

# CONTACT

Official Publication of the National Association of Free Will Baptists

July 2001

A Soldier for God  
Plank Owner  
Mapco Ministry  
Sabbath or Sunday?  
Let's Super-Size It!  
My Old Bible



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Melvin Worthington

## Consequences of Choices

**L**ife is made up of choices. Our choices have serious and sobering consequences. Some of us make choices *quickly* without much thought. Others make choices *quietly* after giving serious thought to the possible ramifications. Still others make *quality* choices that bring bountiful blessings for a lifetime.

Since choices are inevitable, let's learn how to make the right choices. The biblical record reminds us that God gave us the ability to make choices. For example, Adam and Eve made a choice regarding the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3. Abraham made a choice in Genesis 12:1-2 that was of eternal significance. Moses records that God set before the Israelites the way of blessings and curses.

### Foundation for Choices

One essential ingredient for making choices is *information*. Prior to making a choice, we need good information. Abraham's choice was based on good information—God spoke to him. Adam and Eve had the right information and yet made the wrong choice.

Another essential ingredient for making choices is *illumination*. Choices are made not just on information but on one's understanding of that information. Clear understanding of the facts is essential if one is to make a good choice.

A final essential for making choices is *insight*. Insightful choices are made when information is presented and adequately understood. Many people make decisions with the appropriate insight as to the consequences of their decision. Every individual can choose to obey or disobey God.

### Focus in Choices

Making right choices requires that we focus on the *Word of God*. I must ask myself the following questions: Is this choice consistent with the teaching of scripture? Am I obedient or disobedient? Will it please or displease my heavenly Father? Right choices comply with the principles, precepts and practices set forth in the Word of God.

Making right choices requires that we focus on the *Will of God*. When faced with choices regarding salvation, service, separation, stewardship and sin, we need to always determine if this is God's will for us. We must find, follow and finish the will of God for our lives.

One wise writer said that understanding the will of God can be a problem, that undertaking the will of God is a privilege and that undercutting the will of God is perilous. Our choices must always be made in light of our focus on the will of God.

Making right choices requires that we focus on the *Wisdom of God*. James tells us that if we lack wisdom, we should ask God for it. God's wisdom is available and enables us to make right choices. We must lean on His wisdom and not trust in our limited

human wisdom. We should seek His wise counsel as we make choices.

### Finality of Choices

We have the *right* to make choices. God created us as free moral agents with the rights and privileges of making choices. God did not create robots but a man and a woman who were given the right to make choices.

We have the *responsibility* to make choices. Since we have the right to make choices, it naturally follows that we are responsible for those choices. We are not only responsible but we are accountable for our choices. To the degree that we are responsible, to that same degree we are accountable for our choices.

We live with the *realities* of our choices. When one chooses to disobey God, chastisement follows. Sinners who choose to reject God's salvation are faced with the reality of eternal retribution. Saints who choose to live in disobedience face the reality of divine chastisement.

Moses chose to disobey God and was not allowed into the promised land. David chose to commit adultery and suffered four-fold for his choice. Jonah chose to disobey God and spent three nights in the belly of a fish. He later chose to repent, and God gave him a second opportunity to preach to Ninevah.

Choices do have lasting consequences. There are consequences of forgiven sin. While it is true that God forgives and forgets, there are still lasting consequences of sins that have been forgiven. Choices always have consequences. We must live with the consequences of our choices. ■

### The Secretary's Schedule

July 2001

- 9-13 Pre-Convention Meetings
- 14 Executive Committee Meeting
- 15-19 FWB National Convention
- 19-20 Post-Convention Meetings
- 26-29 Mexican National Convention

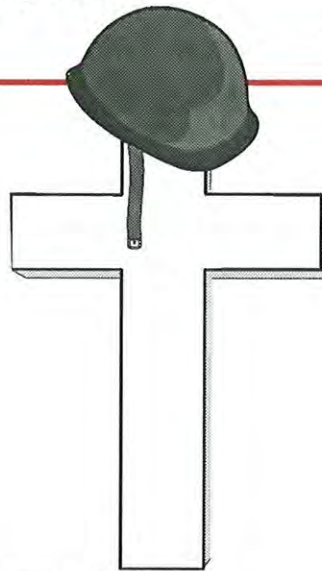


# A Soldier for God

By Chaplain Richard Anderson

"When the Country has been in need, it has always been the soldier! It's the soldier, not the newspaper, who has given us the freedom of the press. It's the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech. It's the soldier, not the campus organizer, who has given us the freedom to demonstrate. It's the soldier, who salutes the flag, serves under the flag, has his coffin draped with the flag, and who allows the protester to burn the flag. It's the soldier, who is called upon to defend our way of life!"

—(Author Unknown)



**A**mong the metaphors used by the Apostle Paul, none are more appropriate this month than the military comparisons, specifically that of being a soldier. Paul spent much of his later years among Roman soldiers. Consequently, he employed aspects of soldiering in many of his letters.

For example, Roman armor (Eph. 6:10-20), the orderly formation and marching of troops (Col. 2:5), the sounding of the trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52-53) and a military parade (II Cor. 2:14-17). Paul used these images to remind readers that the Christian life is a matter of life and death, not a playground. It is a battlefield where battles are won or lost every day.

When Paul penned this personal letter to Timothy, he was alone in a cold, damp dungeon (4:10-12) after being imprisoned in Rome as a result of persecution under Nero. In his last epistle, Paul commands Timothy to be strong, to stay in the fight, to be a good soldier of Christ Jesus (cf. 1:7-14; 2:1, 3-4). Moreover, as Paul calls Timothy to be "a good soldier of Christ Jesus," he issues two critical reminders: an appeal to endurance (2:3) and advice regarding entanglements (2:4).

## Appeal to Endurance (2:3)

*Webster's Dictionary* defines endurance as "lasting power." It is the ability to keep on keeping on. It's the opposite of surrender, weakness, hopelessness, succumbing and giving up. Synonyms for endurance include fortitude, forbearance, continuation, perseverance and persistence.

The following entries from the diary of John Wesley serve as a vivid example of perseverance:

1. **Sunday, A.M., May 5**—Preached in St. Anne's. Was asked not to come back anymore.
2. **Sunday, P.M., May 5**—Preached in St. John's. Deacons said "Get out and stay out."
3. **Sunday, A.M., May 12**—Preached in St. Jude's. Can't go back there, either.
4. **Sunday, A.M., May 19**—Preached in St. Somebody Else's. Deacons called a special meeting and said I couldn't return.
5. **Sunday, P.M., May 19**—Preached on street. Kicked off street.
6. **Sunday, A.M., May 26**—Preached in meadow. Chased out of mead-



ow as bull was turned loose during service.

7. **Sunday, A.M., June 2**—Preached out at the edge of town. Kicked off the highway.

8. **Sunday, P.M., June 2**—Afternoon, preached in a pasture. Ten thousand people came out to hear me.

Calvin Coolidge, the 30th President of the United States (1923-1929), once said, "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race," (*Bits and Pieces*).

### *Stay Fit*

The two truths identified in this verse will enable all soldiers of Christ Jesus to "press on." First, to endure, a soldier must be fit. The Greek word for "good" used in this verse is *καλος*. This word denotes that which is intrinsically good, and so it is goodly, fair, beautiful, noble, excellent or superior (*Vines pg. 164; Lenski pg. 780*). Thus, the call is to become a noble or a superior soldier of Christ Jesus. An excellent or superior soldier, in my opinion, is both physically and spiritually fit.

Soldiers are expected to develop and to maintain physical fitness. Each branch of our nation's military requires grueling training exercises that aim at strengthening each soldier's endurance. As soldiers of Christ Jesus, we need to be vigilant regarding our physical fitness, for our physical condition impacts our emotional, mental and spiritual capabilities. Consequently, we as soldiers of Christ Jesus need to discipline ourselves to eat properly, exercise regularly and get a proper amount of rest.

Soldiers are also encouraged to develop and to maintain spiritual fitness. General John W. Vessey, Jr., former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made this comment, "The spiritual health of the Armed Forces is as important as the physical health of its members or the conditions of the equipment."

General George C. Marshall, former Chief of Staff of the Army, once said, "I look upon the spiritual life of the soldier as even more important than his physical equipment . . . . The soldier's heart, the soldier's spirit, the soldier's soul are everything. Unless the soldier's soul sustains him, he cannot be relied upon and will fail himself and his country in the end."

Needless to say, as soldiers of Christ Jesus, we must seek to grow in our relationship with our Heavenly Father and Loving Lord. We must have as our number one priority to know the Lord and to grow in our intimacy with Him. To endure, a good soldier of Christ Jesus is fit, both physically and spiritually.

### *Stay Focused*

Second, to endure, a soldier must be focused. Verse 3 begins with the compound word, *συγκακοπαθησον*, which literally means "Suffer ill or evil with."

Soldiers are called upon to suffer hardships. Frequent deployments, field training exercises and separation from family are only a few of the hardships our nation's military personnel endure. A soldier does not have a 40 to 60-hour work week. He is a soldier 24 – 7. His body, his time and his talents belong to the military.

When on leave, he is subject to recall at any time. Moreover, when duty calls, he is expected to put his life on the line without hesitation. Needless to say, soldiering is a tough, demanding vocation.

Likewise, soldiers of Christ Jesus are called upon to suffer hardships. Paul informed the soldiers of the Lord Jesus in Philippi, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him" (Phil. 1:29). We have been granted the gift of belief and of suffering.

Henri Nouwen writes, "Your life is not going to be easy, and it should not be easy. It ought to be hard. It ought to be radical; it ought to be restless; it ought to lead you to places you'd rather not go."

Booker T. Washington once said, "No man should be pitied because every day of his life he faces a hard, stubborn problem . . . . It is the man who has no problems to solve, no hardships to face, who is to be pitied . . . . He has nothing in his life which will strengthen and form his character, nothing to call out his latent powers and deepen and widen his hold on life."

In addition, Paul reminded his fellow soldier, Timothy, that he was not alone in his suffering. Paul uses the compound verb, *συγκακοπαθησον*, "Suffer ill or evil with." One of the consolations we have as soldiers of Christ Jesus is that we are not alone in our suffering.

First and foremost, our Commander-in-Chief, the Lord Jesus Himself, is with us. He will never leave us nor forsake us. Second, all soldiers of the cross have endured and are enduring similar sufferings (II Tim. 3:12). So, stay focused!

### **Advice Regarding Entanglements (2:4)**

Soldiers in our nation's military, as well as soldiers of the cross must guard against all distractions and entanglements involving "the affairs of life." In II Timothy 2:4, Paul provides to his fellow-soldier, Timothy, the keys to overcoming entanglements.

### *Remember Freedom*

First, a soldier must remember his freedom. The Greek word translated "entangleth" (KJV) or "gets involved" (NIV) is *εμπλεκω* which literally means "to weave." Moreover, this verb can be translated in the middle voice (*entangles himself*) or the passive voice (*allows himself to become entangled*).

A soldier does not entangle himself in civilian affairs nor does he allow himself to become entangled in civilian affairs, because he is now free to be a soldier. He has stepped out of the civilian life and into the military life. Likewise, a good soldier of Christ Jesus does not entangle himself nor does he allow himself to become entangled in temporal, earthly affairs, because he has been freed to pursue eternal, heavenly affairs.

Fellow-soldiers of the cross, I urge you to guard against two extremes: liberalism and legalism. Both are entangle-



ments. In my opinion, most of us Free Will Baptists are more prone to legalism, that is erecting man-made rules and regulations and then forcing them upon each other. Need I remind us that the Lord Jesus condemned this type of entanglement in the lives of the Pharisees. Remember your freedom in Christ! After all, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

### Reveal Faithfulness

Second, a soldier must reveal his faithfulness. "When a Roman soldier joined the army, he took the *sacramentum*, the oath of loyalty to his emperor" (Barclay, 160). Likewise, whenever someone enlists or is commissioned into our nation's military, he or she takes an oath of office, that is a verbal oath affirming the soldier's faithfulness to his or her superior.

Oftentimes, we as soldiers of the cross are tempted to be more concerned with pleasing our employer, our family, our friends or our neighbors than about being faithful to the Lord.

A gentle reminder from Paul is in order: "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). As soldiers of the cross, we must have as our ambition that of being faithful to the Lord Jesus.

In March 1999, I had the opportunity to travel to Fort Benning, Georgia, in order to attend Basic Airborne Training. Little did I know what I was getting my 31-year-old body into! Our class was composed of approximately 270 students from all branches of service. I was the only chaplain in our class.

I vividly remember rising around 0400 each morning to make it to formation. Those standing next to me were about 19 years old. Following the morning formation, we would run to the physical training field approximately one-half mile away. We would then have an opportunity to do

numerous pull-ups, side straddle hops, knee bends, sit-ups, push-ups, as well as run—the longest being five miles.

I also remember doing numerous parachute landing falls, jumping from the 34-foot tower, "S" rolling a parachute, rigging an alic pack for a combat jump, qualifying on the lateral drift apparatus and the swing landing trainer, as well as making my five jumps from a C-130 Hercules and a C-141 Starlifter. Just thinking back over those days makes me tired and sore.

However, you know what I remember most? I recall standing in formation on Fryer Drop Zone at the conclusion of Basic Airborne Training as Staff Sergeant Nolan stood in front of me, pinned my parachutist badge on my chest, and said to me, "Well done, Chaplain."

Fellow-soldiers of the cross, all the training, hardships and suffering will seem so small and insignificant when we stand before our Great Commander-in-Chief and hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21). Are you a *good* soldier of Christ Jesus? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Chaplain Richard Anderson is a captain in the United States Air Force. He is stationed at Hill Air Force Base in Utah. He is one of ten Free Will Baptist chaplains serving in the Armed Forces.

## BEYOND BELIEF

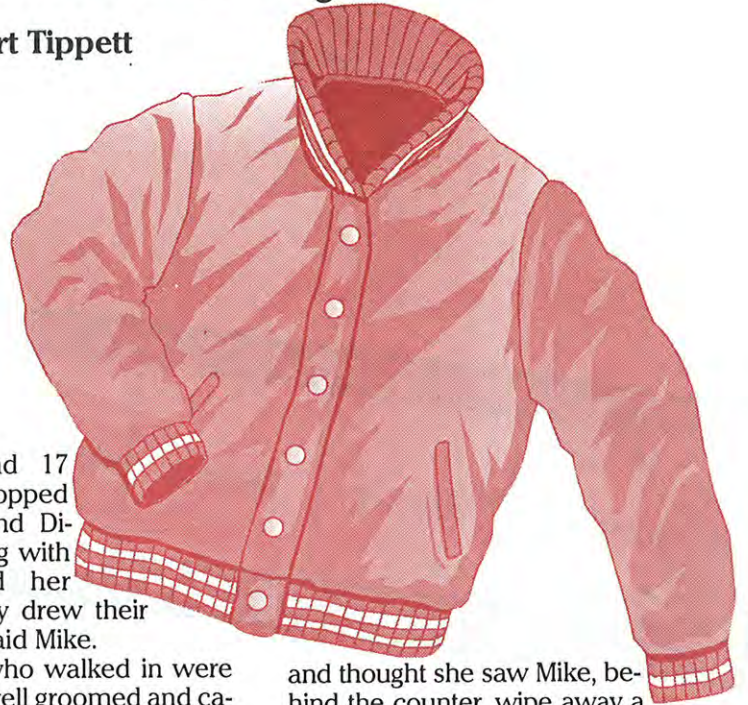




If you ever wondered what Jesus would do on a cold morning . . . read on.

# Mapco Ministry

By Bert Tippet



**Y**ou expect to get gas and coffee at convenience stores, but my wife, Dianne, and I also got a sermon there one cold morning last winter. We visit a Mapco station near our home every morning for coffee. It is our first stop on the way to work on weekdays and one of our early morning events on weekends.

We have done it for years. We have seen our store go through changes in management and a frequent turnover in clerks. In the process, we have tried to maintain our "Mapco ministry" by reaching out to people who work and shop there.

Like Rhonda, the single mother who worked there for so long and opened her heart to Dianne. And Ralph, the manager who told me how he was led to the Lord just as he was about to commit suicide.

Since we stop in at about the same time every day, we also rub shoulders with other early coffee drinkers, most of whom are on their way to work, too.

The Balloon Man advertises party balloons on the side of his van and always has a good word for everyone. A nurse in a green Toyota comes in daily with her disabled daughter. The daughter is 23, but had an adverse reaction to a smallpox vaccination when she was 11 months old. She does not speak and is physically handicapped, but she and her mother are always pleasant.

The morning we got our Mapco sermon was cold, the temperature

hovering around 17 degrees. We stopped off, as usual, and Dianne was visiting with the nurse and her daughter as they drew their coffee, while I paid Mike.

The couple who walked in were stylish. He was well groomed and casually, but nicely, dressed. She was blonde, wearing designer jeans and a pink jacket with Mickey Mouse embroidered on the back. They smiled, spoke and the lady began pouring her coffee.

The disabled girl spotted Mickey's stitched image on the jacket and began to point excitedly while grunting sounds of pleasure. "She loves anything with Mickey on it," her mother explained.

Without hesitating, and to our amazement, the lady pulled off the jacket, handed it to the girl and said, "Here, this is yours."

We all stood for a moment, too stunned by the gift to react. The mother reacted first. Her eyes wide, she said, "Oh, you can't do that! You can't do that!" All the while, the girl was hugging the pink jacket, rubbing it against her cheek and jumping up and down with delight.

The blonde smiled and said sweetly, but firmly, "Oh, yes I can. The coat is hers."

The mother, with tears, continued to insist, "But you can't do that! You can't do that!" My wife was in tears

and thought she saw Mike, behind the counter, wipe away a tear or two.

The blonde explained, "I have a brother in a similar condition to your daughter's. I am glad to be able to do something for her." Her husband smiled his approval of her generosity.

With that, the couple walked out into the frigid morning, she without a jacket.

You don't often see such exhibitions of pure generosity, especially at a convenience store. But it seems to me like something Jesus would do.

And something He would want me to do, too. ■



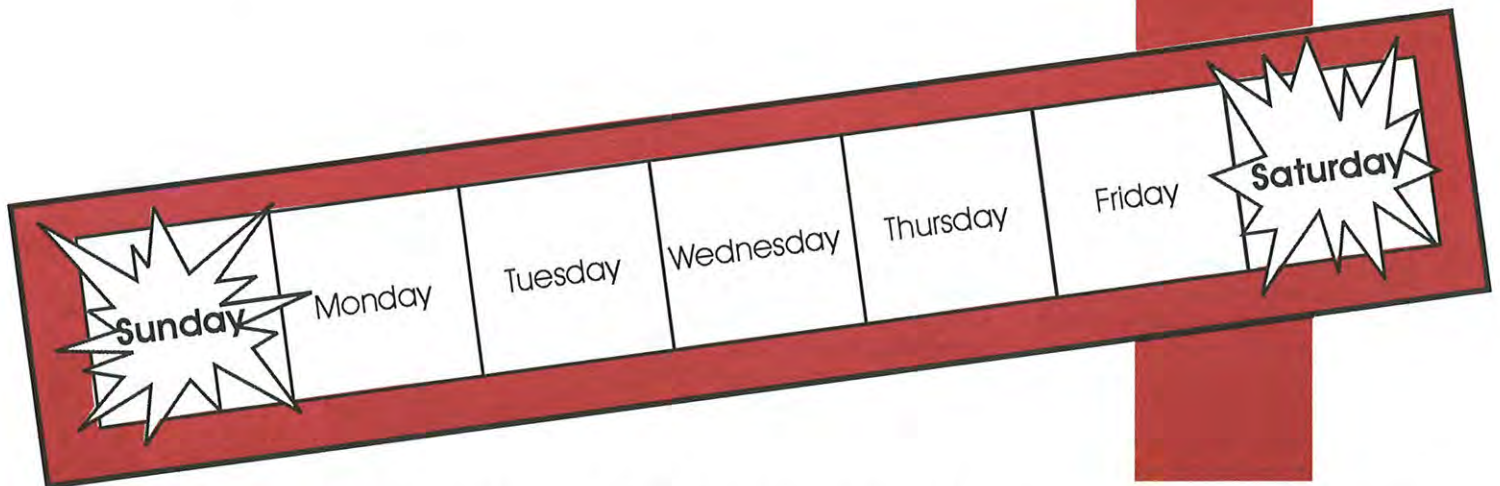
ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bert Tippet is director of public relations at Free Will Baptist Bible College.



A closer look at Sabbath Day and Lord's Day principles

# Sabbath or Sunday?

By Jim Nason



**A**fter 10 years in exile in Holland for religious convictions, the pilgrims found themselves in a dilemma. In their words, “the great licentiousness of youth in that country, and the manifold temptations of the place” were drawing their children into “extravagant and dangerous courses.” One issue was the attitude of the Dutch in making Sunday after church services, a day of feasting and merrymaking.

So, 101 people in a tiny boat set out for a new land where they would be free to honor their God without the distractions. Arriving in the new world on a Saturday, preparations for the Lord's Day worship were made. After the Lord's Day on board, they went ashore on Monday.

## Sabbath Purpose

The early laws, contrary to the revisions of critics, were not to restrict freedom, but to allow the first day of the week to be set aside for the best of things—bodily rest, spiritual worship and acts of charity. The old “blue laws” were vestiges of that foundational practice.

Today, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction where society, and sadly, many Christian homes, place little importance on the Lord's Day. In order to gain a biblical understanding of this special day, several questions may be asked. What was the purpose of the Sabbath? Is the Christian commanded to observe the Sabbath? Is the Lord's Day the Sabbath? What should be our attitude in observing the Lord's Day?

## Sabbath in Transition

The fourth commandment required the Israelites to honor the Sabbath on the seventh day as a day of absolute rest in response to God's example of rest on the seventh day, and as one day of rest from physical labor. For 1,500 years before Jesus' resurrection, the Sabbath was still in effect, and no change in that day is mentioned in the Bible. Who changed the Sabbath to Sunday? When and why was it changed?

M. R. DeHaan notes three schools of thought regarding the Sabbath Day worship. First, there are those who teach that man changed the Sabbath

without any authority whatsoever. A second school of thought teaches that after Christ's resurrection, the Sabbath was changed by the Lord to the first day of the week. The third and most widely accepted view holds that the Sabbath was given to Israel 1,600 years before the cross as a shadow of things to come, fulfilled by Christ and ceased at His resurrection.

## Sabbath Fulfilled

The following observations make this the better view. First, the Sabbath was not changed. Under the law, Israel is still to observe the weekly Sabbath. Under the grace of God, believers have the happy privilege of gathering on the Lord's Day in commemoration of His resurrection.

Second, the distinction between the Hebrew Sabbath and the Lord's Day observance is significant. The word “sabbath” is a Hebrew word meaning “a cessation, an intermission, a resting.” God gave Israel a number of sabbaths to observe including the Feast of Trumpets in Leviticus 23:24-25, and the yearly sabbath in Leviticus 25:2.

The weekly Sabbath was given to



Israel and required to be observed on the seventh day under penalty of death (Ex. 31:15). It distinguished them from all other people.

Third, our Lord met with His disciples on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread. On this day, they gathered for preaching services in harmony with Paul's instruction for the Corinthians (I Cor. 16:1-2). In Revelation 1:10 John calls it "the Lord's Day." The Puritans called it "the soul's market day."

Thus, the precedent is set in scripture and by the practice of the church. As the Sabbath gave Israel the opportunity to celebrate their freedom and rest from slavery in Egypt, so the Lord's Day is the believer's opportunity to celebrate his freedom and rest from the slavery of sin that came through trusting in Jesus Christ.

### Lord's Day Worship

Worshiping on the Lord's Day is sometimes met with two objections. The first is that Romans 14:5-6, Galatians 4:9-11 and Colossians 2:16-17 teach that the Lord's Day holds no special status over other days. This fails to reckon with the New Testament's elevation of the Lord's Day above the other days.

Spurgeon observed that "Sunday

should be spent in recreation. But what do I mean by 'recreation?' It means creating us new. Oh, that everybody who talks about spending Sunday in recreation would come to be recreated, regenerated, renewed, refreshed, revived and made to rejoice in God."

The second objection has to do with practical issues. Some would say, "I have to work on Sunday." A better statement might be, "I have to work on Sunday if I want to work for \_\_\_\_." Which is more important: the company for which one works or worshipping with the Lord's people in His house? Worship on the Lord's Day must take precedence in every area of life.

God's example of rest from and review of creation serves as a model for the believer to rest from the ordinary labor of life and to spend a day in service and celebration of His resurrection. All Lord's Day activities that enable us to celebrate Him are appropriate means for making the Lord's Day that special day each week.

### The Promise

In light of scripture and history, what other day would be best for assembling for instruction, worship and service? If believers are careless about worship on the Lord's Day, what effect will this have on the body of Christ?

If we enter into the spirit of Isaiah 58:13-14, imagine what the Lord will do. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jim Nason pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in New Durham, New Hampshire. He also serves as moderator of the Northeast District Association and is a member of the National Association's General Board.



# Day of Prayer

for the

## National Convention

# Sunday, July 8

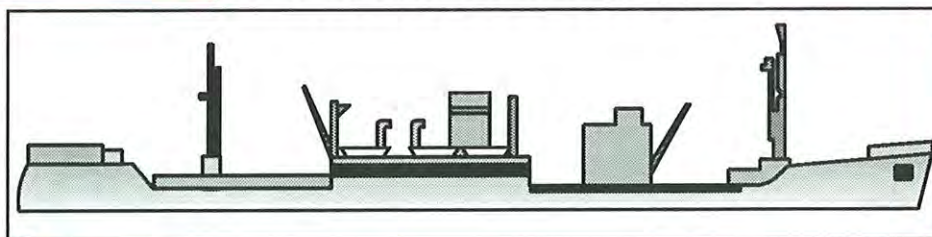
National Convention meets July 15-19  
in Detroit, Michigan





# Plank Owner

By Shirley Phipps



I turned 18 in September 1942 and was drafted April 1943. The normal question asked new draftees was: Which service do you want? The assignment you usually got was just the opposite of what you requested. Not so for me; I asked for the Navy and to the Navy I went. I still feel the Lord had a reason for that.

Anyway, I was off to Great Lakes Naval Base for 12 weeks of boot training. At the time I just couldn't see where a lot of that picky training made any sense, but I have looked back often and been thankful for every bit of it.

After boots at Great Lakes, I had several months of radio school at the University of Chicago. For the life of me, I still can't figure how they decided that an old country boy from Tennessee could become a radio operator. But after a while, the dots and dashes began to make sense and to become a part of me. The time came when I could doze off and never miss a character. I believe I could still copy it.

From Chicago, we were assigned to Sub-Chaser School in Miami where we received detailed radio operational instructions along with a taste of sea duty aboard ship. Now this was quite an experience, since we never even had a rowboat in Monterey! Anyway, this has all been necessary for me to get where my message begins.

It was July 19, 1944, one of those hot days in Orange, Texas, when I shouldered my sea bag and went aboard a brand new ship, the *Kenneth M. Willett DE-354*. Upon completion of the commissioning ceremonies, I was considered a "Plank Owner," an honor given to each member of the original crew, along with a certificate designating him as an owner of one plank of the ship.

Now we all know that ships like mine didn't have planks, but I owned one anyway. I don't know if I own the plank today, because the Navy towed that ship out to sea and used her for target practice. She had served her purpose proudly but when she became useless, she was destroyed.

There is another ship, the Old Ship of Zion. We may not have been a member of the first crew, but Christ bought us a plank and no one can take it away from us. The Old Ship is never going to be done away with either, even though the devil fires a lot of shots at her.

There is another kind of plank I like to consider. Every time we remember them in prayer or kick in a few dollars for one of our missionaries, we can say with much thankfulness, "I have a plank in that little ship." In fact, we can own other planks when we support our own church programs or any other of God's ministries.

It takes a lot of planks to build a house. Mine alone won't do it, but when God puts all our planks together, the building will be complete.

We may not get a big beautiful certificate to frame and hang on the wall like the one given me by the Navy. But all those planks that God has allowed us to collect over the years will look so good to us when we see them added to our heavenly home.

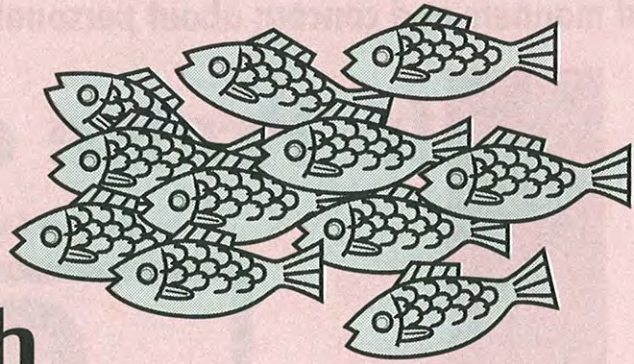
I own a plank in God's work. I own a lot of planks in the on-going work of Free Will Baptist worldwide outreach. Come on board, my brother. We can use another pair of hands and another warm heart. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Shirley Phipps is all-man with an interesting first name. He and his wife, Geraldine, are members of Cookeville Free Will Baptist Church in Cookeville, Tennessee.



# The Third Blessing of Multiplied Fish



By Dennis E. Hensley and Robert Cutright

**M**ost people are familiar with the stories in Mark 6 and 8 of how Jesus fed 5,000 people once and 4,000 people another time by multiplying loaves of bread and a few fish. However, what many people are *not* aware of is the fact that this miracle happened a third time.

During the bitter winter of 1778, General George Washington and his men were holding on for dear life at their encampment at Valley Forge. Firewood was scarce, field game was gone, and the men were wrapping their hats around their feet because their shoes had fallen apart.

During the first two weeks of January, Washington's 5,000 rag-tag troops had small rations of bread and peas and beans, but no meat. When meat was procured by mid-January, it consisted of only the cast-off portions from carcasses (heart, liver and lungs).

By January 28, when a herd of cattle was finally brought to camp, there were only 90 animals. Quartermaster General Nathanael Greene informed General Washington that he had arranged for 500 head of cattle to be delivered on hoof to Valley Forge, but they would not arrive until the end of March.

It was impossible to try to ration 90 cattle to 5,000 starving men for nine weeks. Many soldiers went as long as a week at a time between rations of meat. Even then, the food lasted only the month of February. Short of a genuine miracle, Washington's men would starve before the new herd of cattle could be delivered in four more weeks.

Washington mounted his horse

and rode through camp, encouraging his men to be strong in their Christian faith and to call upon God to deliver them. Washington, himself, went to his quarters and wrote formal prayers to his Lord. He continued this for days, ultimately filling 24 pages with handwritten prayers. At the point of his army's gravest and most dire needs, Washington wrote:

"Most Gracious Lord God, from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift, I offer to thy Divine Majesty my unfeigned praise and thanksgiving for all Thy mercies toward me. . . Bless O Lord the whole race of mankind, and let the whole world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and Thy Son, Jesus Christ. I beseech Thee to defend me this night from all evil and do more for me than I can think or ask, for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose most holy Name and Words, I continue to pray . . ."

Outside, near the camp, the waters of the recently-thawed Schuylkill River began to swirl and roil and splash. Cautiously, the soldiers drew near to inspect. They were absolutely astounded at the sight before them.

There in the water were literally thousands upon thousands of 18-inch, 4-pound shad fish. Their spawning season when they came up river in huge schools like this was always during the third week of April. Year after year they had spawned, just like clockwork during the third week of April—yet here they were at Washington's camp *five weeks early*.

Because the water is warmer near the shore than in midstream, the fish swam near the banks and were easy

to catch. The soldiers jumped in the water with buckets and scooped out the fish. As they threw the fish on shore, other men rushed down with large barrels and supplies of salt so as to store the fish for many future weeks of eating.

Major Henry "Lighthouse" Lee of Virginia ordered his cavalry troops to mount their horses. They hastily rode up stream where the shad fish were heading. Lee and his men charged straight into the ice cold river and pranced their horses in such a dominating fashion, the shad fish reversed course and swam back to where the soldiers continued to grab them in buckets and throw them to shore.

After hours of make-shift fishing, thousands of pounds of fish had been captured and stored. That night the men had all the food they could eat. A month later when the expected herd of cattle arrived, the troops had dozens of barrels of uneaten fish still available.

It would be three more years before these men would defeat British General Cornwallis at Yorktown, thus ending this Revolutionary War. However, had it not been for the miracle of the multiplied fish in the spring of 1778, these soldiers would never have survived long enough to win that war. ■

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Dr. Robert Cutright is a chiropractor in Pennsylvania and the author of a book on American history. Dr. Dennis E. Hensley is an associate professor of English at Taylor University, Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he directs the professional writing major.



Good manners and concern about personal appearance do matter.

# In Praise of Dignity

By Tim Campbell



I have long believed there exists a link between theology and dignity. While the culture in which I was reared did not reach the highest levels of classical social refinement, it did accommodate those things which were respectable and dignified.

A case could be made that etiquette and matters related to dignity and civility are dying a slow and painful death today. Most people do not see the far-reaching implications of letting those knights of the good and proper perish.

So what do loose shirttails and

crude behavior have to do with school shootings, postmodern moods and spiritual apathy? Much!

## Theological Basis for Dignity

Genesis wastes little time telling us that God made man in His own image and in His likeness (Gen. 1:26). In a constitutional way, we are like God. God is a person; we are persons. God thinks, feels and acts, and so do we. The Godhead is the ultimate embodiment of holiness, truth, beauty, love, goodness and justice. God does not

just possess these attributes, but is the source of these distinctive qualities.

What this means in theological truth is that we have a dual responsibility. First, we should recognize and acknowledge God's beauty, order and perfection.

Second, intrinsic to this acknowledgment should be a mirroring of these attributes in ourselves. God designed us to reflect His nature, so we should purpose to be like Him as much as possible.

By doing this we respect who God is by recognizing who we are. That is



at least one aspect of true worship. We seek to know Him in His beauty and holiness. We seek to live in such a way as to convey that beauty and holiness as His creation.

When we fail to recognize and reflect these elements, a personality breakdown occurs. We no longer function as we were designed, and we lose respect for God, ourselves, others and creation in general. We lose our authority to hold society together. This results in unpredictable outbreaks of transgression, anarchy and chaos. Tozer was right in telling us that all problems *are* theological.

### Practical Implications for Dignity

Leroy Forlines tells us in his book, *Systematic Theology*, that life is made up of four basic relationships: man's relationship to God, man's relationship to himself, man's relationship to others and man's relationship to the created order. Man's relationship to God has already been addressed. But how does dignity relate to the other relationships?

When we recognize that we are God's creation made in His image, we recognize our worth. We also recognize that if this is true for us, it is also true for others. They too were designed to reflect His attributes.

There should be a mutual sense of respect and worth in our relationships one to another. These realizations influence our sense of how we relate to ourselves.

When we realize that we are made in God's image and designed to mirror beauty, holiness, love, wisdom and goodness, we understand that because we were created by this perfect God, we should respect ourselves. That realization also tells us that we have worth. This applies to the created order (animals, environment) as well.

### Practical Applications of Dignity

Our deportment, dress and communication with God and others should be based on the dignity and worth of Who God is and who we are individually and collectively as those made in His image and after His likeness.

When we go to church, we should seek to recognize and acknowledge

God's attributes. The primary way in which we do this is by seeking to reflect (not just reflect upon) these attributes while we worship. We reflect His holiness by living in such a way as to lift up holy hands to God through worship.

But this concept must also extend to our deportment in worship. We should worship in a holy, reverent and dignified manner. This does not preclude spontaneity, but there must be dignity. Of course, this principle should be applied to how we dress for worship.

In a broader sense, how we dress and behave should reflect our quest to recognize and respect God and others. While everyone will not dress in a three-piece suit, we should seek to reflect the dignity and beauty that God has bestowed upon us as His creation.

When we meet other people in social circumstances, we should respect them enough to dress in a neat, orderly manner to reflect our respect *for* them and to elicit respect *from* them. Of course, postmodern ideas have broken down any standard for dress by promoting the question, *Who can say what is good or what is appropriate?*

But the more we know about God, the more we will come to consensus in our standards. The problem is that we don't want to conform. We want to rebel in our individuality. We do not want to think on the qualities listed in Philippians 4:8. We prefer to identify with a world gone awry.

How we dress and behave does matter. When a young man meets his date with unkempt hair, shirttail out and shirt unbuttoned, or with his pants pulled down so low that his underwear shows, he is saying that his individual desire to be "cool" is of greater value than reflecting neatness, order and dignity to another person (his date). The other person is not worth his dressing up.

By lowering the standard of dignity, we devalue ourselves, others and ultimately God.

Does this mean that people who don't keep their shirttails in will become serial killers? No, but when society loses its hold on basic standards of appropriateness, civility and dignity, it will lose respect for God, others, self, creation and life in general. If that happens, it is not long till the society crumbles.

When men don't open doors for women and women will not let them do so, does that mean the world is going to pot? No, but it does mean that values have been laid aside and there is little or no recognition of worth for other people. That is a dangerous situation.

### From Where I Stand

The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that the root meaning for the word *etiquette* is a labeling or ticket. When we dress, behave and speak with dignity, we label ourselves as trying to reflect all that is good and beautiful. We tell others that they are worth our best effort because they are made in the image of God.

A note of caution. Postmodern society does not value this virtue. Many people we reach for Christ will not be aware of these concerns. We must work with people where they are.

It is time for Christians to stop extolling sloppy wear and ways. We need to start teaching once again the principles of appropriateness, respect, civility and etiquette. The absence of dignity and civility leads to a debauched society. Nations do not crumble because of shirttails and mussed hair. Nations are destroyed by a loss of respect, dignity and regard for authority. From where I stand, we are in trouble. It's time to change the downward spiral. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Tim Campbell serves as dean of students at Free Will Baptist Bible College.



# Let's Super-Size It!

By Jarvis Reed

**A**s a rudimentary principle, the idea that you become what you desire is accurate. In everyday living, we arrive often at a proverbial crossroad: "In this situation, what do I want most?" Whether minuscule or enormous, the decision always holds consequences.

## Setting Priorities

For instance, there's the opportunity to be a blessing to someone else. Naturally, as far as the Christian is concerned, the souls of people at home and abroad take priority. Sounds spiritual, doesn't it? But the truth is, we are probably more concerned with whether to "Super-Size" our extra value meal at McDonald's than with the souls of a lost and dying world.

Does that thought make you uncomfortable? While we Christians would like to deny the statement, let's be honest with ourselves.

## The Big Picture

It costs 39 cents to super-size that meal which will get you a really big soda and a really big portion of french fries. That's a great deal, isn't it? What if instead of super-sizing the meal, you put that 39 cents aside for missions? If you were really ambitious and set aside 39 cents a day for one year, that would equal \$142.35.

Since conservative estimates place our denomination's membership at 250,000, multiply \$142.35 by that number. That, brothers and sisters, would equal \$35,587,500. Wow! That is a pile of money.

Think of the missionaries we could support. Think of the churches that could be planted. Think of the thousands of souls that could have the truth of Jesus Christ presented to them. The potential change that 39 cents a day could bring is astronomical.

Here's the problem. The total pro-



posed budget for both our Home and Foreign Missions Departments for 2001 was \$12,454,503.26. This is only *one-third* of the amount that 39 cents a day per member would raise. However, these departments will be hard pressed to raise the funds needed for their budgets this year.

Now, I ask this question, "What should we care more about, the souls of a lost world or the size of our fries and soda?" It seems that we do a fine job taking care of ourselves on an individual basis. We obviously desire a sense of stability at the local level because we put so much effort in *self-preservation*. This, however, becomes problematic when we view the Holy Scriptures.

We Free Will Baptists claim to take the Bible as God's inspired Word, consisting of perfect truth. We claim to believe this truth without exception, yet we justify *not* supporting the extension of the good news by over-emphasizing our *own* needs.

## It's a Matter of Trust

Biblically speaking, our needs never have been, nor will they ever be, met by our own efforts. God brings rain on the just and the unjust alike. It is time that we take up the burden of reaching the world for Christ *together*.

Do we really believe the challenge issued by God in Malachi 3:10? Here God says, "Give consistently in the manner and amount that I have instructed and just see if I do not give more in re-

turn than you are able to receive."

In II Corinthians 8:11-15 we are told that it is God's desire that we share the load of ministry support in a way that promotes equality in order that there will be no waste or lacking by anyone.

Don't forget that II Corinthians 9:6-8 clearly shows God's

love for a cheerful giver. This passage states with clarity that if a bountiful harvest is wanted, a bountiful planting is required. If we truly believe The Book, then let's act on what we believe.

If we desire to be a giving, trusting, soul-winning people, we must begin giving, trusting and sharing the gospel. If we desire to be a self-preserving, constantly "maintaining" people, we should just say so—at least expectations would then be accurate.

Since we're Free Will Baptists, let's use our free will and do the right thing: get behind our missions departments so that we can collectively reach the world for Christ. There is nothing more important anywhere than Jesus, so let us "Embrace the Vision" and commit, in one mind and one Spirit, to super-sizing our efforts toward fulfilling the great commission. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jarvis Reed is a Free Will Baptist minister who resides in Weatherford, Texas.





# My Old Bible

By Shirley Turner

**Y**esterday I bought myself a new Bible. This may be the last new Bible I ever get. Is there anyone who understands the relationship between me and my old Bible? We started every day together all these years.

When I was sad, it told me to just “rest in the Lord.” When I was happy over something, my Bible reminded me “every good and perfect gift is from above.” When I was worried, the Bible encouraged me to “cast [my] burdens on the Lord. When I was afraid, it helped me remember the promise, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” And when I failed, I rejoiced in the verse, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

Yes, my old Bible was a close companion. We have Bibles all over the house—this version, that paraphrase. But my 20-year-old King James Version, a gift from the dear women at Liberty Free Will Baptist Church in Chicago Heights, was the *one* I loved.

This was the one I knew inside and out. I could find anything in it. It was underlined, highlighted and notated.

My mind pictured exactly which side of the page any favorite verse was on. Oh, how could I ever go to a *new* Bible?

What if Isaiah 53 isn't on the right side of the page, lower left column? How will I ever find it? I hate changing Bibles because I get so comfortable with the old one. My Bible is like my old Birkenstocks that are too worn out to wear in public, but feel like gloves for my feet. My old Bible is salve when I have a wounded heart.

In the beginning, my old Bible had a rich, red leather back. After five years, it began to get dog-eared and the back hung loose from the rest of the book. I just wrapped the back around it and went on. Sometimes I put a rubber band around the whole thing.

By the time 10 years had passed, the back had long since been laid to rest and Genesis was separated from Exodus. After 15 years, I only had half a concordance left; John 15 could be enjoyed in the book or hand held by itself. Genesis is no where to be found these days, and it seems to have taken Exodus and half of Leviticus with it.

Still, I could not give it up. Hey, it's no

big deal to roll those curled up edges back, and anyway, how often do I read Leviticus these days? If I don't take John 15 out, no one will know that it is browned with fingerprints and age.

It's not like I actually take my old Bible to church where someone might see it. I haven't taken it out in public for at least five years. Any of my other Bibles will do for *show*.

So I've decided the time has come to put my old Bible away. I wonder if anyone will ever look at it again? I wonder if I will be able to resist the temptation to use it just one more day and wait until tomorrow to start breaking in my new one. It will remain a secret between the two of us how many tears have dropped on its leaves, how many joys have come at finding some new understanding there, how much comfort has been found in its pages.

I'm glad this may be my last new Bible. ■

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Mrs. Shirley Turner is a member of Tallula Free Will Baptist Church in Tallula, Illinois, where her husband David pastors.



A tribute to Mrs. Hattie Gilbert

# The Lady Who Talked With God

By Phil Davis

**N**ot everyone knows how to prepare scrambled eggs and polk salad . . . *together*, or how to make the perfect cold butter bean sandwich. In fact, it was the first time I had ever heard of either. But Mrs. Hattie Gilbert, a lifelong member of Cordova FWB Church in Cordova, Alabama, knew how. I specifically remember that the sandwich calls for mayonnaise on both pieces of bread . . . untoasted, of course.

I met Sister Hattie in 1978. I had moved to Cordova after graduating from Free Will Baptist Bible College to become associate pastor. Sister Hattie "adopted me," along with my wife and our 10-day-old daughter. It was our adoption, I suppose, that merited access to such rarities and recipes as scrambled eggs and polk salad or cold butter bean sandwiches.

During my two-year tenure, I enjoyed several heart-to-heart talks with her, most of which transpired in her humble abode just blocks from the church. She was so near that I remember her walking to church often.

One of my favorite true-to-life sermon illustrations comes from her life on a summer night in Cordova. Many of the elderly would raise their windows at night for fresh air. I remember Ms. Hattie, elderly with the evidence of age and hard work pressed against her face, still as sweet and soft as a baby.

She was a slow-talking Southerner with an Alabama accent, a true Cordova Southern Belle with more than average beauty. The beauty of the Lord radiated through her with a radiance not for show, but refined



and defined through both her experiences and her expression.

So it was on this summer night that she, widowed from years prior, was home alone in her mill-style home. Of course, Ms. Hattie always said that she was never alone, for the Lord walked and talked with her every day and every night. This was a fact that she stated quite frequently.

She and the Lord were united in one of their many dialogues that night when Hattie's voice carried over to the open window of a neighboring house. The neighbor, also a widowed and aged lady, immediately phoned Hattie after verifying in her mind that she heard Hattie's sluggish but heightened voice.

The call of a concerned friend and neighbor questioned, "Hattie?"

"Yes," came the calmed response. "Are you all right?" continued the

concerned inquirer.

Again, a calm response answered, "Yes."

The knowledge that Ms. Hattie lived alone combined with the worried thought of a possible intruder caused the caller's inquiry to go further, "Well, I heard voices . . . is somebody there?"

Came Hattie's calm response, "Just me and the Lord. We were talking. I guess I got carried away."

Now *there's* a recipe that tops scrambled eggs and polk salad or cold butter bean sandwiches! Ms. Hattie knew the recipe for communing with the Lord . . . just get carried away. Sure enough, one day in 1988, Ms. Hattie was literally carried away when she closed her eyes in death and opened them in the Savior's arms.

Oh, there was no doubt that Hattie loved the Lord. She loved to talk *about* the Lord, and she loved to talk *with* the Lord.

I scarcely can read Psalm 40:1 without thinking of Hattie, "He inclined unto me, and heard my cry." It was not her unusual recipes that gleaned God's attention, but her constant cry of godliness as she communed with her Lord.

I did wonder if Ms. Hattie perhaps suggested preparing her recipes in Heaven? Probably not. I figure Hattie and the Lord are still talking; I doubt she's even taken a *lunch break* just yet. However, she's doing finer than ever, just Hattie and her Lord! ■

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend Phil Davis pastors Prospect Free Will Baptist Church in Dunn, North Carolina, where he has served more than eleven years.

Mrs. Hattie Gilbert is the mother of Dr. Fay Forlines who is married to Reverend Leroy Forlines.



## Trymon Messer Retires



ANTIOCH, TN—After 22 years with the Home Missions Department (17 years as associate director and five years as general director), Trymon Messer stepped down from his role as leader, mentor and encourager. A farewell reception at the National Offices Building on April 23 allowed friends, well-wishers and staff members to say goodbye to the energetic layman.

Mr. Messer, an ordained Free Will Baptist deacon, was named associate director of the department in 1978 after pastoring 13½ years in Salina, Kansas, where he led a struggling congregation to grow from two families to a record attendance of 964.

Widely-used as a conference speaker and evangelist, Brother Messer was perhaps the finest natural leader of men the denomination has produced this generation. He says that he learned some of his leadership skills in the U.S. Marine Corps at Parris Island.

Messer was named general director of the Home Missions Department in 1995 at age 62. The next five years he invested his energy, his time, his prayers in missionaries, churches and people. He was one of the most recognized men in the denomination—welcome in pulpits and homes across America.

When he started as general director, Messer said that he wanted to encourage pastors. "I would like to address the pastors' salary and benefits. We won't see much growth in our denomination until our pastors start feeling better about themselves."

Current Home Missions director Larry Powell said, "Brother Messer is truly a visionary. He saw the need among Free Will Baptists to attempt great things for God with boldness."

Prior to his years with the Home Missions Department, Messer won two lay awards. Oklahoma Bible College (now Hillsdale FWB College) named him layman of the year in 1964. The Master's Men Department named him layman of the year in 1969.

He chaired the Kansas Home Missions Board and served on both the national Home Missions Board and the Hillsdale FWB College Board of Trustees. Trymon and Opal Messer have three children.

## New Mexico District Meets

ALBUQUERQUE, NM—The New Mexico District Association met April 6-8 at First FWB Church in Albuquerque. Moderator Leslie Skeens led the sessions.

Executive secretary Melvin Worthington preached twice as the keynote speaker. His first sermon was on the second coming, the final sermon on how God provides laborers for His work.

Delegates passed a resolution reaffirming their commitment to God, to the local church, to the district outreach, and clearly stated that their first priority was serving God.

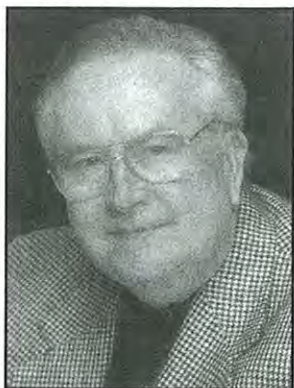
WNAC executive secretary-treasurer Marjorie Workman addressed attendees during the Friday evening ladies' banquet.

In other action, delegates gave special recognition to Louise Gilcrease. They also voted to support two mission works in Albuquerque.

The 2002 session will meet at First FWB Church in Hobbs.



## Alton Loveless to Retire in 2002



NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. Alton Loveless announced to the Sunday School and Church Training Board his intention to retire August 10, 2002, his 65th birthday. The announcement was made at the April 23-24 spring board meeting at Randall House in Nashville.

Loveless came on board as general director January 1, 1994. Under his leadership Randall House Publications has enjoyed unbroken progress and has seen numerous improvements.

Preceding his tenure at Randall House, Dr. Loveless served as

executive secretary for the Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists (1974-1993). He also served 12 years on the Sunday School Board, chairing the Curriculum Committee for 11 years.

In addition, he served 10 years on the Historical Commission as chairman, a term on the Foreign Missions Board, and was a past president of the Free Will Baptist Bookstore Association. Dr. Loveless has also served as pastor of four Free Will Baptist churches in Arkansas and Missouri (1955-1970).

He served as a field representative, Christian education consultant and national/regional marketing director for the southern United States and Caribbean for Scripture Press Publications (1970-1974).

His skill in teacher-training workshops and tutorials in interpersonal relationships have created speaking opportunities around the world. He has conducted 1,100 seminars in 33 foreign countries and 48 states and has been widely used as a Christian educa-

tion consultant by 68 denominations. More than 450 of his articles have been published.

A native of Conway, Arkansas, Dr. Loveless began preaching in 1955 at age 17 and was ordained to preach in 1956. He attended Hendrix College, graduated from Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College and earned his Ph.D. in business administration from Columbia Pacific University.

He married Delois Draby in 1958; they have two sons, Randall and Steven, and five grandchildren.

The board commends Dr. Loveless on his faithful service and leadership to the department and denomination.

The board has begun its replacement process for general director. Applications or recommendations may be sent to the clerk of the Sunday School and Church Training Board: Rev. Edwin Hayes at 3700 South High, Suite 159, Columbus, OH 43207. Deadline for applications or recommendations is July 13, 2001.

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## Georgia Calls for One National Magazine

HAMPTON, GA—If Georgia Free Will Baptists could change one item on the denominational landscape, it would be to combine six national agency publications into one expanded national magazine. During their March 15-17 state association, delegates passed a resolution calling for a five-person Publications Committee from the ranks of state promotional personnel to study the feasibility of doing just that.

The resolution asks National Association moderator Carl Cheshier to appoint the five-person committee with instructions to national agency directors and editors to meet with and cooperate with the project. The Publications Committee would then report their findings and recommendations to delegates at the 2002 national convention which meets in Memphis, Tennessee.

Georgia executive secretary William Smith said the resolution's goals are to promote denominational stewardship and departmental cooperation. The publications cited for the study include *AIM* (Home Missions Department), *Contact* (Executive Office), *FWBBC Bulletin* (Free Will Baptist Bible College), *Heartbeat* (Foreign Missions Department), *Master's Men Newsletter* (Master's Men Department) and *Outreach* (Sunday School and Church Training Department).

Georgia's 65th annual state association met at Trinity Fellowship FWB Church in Hampton. More than 160 people registered for the event, including 55 ministers. Moderator Paul Smith led the business sessions.

Three Georgia pastors developed the association theme, "I Am With You." The speakers included Piney Grove FWB Church pastor Parnell Aldridge, Bellview FWB Church pastor Cliff Holland and Camden FWB Church pastor Billy Bevan, Jr.

Master's Men director Tom Dooley spoke during the Pastor's Conference.

In other action, delegates adopted two constitutional changes to expedite business—one concerned routing correspondence to the state clerk preceding the annual meeting; the other addressed trustees at the children's home in Eldridge, Alabama.

Delegates also passed a \$550,000 state budget which included \$225,000 in cooperative funds. Two members received plaques of appreciation for services rendered: Terry Pierce for six years as director of the teen camp; Malcolm Freeman for 23 years on the Executive Board and 25 years on the Mission Board.

The 2002 State association will meet March 14-16 at Camden FWB Church in Kingsland.



## California Church Reaches Out to Bikers

COTTONWOOD, CA—The fourth annual Jubilee Campout, an effort by one Free Will Baptist church to reach bikers in Northern California, attracted 500 people, including more than 225 motorcyclists during the April 27-29 gathering. Pastor Dan Steigman, who leads Liberty FWB Church in Cottonwood, says that credit for the Jubilee Campout goes to his associate pastor, Don Leedy.

Leedy is a biker himself. While serving as associate pastor at the church, he would disappear in the summer and no one knew what he was doing.

Pastor Steigman said, "When we found out he was ministering to bikers every summer, we decided to make it official."

Now the Jubilee Campout meets annually on the church grounds, with as many as one-third of church members involved in hosting the event. The Jubilee three-day schedule takes over the church's 20-acre campground, parking lot, social hall and sanctuary.

Associate pastor Don Leedy indicated that the program includes a concert each night and preaching by evangelists provided by the Christian Motorcyclists Association (CMA). Other activities include three meals a day, morning worship services, bike games, one-on-one prayer and fellowship with bikers seeking to know more about God.

The campout is funded by donations from vendors, by selling T-shirts and by items from individual group speakers.

Before Don Leedy started the outreach, the only bike events in northern California were sponsored and operated by the outlaw biker groups. He felt that it was important to bring the Christian biker element into the events.

Don was elected president of the local CMA chapter which had lost most of its strength. Through his leadership, the CMA chapter flourished and became ministry-based. Today, the outlaw groups request that the CMA bikers attend their functions because their events "just go better with those [Christian] guys around."

Don Leedy also organized a new group called United Bikers of Northern California which includes bikers from all backgrounds. He serves as chaplain.

Pastor Steigman said, "During the active biker season, the church seldom sees Don."

Don Leedy (54) is married with three children and a foster son. He was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister two years ago. When he's off the road and not working with bikers, Don operates his own business—a swimming pool tiling and rock company.

Liberty FWB Church may be the only Free Will Baptist church in America that operates a regular biker ministry. Pastor Steigman said, "We invite others to come serve in this ministry. Believe me, we can use the help."

For additional information, contact:

**Pastor Dan Steigman**  
Liberty FWB Church  
4145 Rhonda Road  
Cottonwood, CA 96022



Don Leedy preaches to bikers.



More than 225 motorcycles parked at Liberty FWB Church.



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Pastor **Hal Kirk** reported that a benefit for the **James Munsey** family to help defray hospital expenses raised \$24,000. The March 3 benefit attracted numerous attendees from Tennessee's Union Association. Rev. Kirk pastors **Bridgeport FWB Church** in **Newport, TN**.

Fifty-two men and teen boys from across the state gathered at **Prairie View Christian Camp** for the spring **Kansas State Men's Retreat**, according to **James O. Brewer**, chairman. Master's Men staffer **Ken Akers** was the principal speaker. He also provided information on the purpose of the Master's Men program.

After a January soul winning conference with Evangelist **Bob Shockey**, home missionary **Jon Cannon** reports that only one week has passed without someone getting saved at **Victory FWB Church** in **Mascoutah, IL**. Cannon said, "It is my goal to have a soul winning conference every year at our church." (Editor's note: Bob Shockey stepped into a hole in April, broke his left leg and had to cancel six weeks of meetings in order to mend.)

**Good Hope FWB Church** in **Henderson, TX**, celebrated 125 years of ministry. The day's activities included a special prayer meeting, music, poetry, reading the church's history, dinner on the grounds and a balloon release. **David Rhudd** pastors.

Members of **Socastee FWB Church** in **Surfside Beach, SC**, paid off a \$24,000 loan on their church bus in less than one year. The bus is used in children's ministry and conveys the youth choir to revival services. **Darrin Squires** pastors.

Reverend **L. H. Clayton** died January 22 at age 88. He had preached more than 65 years and was a member of **South Carolina's Beaver Creek Conference** for 42 years. Brother Clayton pastored **Fairview FWB Church** in **Spartanburg, SC**, 13 years (1962-1975). He also served on the national Sunday School Board, taught at the Beaver

Creek Bible Institute, served two years as a member of the General Board, and 11 years on the Children's Home Board.

He did it backwards, but the plan worked. Pastor **Robert Rose** announced a "Church Appreciation Day" after 17 years as pastor of **Mt. Elon FWB Church** in **Pamplico, SC**. Following a brief devotional, Pastor Rose asked each family or individual to come forward in the service. He then expressed words of gratitude and presented each family with a copy of a book he had written. Then the pastor and his wife provided a complete meal for the entire congregation.

Pastor **John Matthews** and members of **Cornerstone FWB Church** in **Manning, SC**, celebrated their fifth anniversary/homecoming. Leaders announced that two acres of land had been purchased on which to build a new church. That's good news for pastor Matthews, since the church now meets in his living room for services.

Members of **Mt. Carmel FWB Church** in **York, SC**, honored Pastor **John Cody** for 20 years of service. They gave him a plaque, a cash gift and a surprise dinner in the fellowship hall. Earlier this year, Pastor Cody was diagnosed with Gillium Barre Disease, a paralyzing condition that severely curtails even the simplest tasks. He was hospitalized five weeks. The church raised \$3,000 to assist the pastor.

The ushers had to set out extra chairs at **Osseo FWB Church** in **Osseo, MI**, when 123 people showed up for Sunday service. Pastor **Ray Wilson** reports two conversions and five rededications. Members completed work on the interior of the building.

Pastor **Gene Norris** reports 14 baptisms at **Riverside Fellowship FWB Church** in **Clinton Township, MI**. The church reported attendance at 184.

Pastor **Billy Maynard** reports that **People's FWB Church** in **Chicago, IL**, purchased a church building 100 miles away in **Ambia, Indiana**, for \$4,000. Maynard plans to start a new missions work in Indiana. The building they pur-

chased came with a full basement, two pianos, an organ, chairs, pews and other equipment. Seventy-five people attended the first service in the new work.

**Hosanna FWB Church** in **Charleston, AR**, raised \$1,200.13 for **Hillsdale FWB College**, according to Pastor **Randy Moore**. The money when presented to Hillsdale weighed 732 pounds. That's because it was all in pennies in a large wheel barrow. The church also presented a \$500 check to assist Hillsdale student Julie Biggs. The check was normal weight.

Pastor **Bob Ketchum** retired at **Grace FWB Church** in **Broken Arrow, OK**. The church honored Bob and Ann with flowers, a trophy, cards, letters, testimonies and \$12,000 in cash. Ketchum preached his first sermon May 5, 1953. He pastored in Tennessee and Oklahoma, served as an evangelist, was elected as Oklahoma's moderator and served on the Board of Trustees at Free Will Baptist Bible College. He organized the **Grace FWB Church** in 1975. The Ketchums have been married 47 years. ■

## COMING NEXT MONTH

- ✧ *Will Your Pastor Burn Out?*
- ✧ *Care and Feeding of Young Pastors*
- ✧ *Joy's of a Long-Term Pastorate*
- ✧ *I Love Being a Pastor*



## Charitable Gift Annuities Offer Attractive Returns For Senior Individuals

By David L. Brown

**M**any seniors prefer fixed-rate returns for their assets. However, it is often difficult to get a high fixed-rate return. Charitable gift annuities could be the answer for many. Gift annuity rates are higher than many traditional investment choices. The rate depends on your age.

**F**or instance, a couple who are both 70 years of age would receive a 6.8% rate for a joint-life gift annuity, but a couple who are both 75 would receive a 7.3% rate. A couple who are both 80 would receive an 8.0% rate. Clearly, the higher your age the better the rate.

**I**n addition to the high rate, the annuitants also receive a tax deduction. The tax deduction also varies according to your age, but for an 80-year-old couple the tax deduction is approximately 36% of the gift. Further, a portion of the annuity payment is considered return of principal and therefore not taxable. Once again using the 80-year-old couple as an example, their actual rate is 8.0%. But assuming they are in the 28% bracket their effective rate is 11.06%.

**G**ift annuities can also be used to spread out the effect of capital gains. When using appreciated assets, gift annuities do not by-pass capital gains, but they do allow the capital gains to be paid on a pro rata basis over the annuitant's life expectancy.

**P**erhaps the most wonderful benefit of a gift annuity is that when the annuitants die, their original gift is transferred to their favorite Free Will Baptist ministry.

**G**ift annuities are quite flexible. Younger individuals can use deferred gift annuities to supplement their retirement income. A deferred gift annuity is just what its name implies—deferred for a period of

time. A 40-year-old could set up a \$1,000 deferred gift annuity to start paying at age 65. He would receive an immediate charitable tax deduction of \$480 and at age 65 an annual annuity of \$268 for the rest of his life.

**A**nother possibility is a college gift annuity. This is a special deferred gift annuity that allows an entire lifetime of payments to be paid over a four-year period to help a student pay for college expenses.

**G**ift annuities can also be established for someone other than yourself. For instance, a gift annuity could be set up to benefit an older individual who needs financial assistance. The donor would receive the tax deduction and the annuitant would receive the income. These gift annuities can even be done anonymously.

**T**he Free Will Baptist Foundation stands eager to help with planned gifts like the charitable gift annuity. Please call toll free 877-336-7575 for more information. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. David Brown is member services director with the Board of Retirement.

Free Will Baptist



Foundation



### *A Call To Commitment*

It was July 1971. James and Betty Bishop were attending the Free Will Baptist National Association in Nashville, Tennessee. The time was the Wednesday evening missionary service. James Bishop had an appointment with destiny that night. It would be the turning point in his life. God had been dealing with him for some time. James had walked down that miserable road of searching for God's will, and now it was time for surrender and commitment to His will.

That same evening, I stood in the pulpit to deliver my heart. God had brought me straight from St. Croix, Virgin Islands, to speak and James Bishop from Alabama to listen. James listened intently, and at the invitation he moved to the altar for a life-changing commitment of service to God.

A few days ago, I was in Colonel Bishop's home in Decatur, Alabama. He looked up and said, "I remember you! I remember what you said that night in '71 about your encounter and surrender to God on that tiny island so far from home. I remember your cry of desperation to God for supernatural grace."

At the invitation, he said, "Betty, I have to go to that altar tonight!" He took her hand and together they took a step of faith that began a journey of commitment and compliance to the will of God.

### *A Commission Conferred*

James B. Bishop entered the U. S. Army in December 1960 and completed basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia. There began a career spanning 40 years with 22 years served as a Free Will Baptist chaplain.

Brother Bishop was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps after graduating from Eastern New Mexico University. He entered the U. S. Army Chaplaincy in 1978 and served at Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Camp Greives, Korea; Darmstadt, Germany; and Mannheim, Germany.

James B. Bishop has risen to the rank of Colonel and has been awarded numerous decorations and medals



*Chaplain Colonel  
James B. Bishop Retired*

## *A Continuing Ministry*

By Rev. Larry A. Powell

of commendation. He has been used of God to lead hundreds to Christ for salvation, and has offered counsel and guidance to a multitude of military families.

Chaplain Bishop has been diagnosed with a form of ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). The day I visited with him, he said, "Look, Brother Larry, I can move my fingers!" He wiggled them just slightly for me. To him, that was a major accomplishment. Not long ago, those fingers had directed a military battalion. He spent days and weeks in the field with his men, jumping ditches and jumping from airplanes. He never complained. What a courageous man of character! He truly led by example.

Col. Bishop will continue his ministry from his home in Alabama. In spite of feeding tubes and the breathing apparatus, he will communicate his love and support to our faithful Free Will Baptist chaplains serving around the world. He plans to stay in contact through letters, e-mails, personal cards and telephone calls.

Thank you, Chaplain Bishop. You are an inspiration to us all and a commitment to courage. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Larry A. Powell has served as a home missionary, planting a Free Will Baptist church in St. Croix, Virgin Islands; San Juan, Puerto Rico; McAllen, Texas, and has held pastorates in Tennessee and Georgia. He presently serves as general director for the Home Missions Department.



**T**he most obvious reason to have Sunday School is for individual Christian growth. We must accept the Bible as inspired, so that one's approach is not to argue over relevancy or implications—but rather assume the truth of the Bible and head for the application to current living.

**P**rivate Bible study is invaluable for Christian growth. However, participation in a group which studies the scriptures in a systematic way with learning guided by trained teachers in a small-group setting is essential. Serving as a support and accountability group is what Sunday School is all about.

**S**unday School is a lay movement with volunteer workers serving in every area of the organization. Funding usually comes from the unified church budget subscribed by tithes and offerings of the church members. The church is responsible for enlisting, training and encouraging the faculty and for providing the curriculum materials, supplies, and adequate space and learning environment for each class. (Some Sunday Schools have their own treasury and pay for their own supplies and curriculum.)

**I**f one described the mission of the Sunday School in one word, that word would be ministry. People have many needs. Sunday School with its small group orientation and its foundation on sound biblical teaching is structured to deal effectively with emotional needs (such as self-esteem, search for meaning), social needs (such as loneliness, rewarding service opportunities) and physical and financial needs (as the church uses the Sunday School as a channel for a benevolence ministry).

**M**ost importantly, however, the Sunday School is an effective arm of the church to meet spiritual needs, which the church is uniquely qualified to handle.

**T**he organizational structure of the Sunday School can readily provide an effective and efficient system of communication, accountability and distribution to provide effective ministry in all these areas. An organization which has a place for everyone and assigned responsibility for each person is ideally situated to identify and meet people's needs.

## Why Have Sunday School Anyway?

By Alton Loveless

**T**he Sunday School provides an assigned class for every individual. This same organization provides an ideal foundation for reaching prospective members for the Sunday School and for the church. A class with a view toward enlisting others and with a list of prospects can put its Christian teaching into practical application as they pray for, contact, minister to and visit the prospects.

**W**here the Word of God is taught, lives are challenged and decisions are made. The Bible confronts individuals and calls for a response. The diligent teaching of the Bible calls people to saving faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The environment found in a small group of caring individuals who meet regularly to encourage and exhort one another, centered on the Bible, provides the best possible setting for the work of the Holy Spirit in conviction and regeneration.

**O**ne of the most difficult problems in today's churches is to assimilate new members into the congregation and provide the kind of bonding with other members that will support and nurture Christian growth. Studies show that a new member who has not formed at least some close relationships within the first four weeks in a new organization is essentially lost to the organization. Assigning new members to a functioning Sunday School class in which new friendships can be formed easily and mentoring occurs naturally is an ideal structure for encouraging bonding. Making this work takes some training and dedication on the part of class members and leaders to actively bring new people into the class fellowship. ■



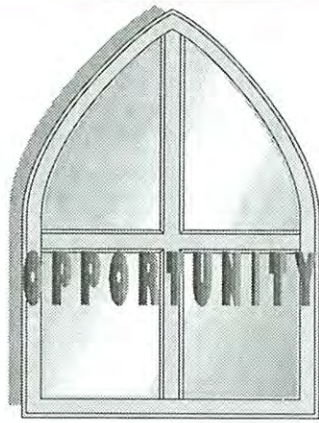
ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Alton Loveless is general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department.



**J**une 1944 was a historic month. Allied forces were herded together on ships by the hundreds of thousands in preparation for the greatest invasion in the history of the world. Paratroopers, pilots, seamen, and infantrymen were anxiously awaiting word from allied headquarters to begin the Normandy invasion. General Dwight D. Eisenhower listened to each member of his staff comment on whether to move forward with the planned invasion or to wait until a later date. His meteorologist read the weather forecast and the prediction was far from perfect. When asked his opinion, the meteorologist said: "We have a window of opportunity. If we fail to go now, it will be several weeks before the tide and weather will permit another attempt." Ike made the decision to launch the D-Day invasion and the rest is history.

We are facing our D-Day at Free Will Baptist Bible College. We have received our "weather report" and we have a "window of opportunity" before us. Failure to take advantage of this opportunity could delay us, not for just weeks, but for many months—perhaps even years—in our efforts to build and relocate to our new campus.

Our window of opportunity began with the securing of a new buyer for the campus. We have signed a letter of intent from another college here in town to purchase our present campus. The closing on the sale is scheduled for September 1, 2001. Our plans are to release the plans for the new campus to contractors and sub-contractors for bids by July 4, 2001. We cannot know for sure what the new campus will cost until we see the actual bids. We must also know for certain that we have the cash and



## Window of Opportunity

By Roy Harris  
Advancement Director

commitments needed, above and beyond the funds received from the sale, to pay for the new campus. We are making personal appeals to individuals, businesses and foundations who can commit to and give large gifts to the campaign.

We are marshaling all our forces in preparation for the launching of our D-Day. We have agreed that to wait will stall the momentum and could delay the move for months, maybe even years. We have a "golden window of opportunity," but we must enlist the help of all those who love Free Will Baptist Bible College. Now is the time for churches, Sunday School classes, individuals, associations, businesses and foundations to step up and

help us take advantage of our "window of opportunity." Many have planned all along to do something significant to help. Now is the time to decide. We must know by July 4 that we have the additional funds necessary to close on the sale of the property. Please ask yourself what you can do over the next three years to help us begin construction in October, as scheduled. Call or write us and let us know what you plan to do. We will keep a running tally and make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees in July.

**L**et's not let this "window" close. D-Day in WWII was an uncertain day when it began, but it was a glorious victory when it was completed. We have some uncertain days between now and July 4, but, with God's help and your prayers and support, we also shall see a great and glorious victory. Young men and women will learn to be effective and faithful servants and will go forth from the new campus to serve Jesus Christ and His Church. ■

# It's not too late!

If you know a young man or woman who should enroll at FWBBC this fall, tell them they still have time to apply. Write or call today for an application, or download it from our web site.

3606 West End Avenue, Nashville, TN 37205  
1-800-76-FWBBC • [www.fwbcc.edu/prospect.htm](http://www.fwbcc.edu/prospect.htm)

Free Will Baptist  Bible College





Garnett Reid

## Amos, The Burden-Bearing Prophet (Part VI) Life or Death (Segment A)

**L**ife or death—all of us know well these words and the concepts they represent. They make for compelling entertainment, whether through the excitement of a television docu-drama or a best-selling hardback.

Sooner or later, though, we face *real* life or death. The setting may be a hospital delivery room or an emergency room. We embrace life celebrating with newlyweds. Yet death shadows us as we assist a loved one whose final days on earth are slipping by.

In Amos 5:1-17, the prophet from Tekoa awakens Israel to a life or death choice. Death, in the guise of God's judgment, awaits the nation's blatant covenant failures. But for any individual who will repent and seek the Lord, He offers mercy and forgiveness.

### A Cycle of Mourning

This section of Amos displays a concentric structure. Think of the circles made by a pebble thrown into a pond. The prophet begins with a particular theme, then supplements it, leading to a central focus. He then repeats or reinforces the same themes following the center, closing the passage with the same idea which began it.

Here is the development of Amos 5:1-17:

**A Lamentation:** Israel has fallen, and she can't get up (1-13)

**An Exhortation:** "Seek the LORD, that you may live" (4-6)

**Condemnation:** Righteousness falls (7)

**Exaltation:** "The LORD is his name" (8-9)

**Condemnation:** Transgression rises (10-13)

**An Exhortation:** "Seek good, that you may live" (14-15)

**A Lamentation:** Israel is crying, and she can't stop (16-17)

### Stanza One: Lamentation (1-3)

The chapter opens with God's command to "hear" His lamentation for Israel. The nation is attending its own funeral, so to speak, as God Himself leads the mourners. Judgment is inevitable for the Northern Kingdom.

The reference to "the virgin of Israel" likens the nation

to a young woman in the prime of life, now taken down suddenly and abandoned due to her unfaithfulness (see similar expressions in Jeremiah 18:13; 31:21; 46:11). She falls, alone and powerless. Verse three portrays her fall in military terms: one thousand go out to battle, one hundred return; so, too, with one hundred, then ten.

### Stanza Two: Exhortation (4-6)

Despite this gloomy outlook for Israel, the Lord extends mercy to the nation. His offer of hope comes in the form of a command: "seek me, and you will live" (v. 4). Life—spiritual life—is not found by trekking to Gilgal, Bethel or Beersheba, ancient worship sites in Palestine. Instead, the people must turn to God and seek Him. Notice that He uses His covenant name, "LORD" (Yahweh), His personal name.

What was true for Israel in the eighth century B. C. is still true for us today. *What we need is not rote religion, but a real relationship with the Lord.* And if we lack this relationship, what then? The consequences, too, are the same: "lest he break out like a fire . . . and there be none to quench it" (v. 6; see also 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2, 5).

### Stanza Three: Condemnation (7)

"Ye who turn judgment (justice) to wormwood and leave off righteousness in the earth" (v. 7). This cryptic indictment reveals the reason for God's anger toward Israel.

"Wormwood" is an extremely bitter-tasting herb. The nation had so perverted justice that the result was bitterness; the companion section, vv. 10-13, will explore this problem further. To "leave off" righteousness is to reject it. The verb actually depicts righteousness thrown to the ground and left there. Israel had ignored her covenant obligations to live a holy life before the Lord, her holy covenant partner.

Still, He pleads with her, as with us: "Seek me, and you will live."

Next month we examine the central chorus and conclusion to Amos' life or death challenge in 5:1-17. ■





Melinda Pinson

## Praying for Your Husband

**H**ow does it feel when you discover for the first time that a particular person is praying for you—for your personal needs and concerns? It brings joy to my soul. Few things in life compare to the calm assurance you can receive knowing that someone prays for you faithfully, consistently and daily.

Maybe you requested those prayers, and a friend or loved one honored your request. Or maybe you did not request those prayers, and a friend or loved one honored God's command.

### *Joy of Praying for Your Husband*

Few ways can compete with prayer for expressing love. The pastor's wife's dearest, most intimate loved one—her husband, the pastor—can surely benefit from her prayers. And through this disciplined prayer for her mate, she will in turn be benefitted. Lovingly praying for your husband will bring you joy.

If we experience oneness in marriage as God designed, no one will know us better than our spouses. Being one as husband and wife means several things. For one, our lives are not our own—our lives are shared. Whatever life brings for the husband is experienced by the wife, and vice versa. When he is up, we are up, but when he is down, we are down also.

### *Bearing Burdens Prayerfully*

Growing married couples bear one another's burdens emotionally by feeling each other's deepest emotions. Yet, God wants us to bear those burdens *prayerfully*. As we experience all our husband's joys and pains vicariously, God wants us to take all the joys, sorrows and worries to Him in prayer and trust in His almighty power.

### *Pray First*

Many of us, however, spend an excessive amount of time worrying, fretting, crying over the problems of our husband's life and ministry—perhaps even griping! Often, when things go wrong, wives try other solutions first and prayer last.

Being angry *and* unprayerful is a double drain on our husband's ministry. We must avoid being the kind of wife described in Proverbs: "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman," (21:19, compare Prov. 25:24).

We need to submit all the problems we and our husbands face to God in prayer—first! Who is better equipped to pray for your husband than you?

We must follow the guidance of the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:6-7: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Systematic, disciplined prayer for your husband will change your outlook on your lives and ministry together. It's worth the effort and sacrifice. And you will realize that prayer changes you first, not just your husband. Prayer softens your heart to love and help this person with whom you have become one.

### *Pray for God's Will*

In praying for her husband, the pastor's wife should have as her goal, not to get her husband to do what she wants, but to get him to conform to the will of God in every area of life—"not my will but Yours be done." No matter how godly your husband might be, no

husband can live up to all his wife's expectations. Prayer will help you accept your husband now but expect more from God in the future.

### *Things to Pray For*

What are the main things we as pastors' wives need to pray for when interceding for our husbands? Pray for your husband's personal walk with God, that he will love God with all his mind, heart, soul and strength—that he will be a man of holiness and integrity.

Pray for him as a husband and father, that he will grow daily in his fulfillment of his covenant responsibility as family leader. Pray for him as a minister, that he will not be overwhelmed by the demands of his unique calling. Pray for his safety and health as he goes about his daily life.

Disciplined prayer for your husband—for his life and ministry—will bring you joy. It will bring a new, deeper perspective on your relationship with your husband. Praying before worrying will help you put God's will for your husband and family in the center. Pastors' wives, let's commit ourselves anew to a life of prayer for our husbands! ■





Randy Sawyer

## The Reforming Power of Expository Preaching (Part I)

**T**he church of the Middle Ages was a massive and powerful institution. The pope, as supreme authority in Christendom, exercised a moral rule over both ecclesiastical and political matters. The church buildings and the services held in them were very similar everywhere. The universal use of Latin facilitated communication, and the laity as well as the clergy were deeply devoted to the dogma that had evolved over the previous centuries.

### *Crumbling Foundations*

In spite of the appearance of stability, however, the very foundation of the church was disintegrating, and without significant reforms the church was in danger of total collapse. Reformation was needed both morally and theologically.

Morally the church was infected with corruption. The papal court was a hotbed of conspiracies, plots and intrigues. Half the popes between 1417 and 1517 fathered illegitimate children, and the lesser clergy and monastics were given to absenteeism, bribery and licentiousness.

The church also needed reform on the theological level. The teachings of the church had gone astray to the point that it no longer resembled "the doctrine of the apostles" and church fathers. It was imperative that the church return to the sources of Christianity, especially the study of the Holy Scriptures.

### *Courageous Reformers*

Though there were significant signs of decadence, many courageous churchmen voiced a deep desire for reform. These reformers sprang from divergent backgrounds and at times held to conflicting theological viewpoints. But each shared the conviction that God's Word is supreme and they had been chosen to proclaim that Word.

In *On the History of Preaching*, John Broadus summarized the preaching of the Reformation Age: "It was a revival of biblical preaching. Instead of the long and often fabulous stories about the saints and martyrs, and accounts of miracles, instead of passages from Aristotle and Seneca, and fine-spun subtleties of the schoolmen, these men preached the Bible."

It was indeed the recovery of expository preaching that served to fuel the Reform movement. Who were these courageous reformers? Who were these men who tore asunder the fabric of Roman Catholicism to herald the dawning of a new day?

### *The Morning Star*

John Wyclif is sometimes known as the Morning Star of the Reformation. Born in 1330 into an English family, Wyclif went to Oxford to study and by 1370 had become Oxford's leading philosopher and theologian. In his 40s, Wyclif became involved in politics, siding with the government in its disputes with the Papacy.

During that time his views became increasingly radical as he questioned the rights of a corrupt clergy to control church properties. Just when his beliefs became most radical, the political climate changed, and he lost his government support. Shortly thereafter, the pope condemned 18 of Wyclif's statements in a series of bulls.

In 1378, with this pressure mounting against him, Wyclif retired to a country parish. There he continued to write and encourage those seeking reform.

Besides maintaining the inerrancy of scripture, he claimed that the Bible contains the whole of God's revelation. There is no need for any further teaching to be supplied by church tradition, the pope or any other source. Furthermore, the Bible is to be made available to all Christians, the laity as well as the clergy.

Accordingly, Wyclif translated the Bible into English and then went out to preach God's Word. Wyclif died of a stroke in 1384, but his disciples, the Lollards, continued to teach his doctrine. They carried his ideas throughout Europe and helped pave the way for the 16th century English Reformation.

Wyclif's most significant contribution to preaching was his use of the "naked text," or exposition of the gospel message without the accumulation of tradition. He insisted that preaching should be based upon the biblical text alone. He believed that a preacher must preach only the "unsullied laws of God."

"Scripture to him was the '*magistrum optimum*,' higher than reason and tradition." His firm adherence to the "naked text" revived the superiority of pulpit evangelism over mere ceremonialism, and became the model for other reformers.

At the Council of Constance, the works of Wyclif were condemned. Thirteen years later in 1428, Wyclif's bones were dug up and burned.

A biographer commented, "They burnt his bones to ashes and cast them into the Swift, a neighboring brook. Thus the brook conveyed his ashes into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas and they into the main ocean. And so the ashes of Wyclif are symbolic of his doctrine, which is now spread throughout the world."

### *The Bohemian Reformer*

Wyclif's teachings greatly influenced the Bohemian reformer, John Huss. Wyclif's writings were already known in Bohemia in the 14th century, but in 1401 Jerome of Prague brought from England copies of his more radical theological works. As early as 1402, Huss was regarded as the chief exponent of Wyclif's views. From his strategic position as rector and preacher at



Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, Huss sought to preach only the "naked text."

In preaching on I Corinthians he said, "I would remind you how I preached to you the gospel." Then exhorting the priests of his day, he continued, "Preach the gospel, not some entertainment or fables, or plundering lies, so that the people with attentive minds will accept the gospel and both the preacher and the hearer will be grounded by the faith in the gospel."

Huss often preached a series of sermons consisting of a running commentary on a whole scripture passage. In so doing, he gathered numerous quotations from widely scattered sources to add credibility to his proposition. Huss did not employ expository preaching as the modern definition would suggest, but his sermons were a departure from the tedious traditions of his day and were thoroughly scriptural.

The greatest aspect of Huss' preaching, however, was his passion. Charles Dargan said, "In his preaching Huss carried more weight by the strength and sincerity of his convictions than by those more pleasing and impressive talents which we call eloquence." People loved to hear him preach because of the zeal they saw in him.

John Broadus wrote: "John Huss was an eloquent and scholarly man, and his 'fervid' sermons in favor of moral and ecclesiastical reformation long made a great impression."

Though his voice was silenced at the stake at Constance in 1415, the fires of reform ignited by his biblical preaching set ablaze the hearts of his countrymen. Today, in the center of Old Town Square, Prague, stands a memorial to the Czech Reformer. So great was influence over his native land that Prague became known pre-eminently as the home of Huss.

### The Naked Text

Both Wyclif and Huss were committed to preaching the "naked text," and in an era when church tradition and papal commentary ranked on par with Scripture, these men courageously held to the sufficiency of the Word. Their work demonstrates clearly the "reforming power of expository preaching." (Next month we will see how this principle is demonstrated in the preaching of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin.) ■

# THE TOGETHER WAY

April 2001

Receipts:				Year To Date	Year To Date	Year To Date
State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Designated	CO-OP	Total
Alabama	\$ 461.96	\$ 0.00	\$ 461.96	\$ 1,793.15	\$ 620.08	\$ 2,413.23
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	30.00	204.60	234.60
Arkansas	32,771.81	26,765.59	59,537.40	95,149.15	76,508.70	171,657.85
California	.00	1,016.07	1,016.07	883.54	4,438.14	5,321.68
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	129.32	3,999.00	4,128.32
Georgia	31,059.88	1,515.42	32,575.30	131,230.45	6,996.30	138,226.75
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	10,289.45	2,376.10	12,665.55	33,621.75	8,762.31	42,384.06
Indiana	1,627.26	143.55	1,770.81	7,976.86	883.75	8,860.61
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	796.30	796.30
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	106.55	106.55
Kentucky	.00	357.41	357.41	1,682.04	3,143.88	4,825.92
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	20.00	20.00	40.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Michigan	9,929.30	1,149.87	11,079.17	84,169.38	8,587.91	92,757.29
Mississippi	8,774.80	919.77	9,694.57	35,064.65	2,633.54	37,698.19
Missouri	44,399.12	13,939.56	58,338.68	177,342.37	56,465.61	233,807.98
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	457.91	68.95	526.86	1,729.95	219.97	1,949.92
North Carolina	955.24	3,135.42	4,090.66	5,045.81	11,370.80	16,416.61
Ohio	12,010.27	4,081.64	16,091.91	45,309.69	12,876.01	58,185.70
Oklahoma	77,583.98	14,235.92	91,819.90	198,964.04	45,872.49	244,836.53
South Carolina	33,394.16	123.88	33,518.04	216,020.03	773.05	216,793.08
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	11,272.74	1,011.07	12,283.81	51,047.32	9,548.64	60,595.96
Texas	12,394.90	561.53	12,956.43	30,671.26	1,199.30	31,870.56
Virginia	143.11	.00	143.11	1,476.56	131.25	1,607.81
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	713.65	339.01	1,052.66	11,040.90	517.41	11,558.31
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	628.66	13.75	642.41	2,793.13	45.24	2,838.37
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(0.06)	(0.06)	.00	.03	.03
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 288,868.20</b>	<b>\$ 71,754.45</b>	<b>\$ 360,622.65</b>	<b>\$ 1,133,191.35</b>	<b>\$ 256,720.86</b>	<b>\$ 1,389,912.21</b>

### Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 2,222.57	\$ 32,289.54	\$ 34,512.11	\$ 7,729.82	\$ 115,524.41	\$ 123,254.23
Foreign Missions	171,880.69	9,076.94	180,957.63	657,271.08	32,475.17	689,746.25
FWBBC	23,987.61	9,076.94	33,064.55	97,290.24	32,475.17	129,765.41
Home Missions	79,394.76	7,103.70	86,498.46	301,024.87	25,415.37	326,440.24
Retirement & Insurance	502.90	5,525.11	6,028.01	2,126.68	19,767.52	21,894.20
Master's Men	296.16	5,525.11	5,821.27	1,821.22	19,767.52	21,588.74
Comm. for Theo. Integrity	49.47	197.30	246.77	182.81	705.97	888.78
FWB Foundation	337.05	2,367.91	2,704.96	1,270.89	8,471.82	9,742.71
Historical Commission	32.12	197.30	229.42	130.76	705.97	836.73
Music Commission	9.46	197.30	206.76	23.79	705.97	729.76
Media Commission	176.81	197.30	374.11	605.84	705.97	1,311.81
Hillsdale FWB College	1,794.38	.00	1,794.38	7,433.13	.00	7,433.13
Other	8,184.22	.00	8,184.22	56,280.22	.00	56,280.22
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 288,868.20</b>	<b>\$ 71,754.45</b>	<b>\$ 360,622.65</b>	<b>\$ 1,133,191.35</b>	<b>\$ 256,720.86</b>	<b>\$ 1,389,912.21</b>





# The 2001 Truth & Peace Student Leadership Conference

Ryan Akers Monterey, TN	Katie Douglas Macon, GA	Daniel Judkins Monticello, AR	Blake Martin Russellville, AR	Josh Owens Antioch, TN	Jason Thompson Liberal, MO
Toni Alejandria Fairfield, CA	Maci Dukes Lake Butler, FL	James Judkins Monticello, AR	Holly Mashburn Asheville, NC	Emily Parker Fredericktown, MO	Casey Tryon Broken Arrow, OK
Sheri Alford Spencer, OK	Jesse Fletcher Antioch, TN	Russell Kern Locust Grove, OK	Lindsey McAdams Goodlettsville, TN	Bethany Parks Pleasant View, TN	Carol Ann Upton Stockton, CA
Bobby Baldridge Eastern, KY	Lisa Gaw Cookeville, TN	Scott Kernan Desloge, MO	Jill McAlister Farmersville, CA	Corey Perry Spencer, OK	Emily Walker Nashville, TN
Drew Bigley Ina, IL	Michael Godbold Russellville, AR			Shannon Peterson Alma, GA	A.J. Warden Bonner Springs, KS
Christine Boddie Mammoth Springs, AR	Casey Gwartney Locust Grove, OK			Ben Polston Pryor, OK	Jillian Weaver Locust Grove, OK
Jennifer Bryan Greenville, NC	Darin Gwartney Locust Grove, OK			Audra Rial Pryor, OK	Dustin Williams Ada, OK
Rachel Bryant Vero Beach, FL	Corey Hawkins Greenville, NC			Jacob Riggs Joelton, TN	Carajean Wilson Danville, AR
Lauren Caldwell Warren, AR	Rachel Henderson Pocahontas, AR			Alison Segraves Antioch, TN	Chris Wilson Broken Arrow, OK
Matthew Caldwell Ft. Smith, AR	Tracy Hensley Swannanoa, NC			Alexis Smith Fresno, CA	
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Zac Childers Pikeville, KY	Josh Holland Bixby, OK	Derek Lambert Bentonville, AR	Tommy Murray Rogers, AR	Derick Stokes Locust Grove, OK	
Teri Deel Mt. Juliet, TN	Daniel Holt Ozark, AR	Ashley Lewis Cisne, IL	Dawnetta Nance West Fork, AR	Alissa Taylor Fresno, CA	
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Thomas Marberry

## The Quest For Truth

By F. Leroy Forlines

(Nashville: Randall House Publications, 2001, 544 pp., hardback \$34.95, paperback \$29.95).

**P**rofessor Leroy Forlines is well known among Free Will Baptists. He has taught biblical studies, theology and ethics at Free Will Baptist Bible College for more than 35 years. He holds degrees from Free Will Baptist Bible College, Winona Lake School of Theology, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and Chicago Graduate School of Theology. He is the author of several books as well as numerous articles and papers on a variety of subjects.

This book is a complete revision of his 1975 book, *Biblical Systematics*. This work is larger and more comprehensive than its predecessor; it is a much more accurate reflection of the depth and breadth of Forlines' scholarship.

*The Quest For Truth* is not a typical systematic theology textbook. It is not a survey of the major doctrinal teachings of the Christian faith; several major doctrines (such as ecclesiology and eschatology) receive little consideration. It focuses on theology (the doctrine of God) and soteriology (the doctrine of salvation).

The book has a decidedly apologetic tone. It seeks to defend a traditional Reformation form of Christianity against the attacks of postmodernism. It also devotes more attention to the application of Christian truth than do most theology textbooks. For this author, theology is not just an abstract academic discipline; the truths of the Christian faith must be applied to the everyday lives of believers.

The author has two specific purposes in mind. First, he seeks to acquaint the reader with the dangers of modernism and postmodernism (especially the latter). He argues that modernism did great harm to traditional Protestantism in the late 19th and 20th centuries. He views postmodernism as an even more dangerous foe.

As Forlines explains, "Postmod-

ernism undercuts the possibility of moral consensus. It goes beyond a simple denial of general revelation. It denies that Truth exists." In postmodernism there are no absolutes; there is no way to determine what is really right and what is really wrong. Everything is relative. It is normal for a person to believe things that are in fact contradictory.

The second goal of this book is to present a traditional Arminian approach to theology. As the author correctly notes, the theology of James Arminius has often been ignored, misrepresented and even perverted. Those theological students who do have the opportunity to study Arminianism are generally exposed either to the Wesleyan form of the doctrine or to the weakened form being promoted by scholars such as Clark Pinnock.

As Forlines concludes, "I think the climate is right for a revival of Classical Arminianism." In his view, the form of Arminianism taught by Arminius himself is particularly suited to deal with the theological challenges that the church faces today.

The book is comprehensive; its treatment of the issues is quite complete. The author interacts with a wide variety of theological literature written by scholars from different backgrounds. Forlines is not afraid to express his areas of agreement and disagreement. It is clear that he has carefully thought through the issues and come to his own conclusions.

The book is not an easy read. It deals with issues that are often complex and difficult to explain. Postmodernism, for example, is a theological concept with presuppositions that are hard to understand and conclusions that are difficult to define. Any author who seeks to explain postmodernism faces a formidable task. The book is also, at times, repetitious and the progress of thought is hard to follow.

This book is a significant contribution to Free Will Baptist scholarship. There is no other book currently available which addresses these complex issues in such a comprehensive way. There is no other book that contains the kind of practical application of important theological principles that this book contains.

This work is also a call for action. The author reminds us that "Our responsibility is a serious one. If we do not face up to the seriousness of the situation and take appropriate steps to do something about it, our children, our grandchildren, the church, the nation, and the world will suffer."

This is a unique book; it will inform you and challenge you. Spend some time with it. It will be time well spent. ■

### Directory Update

#### ARKANSAS

Mark Stripling to First Church, North Little Rock

#### ATLANTIC CANADA

Daryl Crain to Stickney Church, Stickney

Murray Macumber to Upper Brighton Church, Upper Brighton

Brian Bradley to Lansdowne Church, Stickney

#### GEORGIA

Emory Howell to Bethlehem Church, Cordele

Mark Williford to Macedonia Church, Colquitt from Glennville Christian Academy as principal

Eric Brown to Pine Level Church, Alma from United Church, Dickson, TN, as associate pastor

#### ILLINOIS

Matt Crain to Johnston City Church, Johnston City

#### VIRGINIA

Jay Summerlin to Woodland Heights Church, Martinsville





Jack Williams

## Great Revival Ties

**T**he first time I went to a revival meeting a girl tried to strangle me with a necktie I wore that belonged to my uncle. That made three firsts in one trip—first revival, first time to wear a tie and the first time a girl bullied me.

I was five years old and decided on the spot that I hated neckties, hated revivals for making me wear a tie, and hated girls in general because that's what boys do when they're five. Those three hates kept me out of church six years, out of neckties 12 years and away from girls until first grade.

**My taste for revivals** changed by the time I turned 11, since that was the only entertainment available in the community after the sun went down. Yes, I admit that revivals were more entertainment than religious experiences. At least they were until a 1954 revival when something the preacher said pushed a load of conviction inside my soul.

Now that was scary. I couldn't sleep at night and was afraid to say anything about it. The idea that God had His all-seeing eye on me took the fun out of nights and made the hot cotton fields seem like a preview of something a lot hotter.

For the next five years, not a day passed without me being aware that I must face God in judgment. Such was the power of revival preaching even in a rural backwater with quarter-time pastors. Teen years are tough for boys, but they're almost unbearable when you're also on the run from the Hound of Heaven.

**My best-ever revival** encounter happened one August night in 1958. By then I was within shouting distance of 16, had not been bullied by a girl in years and did not own a necktie. But I was in near despair under a heavy load

of sin that wouldn't go away.

By Thursday night, I knew I was in serious trouble. Even coming into the church house and sitting on the back row behind the door gave no relief from the faithful Hound of Heaven who tracked me relentlessly until he cornered me during the invitation and refused to turn my soul loose.

When the dam burst and I knelt at the altar, I discovered that 15 others had also come to pray for salvation. A powerful revival washed through that farming community and forever changed my life. And God did it all without requiring me to wear a necktie.

**Fast forward three years** to the first revival I preached. Wow, what a wonderful difference standing on the pulpit side of revival preaching instead of the fugitive side trying to evade an omnipresent God.

I preached 17 times in 14 days, baptized (Sorry, I forgot to count) smiling converts, took an 11-year-old girl out on her first date (with her parents' encouragement) and bought a ring for my fiancée. We rode a tidal wave of revival.

Somebody took pictures of the river baptismal scene after the revival. I looked wetter than those we baptized. The other people in the pictures are easy to recognize, but the guy who plays my part looks like a skinny teenager.

The song leader in that revival got called to preach and is now a home missionary in Michigan. The pastor of the church got called to Heaven eight years ago. I've been called a lot of things on the trail since that time.

**What makes that revival** even more special is that the church wanted somebody else for the meeting. The pastor called Free Will Baptist Bible College and was talking with an upper classman named John Stu-

art Craft who, as it turned out, was already booked.

I happened to be walking down the dormitory stairs on my way to a pick-up basketball game when John turned, saw me and yelled, "Hey, Jack, do you want to preach a revival in Ohio?"

"Sure," says I, and got on the phone. The pastor didn't ask if I'd preached a revival, and I didn't tell. By the time he got around to asking, I was unloading my briefcase in his spare bedroom. He said I had to wear a tie.

**Now here's the place** where I lose the female readers. During the second week of the meeting, I called my fiancée and told her that we might have to postpone our Friday, July 13 wedding if the revival didn't end. To her credit, she said that was all right since she knew how important revivals were. I thought it was a very understanding attitude for a lady to have.

Naturally, I don't want to imply something here that I shouldn't, but two days after I called her, the revival fires cooled and we closed the meeting in time for me to drive 200 miles to the wedding.

**She claims that** she did not pray for the revival to end, although she could not vouch for a few of her relatives and some of her less spiritual friends. And I believed her, of course. No, she didn't bully me to stop the revival and go to the wedding. She did, however, insist that I wear a necktie when I got there.

Oh, I almost forgot. We returned to Ohio and spent our honeymoon with that pastor, his wife and their six children. I didn't have to wear a tie. ■



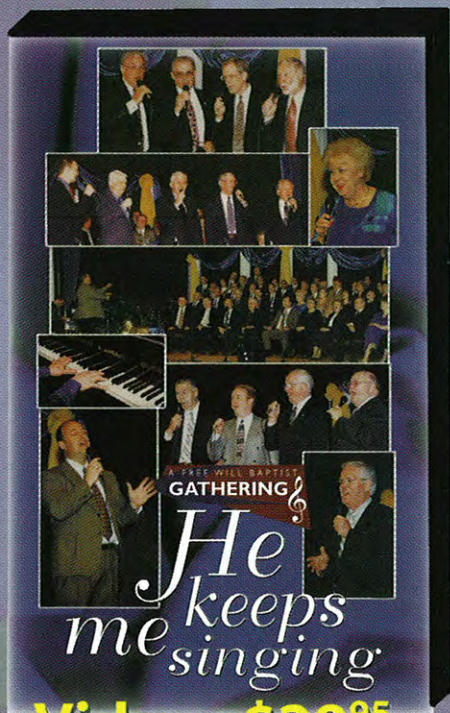
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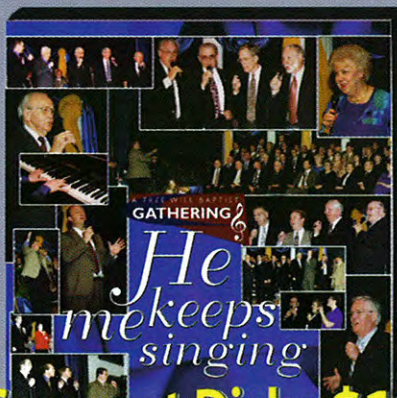
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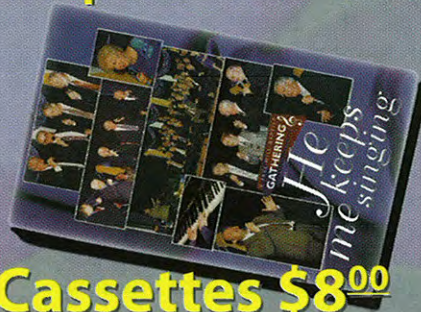
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