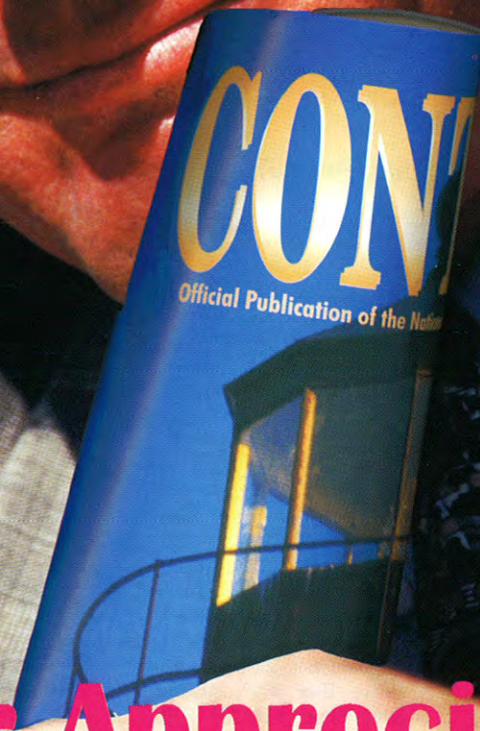


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Official Publication of the National Association of Free Will Baptists

August 2001



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Issue**

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

Precepts for the Pastor

Pastors have many resources available today regarding preaching and pastoral ministry. Scores of workshops, seminars and conferences suggesting new methodology for church growth and preaching are conducted each year.

Bombarded by all the suggestions, some pastors tend to become disillusioned. Others leave the ministry because they are unable to cope with the demands placed on them by contemporary culture.

While it is important to note what is taking place in contemporary society, that should not be the standard for measuring our ministry and methodology. Preachers can profit most by going back to the basics recorded in the Bible—God's ministry manual.

The writer of Psalm 119 uses the word *precepts* over 20 times. "Precepts" is another name for a mandate from God and is used only in the plural. A right relationship to God's precepts is essential for effective ministry.

Attributes of the Precepts

The precepts of God are inspired. The Bible declares, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," (II Tim. 3:16). They are sufficient for direction in ministry. The precepts of God are true, tested and timeless.

Attitude toward the Precepts

The Psalmist declared, "Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts," (119:173). Our attitude to-

ward God's precepts should be one of longing after, loving, listening to and loyalty.

The Psalmist continues, "Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O Lord, according to thy lovingkindness," (119:159). We should be delighted by the precepts, directed by the precepts and diligent students of the precepts.

The Psalmist further declares, "And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts," (119:45).

Admonition regarding the Precepts

God admonishes us to *know* His precepts. The Psalmist declares, "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts," (119:100).

Understanding God's precepts will enable us to avoid getting entangled with that which is evil and will help us hold to that which is right. The Psalmist declares, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way," (119:104).

God admonishes us to *keep* His precepts when He says, "Thou has commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently," (119:4). The writer says, "The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole

heart . . . Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts," (119:69, 134).

God admonishes us to *kneel* in submission to His precepts. Submission to God's precepts is the pathway of blessing.

Application from the Precepts

We need to *peruse* the precepts. Daily, we need to read the precepts of God in order to refresh our minds regarding His will for our lives.

We need to *ponder* the precepts. The Psalmist affirms this, "I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways . . . Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts," (119:15, 78).

We need to *practice* the precepts. The Psalmist says, "The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts . . . I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts," (119:110, 141). We need to do what the precepts demand.

We need to *pattern* the precepts. Our lives should *reflect* the precepts. We should *preach* the precepts. While it may be necessary to use illustrations in our preaching, they should never take the place of the precepts. The precepts give discernment, direction and delight to those who embrace them.

The next time your preacher seems discouraged at the complexity of contemporary ministry demands, send him to Psalm 119 to peruse, ponder and practice the precepts. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

August 2001

6-8 Arkansas State Association

15-18 CMP Conclave

I Love Being A Pastor

By Brent Nix



From what I understand, there is a shortage of pastors around the country. According to some of our state leaders, it is getting more and more difficult for churches to find men to lead our congregations. This is not only a problem among Free Will Baptists. Other churches and denominational groups are also struggling, almost scrambling, to find men who are called, trained and willing to be spiritual shepherds.

I have heard and read about some of the reasons behind this trend, but the one that disturbs me the most is that some pastors are simply leaving the ministry. They are not retired or morally disqualified or incapable. Rather, they are drained and burned out and weary.

It is not my purpose here to judge or justify such occurrences. What I would

like to do is share some of the reasons I truly enjoy being a pastor. It is my hope that those currently pastoring might read this and be encouraged. Perhaps some who have stepped away from leading a church for a time may be reminded of some of the great things they are missing and feel God's calling to stand behind the pulpit once again.

Interesting Situations

I frequently read the comic strip "Dilbert" by Scott Adams. My favorite character is Wally who can usually be found spending a great deal of creative energy trying to escape his mundane existence in an eight by eight cubicle. I always find it amusing probably because I can relate somewhat to his plight.

That's because I am bivocational and my secular job is generally the

same old thing every day. That's certainly not the case with my church employment. There always seems to be something interesting happening regarding my role as a pastor.

For instance, I was talking with a lady one day and the subject of what I do besides work part-time for the local school district came up. I told her I pastor the local Free Will Baptist church and her next question was typical, "What does that mean . . . *Free Will Baptist*?" I briefly explained that we believe that each person has a free will and can choose to accept or reject God and the gift of his son Jesus.

"Well, that sounds good to me," was her reply. Sensing an opportunity, I was just about to invite her to church when she continued, "You must have a lot of those . . . um, what do you call those people who don't believe in God?"

Now starting to wonder where this conversation might be headed, I haltingly supplied, "Uhh... you mean atheists?"

She brightened, "Yeah, you must have a lot of atheists coming to your church."

Perplexed, I just looked at her and she must have noticed my confusion, "You know . . . because you think it's all right to reject God."

Wincing inwardly, I quickly explained that while we believe people have the *option* of rejecting God, Free Will Baptists do not think it is *okay* to reject or ignore Him and there will be terrible consequences if they do.

"Oh," she said. And that was that.

While I don't think the spiritual darkness evident in her was humorous, later as I reflected on how this episode played out, I couldn't help but shake my head and chuckle a little. It was a relatively small thing, a brief encounter, but illustrative of the fact that whatever else you want to say about it, a pastor's life is rarely boring.

Investigating the Scriptures

In my mind, one of the biggest advantages of shepherding a church flock is the opportunity to spend prime-time studying the Bible. Laymen who necessarily work 40 or more hours a week to make their living must squeeze that devotional and study time in as they can. With family, community and perhaps other responsibilities, that can be a challenge.

The pastor, on the other hand, does not have to search for that time. It is (or should be) the chief priority of his weekly schedule. The apostles recognized this in Acts 6:1-4 when they told the church at Jerusalem to appoint seven deacons so that they would not have to "leave the word of God and serve tables" but rather could give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Coupled with this, of course, is the communication of what the pastor finds in his study of the Bible through preaching and teaching. Again, to me, this is a highlight of the pastor's life and ministry. There is nothing else quite like watching the light come on in the faces of people listening to you as you explain a scripture passage and understanding comes to them. I spend a good portion of my time during the

week digging out gems of God's Word and then sharing them with my folks on Sunday . . . and get paid to do it!

Interacting with the Saints

When we take requests during our Wednesday prayer meetings, it is not unusual for our people to mention a situation at their job where they are having a difficult time with a co-worker who is usually an unbeliever. This is sad but not unexpected in the workplaces of the world. When people do not possess the new nature only the Lord can give, they are dominated by the old, selfish, sinful nature with which they were born. This can easily lead to conflict.

The pastor, on the other hand, spends the great majority of his ministry surrounded by people who are saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Because I experience both working in the secular world and ministering in the church, I can testify that it is greatly refreshing when I interact with my church family.

We have in common a world view which believes in God and accepts the Bible as authoritative. We are almost always on the same page as we work together because we have the same goal of reaching our community for Jesus. Church board meetings, Sunday School meetings, business meetings—I'll take them anytime over meetings at my other job.

Now, I am not naive. I understand that not everyone who goes to church, participates and holds an office is necessarily a genuine, born-again Christian. There are some wolves in sheep's clothing. And sometimes those who really are Christians don't act like it. But I maintain that, in general, pastors are blessed to work closely with the best people who still live in this old world—God's people.

Influencing Souls

About two years ago a young lady came forward during the invitation to give her life to the Lord. She was a single mother and came from a difficult, dark background. While counseling with her at the altar, she revealed to me that she was pregnant with her second child. Our church, particularly another single mom in our congrega-

tion, took her in and tried to show her the love of Jesus.

I told her I was her pastor and available anytime she needed me. All she had to do was give me a call or stop me after church. And because she was hungering and thirsting for righteousness, she took me up on that. She posed some questions that certainly stretched my capacities over these past couple of years.

Today she is happily married to a good Christian man. They are faithfully attending church, tithing, using their abilities to minister among us and raising two precious children to love God. Not too long ago at our Fall Festival as this young lady was reading a gospel story to all the children present, I nudged one of our deacons and said, "Look at Jennifer. That's what it's all about, isn't it?" He wholeheartedly agreed.

It was the Holy Spirit who did the real work of changing her life. But what an honor and a privilege it is for us pastors to be instruments of encouragement, counsel and teaching to people who are tired of the ways of the world and desperately want to know God.

Someone once said that the only two things which will survive this present world are the Word of God and the souls of men. Pastors have the unique opportunity to be closely involved with both of these. While fulfilling the call to be a pastor is, admittedly, not without its stresses, I cannot imagine doing anything else. Nothing, to me, is as worthwhile or more fulfilling. I love being a pastor. ■

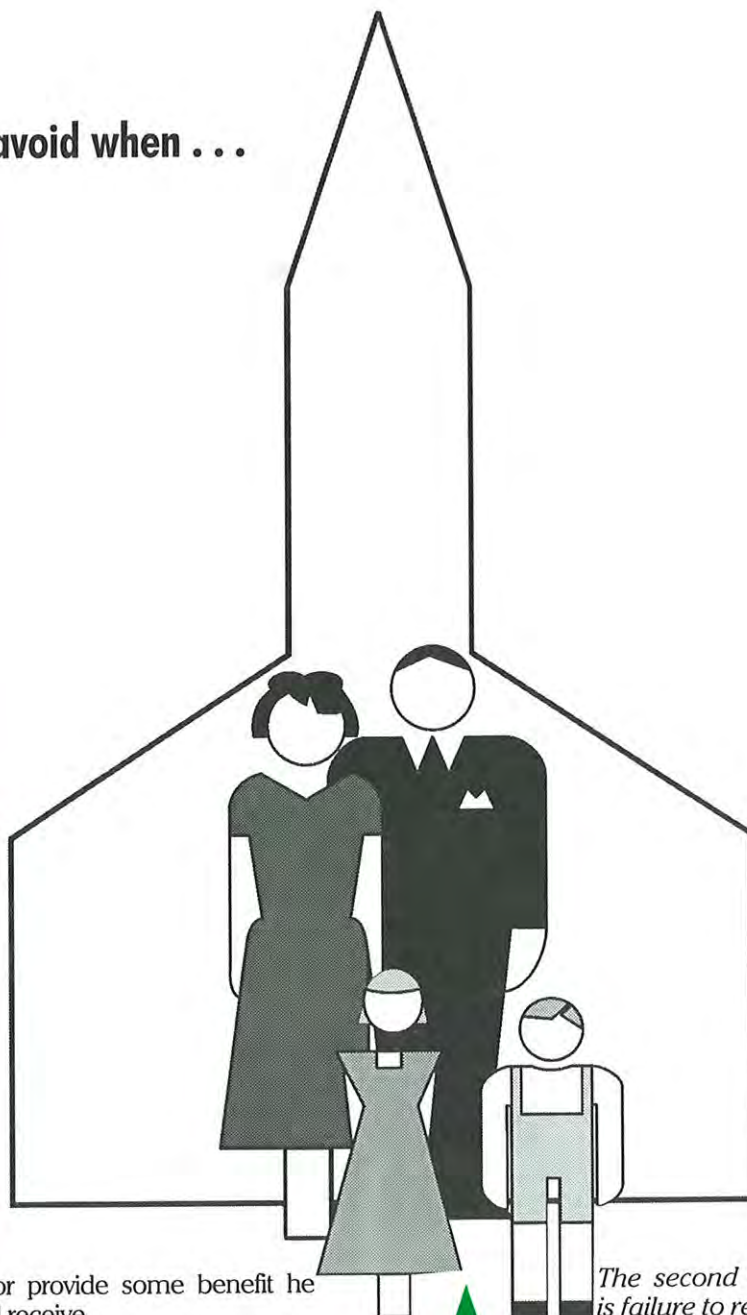


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Brent Nix pastors New Hope Free Will Baptist Church in Kent, Washington. He serves as moderator of the Northwest Association and is a member of the General Board.

I ♥ Pastoring

Providing for the Pastor and His Family

By Billy A. Melvin



Over some 50 years of ministry, I have observed that churches often make serious mistakes in how they provide for their pastor and his family. These mistakes place a tremendous strain on the pastor and may impact his ability to serve effectively or result in his early departure to another field of service.

The first mistake is balancing the church budget on the back of the pastor and his family.

1

What happens is this: Consideration is given to all budget items except the pastor's salary. Then, in light of the previous year's experience, new expense figures are established for the coming year. These are then totaled to determine whether or not there is room in the budget to give the pastor a

raise or provide some benefit he should receive.

How often I've heard the statement, "We know our pastor is underpaid and we'd like to do more for him, but our budget won't allow it." When this is said, what has happened? Simple. The church budget has been balanced on the back of the pastor. He is the one who pays for the church to have a balanced budget.

The way to avoid this mistake is to consider the pastor's salary and benefits *before considering the other items in the budget*. The first goal should be to do what is fair and right for the pastor in light of his education, experience and ability, even if some other items in the budget have to be cut or eliminated. (A good standard in most communities is the pay scale of school principals in the local school system.)

The second mistake is failure to recognize the loss of personal income to a pastor if he has to pay all of his social security payments.

2 Most pastors serving churches in a full-time capacity make their social security payments as a self-employed person. Unless the church assists the pastor in these payments, his income is significantly reduced.

Here is an example. Let's assume your pastor has an adjusted gross annual income of \$30,000. His social security payment for the year 2000 would have been 15.30% of his salary or a total of \$4,590. That's a hefty amount for a pastor to subtract from his annual income. True, if the church assists the pastor with his so-

cial security payments, he has to declare that money as income, but the cost to him is greatly reduced.

It is my conviction that every church should provide at least 50% of the pastor's social security payment, if not all of it.



The third mistake is thinking that the provision of a parsonage is a good deal for the pastor.

The provision of a parsonage may be a good deal for the church, but it's hardly a good deal for the pastor. There are two reasons for this:

First, I have noted a trend among churches to over-estimate the value of the parsonage to the pastor and his family when setting his salary. The congregation often is comfortable with the notion that although they are paying a small salary, they are providing a house with all utilities. In most cases of this sort, the value placed on the provision of a parsonage and utilities is much higher than can be justified.

And, second, what is really happening here? Isn't it obvious? The pastor and his family are making payments on a house they don't even own! In short, he is helping to buy or maintain a house for the church. It is for this reason that many older pastors, who have lived in parsonages all their lives, have no place to go when they can no longer serve.

Fortunately, more and more churches are seeing the fallacy of the parsonage arrangement and are providing loans and housing allowances, so pastors can purchase their own houses.



The fourth mistake is failure to provide for the pastor appropriate benefits beyond his basic salary.

The needs of most pastors and their families go beyond a basic salary. Such provisions as health insurance, vacation time or sick days should be provided by the church. And when possible, still other benefits should be considered. Many churches today provide their pastor a budget for books and magazines, time away for conferences/seminars and occasional opportunities for additional education or study.

In any annual review of your pastor's salary, make sure there is also a review of the benefits provided by the church. Your generosity in this area will help meet real needs and enable your pastor to serve you even better.



The fifth mistake is assuming the pastor should cover any auto expense incurred in the fulfillment of his pastoral ministry.

I'll never understand it, but it happens. Business men who receive full reimbursement for their travel expenses in connection with their jobs will sit in a finance committee meeting of a church and make no provision to reimburse the pastor for his travel expenses.

With the high cost of purchasing and operating an automobile today, the cost to a pastor is significant when he is expected to absorb the cost of miles driven in ministry. The least a church can do is to reimburse the pastor for the actual miles he drives in the fulfillment of his pastoral duties.

In the year 2000, the mileage allowance by IRS was 32.5¢ per mile. Every church should arrange for their pastor to keep a record of miles driven in ministry so he can be reimbursed monthly.



The sixth mistake is neglecting to provide a fair investment in a pension fund for the pastor so there is some provision for his living expenses when he is no longer able to serve.

Because a pastor seldom stays at one church for his entire ministry, churches don't see the impact this mistake has on his life and his family. Like everyone else, it is prudent for a pastor to have a pension plan to supplement what income he may be able to receive from social security. I trust by now the leadership of every local church understands that it is most difficult, if not impossible, to live on social security alone.

When a local church provides for the pastor's pension fund during the time he is serving that church, it is doing its part in providing for the pastor's retirement years. What is a fair provision? I suggest a goal of 10% of the pastor's annual salary as a minimum.



Although the above six mistakes were all I had planned to write about in this article, there is another that comes to mind. *It is failure to show appropriate love and appreciation to the pastor and his family at*

Christmastime and other special occasions such as his birthday or the anniversary date of his ministry at the church. Pastors, like all of us, appreciate expressions of love. At such times, it isn't the dollar amount of a gift that counts, but the fact that the church cares enough to say we love and appreciate our pastor.

How does your church measure up? Are you appropriately providing for your pastor and his family or still making the mistakes every church should avoid? ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Billy A. Melvin has served as a pastor, denominational leader and was for 28 years the executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals. He is co-founder of the Christian Association of Prime Timers, an organization serving Christian seniors. Dr. Melvin lives with his wife, Darlene, in Englewood, Florida, where he is involved in a variety of Christian ministries.

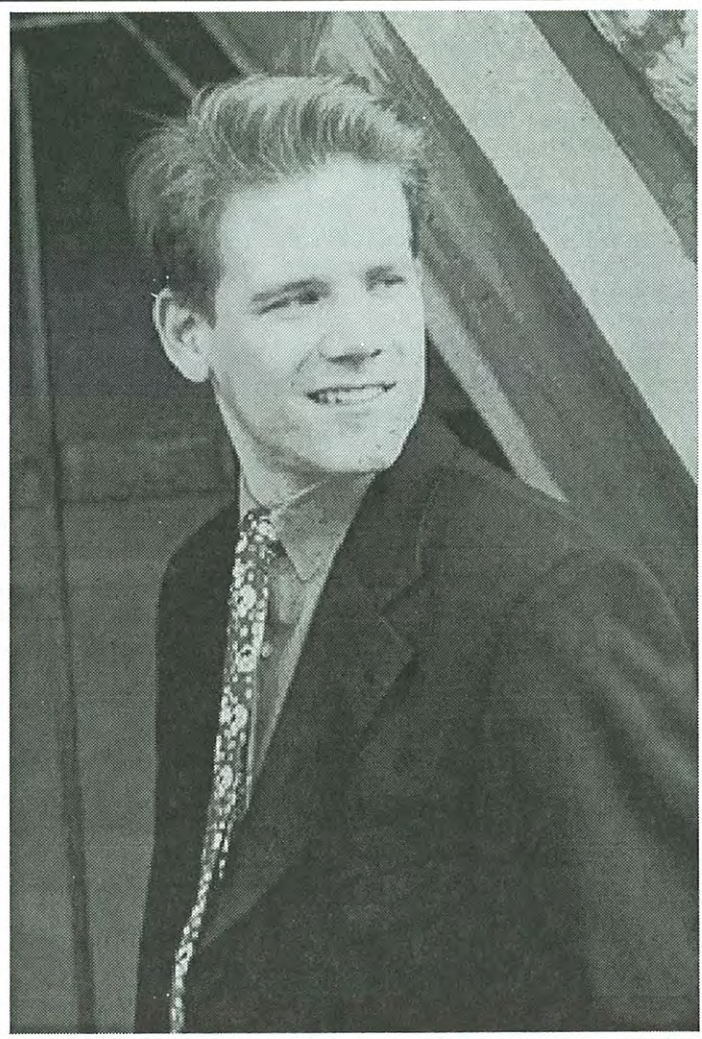
Pastor
Appreciation
Day

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September 9



# The Care and Feeding of Young Pastors

By Roy Thomas



**T**he church which calls a young man to be its pastor has a wonderful opportunity and an awesome responsibility ahead! The congregation has agreed to make an investment in the education and experience of a young man who may make a significant contribution to the cause of Christ for many years to come. Much of his future success in the ministry will depend on the experiences of his first pastorates.

Inexperienced young pastors can make serious mistakes. Paul wrote to Timothy, a young man in his first pastorate, "Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Timothy 4:12a). This older, knowledgeable man of God was alluding to the fact that young men can alienate people in the church because of a lack of maturity and experience.

For this reason, many first pastorates are of short duration. Bitterness from failures in the first pastorates, and negligence of the churches to care for and help youthful pastors, can cause some young men to leave the ministry.

However, this need not be the case. Expertise in working with peo-

ple comes only with experience, challenges and achievements. A person does not have to wait until he is older to accomplish something significant. Alexander the Great conquered the world before he was age 29.

The rest of 1 Timothy 4:12 admonishes the young pastor to "... be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." The people of the church *can and must help the young pastor accomplish this serious and impressive undertaking.*

What a challenge and an opportunity for any congregation which calls a young man as its pastor. The church must have a positive attitude and a co-operating spirit from the very beginning. I knew a very successful pastor who died, and his young, inexperienced son was called as pastor of the church. I said to one of the deacons of the church, "This is a large, multi-ministry church, and it would be devastating to this young man if he were to fail."

The compassionate deacon replied, "He is not going to fail, because our church is going to make sure he is suc-

cessful."

The church with such an attitude can build a long, healthy relationship with a young pastor that will produce converts to Christ and result in church growth.

Many young men entering the ministry have the opportunity to join the staff of a strong church with an able pastor before assuming the pastorate themselves. This is a great advantage to the young preacher as he observes a capable pastor leading a church. He is able to glean ideas about how to work with people and administer the church. However, no amount of observation can take the place of first-hand experience. A young man will never get experience as a pastor until he is called to his first church.

## Show Him Respect

The church must remember that regardless of the young man's age and experience, he is the pastor. He has been made overseer of the church by the Holy Ghost, and has been elected by the people of the



church. So, in spite of his young years, he is to be the leader of the church. The congregation should respect him as its pastor and follow his leadership.

There is a tendency when the pastor is young for older people in the church to take control and relegate the pastor to a subservient position. Churches have been stunted and preachers ruined because some in the church refuse to trust the youthful pastor to be the leader. Deacons and church leaders should set the example for the rest of the congregation by respecting their pastor and following his leadership.

### **Keep Him Informed**

The church should make the records of the church available to the new pastor as soon as possible. This includes the constitution and by-laws, incorporation papers, financial records, attendance records, baptismal records and church history. Don't keep him in the dark as to past activities and accomplishments of the church. Make him feel a part of it.

Help him get acquainted with the church membership. One or more of the ushers should stand with the pastor and introduce him to people as they arrive or leave the building. This will help him learn who the people are and understand their needs as quickly as possible.

Church leaders can help the young pastor stay informed about activities and endeavors of the denomination. The leaders and other laymen in the church should accompany the young pastor to quarterly meetings and state associations. Some young preachers have never been to these functions and will neglect them unless encouraged by the church to attend.

The church should include in its budget his expenses to the National Association. Expenses should also be provided for his attendance at occasional Bible seminars, church growth sessions, and missions and evangelism conferences. These will help continue his education, give him new ideas, "recharge his battery" and freshen his ministry.

### **Provide for His Needs**

Sometimes churches call young,

inexperienced pastors because the pay package can be smaller. Experience and accomplishment should be rewarded with a larger salary, but a young pastor and his family should not be starved out because the congregation feels their ages warrant a much smaller salary package. A congregation will never be wrong by being generous and treating the pastor and his family the best it can.

Many young pastors have struggled and done without in order to complete their college education and provide for a young family. They sometimes have only one or two well-worn suits. Church members can give generously on his birthday, at Christmas and on Pastor Appreciation Day. In this way they will soon replenish the pastor's wardrobe. The church will then be proud of his professional appearance at church and in the community. This will help overcome those tendencies of some young pastors to dress too casually and sloppily, setting a poor example before the youth of the church and the community.

The church can also encourage and honor the pastor's wife. Usually she is young, away from home and family, and feeling unprepared, inadequate and scared. If the church will love her and be good to her, she can develop into a great worker for Christ and the church.

This can be accomplished by occasionally getting her a new outfit to wear and providing appointments at the beauty salon. The ladies of the church can provide babysitters for her children so she can occasionally enjoy a date with her pastor husband.

The church should enroll its young pastor in the Free Will Baptist Retirement Program. Sometimes it is difficult for a young man who is struggling financially to see the importance of paying social security and retirement. However, the church leaders must take the initiative to see that he practices good stewardship for his future retirement.

### **Support His Programs**

The church which calls a young pastor will need to allow him the freedom to make some mistakes, try some things that may not work, and allow him to gain the maturity and expertise that only time and age can produce. This will take patience and understanding. The con-

gregation must make special efforts to follow the leadership and new ideas of the young pastor.

Nothing can improve or enlarge without change, and sometimes older church members resist change. Therefore, church members must be careful to not throw a wet blanket on his ideas, plans and proposals for the church programs.

However, some things should never change, such as biblical doctrines, practices and Christian standards. If the young pastor does suggest a far-out idea that might hurt the church or its ministries, the leaders should meet with the pastor privately and lovingly guide him into wiser choices. This will remedy the situation and prevent embarrassment or rebuking the pastor publicly.

The congregation which calls a young pastor should prepare the nurseries, children's churches and classes for growth. A pastor tends to reach his peers, so the church with a young pastor will add young families with babies and small children. The church must have the vision for advance planning to meet these needs.

The church is a love affair between a congregation and a pastor. They should both think in terms of a long-term relationship. No one should be called to "fill in until we can get someone better." If the church will love its young pastor, respect him, support him, help him and back his programs, there will be tremendous results. The church will grow, the pastor will succeed, and his children will say what my grandson said recently, "When I grow up, I want to be a pastor like my dad." ■



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Dr. Roy Thomas is a Free Will Baptist evangelist who resides in Greeley, Colorado. He served with the Home Missions Department for 35 years (1960-1995) as a home missionary, associate director and general director.



# Will Your Pastor Burn Out?

By Jeff Gaskins



**A** few months after a devastating flood in Eastern North Carolina, I had a conversation with a deacon from a church that had suffered terribly. I watched as their pastor tirelessly worked to help his members cope with the tragedy. Feeling the strain myself as I tried to cope with heart-breaking losses in my own church, I knew that my pastor friend was also being especially hard hit.

I encouraged the deacon to suggest

that his pastor take few days off and get some rest before the strain became too much. The deacon took my advice, the pastor did get some rest, and he is continuing today to lead a growing and prosperous church.

Not all stories about overworked pastors conclude with a successful ending. Often we hear of successful pastors who leave the ministry to pursue less stressful interests. Many of these, I believe, are the products of stress and burnout.

## What is Burnout?

Burnout results when individuals experience increasing amounts of prolonged negative stress as a result of a crisis in life or overwork. One expert described burnout as "a state of physical, emotional exhaustion marked by physical depletion and chronic fatigue, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, and by development of a negative self-concept and negative attitudes towards work, life and other people."



Burnout is sometimes referred to as "compassion fatigue." Pastors are vulnerable because they are people-helpers by nature and vocation.

### Who is Affected by Burnout?

One of the great tragedies of burnout is that it is most likely to affect the most dedicated, committed, enthusiastic, promising and effective pastors. These men are often high achievers who tend toward perfectionism and often expect too much of themselves as well as others.

A recent survey of pastors revealed that their own high personal expectations, unfinished work and a love for the ministry contributed to an average workweek of 54 hours. High-energy pastors are like 100-yard dash runners who believe they can keep that same pace in a marathon. Eventually something has to give.

Many pastors continue patterns of behavior that will likely lead to burnout because of the various voices that drive them. One voice says, "Doing is the key to being worthwhile." Overworking while caring for the needs of others can stem from a need to bolster self-esteem. Even after expending their last ounce of energy, however, this voice may say, "That's good, but it's not enough."

Another voice that drives the workaholic pastor is the one that says, "There are so many problems that need my attention. If I work harder and longer I will be able to solve them all." The difficulty is that after one problem is solved, the stressed pastor will always find more problems to unravel.

Finally, a voice that drives many pastors to exhaustion is one they believe comes from the Holy Spirit. Pastors love people and want to see lives changed as a result of the gospel. A compulsive drive to reach the unsaved that ignores the effects of stress and overwork, however, can ultimately lead to burnout and a shortened ministry.

### Warning Signs of Stress

What are some of the warning signs that burnout is likely to occur? Too much stress and burnout can affect the whole body. Early warning signs include frequent insomnia,

chronic tiredness, muscle tension, teeth grinding, high blood pressure and digestive problems.

Emotional symptoms include feelings of failure in the ministry, increased impatience and irritability, a sense of helplessness and inability to work out problems, a reduced sense of reward in return for pouring so much of self into the ministry, a growing root of bitterness and an increasing cynicism and negativism about self, others and the church.

Spiritually, devotional times can be a two-edged sword filled with guilt and self-recriminations for either not doing more or for doing too much in the ministry.

### Ways to Avoid Burnout

The good news is that burnout is a relatively easy problem to prevent and resolve. It is possible to recover from a mild case of burnout within a day, or at most a few days with some much needed rest. Church members are needed, however, to help their pastor to avoid burnout since pastors on their own are reluctant to admit that they have a problem.

#### Time Off

First, encourage your pastor to take regular time off. Spread the word in the congregation about the pastor's day off and limit all communication with him to emergencies only.

#### A Real Vacation

Second, require that your pastor take a real vacation by leaving behind his cell phone and pager and going somewhere to rest. (By the way, going to the National Association should not be considered a part of your pastor's vacation time.)

#### Prayer Support

Third, you could also begin a prayer partners ministry by gathering together a group of people who will regularly pray for the pastor and provide him specific encouragement and support.

#### Exercise

Fourth, include as part of his pay package a membership at a fitness club

and encourage him to regularly attend.

### Family Focus

Fifth, limit meetings during the week and encourage him to either spend those nights with his family or to turn in early for a good night's sleep.

### Friends

Sixth, encourage the pastor to have personal friends inside and outside the church. These friends can serve as an accountability group that can help keep a close look out for signs of burnout.

### Realism

Finally, and I believe most importantly, share with your pastor that you fully understand that the role of the pastor is to lead and equip members to do the work of the ministry and that he is not responsible to do all of it by himself.

Earlier in my ministry I was young, eager, energetic and burning the candle at both ends. I was in a growing church and enjoyed working seven days a week. A godly deacon looked at me squarely and told me that I would jeopardize my family and ultimately deplete my soul if I continued at the pace I was setting.

He loved me enough to confront me and insisted that I take time off for resting and spending time with my family. I heeded his advice. The church continued to grow, even with my days off, and I learned a valuable lesson that strengthened and lengthened my ministry. You could do the same for your pastor. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Jeff Gaskins pastors Trinity Free Will Baptist Church in Greenville, North Carolina.



**R**etirement can be many things, a heaven you long for or a terror you flee, the beginning of a new adventure or the end of everything you value. Regardless, unless death calls you earlier, it's coming so you better get ready.

Remember the advice on how to eat an elephant—one bite at a time. Preparing for retirement is similar. Divide the process into manageable bites and deal with the pieces.

Retirement needs seem to logically fall into two big areas, the physical things (money, housing, food, health care) and the mental things (how to manage and react to everything including people and the physical things). Then divide these two into smaller bites.

Since most of us have to deal with physical things, start there. Begin by asking the following questions.

### Where Am I Now?

The easiest way to answer this question is to create a realistic net worth statement. A net worth statement is simply a list of all the things you own minus all the debts you owe. It does not need to be precise to the penny, but it should be close. Don't over-value things like cars, home furnishings and personal property items.

You should do this annually. Year end is a good time since the necessary information is already available from tax calculations. Life and retirement are about more than things, but things can be comforting, helpful or even necessary.

### Where Am I Going?

By comparing two years' net worth statements, you can determine if you are making progress toward your goals. The first step to financial success is spending less than you make. The second step is making money work for you through savings and investments. By reviewing your net worth statements over a period of years, you will get a clear picture of your progress.

### How Long Do I Have?

This is simply the number of working years to retirement. Certainly some will face unforeseen events such as disability or even an early death. These unknowns should be managed as much as possible through wise use of

insurance. Health coverage, term life and disability coverage are all important to protect your family during your working years. However, the vast majority of us will live a full life. Your planning should plan for that.

### How Much Will I Need?

No one can know for sure, but there are some good guidelines. Look at your spending habits now; this is the best gage. Financial advisors suggest you will need from 65% to 100%+ of your final year's income to feel comfortable. Somewhere in that range should be your target. If you own your own home and enter retirement with no debts, you will be at the lower range. If you plan to do a lot of traveling or have high health demands, you may be in the upper range.

Where will you get your retirement income? Most will count on something from Social Security. Remember it is only designed to replace about 45% of the income for the lowest wage earners, down to 23% for those with maximum taxable earnings. Where will you get the remainder to sustain you and your spouse?

There are many possibilities:

*A formal retirement plan* provided by or through your employer should be used when possible. Our Free Will Baptist program is available to all paid employees of a Free Will Baptist church or agency.

*Personal savings and investments* including traditional and Roth IRAs are an integral part of every successful plan.

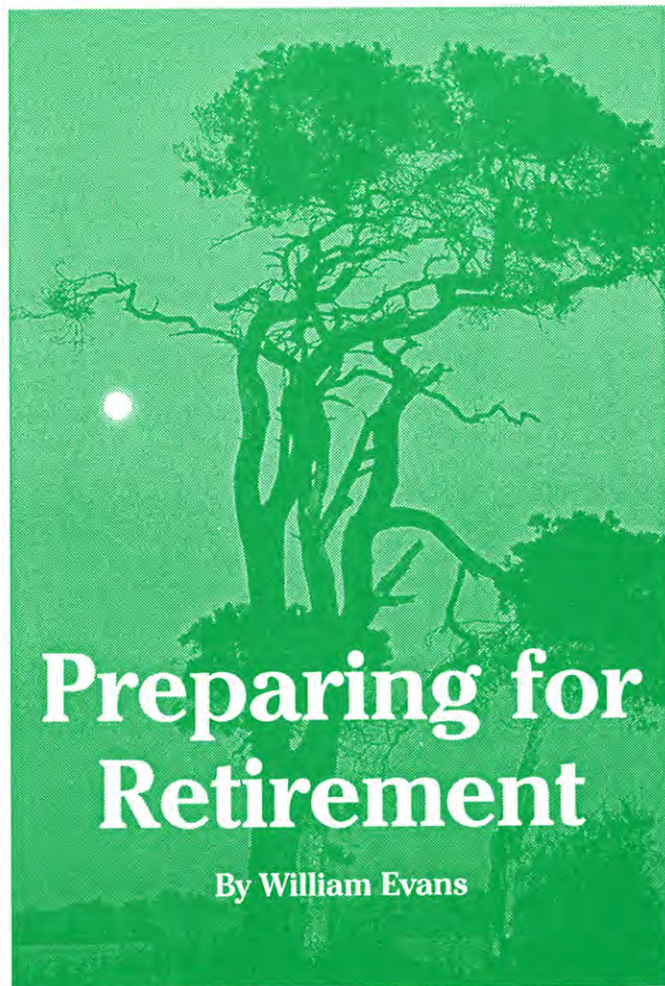
You may receive an *inheritance*, *help* from your children or other family members.

*Supplemental Security Income* and state welfare programs may be available if you have none of the above and are in great need.

Your *lifestyle* will make a big difference in what your need in retirement. If you are accustomed to spending a lot during your earning years, you will find that cutting back drastically makes retirement difficult.

### Now for the Big Question, How Do I Get There From Here?

Determine as best you can how much you will need at retirement, how much you can save each year,



# Preparing for Retirement

By William Evans



and what those savings will earn compounded to retirement. Accumulating sufficient retirement assets requires just three things: savings, earnings and time. Pardon the parody, but the greatest of these is time.

Here is the retirement savings good news: time is your greatest ally in accumulating assets . . . when you are young. If you aren't, it can be a terrible foe.

About now some of you are saying, "Well, I will trust the Lord to provide for me." I remind you that He may have already been providing during the working years.

Should a Christian really be concerned about his personal retirement years? Our earthly future is uncertain and we are instructed to live by faith. Besides, retirement has only been possible for ordinary folks during the last 100 years or so anyway.

Although the Bible addresses retirement only briefly or indirectly, it does deal with greed. There is a short reference to the retirement age of priests as 50 in Numbers 8. Consider the ant in Proverbs 6:6, the admonishment to provide in I Timothy 5 and, of course, the classic picture of Joseph's gathering for seven years in Egypt to distribute during the famine. Read especially Genesis 45:5, 7. In light of these, preparing for the future—retirement if you will—does not seem anti-Bible, anti-God nor anti-faith.

God should control our savings and accumulation as much as our present income. He urges us to be generous and willing to share whether we have little or much. By restraining ourselves during the earning years there will be some for the yearning years. Having more than we require at retirement is much more desirable than having too little. A generous soul can always redistribute the excess.

If the *things* are being taken care of, then we need to consider our emotional preparation.

### ***Start considering now when your retirement day will come.***

No matter what you can offer the church today, there is coming a time when either you or the church will feel you can no longer meet the demands. Let me suggest that you begin now to accept the fact that one day you will need to retire.

### ***Look at your personality today.***

You are building each day the person you will be down the road. Be sure you are putting into your life the things you will enjoy for years. Retirement will not increase your interest in anything. It will give you more time to be what you are becoming. Make sure you will be the kind of person your spouse will enjoy, appreciate and respect.

Continue, or begin, developing interest in a number of things. Learn about your community and the people where you live. Get acquainted with your local library. Check on the needs—area ministries or social services. Take up a hobby.

Remember you are a social creature. You need to be involved with other people. Remember that pet owners generally out-live people who live alone.

Start some type of exercise program. Check with your doctor, and remember that walking is one of the least stressful and most beneficial exercises. Those who can't do anything else can do isometric exercises. I recently read that just tensing the muscles while seated on a long flight will help eliminate blood clots in the legs. Do something.

### ***You are more important than the work you do.***

Regardless of the pressures and frustration you feel in your work, your job often becomes a significant part of who you are. Leaving your job is often threatening to more than just the loss of your income.

Retirement is not the end of life. New federal figures indicate the average 65-year-old can expect to live another 25 years or more.

Retirement is the transition from doing what you must do to earn a living (even when you enjoy it so much you would do it for free) to doing what you want to for fulfillment. It may also include working for pay to sustain or supplement income.

Preparing for retirement requires allowing Christ to mold you inside so that you can enjoy who you are. When that is achieved, others will enjoy being in your company and the image of Christ will be clearly seen. Retirement will be full and complete regardless of whether it is short or long, well financed or not.

Christian workers should look for areas to serve where they are wanted, needed and are comfortable. When that work is rendered without the need for reimbursement, it qualifies in the Lord's more blessed category. It adds a special flavor to the golden years.

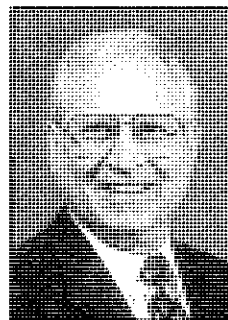
### ***Retirement Is an Opportunity***

What does a retired Christian worker do? Those who love fishing will fish, golfers will golf, travelers travel, readers read—but no one does any of those things all the time. It is important for each of us to develop an interest in a number of things. Try several things and find those that are right for you.

Some retired pastors have said to me, "I'm having a hard time in retirement. I'm not important to anyone any more." Well, there are many smaller churches that could and would use a retired man if he were available. But to pastor after reaching retirement age simply from the need for income or emotional addiction is not good.

The post-retirement pastor may not be able to provide the shepherding he desires or the church may reach a point where it wants and needs a change. Part of life is to have some significance and retirement should not diminish that. However, it will require some changes in the way we use our time and how we are gratified.

How should Christians, especially those who have given their lives in service, approach retirement? There are so many questions. How much will I need in retirement? Where will I live? What will I do with all that time? Will I maintain my health? Will I need to get a part-time job? How will I relate to my church? . . . denomination? ■

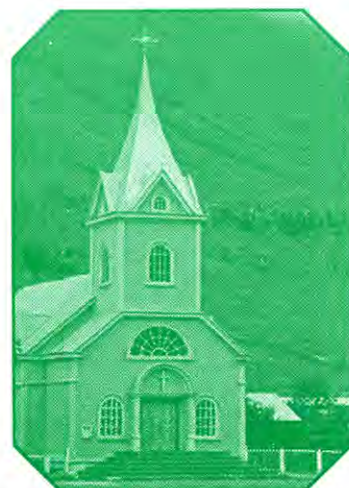


**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Reverend William Evans serves as general director for the Board of Retirement and as director for the Free Will Baptist Foundation.



# Can the Small, Traditional Church Grow?

By Matt Pinson



**P**astors and leaders of small, traditional churches find themselves awash in a sea of church growth literature that often seems useless to them. On one hand, run-of-the-mill church growth books come from the perspective of “when I came to First Baptist, we had only 250 in Sunday morning worship attendance. Now we have more than 1,000. Here’s how you can do the same.”

On the other hand, most church growth books communicate, whether consciously or unconsciously, that the only way to achieve church growth today is to harness contemporary, mega-church methods that have come into use in the last two decades or so.

## Our Context

Most Free Will Baptist pastors start out with traditional churches that have fewer than 100 attendees on Sunday morning. In fact, 36% of Free Will Baptist churches have 50 or fewer people. Another 24% have 100 or fewer. That makes 60% of our churches with fewer than 100 people in attendance. This is not unusual. The average church in America, regardless of denominational affiliation, has fewer than 100 people in attendance on a typical Sunday morning.

So what’s a small church pastor to do? Is it possible for small, traditional and small-town churches (the kind of churches our Free Will Baptist churches are) to grow? I believe it is and have experienced dynamic church growth in my seven years as pastor of Colquitt FWB Church, a smaller, traditional church in a small Georgia town. I’ve found that traditional churches that want to grow can grow, even if they don’t have the desire or resources to use contemporary or mega-church methods.

## Is Contemporary Culture Unique?

One myth of the modern-day church growth movement is the uniqueness of our contemporary religious situation. The only way we can reach out to a pagan, pluralistic, affluent, educated, technologically advanced and morally decadent culture, it is argued, is to employ marketing methods that appeal to people’s pop-culture sensibilities.

Most Free Will Baptist pastors couldn’t do this if they wanted to, because their congregations are traditional and wouldn’t go for it. Many pastors have an instinctive sense that selling out to pop culture is not the best way to honor Christ in the life of the Christian congregation.

The good news is that we don’t have to sell out to reach out. We can have growth without giving in to the shallow

pop culture that is based, not on a neutral worldview, but on a non-Christian worldview.

A few years ago when I was worrying about how to reach this culture for Christ, it dawned on me that there are a great many similarities between our culture and the culture of the New Testament church.

## Our Culture and Paul’s Culture

When we compare the culture of today with that of, say, the apostle Paul’s day, we find striking similarities. The culture in which Paul ministered was, like our own, a pagan, pluralistic, affluent, educated and morally decadent culture. Paul faced a variety of philosophies (like the Stoics and Epicureans in Acts 17) and religions. Popular and diverse mystery religions that exalted illicit sexuality of all types were rampant in cities like Ephesus.

The coliseums were home to graphically violent gladiator fights. The amphitheaters featured graphically sexual plays. There was great wealth (and also an increasingly top-heavy welfare system). People were surrounded by a great deal of education and philosophy, and there was no real religious consensus or even agreement on the meaning of truth in the Roman Empire of Paul’s time.

Any of this sound familiar? The only major difference between today’s culture and that culture (as it relates to reaching unchurched people for Christ) is the use of electronic technology like radio, television, video technology and the Internet.

## Early Church’s Growth

University of Washington sociologist Rodney Stark recently studied the phenomenal growth of the early church in his book, *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*. While I would not agree with every conclusion of this fascinating book, it raises an important point: The early churches grew extraordinarily in a cultural environment much like ours.

Keep in mind, the early churches started out at first with mostly poor people. So it wasn’t that they had a lot of money to spend. They were almost always small and informal. They usually met in houses or rustic locations—sometimes even in places like Rome’s catacombs (underground burial places) so as to escape persecution.

The demands were high because they faced persecution and even martyrdom. Membership requirements



were strict, and church discipline was stringent. Almost all the money they collected went to the support of the ministry, missions and the poor.

They had simple worship that wasn't very entertaining to their members, who were accustomed to the garish and spine-tingling amusement so common in Graeco-Roman cities. Like the Jewish synagogues, they were long on scripture reading and teaching and preaching and short on musical performance: they had no choirs, no worship teams, no special music, even no musical instruments.

Yet, soon these churches began to attract all levels of people—the rich and poor, the educated and ignorant, the slave and free, people of all races. Why? How could these churches grow in a culture eerily like our own?

### Why Early Churches Grew

The answer lies in the New Testament itself. First, we must get back to the basics of the early church: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers." They sang Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs that accomplished three things: (1) teaching, (2) admonition and (3) making melody in their hearts to the Lord.

They spread the gospel and helped people go other places to proclaim the good news. They had shepherds who lovingly led the flock under Christ as servants and held themselves up to the highest principles of biblical virtue. They had high standards for church membership and discipline. They were concerned about teaching people to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

### 11 Necessary Growth Elements

What do the characteristics of the early church point to as keys to success in church growth? Here are the main ones, in no particular order:

- (1) the expositional teaching and preaching of scripture
- (2) a primary concern for doctrine and theology (they weren't content to let their discipleship of new believers remain on the level of milk rather than meat)
- (3) a deep yearning to see lost people come into the kingdom and to be fellow laborers in missions
- (4) a strong commitment to personal and corporate prayer
- (5) pastors who were close to their flocks, preached the Word, ministered to the needs of the flocks as servants and were sensitive to the culture they lived in
- (6) equipping the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12)
- (7) an intimate unity and fellowship among believers (with lots of meals to foster that close fellowship!—see, e.g., Acts 2:42, 46)
- (8) high standards of church membership and discipline
- (9) simple, sincere, scriptural worship that was honoring to God and edifying—not entertaining—to His people
- (10) a concern for helping the poor and downcast, with godly deacons administering that aid
- (11) fellowship with other scriptural churches

This was the early church's recipe for success in a society much like our own. Most churches that are not growing (unless they are in a depressed population area or face other mitigating factors) fail to grow, not because they don't avail themselves of the latest offerings of the contemporary church movement, but because they are not se-

rious about one or more of the above elements.

Recovering some of these "old" principles will mean doing something "new" for many churches that are set in their ways.

### Pastoral Turnover

Certain other things are especially necessary in our contemporary context. First, perhaps the most obvious thing that keeps small Free Will Baptist churches in the rut of lack of growth is pastoral turnover.

In his book, *Eating the Elephant: Bite-Sized Steps To Achieve Long-Term Growth In Your Church* (a book aimed specifically at smaller, traditional churches), Thom S. Rainer lists short pastoral tenures as one of the biggest reasons churches don't grow. Studies show that most pastors of evangelical churches stay an average of only two to three years. Yet, recent studies show that pastors who experience tremendous growth do so between their third and ninth year at a church.

Pastors who desire church growth must be committed to shepherding a congregation for more than two or three years. This is part of the close shepherding that we see taught and modeled by Christ and the pastors in the New Testament.

### Education and Excellence

In an increasingly educated, information society, pastors must do everything they can to increase their level of education. We must "become all things to all people, that we might by all means save some." Many of our congregations have levels of education that are increasing at faster rates than that of their pastors. Churches must make it possible for their pastors to further their education.

Related to this, George Barna says in his *Index of Leading Religious Indicators*, that one thing is constant in today's society: Unchurched people (as well as church people) are accustomed to excellence. While they are not as concerned about many of the things we think they are (like worship style), people do want things to be done in an excellent manner.

### Embrace Change

Although I'm advocating a method of church growth that does not rely on marketing and pop culture for its methods, I want to emphasize that growth does mean change. Even while avoiding marketing and pop culture, leaders of small, traditional churches cannot afford to be closed to change.

The reason so many in the contemporary church movement are opposed to tradition of any kind is that they don't understand tradition. They think that tradition means: "We do things the way we do them because we've always done them that way." (Ironically, so often, the things "we've always done that way" are just relics of a few decades ago.)

We need to understand that it is possible to be rooted in the past—something that transcends the vicissitudes of contemporary culture—without being straitjacketed by the often-ineffective methods of the 1950s.

Some smaller, traditional churches, wary of the megachurch model that has made church into "McChurch," avoid any kind of "programs" for fear they will sell out and become something the church isn't meant to be. Pastors must find ways to foster fellowship for both families and various age groups in the church.



## Dr. Jonathan Thigpen with the Lord

NASHVILLE, TN—More than 500 people gathered at Donelson FWB Church in Nashville on May 24 for a memorial service honoring Dr. Jonathan Noel Thigpen who died at his home in Wheaton, IL, after a five-year battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). Dr. Thigpen, 49, was President Emeritus of the Evangelical Training Association (ETA) at the time of his death on May 20.

Reverend Thigpen, an ordained Free Will Baptist minister, answered the call to preach at age 14. He attended Free Will Baptist Bible College where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1973, and later moved on to serve in a variety of denominational positions.

Jonathan was a versatile and innovative Christian leader. While attending FWBBC, he began a coffee house outreach across the street from Vanderbilt University and challenged university students with the claims of Christ. As a Bible College student, he also organized and led The Conquerors, a men's trio combining instrumental music, drama and evangelistic preaching to reach the lost.

He earned the Master of Religious Education degree at Temple Baptist Seminary while pastoring in Chattanooga.

Jonathan coordinated the National Youth Conference for a time, served as a professor at FWBBC, conducted Christian education seminars nationwide, and entered the field of journalism as an editor and curriculum writer at Randall House Publications. He moved to Wheaton in the late 1980s to pursue his doctorate and worked four years as advertising manager for Christianity Today, Inc. He was named president of the Evangelical Training Association in 1992, a position he considered his "dream job."

Dr. Thigpen and his wife, Yvonne, worked together in the ETA office where she served 10 years as director of educational ministries. When Jonathan's ALS restricted his physical abilities in the spring 2001, he took the position of President Emeritus at ETA and Yvonne was named Interim President.



Jonathan earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School on May 6, 2000. By that time, physical problems caused by his advanced ALS forced him to type his doctoral dissertation using two fingers. He never gave up, however, and completed the dissertation, then successfully defended it to claim the Ph.D. degree.

During "Jonathan Thigpen Day" at Free Will Baptist Bible College last December, Dr. Thigpen told students and guests while speaking from a wheelchair, "ALS may kill my body, but it cannot kill my soul."

Two of Jonathan's long-time friends officiated during the memorial service in Nashville—Illinois pastor Daryl Ellis and Tennessee pastor Rob Morgan. Reverend Ellis reminded hearers that Jonathan had been a champion high school athlete in Tennessee setting a state record in the high jump. Ellis said, "While Jonathan was a runner all his life, he was more than an athlete. He was a Christian communicator, an educator, a biblical expositor, a mentor, a cheer leader and an encourager."

Donelson FWB Church pastor Rob Morgan said that "the Bible was Jonathan's great Book." Comparing him to the biblical Jonathan, Pastor Morgan said, "Jonathan was a courageous innovator willing to take God at His Word. He was a natural leader who inspired confidence; he sustained himself in the Word; he had a great capacity for friendship; he knew how to strengthen others in the Lord; he died too soon."

Funeral services were conducted May 23 at the College Church in Wheaton with Reverends Morgan and Ellis officiating. Burial followed at the Wheaton Cemetery.

Dr. Thigpen is survived by his wife, Yvonne Thigpen, and one daughter, Jessica Thigpen, both of Wheaton; parents, Dr. and Mrs. Charles A. Thigpen of Nashville; and three sisters, Mrs. Laura Cannon of Perry, GA; Mrs. Ann Maines of Centerville, VA; Mrs. Ruth Slaten of Woodstock, GA.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Evangelical Training Association, P.O. Box 327, Wheaton, IL 60187.



## Idaho Celebrates 50 Years

NAMPA, ID—A happy delegation of pastors and laymen celebrated 50 years of Free Will Baptist work in Idaho on May 18-19 when the Idaho State Association met at Nampa FWB Church in Nampa, about 20 miles from Boise. The state association includes six churches in Idaho and a mission church in Utah.

Moderator Earl Jenkins assembled a 40-page working history of the state association and urged the churches to revise, edit and update the data in preparation for publishing a permanent history. He gave a brief verbal history of the Idaho work.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Buhl FWB Church (Buhl, ID) which began in 1951 af-

ter a revival meeting preached by Oklahoma pastor Jake Gage. The church called another Okie, Virgil Florence, as its first pastor. The group purchased 2.4 acres of land and began to build.

During a December 1951 service in the basement church, a young Air Force serviceman home on furlough became the first convert in the new church. His name was Roy Thomas, later to become a pastor, evangelist and director of the Home Missions Department.

The Idaho churches reported 79 baptisms this year, according to Brenda Jenkins, state clerk.

The theme for the meeting was "Jubilee." Arkansas pastor Doug Little delivered the keynote

address Friday evening and then led in a Saturday morning devotional service. Jack Williams preached Saturday morning.

Churches were asked to send in a list of names to be read at the 2002 session during a time to "Recognize the Pioneers." The Idaho Women Active for Christ and state youth camp gave positive reports.

Moderator Earl Jenkins urged churches and individuals to send all funds for national outreach through The Together Way Plan in order to track Idaho giving.

The 2002 state association will meet May 17-18 at Buhl FWB Church in Buhl.

## Florida Adopts \$582,000 Budget

DELAND, FL—Delegates to Florida's 57th annual state association adopted a \$582,000 total ministries budget including \$117,000 in Together Way allocations. Clerk Randy Bryant said the Together Way funds will be allocated: State Executive Office (includes state paper, resource manager, executive secretary, administrative costs)—\$81,260; State Mission Board—\$24,000; Youth Board—\$4,608; C.E. Board—\$11,052; National Co-op—\$13,608; Ministers' Retirement—\$3,600; and Alabama Children's Home—\$1,200.

The May 9-12 session met at Holiday Inn Convention Center in Deland, and included the State Youth Conference activities as well as Florida Women Active for Christ. More than 500 people attended the events. Thirty-seven ministers and 10 deacons registered.

Moderator Tim Owen was elected to his third two-year term. The state theme was "It's Harvest Time" and featured these three speakers who developed the concept: David Wornack (Pastor/

Christian Home FWB Church), Tommy Capps (Pastor/Cornerstone FWB Church, and Sam McVay (missionary to Spain).

Delegates passed five resolutions, including one calling for a study committee to investigate the possibility of one national magazine. Other resolutions called for unity, for instruction in denominational heritage, for holy living.

Florida has an O.A.S.I.S. program forming (Older Adult Saints in Service). Bill Whipple heads up this effort.

Officials presented plaques to Salem FWB Church and Piney Grove FWB Church for their contributions in cooperative giving and missions respectively.

Sixty people registered for the Florida Women Active for Christ. Sam and June McVay, missionaries to Spain, gave testimonials. The women gathered \$2,000 worth of supplies for the Missionary Provision Closet.

The 2002 Florida State Association meets May 8-11 at Jacksonville Marriott Hotel in Jacksonville.

## FWBBC Sets Scholarship for Pastors' Children

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College announced that it will give a \$2,500 per year scholarship to the dependent children of Free Will Baptist pastors. The program could potentially save pastors \$10,000 on each child's education.

The Legacy Scholarship will be extended to the senior pastors—part- or full-time—of Free Will Baptist churches. Each recipient will be required to:

- live in the dormitory
- take a full load (12 hours or more)
- be making satisfactory progress toward a degree offered by the college
- maintain consistent Christian character.

The scholarship is good for up to eight semesters to students under 24 years of age.

For more information and/or an application, pastors may contact:

**Free Will Baptist Bible College**  
3606 West End Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37205  
1-800-76-FWBBC



## Free Will Baptist Bible College Graduates 39

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College graduated 39 students in commencement exercises held on campus May 17. The graduating Class of '01 includes students from 13 states and Canada. Five degree programs are represented. A Bachelor of Science in Youth Ministry was awarded posthumously to Will Hall, a senior from Garner, North Carolina, who was killed in an automobile accident in December.

Five seniors shared testimonies of their time at

FWBBC before a packed Memorial Auditorium: Allysa Hampton (TN), Allison Hood (AL), Darin Miles (SC), Tyler Penn (IL) and Gary Roe (KY).

The charge was delivered by Dr. LaVerne Miley, former medical missionary to Ivory Coast and a part-time teacher at the college.

The following students comprise the Free Will Baptist Bible College graduating class of 2001:

### Bachelor of Arts

Reneae Mayhew Aldridge  
Clinton Township, Michigan  
Bethany Joy Crowson  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Richard Adam Davis  
Altamont, Illinois  
Michael A. DeGuira, Sr.  
White House, Tennessee  
Kristen Nicole Jewell  
Macon, Georgia  
Steven Robert Lewis  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Victoria Jewell Lindsey  
Chester, Georgia  
Matthew Darin Miles  
Florence, South Carolina

April Dawn Millsaps  
Russellville, Arkansas  
Tyler Benjamin Penn  
Decatur, Illinois  
Sarah Joy Pittman  
Oreana, Illinois  
Jeremiah Randall Riggs  
Joelton, Tennessee

### Bachelor of Science

Katie May Brossaline  
Rapid City, South Dakota  
Jackson Thomas Douglas  
Macon, Georgia  
Jeffrey Mel Gainey  
Smithville, Mississippi  
William Watson Hall, II

(Posthumously)  
Garner, North Carolina  
Allysa Michelle Hampton  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Jennifer Erin Hilliard  
Rinard, Illinois  
Johnny Dow Hollis, II  
Effingham, Illinois  
Allison Marie Hood  
Birmingham, Alabama  
Sara Hope Humbles  
Ayden, North Carolina  
Charissa Anne Isaacs  
Tennessee Ridge, Tennessee  
Gregory Jackson Kettelman  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Megan Rhea Mackie  
Cookeville, Tennessee

Nathanael Ray Paul Raymer  
Joelton, Tennessee  
Gary Michael Roe  
Boones Camp, Kentucky  
Randolph William Alexander Scott  
Spring Hill, Tennessee  
Michael Eric Shook  
Decatur, Illinois  
Trudie Renee Skelley  
Oakley, Illinois  
Jeremy Russell Thomas  
Albany, Georgia  
Tiffany Leigh Woodard  
Lucama, North Carolina  
Eugene Edward Wooton  
Ypsilanti, Michigan  
James Riley Young  
Canal Winchester, Ohio

### Bachelor of Music Education

Angela D. Crain  
Beechwood, NB, Canada

### Associate of Christian Ministry

Aaron Russell Baldridge  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
Stephanie Jane McVay  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Adam L. Morgan  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Terry Jay Vandivort  
O'Fallon, Missouri

### Associate of Arts

Sarah Joy Aldridge  
Valrico, Florida





# currently

Pastor **Brian Bishop** reports 16 new members, six baptisms, three rededications and 28 new people attending **Cedar Hill FWB Church** in **Asheville, NC**. The congregation completed a 2,800-square-foot fellowship hall with full basement that is debt-free.

**Covenant FWB Church** in **Soddy Daisy, TN**, added an 8:30 a.m. Sunday service on June 3 in order to accommodate growth, says Pastor **Marcus Clagg** who leads the six-year-old congregation. Associate pastor **Adam Clagg** said that the additional service is more convenient for the early risers. The church ministers to 350 people in the Chattanooga area.

Pastor **Zane Brooks** reports 16 conversions at **First FWB Church** in **Wellington, KS**.

Pastor **Clifford Bell** baptized six converts at **Bethel FWB Church** in **Kansas City, KS**.

More than 300 people attended an outdoor drama sponsored by **Pleasant Valley FWB Church** in **Pedro, OH**. The drama was written by **Yvonne Sturgill** who attends the church. Pastor **Don Friend** reports 10 conversions at the drama presentation. He baptized seven.

**Pleasant Hill FWB Church** in **Delaware, OH**, welcomed 13 new members. **Wayne Keith** pastors.

Pastor **Wiley Perkins** reports 10 conversions, seven baptisms and four new members at **Samantha FWB Church** in **Leesburg, OH**.

It's a new attendance record at **Community FWB Church** in **Rittman, OH**. Pastor **Joe Castle** counted 212 people that day. Six people were converted and four rededicated. The congregation purchased all the available land adjacent to their property and plan to build a new sanctuary.

Reverend **Robert Mead**, an **Ohio** pastor for 47 years, died March 23 at age 70. He was converted in 1951 and ordained to preach in 1954. He served as state evangelist four years. Between the years 1956 - 1993, Brother Mead pa-

stored six churches in Ohio, including 22 years at **Forest Valley FWB Church** in **Springfield**. He served five years as secretary treasurer of the state Home Mission Board (1967-1972).

After 66 years as an ordained minister in **Ohio**, Reverend **Bert Miller** died at age 88 on April 5. He was instrumental in beginning Free Will Baptist outreach in Central Ohio. Brother Miller founded **Lockbourne FWB Church** in **Groveport, OH**, then pastored it 33 years (1968-2001) until he died.

Pastor **Brian Bird** discovered so many children attending **Sunrise FWB Church** in **Emporia, KS**, that the congregation started conducting children's church again. The congregation added four new members and changed the name of the church from First FWB Church to Sunrise FWB Church.

After 47 years in the ministry, Reverend **Chesley (Bud) Hill** has retired. He pastored churches in Tennessee, Missouri, Alabama and Florida. The Hills were both active in CTS events, camps and VBS ministry. Brother Hill served six years as editor of *The Gem* in Missouri, as well as on youth camp boards in the states where he pastored. Bud earned two bachelors' degrees from Free Will Baptist Bible College and Southwest Missouri State University, and a master's degree in education at Drury College. He taught special education classes 16 years. He retired to Middle Tennessee where he can be contacted for interim pastoral duties, revivals and youth camps: 7093 Highway 41-A, Pleasant View, TN 37146.

Pastor **David Malone** reports eight baptisms and four new members at **Peace FWB Church** in **Granite City, IL**.

Members of **Crossroads FWB Church** in **Effingham, IL**, celebrated 20 years of service to the community, according to Pastor **John Hollis**.

**Victory FWB Church** in **Mascoutah, IL**, purchased a bus for ministry use, says Pastor **Jon Cannon**. The church witnessed 10 decisions for Christ and

five baptisms.

Members of **Southgate FWB Church** in **Southgate, MI**, launched a stewardship campaign to eliminate all indebtedness on their new building within three years. Cash and commitments exceeded the debt amount. **Keith Kenemer** directed the stewardship campaign. **Ron Helms** pastors.

**Collinsville FWB Church** in **Collinsville, OK**, dedicated their \$300,000 church that was completed debt-free, according to Pastor **Hermon Wood**. The 10,000-square-foot structure includes a 300-seat sanctuary, fellowship hall, nine classrooms and two offices on the 2.5-acre site. The church averages 80 in attendance. Twenty-four new members were added last year.

A family donated a new 15-passenger van to **Rejoice FWB Church** in **Owasso, OK**, according to Pastor **Leonard Pirtle**. The van will be used in the church's senior adult outreach program.

Twenty-six years ago, members of **First FWB Church** in **Brunswick, GA**, started **Brunswick Christian Academy** as a ministry to southeast Georgia. This past year, more than 40 of the academy students were converted and 15 baptized. Most of the converts were led to Christ by teachers in the classroom, according to Pastor **Chip Sekulich**. **Steven Clagg** serves as principal at the academy.

Members of **Watermill FWB Church** in **Valliant, OK**, dedicated their new building April 14. Pastor **Bob Thornburgh** led the congregation through the year-long building program.

Pastor **Tim Rabon** reports 162 conversions in one day this spring at **First FWB Church** in **Raleigh, NC**. Of the 2,461 people who attended service, some 698 were first-time visitors. ■



**M**y heart sank as I raised the heavy wooden shutters in the church.

The light that usually cut through the darkness slowly crept into the room. The darkness was replaced by a dull, chalky gray. Outside the rain was falling, the wind was blowing and the temperature was dropping. It had all of the ingredients for a poorly attended service. While it's difficult to get people in the United States to church on nasty, rainy days, people in Uruguay find many excuses. Life here in the city of Montevideo often means standing in the rain for 10-15 minutes waiting for the bus and then arriving at church cold and wet.

Adding to my frustration that day was the fact that I could see almost directly into the church across the street from us. It is a church in name only, more like a cult. But every seat in that building was filled! Probably a hundred or more people had come out in the rain...in the wind...in the cold to hear that misrepresentation of the gospel.

I had already prepared to sing with Tammy and the boys and have a family Bible study if no one came. It had never happened before, but I was sure on a day as stormy as this one, it would happen. It was definitely not going to be a day to write about.

When was the last time you received a newsletter from a missionary saying his family were the only ones that attended the church service? People like to read about something exciting. They like to hear that those they support financially and through prayer are making a difference. They want to hear of death-bed conversions because the missionary arrived at just the right time. I would have none of those stories that day.

Our church service starts at 10:30 a.m. (give or take about 30 minutes). Jorge arrived at 10:20. Wow, I did not have to talk just to Tammy and the boys! We had at least one person show up. Perhaps in a great act of faith, I told Jorge that I was going down to be at the door so people would not have to wait out in the rain for us to let them in. (Faith of Abraham, right?) He accompanied me.



*Jaimie and Tammy Lancaster and their children stand in a street of Montevideo, Uruguay.*

## Rain or Sonshine?

By Jaimie Lancaster

**A**s we waited, we talked about the weather, Uruguay, the church and other things.

At 10:40 I stepped out onto the sidewalk to see what was happening. I was met by four other people who were coming to the service. Then came Mario Bueno. A few minutes later Juan and his two sisters arrived, each with an umbrella. Five minutes later Martin, a four-year-old, was dropped off at the door by his father. Wow! We had enough to have a church service.

We started the service at 10:30 on the dot (only the dot was at 11:00). We were supposed to have visitors from the other Free Will Baptist church in Montevideo, but with the rain and a 45-minute bus ride we knew it would probably be too much for them. We went ahead and started.

Around 11:15 the buzzer rang so I went downstairs to open the door. I supposed it might be a teenager who had rung the buzzer just as a joke. When I opened the door I found Vilma, her daughter, and seven other children. They were wet and cold, but they had made the 45-minute bus ride to come to church.

We wound up with a total of 24 people. The great news is that only nine were adults. The rest were age 15 and under.

**T**hen God convicted me for my lack of faith and my shortsightedness. I had not expected anything this great on such a terrible day and, as usual, God blessed beyond any expectation! In addition to that, Vilma asked Tammy if she would mind if she brought about 20 kids the next time she came! Mind? Of course not!

The strangest thing happened when all 24 of us were finally seated in the church building. We sang, we prayed, we laughed and we worshipped. Then that dull, chalky gray that was filling the room changed into the glorious reflection of THE LIGHT of the world. It was still dark outside, and it was still raining. But in that room, there was light!

Jaimie and Tammy Lancaster are first-term missionaries in Montevideo, Uruguay.



**A**ugust has been set aside as WNAC Emphasis Month since 1965. The purpose for an emphasis month is twofold: To present the work of Women Nationally Active for Christ to the local church and to provide an opportunity for the church to assist in the financial support of the National WNAC Office.

In keeping with everyone's "top ten lists," my top ten reasons why Free Will Baptist women should be involved in WNAC and why the church should support them are:

## My Top Ten

By Marjorie Workman

**10 Food and fellowship.** Women enjoy sharing with one another. They discuss church, school, children, spouses, politics, weather, community events—the subject is inconsequential. What's important is that they listen to each other. They learn, grow, find solutions and receive encouragement and support. They bond. They also like to eat even if they do talk about dieting all the time.

**9 Creative opportunities.** WNAC sponsors a Creative Arts Contest every year. This provides an opportunity for women to test their creativity in writing and art. More than a hundred entries are submitted every year. Entries include drama, poetry, programs and articles. They draw and paint, too. Many women are published for the first time through *CoLaborer* magazine.

**8 Literature.** WNAC publishes *CoLaborer* magazine, the only Free Will Baptist magazine for women. We provide a yearbook for local groups to use in planning and setting goals. We print free promotional materials to help enlist women in ministry. And, we publish a book of programs for teen women to use in their Young Women Active for Christ groups.

**7 Missionary Provision Closet.** WNAC women keep a large storage area stocked with small appliances, linens, bedding, dishes, cookware and other household goods. These items are provided for both home and foreign missionaries at no cost to them. In 2000, the women collectively provided over \$90,000 in cash and non-cash gifts for the closet.

**6 MK Ministry.** Provisions are made for the children of missionaries to receive school supplies, games, books, gift cards and phone cards.

**5 Educational support.** WNAC gives scholarships to students in other countries who are preparing for ministry in Free Will Baptist churches in their country. And a loan fund is available for students studying at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

**4 Study.** WNAC realizes that information is abundant and selecting the right information is essential to keeping a compassionate heart for global

evangelism. Keeping the women up-to-date on everything from who the missionaries are, where they are serving, what are their stories and how can women help is just a portion of the information provided. Women are encouraged to study in areas of personal growth, Christian living and prayer. The free resources provided by the Foreign and Home Missions Department, FWBBC and other ministries are promoted. WNAC recognizes that learning is essential to growth.

**3 Prayer.** Over the years, WNAC has been known for her prayer ministry. Three weeks are set aside each year to especially pray for foreign, home, and state missions. A Prayer Fellowship has been established to join believers around the world to pledge to pray daily for global missions and Free Will Baptist ministries.

**2 Service.** WNAC is primarily a service organization. Opportunities for service in the local church and community are kept before the women. This is the chance to "do" missions, not just learn about and pray for missions. These are the "hands-on" opportunities.

**1 Purpose.** WNAC's purpose is "to provide opportunities for women to understand and fulfill the Great Commission through their responsibilities in the family, in the church, in the community and around the world." Never before have the challenges been so great and the opportunities so abundant to counter the cultural and moral climate in a world that is spiraling toward destruction. WNAC provides a place for women to unite together for total involvement in God's plan to reach the world. This is our heartbeat and the number one reason why women should be a part of WNAC and why the church should support them. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). ■

Women Nationally **WNAC+** Active for Christ



**W**e realize there are many and various kinds of pension and insurance plans available today, but there are advantages of using the denomination's plan.

**Our plan is portable.** The account always belongs to the individual and moves with the individual from church to church as God moves that individual.

**Contributions are vested 100%.** There is 100% full, immediate vesting (lifelong ownership by the participant) of all contributions to a participant's account.

**Investments comply with our church covenant.** Our investment managers have strict guidelines whereby they are not to invest in what is commonly called "sin stocks." Those are alcohol, tobacco, pornography, gambling and entertainment.

**Participants have a voice in management.** Delegates at the National Association adopt and may question the audited financial statements. They also elect the trustees of the plan.

**Earnings are for the benefit of the participants in the plan.** The average earnings of our plan since its inception now exceeds 9%. There are no stockholders or agents to receive their share. Neither are there exorbitant administrative overhead expenses. Our operating budget is modest and is set by the National Association.

**Settlement as housing allowance.** At retirement, up to 100% of a pastor's pension can be designated as "housing allowance" and is tax free. This can only be arranged through a denominational plan.

It is important to start retirement planning as early as possible because of time value of money or compounding interest. The sooner you start, the more time you give the power of compounding to work for you. Money invested over a period of time with compounding interest will grow to an astonishing amount.

The following chart is based on 9% earnings.

| Age | Monthly Deposits | Number of Contributions | = | Your Total Cost | Value at Age 65 |
|-----|------------------|-------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 25  | 55.66            | 480                     | = | 26,716.80       | 250,038.72      |
| 35  | 140.26           | 360                     | = | 50,493.60       | 250,025.18      |
| 45  | 379.49           | 240                     | = | 91,077.60       | 250,098.79      |
| 55  | 1,294.70         | 120                     | = | 155,364.00      | 250,096.60      |

You can never start planning too early. Careful planning will assure adequate finances in retirement. On the other hand, even if you have delayed your planning, it is

## Why Choose the Free Will Baptist Pension Plan

By D. Ray Lewis

better late than never. To fail to plan is to plan to fail.

An applicant for participation in the plan must be gainfully employed a minimum of 20 hours weekly by a Free Will Baptist church or church-related agency. Being gainfully employed is receiving reasonable compensation for services. Serving in a voluntary ministry without compensation does not qualify a person for participation in this plan.

There are three levels of participation available.

**A. Plan 1—Full Employer Participation—pays the highest earnings.**

The church/employer is required to contribute a minimum of 5% of the employee's base salary (taxable income). The employer may contribute up to 25% of the base salary as long as all tax-deferred contributions do not exceed 25% of base salary or \$10,500. The employee may contribute any amount of tax-paid (EE) contributions.

\$25,000 term life insurance is required for participants in Plan 1.

**B. Plan 2—Individual Plan—pays ¼% less earnings than Plan 1.**

The employee and/or employer is required to contribute a minimum of 3% of the employee's base salary (taxable income). The employee may contribute any amount beyond the 3% as long as all tax-deferred contributions do not exceed 25% of base salary or \$10,500.

\$25,000 term life insurance is optional.

**C. Plan 3—Entry Level Plan—earns ½% less than Plan 1.**

The plan requires a minimum contribution of \$10 a month. The contributions may come from the employee or the church/employer or a combination.

No insurance is available under Plan 3.

There are three types of contributions:

**A. ER (Employer) contributions are made by the employer as a budgeted amount above the employee's taxable income. These contributions are always tax-deferred.**

**B. SRA/tax-deferred contributions are non-budgeted employee contributions made through an agreement between the employee and the employer. The church/employer withholds the specified amount and sends it directly to the retirement office.**

**C. EE (Employee) contributions—EE contributions are made directly to the retirement fund by the employee from tax-paid income.**

If we can help you further, contact us (toll free) at 1-877-767-7738. ■

# Retirement



# & Insurance





Garnett Reid

## Amos, The Burden-Bearing Prophet (Part VII) Life or Death (Segment B)

**L**ast month we began our look at the life or death choice God gives Israel through His servant Amos in 5:1-17. The passage has a concentric arrangement, you will recall, with a lament (vv. 1-3, 16-17) bracketing the prophet's exhortation to "seek the LORD" (vv. 4-6, 14-15). Then follows Amos' exposé of the reason for God's judgment (vv. 7, 10-13).

### Exaltation (8-9)

At the center of the passage in verses 8 and 9 is the second brief "hymn" (see also 4:13 and 9:5-6) extolling God's character. Three of His works highlight this short poem. First, Amos offers praise for the Lord's *creation*. He is the One who makes "the seven stars (Pleiades) and Orion," two prominent constellations seen above the equator in the winter skies.

Next, the hymn extols the *providence* of God. He turns night to day and pours waters over "the face of the earth" (v. 8), the latter a reference either to the evaporation/condensation cycle of nature or to floods.

The final lines in verse 9 serve as transition into the next section of the passage. At issue here is the third work of God: His *judgment*. He brings destruction upon the "strong" by overturning their fortresses. This portrait reveals Israel's God: "The LORD is His name" (v. 8; see 4:13).

What is curious about this description is that Amos does not focus on those facets of God's character we would expect. We might think that at this point in his plea for repentance he would emphasize the Lord's great love for His people, His tender compassion for them in their rebellious state or His faithful promise to forgive their sin.

Instead, the prophet angles his penitential appeal to the reader from what J. I. Packer labels God's "kindly discipline." We dare not trifle with the God

whose power created the universe, maintains its order and unleashes judgment against its rebel inhabitants. When He commands, "seek me," we must not do otherwise. As George Whitefield counsels, if God puts thorns in your bed, it is to awaken you from the sleep of spiritual death.

### Condemnation (10-13)

In verses 10-13 Amos further explains the basis for God's judgment—namely, Israel's covenant violations. The charges include *injustice*: the people despise anyone with integrity (v. 10); and *materialism* leading to *extortion*: they exploit the righteous poor (vv. 11-12). These crimes are "*transgressions*," God says. They are rooted in a deep-seated defiance of Him and His covenant demands.

Things are so bad in eighth century B. C. Israel that "the prudent shall keep silence," according to verse 13. Amos does not mean by this warning that one should not cry out against evil in the culture; his own prophetic voice proves that is not what he means. He is saying, though, that there will be consequences for those who do challenge iniquity. "For it is an evil time" (literally, "an evil time it is," emphasizing "evil time"), he explains.

### Exhortation (14-15)

Complementing Amos' earlier imperative to "seek the LORD" (vv. 4, 6) is his command, "seek good, and not evil, that ye may live" (v. 14). This call to repent entails hating evil, loving good and establishing justice. Such a transformed way of life indicates true repentance and flows out of God's ever-abundant provision of grace (v. 15).

This appeal suggests two important truths. *First, any urging to seek the person of God in renewed faith carries with it an inherent appeal to seek the*

*righteousness of God in transformed living.* We cannot seek Him without also seeking His goodness, that is, absolute moral excellence, not the sappy, sentimental idea of "good" that our society touts. To talk of knowing and loving God without a lifestyle to prove it is an insult to God's true character.

A second principle is that covenant faithfulness is a two-sided coin: the command "hate the evil" precedes "love the good." Read Ephesians 4-5 and Colossians 3 where Paul orders us to "put off the old man" and "put on the new man." People observe our faith as much by what we stand against as by what we stand for.

### Lamentation (16-17)

Sadly, Israel in Amos' day rejected his appeal. The result was wailing and mourning over the coming judgment (16-17). Although the Assyrian army invaded the land in 722 B. C., in reality God Himself was "passing through," keeping His righteous word to a disobedient people.

His word to you and me, in our time, is still, "seek me, and you shall live." ■

*Mark it Down!*

**Pastor  
Appreciation  
Day**  
**September 9**



# THE PASTOR'S WIFE



Melinda Pinson

## Friends

**A** recent study of 228 pastors' wives showed that 45% "have no close friends within their churches." Almost half "felt constrained in developing close friends in the local church context." This could mean a number of things. But it obviously suggests that loneliness is a major problem for pastors' wives.

### *Pastors' Wives and Loneliness*

The antidote to loneliness is, of course, friendship. Therefore, developing godly friendships should be a high priority for pastors' wives. We need friends who will love us and help bear our burdens, friends who will laugh with us and share our joys. We need friends who will hold us accountable to Christian standards of holiness, love and wisdom. Yet, finding friends can be a difficult task for pastors' wives.

### *Your Husband—Your Best Friend*

One important thing needs to be said before we talk about finding new friends. A pastor's wife must first forge a friendship with her husband. Pray that your husband will be your best friend, and work toward that goal. This is necessary; some things can and should only be shared with your husband. He needs to be your closest confidant. Learning to be best friends with your husband will help you be a better friend in general.

### *Pray for Discernment and Good Friends*

We must pray for discernment in our selection of close friends. Friends can be a positive asset or a drain. As Proverbs 12:26 says, "The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray." We need to pray that godly women will come into our lives—

women who have the joy of the Lord and who will edify us.

We must be careful to shield ourselves from deceptive people who are not worthy of our trust (see I Cor. 15:33). When we befriend someone, their qualities tend to rub off on us. If what is rubbing off is negative, we should not forge a close friendship with that person.

This can be difficult, because often pastors and their wives minister to people who don't have a great deal of Christian maturity—or who aren't believers. We must make a clear distinction in our minds between our close, Christian friends and those who have spiritual needs to whom we are trying to minister.

### *Be Open*

As a pastor's wife, you need to develop friendships with godly women inside and outside your church. It's important not to present yourself professionally, but personally. In other words, our goal in forging close friendships should be to have our friends introduce us not as "our pastor's wife," but as "my friend."

Furthermore, a commitment to true friendship involves a commitment to honesty and openness. The most well adjusted pastors' wives have a few good, close friends with whom they can openly share their hearts. We all need it. Jesus Himself had a close circle of friends with whom He was especially open.

### *Use Common Sense*

In seeking a confidant, however, we must be on our guard. Again, we must pray for and exercise discernment, not only in the friends we choose, but in the topics we talk about with those friends. We must be careful not to let "sharing our burdens" degenerate into gossip.

We also need to make sure that we don't initiate close friendships with women who are gossips. Many pastors' wives have been betrayed by church members. So we must exercise wisdom in the choice of our close friends. Furthermore, every woman knows the difference between casual acquaintances, friends and close friends, and these levels will be similar in the lives of pastors' wives.

We need to have balance in our friendships. Pastors' wives need to get out of their comfort zone. Be friends with a woman from another generation. We need younger and older friends. If you are younger, find a seasoned pastor's wife from another congregation who would make a good friend. If you are older, befriend a younger pastor's wife. She could benefit you as you benefit her. Friends are a gift from God. With persistent prayer and godly discernment, you can choose close friends that will complement your life and ministry as a pastor's wife. ■

## Directory Update

### OKLAHOMA

Mike Hutsell to Grace Church, Broken Arrow

### SOUTH CAROLINA

Wayne Snipes to Hillside Church, Florence from Unity Church, Johnsonville

Dennis Tolley to Gaffney Church, Gaffney

Mikell Edge to Unity Church, Johnsonville

Timmy Hodge to Rains Church, Rains

Wayne Rhodes to Freedom Church, Ladson

### OTHER PERSONNEL

Roger Mercer to Homerville Church, Homerville, GA, as youth minister from Zion Hill Church, Millwood, GA, as youth minister

Raymond Chronister to Cavanaugh Church, Fort Smith, AR, as minister of pastoral care





Randy Sawyer

## The Reforming Power of Expository Preaching (Part 2)

**I**n order to understand the *Reforming Power of Expository Preaching*, we must trace the Reformation to the personal experience of the monk who shook the world from his lonely study in Wittenberg. Born in Saxony in 1483, Martin Luther has been called the Father of the Protestant Reformation. He was educated as a loyal member of the medieval Roman Catholic Church and became a monk and a priest.

### The Word Shapes Luther

Luther gave himself to the vigorous pursuit of the monastic ideal. He devoted himself to study, prayer and the use of the sacraments. He especially used the sacrament of penance, examining himself, sorrowing for his sins, confessing his sins to a priest and fulfilling every requirement imposed upon him.

Through his study of the scriptures and his own spiritual struggles, Luther was led to an evangelical breakthrough. He began to teach the basic principles of the Protestant Reformation: justification by grace through faith alone and the ultimate authority of the Bible for Christian belief and practice.

In his *Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, Luther writes, "We reach the conclusion that faith alone justifies us and fulfills the law; and this because faith brings us the spirit gained by the merits of Christ. The spirit, gives us the happiness and freedom at which the law aims; and this shows that good works really proceed from faith."

In 1512, Luther accepted a professorship at the University of Wittenberg where he began his lectures on the Bible: from the Psalms, Romans, Galatians and Hebrews, and back to the Psalms. These texts were basic in shaping the thought of the future reformer.

### The Word Shakes the World

Four years later in 1516, Luther became the people's priest in Wittenberg with regular preaching responsibilities. The combination of theology professor and pastor led him to take the actions that would make him famous.

In 1517, Luther became concerned about the abuses in the sale of spiritual privileges. Technically called indulgences, these privileges offered the removal or the reduction of satisfactions required of sinners as a part of the sacrament of penance.

In the Middle Ages the idea developed that although God does freely forgive sinners, it is appropriate to express your gratitude in various ways, one of which was financial. By the early 16th century, however, this idea had become corrupted; leaving people with the impression that if they would give money their sins could be remitted.

As a pastor and theologian, Luther strongly objected, and in response formulated his "95 Theses," which he subsequently posted on the church door at Wittenberg. Luther was a brilliant, forceful communicator, addressing the most important religious issues of his day in the pulpit and with his pen. Between 1517 and 1520, he produced several of his most powerful treatises which helped to rally support for the reform movement. And he needed the support.

As early as 1518, an order was issued for his arrest. Although the order was not carried out, pressure from church officials increased. In June 1521, Luther was excommunicated and in March ordered to appear before the Imperial Diet of Worms. Facing the council, Luther was asked if he wished to recant.

In reply he issued one of the greatest statements of church history: "Unless I am refuted and convicted by the testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear arguments, I am conquered by the Holy Scriptures quoted by me, and my conscience is bound by the Word

of God: I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against the conscience. Here I stand. God help me."

Luther's achievements as a pastor, scholar, theologian and Christian were monumental and have influenced the church profoundly to this day. Melancthon provided a fitting epitaph for Luther when he said that God had given a violent age a violent physician.

"Violent" may be a good word to describe Luther. He was fiery and rough. He was always out on the firing line, especially in the pulpit. His commitment to preaching shook the world.

### The Word Saturates His Preaching

It is difficult to imagine that courageous Luther ever being afraid, but apparently his first experience at preaching terrified him: "Oh, how I trembled when I was ascending the pulpit for the first time," he said.

Commissioned to preach in Wittenberg Church, Luther preached three times on Sunday and then at least once a day throughout the week. He even preached at home when he was too ill to ascend a pulpit.

Luther's preaching was characterized by a sense of urgency. In fact, he regarded preaching as the central part of public worship and even placed the preaching of the Word above the reading of it. Luther believed the congregation ought never to come together without the preaching or expounding of the Word. During his youth, he had never heard the Bible explained, and thus he was driven to expository or expositional preaching.

Luther's expository sermons varied from greatly detailed studies to generalized essays, but seldom did he strain the meaning of a passage or indulge in allegory. He regarded the context of a passage as important to the meaning of a text and sought always to discover



the original intent of the biblical author.

To Luther, the highest eloquence was to speak simply. He spoke all of his sermons in the language of the common people. In fact, much of his language was so common that the schoolmen regarded it as crude, perhaps even vulgar.

He once commented: "When I preach I sink myself deeply down; I regard neither doctors nor masters of which there are in the church about forty. But I have an eye for the multitude of young people, children and servants, of which there are more than two thousand. I preach to them."

Luther considered preparation to be of utmost importance, to be done as carefully as a mother would prepare food for her baby.

Concerning his preparation system, he wrote: "When he (the preacher) preaches on any article, he must first distinguish it, then define, describe, and show what it is; thirdly, he must produce sentences from the Scriptures to prove and strengthen it; fourthly, he must explain it by example; fifthly, he must adorn it with similitudes; and lastly, he must admonish and arouse the indolent, correct the disobedient, and reprove the authors of false doctrine."

Though Luther sometimes broke his own homiletical rules, he was always thoroughly prepared and communicated the deep convictions of his soul to the thousands who came to hear him.

Dargan singles out three characteristics which distinguished Luther's sermons from those of his predecessors: 1) they were marked by right interpretation and application of scripture; 2) they preached Christ alone as Savior; 3) they proclaimed union with Him by faith as the only way of salvation.

Above all, Luther passionately believed the preaching of the Word to be the greatest power for Reformation. Concerning his role in the reform movement he wrote: "I simply taught, preached, and wrote God's Word: otherwise I did nothing . . . The Word of God did it all." As with Wyclif and Huss, the Word of God was supreme in Luther's heart and ministry. He held firmly to the *Reforming Power of Expository Preaching*. ■

# THE TOGETHER WAY

May 2001

| Receipts:             |                      |                     | Year To Date         |                        |                     | Year To Date           |            |       |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|-------|
| State                 | Designated           | CO-OP               | Total                | Designated             | CO-OP               | Total                  | Designated | CO-OP |
| Alabama               | \$ 368.03            | \$ 194.32           | \$ 562.35            | \$ 2,161.18            | \$ 814.40           | \$ 2,975.58            |            |       |
| Arizona               | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | 30.00                  | 204.60              | 234.60                 |            |       |
| Arkansas              | 7,629.99             | 10,703.51           | 18,333.50            | 102,779.14             | 87,212.21           | 189,991.35             |            |       |
| California            | .00                  | 1,486.94            | 1,486.94             | 883.54                 | 5,925.08            | 6,808.62               |            |       |
| 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               | 31,429.59            | 1,637.89            | 33,067.48            | 162,660.04             | 8,634.19            | 171,294.23             |            |       |
| Hawaii                | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Idaho                 | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Illinois              | 10,973.18            | 2,048.31            | 13,021.49            | 44,594.93              | 10,810.62           | 55,405.55              |            |       |
| Indiana               | 2,030.91             | 186.85              | 2,217.76             | 10,007.77              | 1,070.60            | 11,078.37              |            |       |
| Iowa                  | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | 796.30              | 796.30                 |            |       |
| Kansas                | .00                  | 78.22               | 78.22                | .00                    | 184.77              | 184.77                 |            |       |
| Kentucky              | 324.54               | 465.72              | 790.26               | 2,006.58               | 3,609.60            | 5,616.18               |            |       |
| Louisiana             | 10.00                | .00                 | 10.00                | 30.00                  | 20.00               | 50.00                  |            |       |
| Maryland              | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Michigan              | 32,584.08            | 4,783.53            | 37,367.61            | 116,753.46             | 13,371.44           | 130,124.90             |            |       |
| Mississippi           | 50.00                | .00                 | 50.00                | 35,114.65              | 2,633.54            | 37,748.19              |            |       |
| Missouri              | 44,440.35            | 17,076.49           | 61,516.84            | 221,782.72             | 73,542.10           | 295,324.82             |            |       |
| Montana               | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Nebraska              | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| New Jersey            | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| New Mexico            | 824.73               | 92.37               | 917.10               | 2,554.68               | 312.34              | 2,867.02               |            |       |
| North Carolina        | 3,307.67             | 3,476.48            | 6,784.15             | 8,353.48               | 14,847.28           | 23,200.76              |            |       |
| Ohio                  | 34,630.28            | 3,806.68            | 38,436.96            | 79,939.97              | 16,682.69           | 96,622.66              |            |       |
| Oklahoma              | 55,947.75            | 11,455.81           | 67,403.56            | 254,911.79             | 57,328.30           | 312,240.09             |            |       |
| South Carolina        | 37,727.43            | 112.61              | 37,840.04            | 253,747.46             | 885.66              | 254,633.12             |            |       |
| South Dakota          | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Tennessee             | 2,620.10             | 1,960.19            | 4,580.29             | 53,667.42              | 11,508.83           | 65,176.25              |            |       |
| Texas                 | 5,901.11             | 247.17              | 6,148.28             | 36,572.37              | 1,446.47            | 38,018.84              |            |       |
| Virginia              | 140.54               | 342.21              | 482.75               | 1,617.10               | 473.46              | 2,090.56               |            |       |
| Virgin Islands        | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| West Virginia         | 1,505.10             | 51.43               | 1,556.53             | 12,546.00              | 568.84              | 13,114.84              |            |       |
| Wisconsin             | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Canada                | 608.37               | 10.50               | 618.87               | 3,401.50               | 55.74               | 3,457.24               |            |       |
| Northwest Association | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Northeast Association | .00                  | .00                 | .00                  | .00                    | .00                 | .00                    |            |       |
| Other                 | .00                  | (0.15)              | (0.15)               | .00                    | (0.12)              | (0.12)                 |            |       |
| <b>Totals</b>         | <b>\$ 273,053.75</b> | <b>\$ 60,217.08</b> | <b>\$ 333,270.83</b> | <b>\$ 1,406,245.10</b> | <b>\$316,937.94</b> | <b>\$ 1,723,183.04</b> |            |       |

| Disbursements:           |                      |                     | Year To Date         |                        |                     | Year To Date           |            |       |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|-------|
|                          | Designated           | CO-OP               | Total                | Designated             | CO-OP               | Total                  | Designated | CO-OP |
| Executive Office         | \$ 1,673.74          | \$ 27,097.75        | \$ 28,771.49         | \$ 9,403.56            | \$142,622.16        | \$ 152,025.72          |            |       |
| Foreign Missions         | 140,287.88           | 7,617.47            | 147,905.35           | 797,558.96             | 40,092.64           | 837,651.60             |            |       |
| FWBBC                    | 29,961.72            | 7,617.47            | 37,579.19            | 127,251.96             | 40,092.64           | 167,344.60             |            |       |
| Home Missions            | 81,726.40            | 5,961.51            | 87,687.91            | 382,751.27             | 31,376.88           | 414,128.15             |            |       |
| Retirement & Insurance   | 265.21               | 4,636.71            | 4,901.92             | 2,391.89               | 24,404.23           | 26,796.12              |            |       |
| Master's Men             | 340.60               | 4,636.71            | 4,977.31             | 2,161.82               | 24,404.23           | 26,566.05              |            |       |
| Com. for Theo. Integrity | 53.12                | 165.57              | 218.69               | 235.93                 | 871.54              | 1,107.47               |            |       |
| FWB Foundation           | 150.32               | 1,987.18            | 2,137.50             | 1,421.21               | 10,459.00           | 11,880.21              |            |       |
| Historical Commission    | 35.76                | 165.57              | 201.33               | 166.52                 | 871.54              | 1,038.06               |            |       |
| Music Commission         | 6.26                 | 165.57              | 171.83               | 30.05                  | 871.54              | 901.59                 |            |       |
| Media Commission         | 143.61               | 165.57              | 309.18               | 749.45                 | 871.54              | 1,620.99               |            |       |
| Hillsdale FWB College    | 2,139.01             | .00                 | 2,139.01             | 9,572.14               | .00                 | 9,572.14               |            |       |
| Other                    | 16,270.12            | .00                 | 16,270.12            | 72,550.34              | .00                 | 72,550.34              |            |       |
| <b>Totals</b>            | <b>\$ 273,053.75</b> | <b>\$ 60,217.08</b> | <b>\$ 333,270.83</b> | <b>\$ 1,406,245.10</b> | <b>\$316,937.94</b> | <b>\$ 1,723,183.04</b> |            |       |



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Thomas Marberry

## "The Message of Genesis 12-50" in *The Bible Speaks Today*

By Joyce G. Baldwin

(Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986, paperback, 224 pages, \$14.95).

**T**his volume is part of a series of expositions that emphasize the contemporary nature of the biblical message. The authors of this series are convinced that the Biblical message is an eternal one that speaks to men and women of every age and generation. Some volumes in the series are new; others were published in earlier years as separate volumes. This volume was originally published in 1986. It is certainly worthy of reissue.

The author is one of the outstanding Old Testament scholars of our generation. She formerly served as Principal of Trinity College in Bristol, England. She is the author of numerous books and commentaries on Old Testament themes.

This is not a commentary in the traditional sense. It is an exposition of the principal teachings of this portion of Genesis. Because of the nature of this work, the author does not devote a great deal of attention to issues of date, authorship, and composition. She does, however, call attention to certain basic theological assumptions that are evident in the book of Genesis.

This first of these assumptions concerns the book's idea of history. As Baldwin writes, "In the Bible . . . life's direction is ensured by God who created the world and its peoples; he transcends time and gives to human life and events a significance they could not otherwise have."

Another basic assumption of Genesis concerns "the whole question of right and wrong." For the book of Genesis, being right is more than just obeying a code of laws; it is being in a right relationship with God. Baldwin illustrates this principle using the example of Adam and Eve.

She writes, "Whereas popular thought associate morality with law keeping, Genesis depicts the first hu-

man pair enjoying conversation with God, and meant to find happiness in fulfilling the role planned for them by their Creator."

In one sense the events of the Bible are timeless, and in another sense they are not. Biblical events take place in a certain historical context, and they cannot be correctly interpreted apart from a knowledge of that context. The lessons which those events teach are timeless and should be correctly applied to every generation.

As Baldwin notes concerning Abraham, "We have spoken of the lessons learnt by Abraham being timeless, but that does not mean that their setting is not important."

This is also a theological exposition of chapters 12-50 of Genesis. The author always recognizes the theological issues these chapters confront. In her discussion of the call of Abram in Genesis 12, Baldwin examines the theological issue of suffering. She writes, "Early on in his experience Abram was discovering that to be in the place of God's appointment is not to be exempt from suffering."

This work is also a practical application of the lessons of Genesis to the lives of believers today. For example, in her discussion of the life of Joseph, she explains why Joseph did not seek revenge against his brothers who had sold him into slavery.

She writes, "Joseph had been able to come to terms with the situation because he had been able to trace the hand of God in all that had happened to him." This is an important lesson for believers of every age. We have to be able to put things in their proper perspective and see the hand of God at work even in difficult situations.

This book is also a very Christ-centered work. I have never read a book on the Old Testament that made more references to the life and min-

istry of Jesus Christ. Baldwin notes the many similarities that can be found between events in the life of Christ and events in the lives of the prominent characters of Genesis.

Concerning Abram's departure from Haran she writes, "There is a sense in which every believer has to abandon the past, make an about turn and start afresh in the service of Jesus."

In some ways the author is a contrarian; she does not always adopt the traditional interpretation of certain Genesis passages. For example, the traditional interpretation among Old Testament scholars is that Abraham and his family were nomads and that they were part of a larger series of migrations which were going on at this time in the ancient Near East.

She rejects this approach entirely. She argues, "Abram was looking for a land which his descendants could inherit, and . . . the theme of land inheritance is utterly foreign to the nomadic way of life. Nor does the text of Genesis suggest that Abram was taking part in a widespread migration; rather the reverse."

This book is well written and thought provoking. It can be of great value to preachers, teachers and others who want to know more about how we can apply the lessons of Genesis to our preaching and teaching today. I hope the forthcoming volumes in the series are as valuable as this one. ■

*The Pastor's Wife . . .*  
Another reason to remember  
September 9



*Pastor Appreciation*  
*Day*





Jack Williams

## Moses and the Preacher Boys

**M**oses died Monday in Nashville. No, not *that* Moses. This one was born in Arkansas, not in Egypt. He was 82, not 120. The Tennessee Moses was a preacher on Jo Johnston Avenue, not a law giver on Sinai.

The local newspaper printed a 12-paragraph story about Moses' death in which a reporter wrote: "He was a preacher's preacher. There was never a doubt that he was a mentor for young preachers."

**The Reverend Moses** Herring pastored the same church in North Nashville 40 years, and I never met him. What the reporter said in the third paragraph of his article makes me know that I missed someone special.

That's because Moses Herring ordained 36 ministers from his own congregation. While it's not unusual for a pastor to participate in the ordination of 36 ministers during his career, it's down right miraculous for all 36 to come from the same church.

One thing's for certain—Moses Herring knew something about challenging men to grow spiritually and then giving them room to do it. He averaged almost one ordained preacher every year for four decades. That's an amazing record.

**What about your church?** Has God called any young men from your church to preach in the last year? The last five years? The last decade? Ever? Do the members in your church know where God goes to get preachers?

We need pastors who will encourage our youth to consider the high calling of ministry. Yes, we understand that God must *call* men to preach, that this is not a vocation where one volunteers in time of crisis and then goes back to his regular life after the emergency ends.

We need parents to nudge their children toward Christian service.

True, we want bankers who are Christian witnesses, teachers who model Christian virtues, cashiers who demonstrate Christian love. But we also want God to place some of our best and brightest into the ministry.

**How young is too young** for a boy to consider a call to preach? This may surprise you, but it's not unusual for God to call boys to preach early in their lives. For instance, when he died at 49, the late Dr. Jonathan Thigpen had been preaching 35 years . . . he was called to preach at 14. When Evangelist Rupert Pixley died at 80, he had been preaching 63 years . . . he was called to preach at 17.

Dr. Alton Loveless, general director at Randall House Publications, pastored a church as a 17-year-old high school senior. Richard Atwood, director of missionary assistance with the Home Missions Department, answered the call to preach at 18. Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington was ordained at 20. Hillsdale FWB College president Carl Cheshier was ordained at 18.

**The most interesting** element in this mix of men and ministry is that their stories are fairly routine in the world of preachers. Now and then, God snatches a busy attorney away from his law books or sweeps some gravel-throated Marine sergeant from his military career to preach. But for the most part, this serious business of preaching drops on the shoulders of teenagers struggling with high school math and raging hormones.

Let's issue a straightforward challenge to our youth. They can take it. Tell them that we're asking God to call boys to preach. Pray publicly for God to call young men from your church into the ministry. Pray that same prayer when the Junior Boys meet for Sunday School. God will hear the first time; the

boys may need to be reminded.

**There's nothing more** liberating to a youngster than the knowledge that an adult thinks he can handle a big job. That same boy who hops around the home twigs like a sad little sparrow has the capacity for eagle flight and a high calling.

When someone believes in you, there are no limits. The day a boy discovers that the God of the universe trusts him with the gospel, that's the day he explodes with possibility.

Don't worry. God won't call all the boys to preach. He'll leave some to build cabinets and drive 18-wheelers, some to repair copy machines and hold public office. A few, however, will hear the voice of God directing them to a life beyond 40 hours and a 401(k) plan.

**A few weeks ago** while attending the Idaho State Association, I noticed quite a stir before the Saturday morning business session as a tall, slender young man made his way toward the front. He was quiet with a certain look in his eye.

A pastor standing nearby said, "This is Angus Hughes. He's our preacher boy." They all seemed proud of him.

He had preached a few sermons and was open for others, but he did have a problem. Somebody had to drive him to his preaching appointments. When I asked his age, Angus said, "I'm 14 . . . and one-half."

A 14-year-old boy may be too young for the U.S. government to trust him with a driver's license, but he's old enough for God to trust him with a call to preach the gospel.

**We can blame no one** but ourselves if the boys in our churches are so distracted by games and fluff that they have neither the time nor the inclination to listen when a Carpenter from Galilee whispers, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ■



CONTACT

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