-December that the college had received \$180,000 in 14 days for the project. That included a one-time gift of \$125,000, a \$5,000 gift

from the Illinois CE Board, a \$25,000 gift from one church and \$14,000 from an individual who sold some stock.

Contact welcomes **Dailyville Digest**, publication of **Dailyville FWB Church** in **Waverly, OH**. The monthly newsletter will cover church activities and programs, as well as news from the members. Copies will be mailed to the homebound, college students, military personnel and others. **Billy Sharpston** pastors.

Victory FWB Church in **Anderson, SC**, went self-supporting, according to Pastor **Danny Keen**. The church dedicated their new building after a special dinner. Home Mission Board chairman **Earl Hendrix** preached the dedication message.

Members of **Southside FWB Church** in **Darlington, SC**, moved into their 3,200-square-foot sanctuary which seats 275. The old sanctuary will become a fellowship hall. **Leroy Lowery** pastors.

Sixty-five babies were born in four years to members of **Cornerstone FWB Church** in **Whiteville, NC**. Add the new converts to that list, and it's no surprise that Pastor **Steward Norris** wants more pews and Sunday School rooms.

Thirty-two men gathered at **Florida's Camp Mt. Bethel** in **Bonifay** for the annual men's retreat. Eight laymen spoke on the various aspects of their roles in local churches. The retreat is sponsored by the Northwest Florida Ministerial Fellowship.

The **Oklahoma C.E. Board** reported a record 1,179 campers with 47 conversions last summer. Some 148 other decisions were also made. ■

Directory Update

ARKANSAS

Travis Alexander to First Church, Mountain Home from Emmanuel Church, Jacksonville, NC, as associate pastor

Jackie Brown to First Church Charleston from First Church, N. Little Rock

OTHER PERSONNEL

Curt Gwartney to First Church, Locust Grove, OK, as youth pastor from Fellowship Church, Park Hills, MO



December 2000

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 349.13	\$ 136.05	\$ 485.18	\$ 4,698.16	\$ 1,919.36	\$ 6,617.52
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	69.00	213.00	282.00
Arkansas	29,779.24	13,022.93	42,802.17	184,220.77	184,658.42	368,879.19
California	.00	919.66	919.66	77.00	9,737.83	9,814.83
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	6,120.72	6,120.72	714.55	12,120.72	12,835.27
Georgia	33,853.23	1,231.62	35,084.85	378,121.32	19,354.77	397,476.09
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	9,408.56	2,622.13	12,030.69	102,895.81	25,195.47	128,091.28
Indiana	.00	.00	.00	16,056.20	2,513.13	18,569.33
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	625.00	3,476.35	4,101.35
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	487.01	487.01
Kentucky	897.00	972.23	1,869.23	14,799.59	11,943.65	26,743.24
Louisiana	10.00	.00	10.00	90.00	155.00	245.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	459.36	459.36
Michigan	37,578.21	1,615.00	39,193.21	283,203.82	35,799.53	319,003.35
Mississippi	5,294.99	623.84	5,918.83	78,188.00	6,956.74	85,144.74
Missouri	51,781.62	12,103.75	63,885.37	498,274.53	163,004.56	661,279.09
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	660.04	32.74	692.78	7,149.52	499.56	7,649.08
North Carolina	337.90	5,774.32	6,112.22	17,222.29	33,608.20	50,830.49
Ohio	34,890.83	6,648.56	41,539.39	169,252.24	37,204.72	206,456.96
Oklahoma	58,273.13	11,063.18	69,336.31	685,744.31	131,289.32	817,033.63
South Carolina	.00	.00	.00	529,157.68	550.01	529,707.69
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	27,462.92	777.96	28,240.88	163,312.53	21,968.50	185,281.03
Texas	12,836.02	496.24	13,332.26	118,622.53	3,825.45	122,447.98
Virginia	.00	.00	.00	6,922.07	429.05	7,351.12
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	1,996.21	86.76	2,082.97	20,960.99	959.80	21,920.79
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	345.26	11.43	356.69	7,608.34	140.65	7,748.99
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	708.86	.00	708.86
Northeast Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(0.03)	(0.03)	.00	.38	.38
Totals	\$ 305,754.29	\$ 64,259.09	\$ 370,013.38	\$ 3,289,076.32	\$ 708,470.54	\$ 3,997,546.86

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 1,827.33	\$ 28,916.59	\$ 30,743.92	\$ 23,222.62	\$ 318,811.67	\$ 342,034.29
Foreign Missions	182,947.24	8,128.78	191,076.02	1,939,178.62	89,621.49	2,028,800.11
FWBBC	15,679.58	8,128.78	23,808.36	226,236.74	89,621.49	315,858.23
Home Missions	95,378.37	6,361.67	101,740.04	923,481.04	70,138.52	993,619.56
Retirement & Insurance	549.24	4,947.96	5,497.20	5,677.40	54,552.23	60,229.63
Master's Men	633.45	4,947.96	5,581.41	5,690.39	54,552.23	60,242.62
Commis. for Theo. Integrity	42.81	176.70	219.51	1,213.45	1,948.34	3,161.79
FWB Foundation	498.51	2,120.55	2,619.06	4,003.99	23,379.55	27,383.54
Historical Commission	5.34	176.70	182.04	303.63	1,948.34	2,251.97
Music Commission	15.91	176.70	192.61	214.03	1,948.34	2,162.37
Media Commission	78.34	176.70	255.04	901.82	1,948.34	2,850.16
Hillsdale FWB College	1,544.50	.00	1,544.50	21,162.81	.00	21,162.81
Other	6,553.67	.00	6,553.67	137,789.78	.00	137,789.78
Totals	\$ 305,754.29	\$ 64,259.09	\$ 370,013.38	\$ 3,289,076.32	\$ 708,470.54	\$ 3,997,546.86

**COMING NEXT
MONTH**

- ▶ The Missionary Call
- ▶ Resurrection Theories
- ▶ Heaven is Our Home
- ▶ That's My Boy!

When we entered the 21st century, many questions surfaced. Some are valid and some are still looking for solutions. Questions like, *Where is our contemporary culture headed? Or What will the church of the future look like?* Perhaps we might need to ask, *What should the church of the future be like if it will survive?*

A new catch-word people use for this sweeping change is "post-modernism." It simply means we have cut ourselves off from all the ancient anchors of reality, truth and virtue. To the post-modernist, "reality" is what we make up as we go along. "Truth" is what we decide it is, and "virtue" is melted down to that which is politically correct.

We live at the end of a major form of Christian expression. The country and most parts of society have little respect for the church or its leadership. In fact, with newer generations, denominational loyalties are lower than in times past.

Many researchers see some shifts on the horizon.

First, they see an end to the church's privileged position in Western society. The privileged treatment it has had is disappearing and the non-religious side of society is pushing to remove its exemptions.

Second, they speak of the beginning of a third reformation. The first reformation, as they see it, was in the early centuries of the church under Ignatius and Justin Martyr. They brought understanding of the Trinity to the early church.

The second great reformation occurred in the 16th century under Luther, Calvin and Zwingli who brought clarification to our understanding of saving faith: by grace through faith alone. The third reformation will focus on sanctification. Changed lives will be the hallmark of this reformation.

Richard Foster gave some suggestions if one would strive for spiritual renewal in order to survive in this post-modern era.

1. Become intentionally God-ward in our orientation. Not self-oriented, not success-oriented, not church growth-oriented, not seeker-oriented, but God-oriented. To become known as a passionate worshipping community—adoring God, lifting up Jesus, praying and preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Stop using a marketing approach to church life. The church is not a vendor of religious goods and services but the community of faith. Not to mimic the entertainment industry of our culture but to win people to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. To learn daily spiritual disciplines and unlearn the old patterns of sins one has been saved from.
4. Quit strutting CEO of contemporary culture as a model for Christian leadership.

Where is the Church Headed?

By Alton Loveless

The work of Christian leaders is hard work, grimy work, humble work.

5. Get rid of the "edifice complex." While buildings are not bad, they should be used to help and serve people and not as monuments to our own egos.

6. Engage in vigorous, culture-sensitive evangelism. All peoples need to

hear the gospel of Jesus and His love.

Money magazine annually rates the 300 best places in America to live. A similar approach has been taken with churches. Before protesting this impropriety, you might want to read Revelation chapters 1-3. Most people who are visiting your church for the first time will have rated your church and drawn a conclusion within 15 minutes. Besides friendliness and building decor, let me mention what they are looking for:

First, sensing the presence of God. Experiencing the supernatural is a high priority in today's culture.

Second, others-centered. Today's visitor wants to know if you care about them.

Third, understandable terminology. Guests who visit your church today may not know the religious terminology or clichés that insiders use. Be sure to translate those terms into language everyone can understand.

Fourth, people who look like me. Our level of comfort can be high or low depending on how quickly one finds someone else who looks like him. In a church where all are older, a young person may feel out of place or vice-versa. Whether people are suit-dressed or casual may make a difference. Where everyone is white, people of another color may take notice. This can be hard to change, but a church must communicate an open and inviting atmosphere.

Fifth, healthy problem handling. You can often tell more about a church by the way it handles problems than by the way it handles successes. When the church is running behind budget, is there denunciation for undergiving or a challenge to prayer and generosity? What makes a healthy church is not the absence of problems. It's how the problems are handled.

Sixth, accessibility. How accessible is your church? Do you have wheelchair ramps or parking stall? Just how "barrier free" is your church? Do you have an information card where people can check their areas of interest? Is there a remarks area where people can submit questions, comments or criticism? A church needs to be accessible in every possible way.

Seventh, a sense of expectancy. Have you ever listened to hallway conversations about the church? Listen to the verb tenses. Are they past, present or future? Most growing churches are permeated with high expectations of God's blessing for the future.

The majority of a church's members and guests come to church already beaten up, barely surviving the Monday-through-Saturday ordeals, and have come to church for healing and hope. They want to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. They need to hear He is near and has not forgotten them, and will bless them in the future. ■

Randall



House

This year's Summer Camp will be June 17-22. The cost is just \$185.

Here are some of the special features FWBBC's camping program can offer the young people from your class, church or home:

- A choice of four camps.
- A 24/7 emphasis on robust spiritual growth.
- Experienced counselors and trainers.
- Great value for your money.

Evangelist Jon Forrest, a 1998 FWBBC alumnus, will bring daily challenges to campers. His affability and down-to-earth, real life presentation of the gospel will win their hearts.

Here is a brief summary of our camps:

- **Basketball Camp** will be directed by Flames coaches Byron Deel and Jeff McMahan. They will be assisted by members of this year's Flames and Lady Flames squads. *Note: Separate camps will be conducted for men and women.*

College Plans Summer Camp Program

June 17-22, 2001

By Bert Tippet

• **Drama Camp** will be under the supervision of Tina Tolbert, the college's drama teacher, with assistance by members of the drama team. Skills in both performance and production will be taught.

• **Music Camp** will be directed by Thurman Lucas, director of the college's choral groups. Rejoice Ministry Team members will assist him.

• **Missions Camp** will be directed by veteran mission-

aries Tom McCullough and Eddie Payne. *Note: The FWB Foreign Missions Department recommends Missions Camp for any young people who want to go out under the TEAM program!*

Space is limited, so it is important that campers register early and enclose their \$15 registration fee. Write or call for a free brochure:

FWBBC Summer Camp
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205



On The Campus Of
FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Free Will Baptist Bible College

When is a Charitable Gift not a Charitable Gift?

By David Brown, Accounting Manager

Charitable gifts are often a big deduction on Schedule A. However, the IRS has specific rules governing charitable gifts. One concept governing charitable gifts is whether the gift is a "completed gift."

Whether a gift is completed has to do with receiving continued benefits from a gift. For instance, an individual wishes to give the church \$100,000 but wants to receive income from this gift for his lifetime.

The individual is obviously receiving a benefit from this gift, so this is not a completed gift, and he can not claim the entire \$100,000 as a charitable gift. The net present value of the projected income stream must be deducted from the gift. The Free Will Baptist Foundation offers several gifts of this type, but the donor does not receive a 100% deduction.

There is also a question as to what is the deductible gift. If an individual puts a gift of cash in the offering plate, this is a 100% tax-deductible gift because the donor does not receive any goods or services other than intangible benefits.

However, if a church has a fund raiser and gives a gift valued at \$25 to anyone who contributes \$100 or more, the gift must be reduced by the amount of the value received. So if a person gave \$100 to this special project, he or she should receive a charitable contribution of \$75.

Another area that gives churches difficulty is benevolent gifts. A church can establish a benevolent fund and accept tax-deductible gifts to the fund. However, designated gifts to the benevolent fund are not tax-deductible. An individual may not give a tax-deductible gift to the benevolent fund of a church and designate who they wish to receive the funds. It is permissible to make an anonymous suggestion to the church board or benevolent committee as to how

these funds should be distributed. These suggestions must be totally anonymous and made in writing.

Churches must also be careful when they have a church-operated school connected to their ministry. Church members who send their children to the school can not give their child's tuition as a tax-deductible designated gift through the church.

Questions often arise about a gift given to the pastor or other church employees through a designated gift in the offering. Can this designated gift be tax-deductible? Yes and No. The donor can treat this gift as tax-deductible provided the church gives the pastor or employee a 1099 for miscellaneous income for the gift amount.

This means that the gift is taxable income for the pastor or employee. It will not be treated as taxable income for the pastor or employee if the donor does not take a charitable deduction. It appears we have to pay the piper, or in this case the IRS, one way or the other.

Unfortunately, there are also rules limiting charitable contributions. Cash contributions can not exceed 50% of your adjusted gross income. Non-cash gifts can not exceed 30% of your adjusted gross income. Non-cash gifts also have very specific rules. Gifts under \$500 require a dated receipt with a description of the donation.

A gift to Goodwill must indicate on the receipt what it is—clothing, bicycle, etc. Gifts over \$500 but less than \$5,000 require that IRS form 8283 be attached to the tax return. For non-cash gifts of over \$5,000, in addition to form 8283, a qualified appraisal must be attached. An exception to the qualified appraisal rule is publicly traded securities.

Charitable gifts can have a huge impact on income taxes but the rules must be followed to avoid a visit from Uncle Sam. ■

Free Will Baptist



Foundation

One late summer evening I stopped to see a member of our church. This gentleman owns a large farm in the community, and I knew I could catch him coming in from the fields about this time. I waited outside his office.

Suddenly, vehicles began to emerge from around the corner. There were pick-ups, flatbed trucks and cars rolling in, each one full of men who had worked in the fields all day. There were 35 to 40 men. As they began to unload, I realized that the language they spoke was not my own.

As I inquired about the man I came to see, I realized none of these men spoke English. Their conversations with one another and their curious glances told me they did not understand a word I said. I began to speculate about these men.

They were obviously Hispanics who had come here to find work. I wondered what it would be like to be in a country where you did not speak the language and were unable to communicate with most people. Then I wondered, *If they can't understand the language for daily interaction, how would they be able to understand if someone shared with them the good news of Christ?*

God spoke to my heart about this dilemma. I did not speak Spanish. Other than our church pianist who speaks some Spanish, I didn't know anyone else who knew the language. I prayed for God to give me insight on how we might reach our community's Hispanic population.

A few weeks later, about 15 of our church people gathered to pray for an upcoming revival meeting. During that time, a deacon shared a burden that God had given him to reach out to the Spanish-speaking farm workers living in our area.

When I heard his burden, it was as if God were letting me know that He was indeed opening this opportunity for us. We talked and prayed about what God would have us to do.

The logical place to turn seemed to be to our Home Missions Department. I called the general director, Trymon Messer, and shared our burden. He said he would begin praying about it and would contact Pastor Carlos Rubio, the Hispanic pastor in Nashville.



(l) Deacons Franklin Burkhardt, Elbert Lehman, Jr., Michael Minnehan, Pastor Kinnick.

Cross-Cultural Ministry In Action

By Randy Kinnick

A few weeks later, Brother Messer shared with me that a pastor in Mississippi had contacted him about resigning his church and working as a cross-cultural missionary to Hispanics in the states. Brother Rick Bowling, former missionary to Uruguay, was about to embark on a wonderful experience in the Lord's work.

When I met with Brother Bowling, it was obvious that God had been working on both ends of this relationship to bring about His will. He had orchestrated circumstances in my life, placed a burden on the hearts of our church leadership, and then called a pastor from a comfortable church to begin a ministry thrust that will go beyond our expectations.

I have learned that there are at least 16,000 Hispanics in the Clarksville, Tennessee, area. God has placed a Panamanian Free Will Baptist couple in our area who will also become involved. As God leads, we will begin having our first outreach activities and Hispanic services soon.

Our people participated with Brother Carlos Rubio in Operation Saturation in Nashville. Brother Rubio is in turn coordinating Spanish-speaking preaching for services to be held in our facility and in farm fields of our community.

It is humbling to see God use us to accomplish something that I believe will be a dynamic ministry. We are a small, rural church that could easily be overlooked in the big picture. However, I believe God will bless us immensely if we continue to be obedient to Him in this effort.

As I look at our society, it is evident that God is bringing multitudes of people from around the world to our doorstep. These people need the saving power of Christ in their lives. We no longer can say that we are not missionaries because God hasn't called us to the foreign field. We have a foreign field in our own back yard. ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Randy Kinnick pastors Oakwood Free Will Baptist Church in Woodlawn, Tennessee.

Home Missions





Garnett Reid

Amos, The Burden-Bearing Prophet (Part Two) Catalog of Calamity (Amos 1:3 - 2:16)

Amos' opening oracles concerning various nations (1:3-2:16) serve to remind us of two important effects that culture tends to produce in our lifestyle. Both factors should serve to motivate God's people to renewed commitment to Him, especially in view of the dangers they reveal.

The first lesson these oracles provide is a renewed awareness that God's work is global in its scope. We pride ourselves that our missions efforts to evangelize the world testify to our status as "world Christians." Yet Amos' prophetic voice should open our eyes to the other side of God's global work. Just as certain as God's provision to save the entire world is His promise to judge it as well; we are in danger of forgetting, or even denying, that reality.

Our brief survey of these warnings to the nations reminds us that "all the world" is guilty before God.

To Syria (i.e. Damascus, 1:3-5), God asserted that His judgment will not relent because of their cruel, barbaric treatment of Gilead; His word came true when Assyria conquered Damascus and exiled the Syrians to Kir in 732 B.C. (2 Kings 16:9). The Philistines (1:6-8) were guilty of abusing entire populations through slave-trading, against which God will "turn His hand" by devastating Gaza and the other Philistine strongholds.

He then rebuked Phoenicia (Tyre) for similar practices (1:9-10), as well as for violating a covenant of brotherhood, perhaps with Israel (1 Kings 5:1-32; 9:13).

Edom (1:11-12), relatives of Israel descended from Esau (Gen. 25-27, 32-33, 36), faced God's wrath due to their own "wrath" in a total lack of restraint as they committed terrible atrocities toward God's people (see, for example, II Chron. 21:8-17).

The Ammonites had a history of

hostility toward Israel (Judg. 3:12-14; 10:6-11:33; I Sam. 11:1-11; II Kings 24:1-3). Further, their idolatrous religion had ensnared God's people repeatedly (I Kings 11:7; II Kings 23:13).

Now (1:13-15) God announced His intent to "kindle a fire" against Ammon and its capital Rabbah (modern Amman, Jordan) because of their brutal practices against women and their babies (see II Kings 8:12; 15:16; Hosea 13:16), in order to eliminate future threats to their kingdom.

Moab also faced divine judgment for showing contempt for Edom's dead by desecrating tombs (2:1-3; for the origin of Moab and Ammon in relation to Israel, see Gen. 19:38). In the ancient world, burial grounds were considered sacred and inviolate.

Most shocking of all, God also announced that judgment would come to Judah (2:4-5) and Israel (2:6-16). Judah stood guilty of rejecting God's covenant and failing to keep His commandments. The "lies" causing God's people to err (wander) in verse 4 are probably a reference to their penchant for idolatry (see Josh. 24:15; Num 25:1-3; Judg. 3:7; I Kings 11:4-5, 16:31, 22:53; II Kings 1:3-6, 15:4). Judgment upon Judah arrived in 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar's armies sacked Jerusalem.

The eighth and final nation facing God's chastening hand was Israel (2:6-16). Verses 6-8 describe the nature of Israel's sin, including abuse of the needy, perversion of justice, sexual immorality and the profaning of God's house.

The irony of Israel's sin is noted in verses 9-12. Even though the Lord had given them victory, delivered them from bondage, led them in the wilderness, enabled them to conquer Canaan and provided them with leaders, Israel had forsaken Him.

Verses 13-16 portray the consequences of Israel's sin. Just as an overloaded cart was unable to move, so God's judgment "presses down"

upon His people. Whether they had the prowess of a fleet-footed runner, a strong warrior, a skilled archer or an able rider, they would not escape the day of His judgment.

This catalog of calamity in Amos 1 and 2 simply underscores the reality of a second factor or danger presented by our culture: its tendency to deny the real nature and threat of sin.

David Wells argues that "only 17 percent of the American public defines sin in relation to God." While many, even the media, may identify cultural "evils" in our society, we avoid the fundamental issue of sin as a personal offense against a holy God. Says Wells, "in our culture, the use of *evil* simply expresses our abhorrence of society; in the Bible, the word *sin* expresses God's abhorrence of it."

Amos labels these international offenses "transgressions" against God. The word translated "transgression" here is *pesha* and conveys the idea of rebellion, or a personal offense against God. Sin is not merely evil or wrong, it is a violation of God's character and an offense to His holy person.

The prophet's use of the numerical formula, "for three transgressions, and for four," is likely a rhetorical way of saying that sin goes on and on, or that the number of these nation's sins has reached its limit and judgment must now come.

In a day of global pluralism in religion, we need this reminder that God hold all nations accountable to Himself and His holy character. Just as His salvation is *for* all the nations, so also His judgment is *upon* all the nations. We also must remember that though the Lord loves His covenant people, He will not tolerate their sin. Personal rebellion against God is the worst sin of all; on the other hand, how satisfying is that life which bows the knee in humble submission to Him and walks before Him in personal, loyal trust. ■



Melinda Pinson

Dealing with Criticism

Criticism Will Come

When you are a pastor's wife, one thing is inevitable: criticism. Criticism will come—intentional and unintentional, constructive and destructive, deserved and undeserved, in a loving spirit or so harsh and mean-spirited that it pierces your heart.

Pastors' wives cannot avoid criticism, no matter how well we live our lives before our church members and the watching world. Whether or not we are being treated unjustly, God expects us as pastors' wives to respond to criticism in a Christlike manner.

Criticism Can Be Positive

When thinking about criticism, often we are so inclined to see it as negative or destructive. We fail to realize that the right kind of criticism can be godly and productive.

The Bible teaches that we should be eager to respond positively to the right kind of criticism: "The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding" (Proverbs 15:31-32).

It is wise to heed constructive criticism. So, one of the most important skills for a pastor's wife to develop is how to discern when criticism is constructive and when it is destructive.

Don't Be a People-Pleaser

Pastors' wives need to be careful to strike a balance in their response to criticism. We need to be careful that we don't become so concerned about pleasing people rather than God. If we assume the role of people-pleaser, we may have a tendency to give criticism from others too much importance in our lives. We may dwell on the negative comments critics in the church

make about our husbands.

In time, this response can lead to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity directed at ourselves, bitterness and resentment directed at our critics, or cynicism and despondency directed at the church or the ministry. So while an open, positive response to constructive criticism is a must for the pastor's wife, we must seek a balance and not dwell on the criticisms of others.

Examine Yourself

Learning this delicate balance in dealing with criticism means examining ourselves and our own motives more deeply than we're sometimes comfortable with. Lorna Dobson, in *I'm More Than a Pastor's Wife*, recommends that pastors' wives, in learning how to respond to criticism within the congregation, do a self-examination using the following factors:

1. Inspect the situation to discern any disobedience to scriptural principles.
2. Determine your heart attitude toward the situation.
3. Try to apply scriptural principles of resolution.
4. Maintain open communication with your husband.
5. Come to terms with who you are and what you are gifted to do, as well as with your limitations.

Pray for Your Critic

This last principle is perhaps the most important—not just for your critic, but even more for you. When someone criticizes you destructively, pray for them—pray, pray, pray! C. S. Lewis used to say that often the person prayer changes the most is the one who is praying.

You may not *want* to pray for your critic. It is so much easier to pray for

those who are victims of their circumstances or the sin in the world. But it is so much more difficult to pray for those who seem to (or *do*) oppose us or our husband's ministry.

Yet, God makes it virtually impossible for us to harbor resentment and remain consumed with anger if we present our critics to the Lord in prayer. As the much loved hymn "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" says,

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee—
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Praying for those who criticize us is half the battle in dealing with criticism. By realizing the inevitability of criticism, by being open to constructive criticism, by refusing to be people-pleasers, by examining ourselves and by praying for our critics, we as pastors' wives *can* be successful in dealing with criticism. ■



Randy Sawyer

Benefits of an Expository Ministry

Through 20 centuries of church history a number of men have committed themselves to the ministry of expository preaching. Many are lost to us, their names known only to an omniscient God. Others, however, continue to serve as beacons of light, offering succeeding generations the encouragement and challenge of a truly biblical ministry.

Voices From the Past

Some of church history's notables extolled the benefits of expository preaching implicitly, through the profound results of their ministries. Still others added to their ministry successes explicative instructions on preaching which we dare not ignore. Consider, for example, these words penned by the "prince of expositors," Alexander Maclaren:

"I believe that the secret of success for all our ministries lies very largely in the simple charm of concentrating their intellectual force on the one work of preaching. I have tried to make my ministry a ministry of exposition of scripture. I know that it has failed in many respects, but I will say that I have endeavored from the beginning to the end to make that the characteristic of my public work."

To Maclaren's voice might well be added that of 20th-century preaching great, G. Campbell Morgan:

Every sermon that fails to have some interpretation of that holy truth is a failure Preaching is not the proclamation of a theory or the discussion of a debate Speculation is not preaching. Neither is the declaration of negations preaching.

Preaching is the proclamation of the Word, the truth as the truth has been revealed.

The company of yesterday's expositors most certainly includes Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Hus, Savonarola, Wyclif, Zwingli, Luther, Calvin, John Jewel, Hugh Latimer, Thomas Cartwright, William Perkins, Richard

Baxter, John Owen, John Bunyan, John Broadus, Bishop Ryle, Martin Lloyd-Jones and others. Their voices from the past encourage today's preachers to accept the discipline and challenge of an expository ministry.

Benefits for Today

Expository preaching offers numerous benefits to any minister and ministry. One of the luminaries of the 19th-century American pulpit was New Yorker William M. Taylor.

In a lecture titled, "The Ministry of the Word," Taylor built a case for expository preaching on five grounds. In considering the fruit of an expository ministry these provide a fitting place to begin. Taylor suggested that expository preaching:

1. Brings the preacher and his hearers into immediate contact with the work and words of the Spirit;
2. Secures variety in the preacher's preaching;
3. Promotes biblical knowledge among God's people;
4. Encourages the preacher to deal with many texts and subjects he would otherwise neglect; and
5. Enables a preacher to gather vast resources for further ministry opportunities.

In his homiletical classic, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, John Broadus encouraged expository preaching because of the great benefits it offers to both pastor and people. Broadus argued that an expository ministry:

1. More completely corresponds with the very idea and design of preaching;
2. Is the "primitive and ancient method;"
3. Diminishes the temptation to misinterpret texts; and
4. Fills the sermon with more pure scripture truths and "scriptural modes of viewing things."

Besides these, other advantages can be listed for an expository ministry.

Expositional preaching insures scriptural authority for the preacher; magnifies God's Word; promotes a biblical world view and spiritual discernment in the Church; keeps a preacher out of "ruts" and away from "hobby horses."

Expository preaching imitates the preaching of Christ, the apostles and the greats of church history; forces the preacher to deal with theological issues and consider difficult texts; allows God to most clearly say what He wants to say to each generation; and offers a tried and proven method for spiritual and *numerical growth among God's people.

Challenge for the Future

An expository ministry "builds up" the pastor and his people in "the most holy faith" more effectively than any other preaching form. This certainly seems to be in keeping with the message of scripture itself.

The apostle Peter encouraged his readers to "grow in the grace and knowledge" of our Lord by feasting on the Word of God. Again, he urged believers to "desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby."

The apostle Paul taught us that it is the Word of God that is "profitable" in the development of our Christian walk and work.

An expository ministry, then, provides the local church with her best possible opportunity to become what God intends her to be. May God grant His people a new generation of preachers dedicated to an expository ministry, and may His Church reap the benefits of their commitment. ■

* Next month we will consider the evangelistic potential of expository preaching.

A Reach That Guy Update

Is there value in taking students on a short-term mission trip? Is there value in organizing service projects for your students?

This past summer, the National Youth Conference was in Anaheim, California. While the location was a vacationer's paradise, it made service project opportunities difficult to find. However, our students took the available opportunities and made the best of the situation.

There were several groups that went to the Orange County Food Bank to sort and box food for distribution. During this time one group of students met a young man working at the food bank through a summer program. The students invited him to the evening service at NYC and were excited when he showed up that evening. He was there for the entire service. Little did he know that the seed had been planted.

In early February of this year, one of the young ladies that invited him to the teen service received a letter from him. He was writing to let her know that he was now involved in a church and had accepted Christ as his personal Savior a few months ago. The young man had just returned from a retreat and was on fire for God. He now has a great desire to share the gospel everywhere he goes.

This young man realizes if these students had not witnessed to him, he may have never found Jesus as the Friend he now knows.

So once again we come to the question, is there value in taking students on a short-term mission trips or organizing service projects for students?

I find the answers to these questions in the letter the young lady received from last year's National Youth Conference.

If there were no service projects at NYC, it is likely that the young man would not be a Christian today. If that is not enough to get you

excited, you should hear the joy in the students' voices who invited him to church for the first time.

Yes, it is extra work to plan a mission trip



rather than a trip to a theme park. Yes, it is extra work to organize a volunteer time for your students in your community rather than planning a pizza party. However, the result could change lives forever. So, students, student workers, and pastors, here is your challenge. LEAVE YOUR COMFORT ZONE. Do something you may not normally do, like work in a hot warehouse for four or five hours sorting food. The impact will change your ministry.



Thomas Marberry

Especially for the Young Preacher

By Dennis P. Wiggs

(Nashville: Randall House Publications, 2000, 134 pp., loose-leaf, \$15.00).

This workbook of materials is drawn from six years of articles that the author wrote for *Contact*. It includes useful information on a wide variety of subjects including the minister's personal walk with the Lord, his family life and his relationships with various members of his congregation. This practical information can help the young minister avoid some pitfalls that are inevitable in the ministry.

The first section deals with the minister's home life. The temptation for every pastor, young or old, is to concentrate so much time and emotional energy on his ministry that he neglects his wife and family.

Wiggs offers practical advice on building a happy marriage. The young pastor needs to recognize his wife's contribution to his ministry. He must honor her position and love her with all his heart. Tell her "I love you" and then demonstrate that love in practical ways. Take her out to eat once a week. Arrange for a baby sitter and spend this time alone with her.

The second section confronts the issue of money management, the area most likely to cause problems for the young minister. Husband and wife should develop the habit of saving receipts and keeping good records. He should go to a lawyer and have a legal will drawn to protect his wife and children in the event of his death.

The young pastor must control expenditures and live within his income. Wiggs suggests that the young minister buy a used car because new cars are too expensive. Pay for the car as soon as possible, and begin saving immediately to buy another one when necessary. Maintain the car well and drive it as long as it is safe to do so. It is less expensive to repair a car than to buy another one.

This section also includes articles

on the pastor's library. Young preachers are busy people, but they need to make time to read and study. He must read his Bible regularly and faithfully. The preacher must not, however, neglect other valuable books. He should buy at least one book a month, keep a current inventory of his library, and properly insure his books. Wiggs recommends that the young preacher read three books simultaneously. Keep one book at home, one in the car, and one in the study. Keep a list of books read and a list to be read in the future.

The third and largest section focuses on the relationship with his church. The young preacher must be organized. He will be called upon to manage large amounts of information ranging from simple prayer requests to activity schedules to sermons. He must develop a system to help manage this information.

Wiggs emphasizes that the young pastor must manage his time effectively. He must, for example, discipline himself to spend time alone with God every day in prayer and Bible reading.

The young preacher needs to develop a lifestyle that brings credit to God, to his church and to his ministry. His conduct must reflect dignity, diligence and dedication to God. He must develop the kind of wisdom that grows out of a relationship with God.

Wiggs counsels, "Remember that your words and actions will usually be repeated. Don't feel that you must give an answer to every accusation, suggestion or plan."

This section also examines ministerial ethics. Many young preachers begin their ministries serving as associate pastor or youth pastor under the supervision of a senior pastor.

The young pastor must be careful to maintain a proper relationship with the senior pastor. He must respect the pastor, pray for him and do whatever

he can to assist the pastor. He must also uphold the pastor and refrain from criticizing him. If the young pastor has concerns, he should share them with the senior pastor, not with members of the congregation.

Maintaining confidentiality is an important part of ministerial ethics. The young pastor should be especially careful not to reveal information that he may learn in counseling situations.

The third section includes helpful information on evangelism. The pastor should be a soul winner himself. He should learn how to use the church bulletin, tracts and other forms of literature to help him.

The final section contains forms which the young pastor may reproduce and use in his ministry. One is a marriage form which helps reduce misunderstandings about arrangements for the marriage ceremony. It also opens the door for a discussion of biblical principles behind marriage.

Although this workbook is specifically designed for the young pastor, it can be helpful to ministers of all ages. It contains practical information that pastors seldom get in college and seminary. The ministry is difficult and challenging. Those who have the responsibility to shepherd God's people need all the help they can get. Take advantage of this useful tool. ■



Jack Williams

How to Listen to a Sermon

Every sermon has three personalities. First, there's the fiery oration the minister intends to preach. That's usually pretty good. Then there's the milder homily he actually preaches. Finally, there's the 30-minute ditty people hear. Sometimes they're the same sermon, but not always.

Just to clear up any misunderstandings, this subject is close to where I live since I'm a preacher with more than a passing interest in sermons and such. So, reader beware. If I show up at your church next week with a sermon that needs hearing, bring your ears and your Bible.

While we don't need to overstate the case, there is an art to listening to a sermon. Better sermons start with better listening, so here are seven tried and tested ways to make you a better listener and your pastor a better preacher in just one week's time. Guaranteed.

Be there. "There" is where and when the sermon is preached. You can't hear the sermon if you're at the lake fishing for bass instead of at church fishing for your tithe. Or if you're searching for golf balls in the rough instead of searching for Habakkuk in the Minor Prophets.

Put plain and simple, the art of sermon listening requires being in church on Sunday. Don't even think of buying the tape instead and listening to it later. Not the same thing, as we all know.

Sporting events may be better on tape or on the tube, but sermon listening is definitely not one of those events. We don't go to church for chili dogs and suds. Everybody's expected to dress up, show up, move up and hook up with something more important than chasing quarterbacks across the 10-yard line.

Pay attention. Editor Lawrence

Hembree tells of a small boy sitting in the rear of the classroom who appeared to be daydreaming.

"Johnny," asked the teacher, "do you have trouble hearing?"

"No, ma'am," he replied, "I have trouble listening."

True, the preacher has some responsibility here also. His job is to speak in a fetching, creative manner. Some are better at this than others, of course. But, remember, there's only one Paul Harvey, and he reads from a script.

As one fellow said, "Learn to listen. Opportunity knocks very softly."

What's the first step to jump-start paying attention? Get to sleep earlier Saturday night. Some folks aren't just daydreaming in church; they're dreaming for real because they boogied till 3:00 a.m.

Stop the music. The preacher does a better job delivering his sermon if he starts on time. A 30-minute sermon feels twice that long when it begins at 11:50 on Sunday morning. Be advised: If the preacher doesn't get the pulpit until noon, don't be surprised if he burns the biscuits.

So stop the music no later than 11:30. Earlier is better. That's the song leader's turf. But if he does his job right and hands the service off on schedule, then it's the pastor's duty to honor the speaker's code, "Be prepared, be brief and be seated."

Take notes. I admit that I've preached more sermons than I've heard. It's what happens when your business cards come with "Have Bible Will Travel" printed in the corner. However, over the years, I learned a trick of the trade that makes other people's sermons sound better—I take notes, and I suggest that you do, too.

Taking notes fine tunes the attention span. Jot down interesting state-

ments, timely quotes or illustrations. See if you can spot the speaker's outline. Educators tell us that we remember more of what we write than of what we hear. So make your third grade teacher happy and take notes.

Writer Mark Herndon said, "It's a mistake to think we listen only with our ears. It's much more important to listen with the mind, the eyes, the body and the heart. Unless you truly want to understand the other person, you'll never be able to listen."

Take it home. No sermon should ever be left in the pew. The test of listening is if we take the sermon home on Sunday and then take it to the office on Monday.

No need to stockpile truth in the hall closet. The Gospel does the most good when it's harnessed to life and put to work. We know we've heard the sermon when we start treating our wives as our best friends, our children as gifts from God and our neighbors as real people who matter.

Tell the preacher. Want to see your pastor speechless next Sunday? Be there on time, pay attention, take notes . . . and on the way out the door, tell him what he preached and how you plan to apply it on Monday.

He'll be amazed and you'll win a friend for life. There's no greater compliment to a speaker than a listener who hears what he says and repeats it with a smile.

Get serious. The Bible takes the subject of listening seriously. On at least three occasions, Jesus told those who heard His sermons, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mt. 11:15; 13:9, 43).

That's good enough for me. Here's to shorter sermons and longer listeners. ■

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