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Free Will Baptist Bible College**

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

President Pinson

God raises up uniquely gifted individuals to give direction to His work. This is evident in the selection of J. Matthew Pinson as the fifth president of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He is an exceptional young man with unlimited potential who will serve well as president of our flagship institution of higher learning.

His Character

Matt has a distinguished heritage as a Free Will Baptist. He is a fifth-generation Free Will Baptist, son of a Free Will Baptist deacon and grandson of a Free Will Baptist pastor. His *intellectual capacity* and his *integrity of character* will serve as a model for students, staff and faculty.

Matt is a special man with sparkling skills and abilities and a biblical breadth and balance that we need at this critical moment in our history.

His Credentials

President Pinson brings impressive credentials to the presidency. Consider his *education*. He attended Free Will Baptist Bible College (1985-86). He received his B.A. degree (1990) and his M.A. degree (1993) at the University of West Florida. He received the M.A.R. degree in theology and church history from Yale University, and will receive the Ph.D. in history from Florida State University in 2002.

Consider his *experience*. He has served as a *pastor*. Since 1994, he has pastored Colquitt FWB Church in Georgia. The church has experienced significant statistical, spiritual and stewardship growth. He led the church in a building program in 2000.

He has served as a *professor* at Georgia Bible Institute, Bainbridge College, Florida State University and the University of West Florida.

He is a *prolific writer*. He has served

as editor-in-chief of *Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought*, published by the Commission for Theological Integrity, as managing editor of Georgia's state paper, *The Promotional Bulletin*, as co-editor and publisher of the *Historical Review*, published by the Historical Committee of the Florida State Association.

President Pinson has authored several books, including *A Free Will Baptist Handbook: Heritage, Beliefs, and Ministries* and *How Can I Have a Relationship with God?*, published by Randall House. Zondervan Publishing House will publish two of his books in 2002.

Matt has written numerous articles and papers for theological journals, academic presentations and seminars. He has spoken at ministers' conferences and workshops throughout the denomination.

Consider his *expertise*. He brings a broad array of gifts and abilities to the presidency. Not many individuals have his capacity to articulate, analyze and act.

His Commitment

President Pinson is committed to Free Will Baptist *distinctives*. His commitment to denominational polity, programs and policies will produce college graduates who are strong advocates for denominational distinctives. He states, *As president of Free Will Baptist Bible College, I am committed to service to our denomination. Our college must not only be interested in what the denomination can do for it, but we must be concerned about what*

we can do for our denomination.

President Pinson is committed to our *doctrine*. When he speaks, he consistently champions our doctrinal views. He is not ashamed of our doctrinal distinctives.

President Pinson is committed to our *denomination*. He believes in the denomination—its past, present and prospects. He affirms this when he says, *I look forward to partnership with the directors of the other departments of the National Association to provide ministry and service for Free will Baptists around the world.*

His Challenge

The first challenge he faces as president is that of *communication*. He must articulate clearly and convincingly his philosophy, plan and program for the growth of Free Will Baptist Bible College and its vital role in denominational life.

A second challenge is that of *cooperation*. He must seek through every means at his disposal to develop a spirit of cooperation with other Free Will Baptist colleges. All our colleges will play a significant role in the educational life of denominational constituents in the coming years.

A third challenge is that of *contributions*. The relocation of Free Will Baptist Bible College depends on a significant increase of contributions to the school. In order to hire faculty and pay adequate salaries, contributions must increase. He must accept and address the need for a significant increase in funding for the college.

President Pinson's character, credentials, commitment and challenges are daunting. Can he succeed? I believe he can. He has the vision and values essential to be an effective and efficient president of Free Will Baptist Bible College. Join with me in pledging our total support for his presidency. ■

The Secretary's Schedule

January 2002

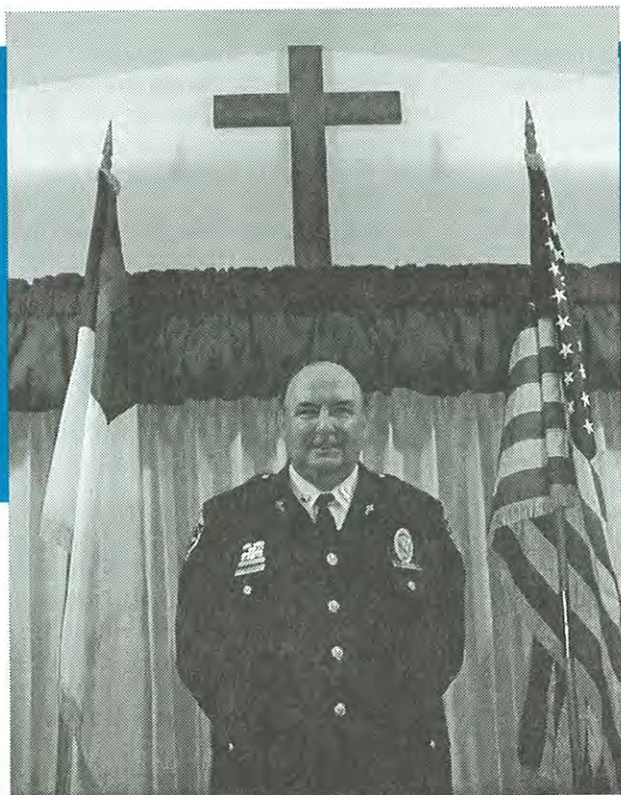
15-18 Convention Planning Trip
Memphis, TN

29- RCMA Annual Conference
Feb. 1 Tampa, FL

Four days in the life of a police chaplain

Officer Down!

By Jim O'Donnell



Society is seeing more confusion between good and evil, right and wrong. People face tragedy daily, often without the help of the Lord or ministers. In the past decade there has been a marked increase in the use of chaplains by law enforcement. These men and women step into the most difficult situations facing police officers and the public. Deaths, shootings and suicides are common to the police and, in turn, the chaplains who serve them.

Standards to become a chaplain vary from agency to agency. Most minimum standards require ordination, endorsement by denomination and local church, at least five years' pastoral experience, a background check, and a demonstrated interest and ability to serve law enforcement. The effective chaplain also needs the endorsement

and support of his local church and family because of demands placed on the already demanding life of a pastor.

Deacon Mike Scott of Airport Road FWB Church in Twin Falls, Idaho, wrote about his chaplain pastor:

When your pastor . . . asks your blessing to be a chaplain, many thoughts come to mind. Will he have the time? Will the congregation be neglected? Will his family be left alone at times? To . . . serve as a chaplain takes a special pastor and a special congregation.

Yes, his time is stretched to the limit when he gives himself to minister to the hurting. . . . But he gives it willingly and as a servant. Yes, the congregation may feel they are neglected at times. But we pray willingly for our pastor's safety and his wisdom in dealing with situations that we would never want ourselves. . . . Yes, the family has been left alone in the middle of the night. But I'm sure the thought has entered

their minds that their husband and dad will be coming home later, while the family he is ministering to will never see their dad again.

Our church accepts the task of fervent and frequent prayer for our pastor and chaplain. Each time he is called out to help with a tragic accident or a life-threatening crisis, prayers go up for him. Our church has a unique honor and privilege like a handful of other churches in this nation. We get to pray for a godly man on the front lines of despair and tragedy, to support him in prayer and to hold families before God who may otherwise have no other access to the comfort and peace that our Lord . . . can provide.

Serving one another through diligently providing for others; serving our pastor through prayer and encouragement, and he in turn ministers to the urgent needs of the community. It's a holy partnership that works.

There is a cost to the pastor, his

family and his congregation. The church may have to share their pastor at inconvenient times. The deacons may have to step into the pulpit while their pastor consoles a grieving family or deals with a tragic event in the community. Calls may come during meals; the family may rise in the morning to find that Dad has been gone all night to a shooting incident.

He calls from the hospital to tell them he loves them. They may know more about tragedy in the community than most, and often know about it sooner. They experience times when, following the tragic death of a child, Dad walks into their room while they sleep. Standing quietly thanking God for their health, he asks for God's blessing on the family he just left.

His wife may be awakened in the early morning hours to hear an almost monotone voice recount the events that transpired since he left her side. The children may be picked up at school by a police car because Dad can't be there—he is helping someone else in need.

Day 1: Career Decisions

"Shots fired! Officer down!" The call that chills every law enforcement officer sounded on a quiet winter evening. With officers converging on the scene, confusion reigned. The Crisis Response Team (CRT) and chaplain were summoned.

It started, like many others, as a response to a domestic disturbance. Arriving officers knew the resident had a history of such problems. Tonight would be different. The two officers entered the house to find the woman and two children cowering in the living room, the husband out of sight.

Crossing to the woman and children, the officers unwittingly passed into sight line of the husband who sat in a darkened room off the living room, pistol in hand. As the officers turned, the husband opened fire. One officer was wounded. The other returned fire and led his partner and the others from the house to safety, while screaming for back-up on his radio. Another responding officer is later wounded by the husband, now the suspect.

The chaplain arrives with the CRT. The uninjured officer involved in the initial exchange of gunfire is brought

to the chaplain. The chaplain takes him aside. They visit for over an hour. Every minute of the situation is reviewed. Mistakes may have been made, but physical injuries are not fatal. Before they are through, the officer and chaplain pray together. As the officer leaves, he extends his hand and says simply, "Thanks."

A year later the same officer and chaplain meet and talk. The officer who was wounded in the initial gunfire has left law enforcement. His career is over. The second officer candidly tells the chaplain, "You remember that night? You saved my career. Thanks! If you ever want to ride along with me, let me know—you're always welcome!" A chaplain can't get a better "paycheck" than that.

Day 2: Keep Her Busy for Us

A woman with a shotgun is threatening suicide and harm to anyone who comes near. A police lieutenant asks the chaplain, "Want to come along?" He nods, picks up his gear and heads toward the waiting patrol car.

Officers have cordoned off the area, a medical unit is standing by, and the woman is being observed. She has a shotgun and is making threats.

At the scene the chaplain sets up behind a patrol car. The woman has been identified: she knows how to use her shotgun. She is also known to have a rifle and .357 pistol. The chaplain is asked to negotiate with her. Using the PA system in the patrol car, he attempts to dialogue with the woman.

Time passes. Officers enter the home and find the rifle. The shotgun is obvious, but where is the pistol? The woman is dressed in sweats and could easily conceal the weapon. The chaplain continues to talk with her. She puts down the shotgun but won't surrender. The officers get more concerned. School will soon be out; children will be entering the area. They must do something to end the standoff. They develop a plan.

Two officers will get behind the woman and overpower her. Other officers will roll in with a car and join in the capture. The plan requires that someone keep her busy until officers get in range. That's the chaplain's job. He must keep her distracted while everyone else moves in. Where is that .357?

The chaplain prays for wisdom and protection for the officers. Everyone is briefed and ready. They turn to the chaplain and ask, "Are you ready?" He nods yes. "Keep her busy for us, okay?" With a smile and a pat on the chaplain's arm, the officers move out.

Talking with the woman, the chaplain realizes there is a major flaw in the plan. From where the woman sits, she will easily see officers passing between the buildings as they move in. They will be in the open, and her shotgun is at hand. Where is the pistol?

Realizing the danger, the chaplain steps from behind the car. If he doesn't distract her, the officers could be hurt. As he moves from behind his protecting car, she stands up, tilts her head to one side and turns toward him.

His heart is pounding, his mind racing—don't tip her off; keep your voice calm and keep moving away from the officers. She turns and takes a few steps toward the chaplain. The shotgun remains on the ground. The distance between the woman and her shotgun is growing as she moves slowly toward the chaplain. The officers appear and disappear behind her. The chaplain keeps talking while getting further from the safety of the car.

Suddenly, the deputies break from cover. She still hasn't detected them. The first one reaches the shotgun, breaks it open, removes the shells and lifts them toward the chaplain, signifying the weapon is secure. The chaplain quickly whispers on his portable radio, "Weapon secure, move in now!"

She reacts by looking at the chaplain talking into his radio, her mind recognizes that something is happening, but doesn't know what. As the deputies advance, she hears them, shouts and turns to run toward a nearby parked truck. The deputies are close enough that in a few short steps they are able to dive, tackling her.

One deputy hits her high, one low and the three roll on the ground. The patrol car roars in. As if rodeo bulldogging, a deputy dives from the moving car to assist. Her hands and arms are grasped and held. It is over. The pistol is found in the truck.

The chaplain and a deputy escort her to a mental health facility. She is calm and cooperative, friendly toward the chaplain. Another successful operation, everyone is safe and

unharméd. Within a week the chaplain receives a message. The woman wants him to know she is going to the state hospital for care.

Day 3: Officers Down

The pager sounds. At home the phone rings. The dispatcher's terse message was simple and straightforward, "Chaplain, we need you to respond—there are two officers down."

This message interrupted Wednesday night Bible study as the chaplain responds to the most horrendous situation any law enforcement officer may face—a line of duty death. Two deputies from an adjacent county have been shot to death while serving a warrant in the small town of Eden, Idaho.

That night the chaplain assists in delivering death messages and breaking the news to members of the sheriff's office. Other agencies assist. It will be a long week. The chaplain will assist not only this department but two others as well. Trained as a counselor and debriefer, he will serve these agencies for two weeks. Contact will continue for months. For many, this event will result in leaving law enforcement. The chaplain tries to help through the crisis.

Day 4: Birthday in a Patrol Car

A sheriff's deputy and his dad (the chaplain) shared a birthday in a patrol car. The deputy was celebrating his birthday; his dad went for a ride-along with him. It started as so many evenings on patrol do—a routine traffic stop or two, calls for a stray cow out of a pasture, possible parties at some neighbor's house and more.

This weekend there was a big motorcycle rally in the mountains south of town. A local constable called requesting that a deputy check out the traffic. Clearing with dispatch, they began to drive that direction. A steady stream of motorcycles roared south.

At the end of the pavement near the site, a motorcycle was parked. A man and woman sat in the dark. The patrol car leaves the pavement and begins the last six miles of dirt road to the rally site. The cyclist and passenger quickly passed the slow-moving patrol car, disappearing into the dust and dark ahead.

Topping a small rise in the road, they spot the now-wrecked cycle. The

driver was laid flat on his back, not moving. His female passenger sat up to his right. The cycle lay on its side, light still on, wheel spinning. The dust had not yet settled.

The patrol car's lights illuminated the scene. The deputy and chaplain left the car to assist the cyclists. As they reached the pair, they could hear a gurgling sound—the male was having trouble breathing. A flashlight revealed he had apparently landed on his head. His nose and mouth were bleeding badly. He was unconscious, unable to breathe. His airway was blocked; he was drowning in his own blood.

The chaplain opened the man's mouth and swept it clear with his bare hands. At that moment he felt a sick realization as he looked at his blood soaked hands—he wasn't wearing protective gloves. The deputy retrieved gloves and a breathing tube from the car. Placing the tube into his mouth, a couple of breaths, and the cyclist began breathing on his own again.

Gauze was applied with pressure to stop the bleeding. The man's condition was evaluated. His position and injuries indicated possible head, neck and back injuries. His eyes were unresponsive, pupils dilated. Shock was setting in.

Their location prevented radio contact for help. The deputy drove to the ridge to call while the chaplain remained with the injured cyclist. A quick-response unit and paramedics were dispatched. It would be an hour before they could arrive. There had been no response by the victim, breathing was normal, but pulse erratic. A helicopter was called. While the chaplain treated the victim, the deputy conducted his accident investigation.

Three times before the first medical unit arrived, the victim showed signs of shock, shaking and shivering. Blankets were placed under and over him. The bleeding had stopped, but still no response.

Shortly before the arrival of the QRU, the victim began to vomit. With help of those nearby, the chaplain directed as they turned him to his side to clear his mouth, careful not to move his head and back out of line. He then began to thrash around. Feet and legs moved, arms began to flail. At least he didn't appear to have any spinal damage, but they weren't about to take chances.

When the medical units arrived,

they began to check the vital signs, start an IV and strap him on a backboard for transportation. Still no response. It has been over an hour since the accident. The terrain dictated that the helicopter be met at the nearby ski lodge parking lot. With the medical personnel working on the victim, the chaplain drove the second ambulance to the site.

In minutes the helicopter could be heard in the distance. The pilot circled and began his landing pattern. The helicopter crew raced to the waiting ambulance. They would also evaluate the man's condition before loading him into the helicopter.

In about 10 minutes the victim was transferred. The pilot added power, pulled pitch and began the ascent from the parking area. Clearing the trees, he circled to gain altitude before departing the valley. He then slowly nosed his craft down the mountain. His slow movements were meant to lessen the pressure on the victim. Within 15 minutes he would land at the hospital. It would be another 50 minutes for the ambulance to join them there.

The victim didn't regain consciousness for two and a half days. He had several brain hemorrhages, a concussion, two discs injured in his back, a broken nose, loose teeth, a sliced tongue, and facial abrasions and lacerations. He would recover and be released in a week.

The deputy and chaplain shared a unique birthday in a patrol car. How often do a father and son (deputy and chaplain) celebrate a birthday in a patrol car? The sheriff's comments after reviewing the after-action report indicated that he may have to restrict their traveling together—too much excitement. But, it was a birthday not soon to be forgotten. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend James (Jim) O'Donnell pastors Airport Road Free Will Baptist Church in Twin Falls, Idaho. He served as a medivac helicopter pilot and infantry officer in Vietnam.

O'Donnell oversees the work of 32 police chaplains in Idaho and holds the rank of major (Department Chaplain). He has received numerous awards, including the Meritorious Service Award, a Department Citation and several certificates of appreciation.

He serves on the Board of Directors for the International Conference of Police Chaplains and is recognized as a Senior Chaplain.

My Vision

By Matthew Pinson

Soon after the Board of Trustees elected me fifth president of Free Will Baptist Bible College, people began to ask me, "What is your vision for the school? What do you stand for?" It is hard to summarize my vision for the College in one brief article. However, I would like to discuss in a few words some of what I envision for the future of our denomination's college.

Today's Challenge

A strong challenge lies ahead of us. In facing this challenge, we must be innovative. Free Will Baptist Bible College has always been willing to change its methods to advance the cause of Christ. We will continue to do that, adapting ourselves to our changing educational environment.

Yet, we must change in a way that maintains continuity with our tradition as a college and as a denomination. One of the things that will remain the same is our basic mission as a college: "to equip men and women, through Bible-based education, to serve Christ and His Church."

This mission suggests that we should be Christ-centered, Bible-centered, student-centered and service-centered. The future of Free Will Baptist Bible College will hinge on these goals. This is why we are here. This is our reason for being.

I want to explore new, creative ways of producing graduates who are shaped by a thoroughly Christian worldview. I am committed to graduating young men and women who are equipped to live and work in a rapidly changing world, serving Christ in Christian service, whether in church or non-church careers.

Our aim must be to educate stu-

dents, in all areas of life, to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."

Tomorrow's Students

I am intent on emphasizing God's call on young men and women's lives. My desire is to reinvigorate the pastoral studies program and deal with the lack of young ministers going into the field. Educating pastors is one of our most crucial needs at this time in our denominational life.

We must prepare preachers of the Word who will take a strong stand for God and truth in an age when divine truth is hard to find. We must equip shepherds who will lovingly lead their flocks and feed them the Word of God.

We will continue the college's historic commitment to a Great Commission focus. We must continue educating missionaries for cross-cultural evangelization in both traditional fields and among unreached people groups.

One of our greatest challenges is to reach out to the 90% of Free Will Baptist students who do not attend Free Will Baptist colleges. We must strive to give those called to non-church careers a keen sense of their divine calling and their unique place in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Bible-Based Education

We must maintain our commitment to higher education that is Bible-based. Free Will Baptist Bible College will continue to center its curriculum on scripture. Rather than giving students unrelated facts, we will give them a coherent body of knowledge held together by the Christian worldview.

As I look at the task that lies ahead, I am aware that I cannot do this job alone. I need your help. Furthermore, I want to make myself available to help you and your church. We want Free Will Baptists to have a sense of ownership in your denominational college.

I am committed to service to our denomination. Our college must not only be interested in what the denomination can do for it. We must be concerned about what we can do for our denomination. We should strive to instill in our students loyalty to our denomination and our confession of faith.

What You Can Do

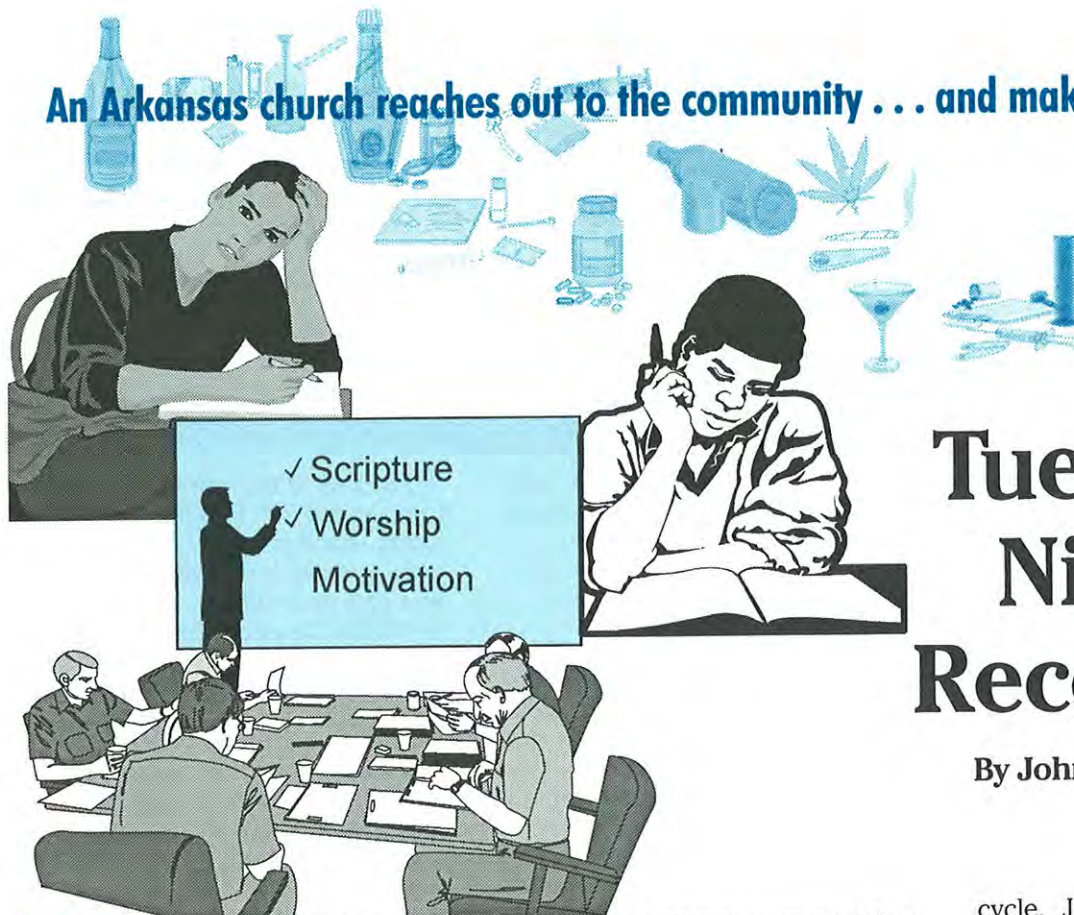
Now what can you do for us?

- First, pray for us. We will not succeed without a network of people who are committed to systematic prayer for this college.
- Second, send us your students. Give us the names and addresses of prospective students. Point them to our website, www.fwbcc.edu.
- Third, support us financially. Give sacrificially to help us do what God has called us to do.
- Finally, let me know how we can be of service to you and your family and your church. Give me your ideas on how Free Will Baptist Bible College can better serve Free Will Baptists in the mission to which God has called us. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend J. Matthew Pinson is president of Free Will Baptist Bible College.

An Arkansas church reaches out to the community . . . and makes a difference.



Tuesday Night Recovery

By John H. Reed IV

We just finished singing with enthusiasm and passion to the Lord. Dennis led in prayer. Daniel testified and our hearts are full. Brenda followed up with her own stirring testimony of a changed life. Now Wiley is preaching about the victorious power of Jesus Christ.

Just another service in a Free Will Baptist church, right? Not exactly: This is our Tuesday night recovery group. In this case the names have not been changed to protect the innocent or the guilty. These are real people.

Dennis is a recovering cocaine addict. He came to Christ 15 months ago. Daniel has been an alcoholic most of his adult life. He hasn't had a drink in almost three years. Brenda got saved six months ago. She accepted Christ in a jail cell after making a phone call to our recovery group leader. Her drug addiction was methamphetamine. Wiley has been free of crack cocaine bondage almost two years now.

I am convinced that the recovery ministry we started could be duplicated across our denomination with caring pastors or lay workers at the helm. I am one who struggled for years with addiction. To some degree I talk their language.

But I am convinced you do not

have to experience cancer to minister to those who do have it. You do need a broken heart over their ruined lives and a vision for what God can do.

The truth of the matter is that drug and alcohol problems are epidemic in our nation. Most churches look for the quick fix, the easy solution. So let me warn you now: Dealing with people in the throes of addiction is a long process. But it can yield glorious returns for the kingdom of God.

Some who struggle with addiction have made one-time commitments to Christ. In many cases this is sufficient to break the addiction cycle and produce long-term results. However, the destructive thinking of an addicted person frequently leads them back to the path of least resistance. For the addict, this is the drug or drink.

Thoroughly grounding anyone in the resources of God takes time. For the addict, this time of growth is not without attacks from Satan. The person who has *used* for years has buried an incredible amount of guilt and raw emotion. Now they are shouldered with the responsibility of facing all that pain without any anesthesia. The pressure is often too great and they use again.

Guilt is gasoline on the fire of addicted lives and enables them to move quickly back into the addictive

cycle. Just having someone who picks them up again and shows them grace can often be enough to make the difference. I do not claim to be an authority on this subject, and I am sure there are others who have much to offer the addicted. Here are some 14 principles that have worked for us.

Find Good Curricula

We use a combination of "Celebrate Recovery" along with "Overcomers in Christ." Each program has its strengths and weaknesses. We have modified a program to meet our needs.

Find a Good Translation

We use the *Life Recovery Bible* in the New Living Translation. I know some get offended at the suggestion of another translation, but you often deal with people who have only an elementary education. I have found a readable translation of invaluable service. Besides, the *Life Recovery Bible* is not available in the King James Version.

Don't Work Harder than the Addict

Many caught in addiction want sympathy and pity more than they want change. Until they are willing to come to a place of surrender and powerless-

ness, they can run you ragged. Do not co-facilitate their sinful behavior.

No amount of external pressure can bring about change in the heart. You cannot save the world. Some will have to remain in addiction until a later date, if they live that long.

Cultivate an Atmosphere of Hope, Honesty and Trust

If you are fake and unwilling to share your own struggles, others will not want to be open and honest either. If you are a phony, you may as well not do this. It is in absolute honesty before God that men and women change their sinful ways.

Be prepared to hear things that will shock you. When that happens, have control over the group. You can steer conversation away from that which dishonors God without being condemning.

Avoid Manipulation by Guilt

People in addiction have done many shameful things. They already know this. Your manipulation by guilt will not help. If someone is not serious about recovery, they won't stick around long. Your external attempts won't help. Our job is to show them that guilt and shame were dealt with on the cross.

Get Local Church Support

Their prayers are vital to this ministry. When they begin to see sinners walk the aisles as a direct result of this ministry, they will be thankful for its impact in the community. By the way, it is your church. You can set rules about smoking, offensive language, etc.

Let the Ministry Pay Its Own Way

Most addicts have used other people and allowed others to pay their way long enough. The church can underwrite some initial costs, but take up a weekly offering. Use the money to supply literature and recovery Bibles. Sell the Bibles and literature to those who can afford it.

Do Not Compete with AA and NA

You will almost certainly differ with them on the person of Christ. You will find that many who attend these meetings are serious about recovery. They

recognize the need for God and will find that your meetings complete for them what AA may have started in their life. I have scheduled my meetings to allow participants to go to both meetings.

Be Soul Conscious

People who really want help from an addictive lifestyle are some of the most openly receptive people in the world. Be ready to share the gospel and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's working in the meetings.

Separate Male and Female Groups

This may not be possible at first. In for-men-only groups, men can be much more comfortable holding each other accountable for their other destructive tendencies such as pornography and immorality. (Many who are not addicted to drugs struggle with this in our churches as well. That is a subject for another time.)

Ladies have often gone so low that they think no one could ever love them or understand. They need an environment where they can be taught good, godly conduct as a woman. Do not allow inappropriate talk or contact between members of the opposite sex. This can be destructive to the whole process. Victory in Christ includes all areas of our lives. This message needs to be repeated often.

Focus on Worship

We chose to name our group "Celebrate Recovery" because that is exactly what we are doing.

Encourage Local Church Accountability

Many in recovery groups like to see themselves as different from the average man or woman who struggles with the flesh. They are not; their sin of choice has more visibly destructive consequences, but they are just young believers struggling to grow into the image of Christ. I encourage those in recovery to make a concerted effort to find a sponsor who is living a life of victory over addiction.

I further encourage them to find a (same sex) mature believer in the church who will spend time encouraging them in the faith. This has

proved invaluable in nudging our church to develop a heart for this ministry and in incorporating newly-recovering people into the church.

Do Not Debate

Terms such as addiction/ illness/ disease or recovered vs. recovering vs. free have differing meanings to different people. I have personal beliefs about each of these subjects, but I have found others who are in solid recovery through the power of Christ who choose to use recovery terms with which I disagree.

Develop Servant Leaders

You will discover that some of the men and women you are ministering to are incredibly bright and gifted people. Some of them will have a heart for this ministry. So give them something to do.

I realize there are many things I failed to cover in this article. You may not agree with all I said. This, I think, we will agree on; there are many precious, misunderstood people who have been thrown away by our society and ignored by the church. I believe that the Savior wants to minister to them today.

After you have been in this ministry for a while, you will discover that you have established a reputation in your community. The local jails will know you. The judges and parole offices will begin to refer people to you. You will begin to make a difference in this awful blight on our communities.

If I can help anyone in this ministry, please call: (church) 870/364-2708 (home) 870/364-3164. Truly, the fields are white unto harvest but the laborers are few. ■

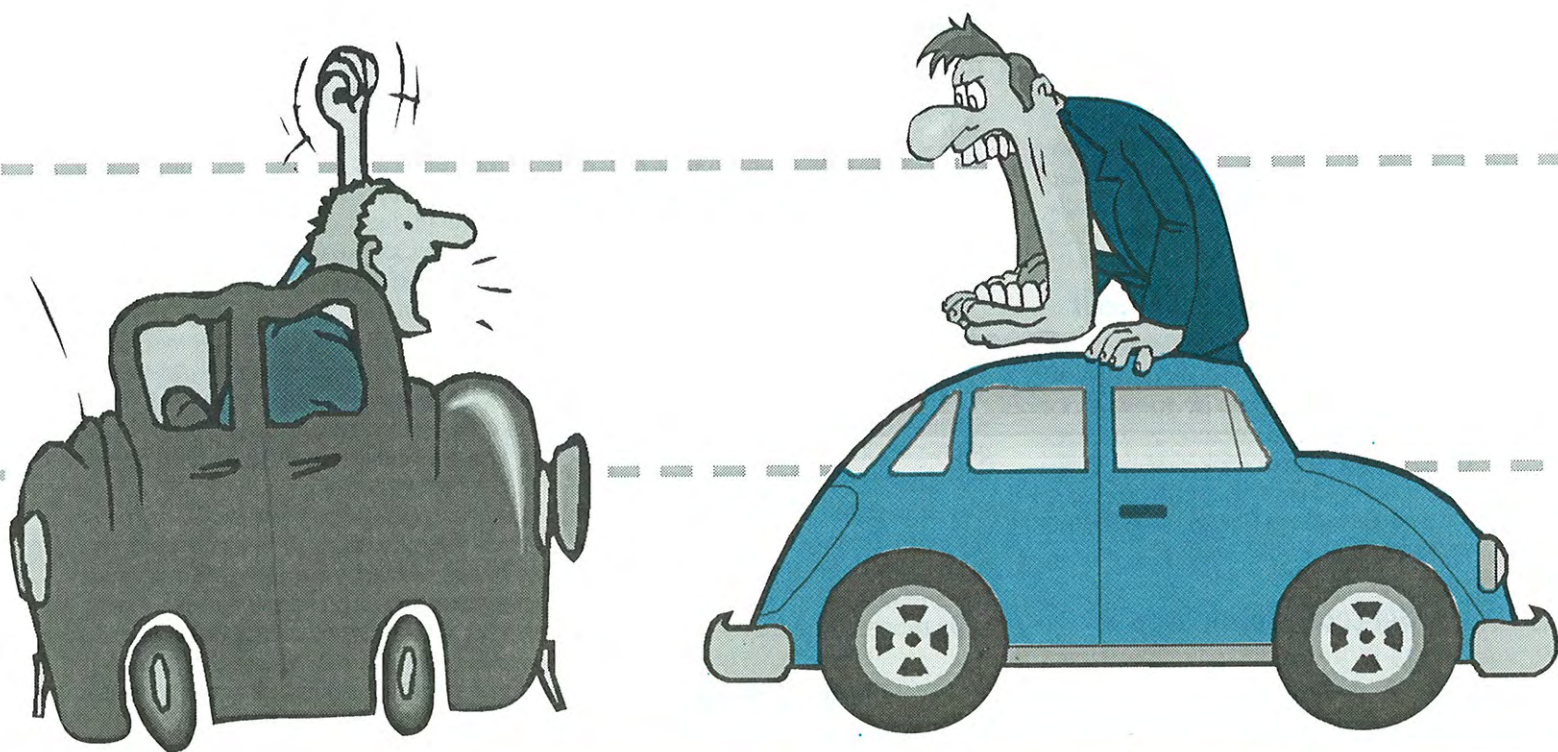


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend John H. Reed IV pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Crossett, Arkansas. He previously pastored in Virginia and Mississippi. John graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1980.

What happens when the law of the land gets tested on the highway and in the church?

Christian Behind the Wheel

By Jonathan Turnbough



One remarkable thing about the Bible is that it brims with instruction and wisdom for modern life. You won't read "Blessed are the multi-taskers" or "Let your Indiglo so shine before men" anywhere between the covers of the Word, but there are principles throughout the Bible that continue to guide those who study it. The scriptures, inspired by the Spirit and written in a context where men walked on dirt paths wearing sandals, still speak to people wearing Nikes who zip around in Buicks and Nissans. It is the time we spend in our automobiles that I address.

Now you may be thinking: *Christianity and driving? What's the connection? What's the point?* The point is:

Most People Drive

The automobile is what many folks spend the most money on in their lifetime other than a home, and that's where many spend a reasonable amount of time. I spend at least an hour in my vehicle daily. For many, driving time comprises a large chunk of their day.

Tested on the Road

Dirty looks, angry honks, obscene gestures and more are regular features of driving, especially in larger cities. I live in Nashville where heavy traffic is the norm. Frustrating as that can be, other drivers often contribute to the mayhem, sometimes pushing folks to

their limit. People, pets and inhibitions have died as a result of road rage.

Driving can be a real test of Christianity. Some time ago I realized that the attitude I display in my driving doesn't line up with the Christ-like attitude I try to live out in other areas of my life.

Easy to Compartmentalize

These days life can become extremely segmented. Many would have trouble recounting all the hats they wear—spouse, employee, coach, parent, chauffeur, "Christian . . ." There is a tendency to compartmentalize the segments of life, including Christianity.

God intends, however, for Christianity to be neither one of the many hats we wear nor a mere segment of

life. He desires for Christianity to *be* life, to be the overriding factor affecting all we are and seeping into all we do. Driving is an area of life easy to overlook, but Christians should strive to drive "Christianly." Here are some helpful principles for this endeavor.

Obey the Law

We wouldn't dream of robbing a bank; shoplifting would be unthinkable. Other principles of law, however, are easier to overlook. Most of us probably consider ourselves good, law-abiding citizens. But get us into that driver's seat, and watch out! Suddenly, the laws aren't that significant, they're really more like suggestions, and besides, *I'm in a hurry*.

A number of laws pertain to driving, but the speed limit immediately comes to mind. In fact, that was probably what you first thought of when you read "Obey the law." I confess, it's often hard to drive the speed limit—or is it? Why is it difficult to drive 55 miles per hour? Is that really so slow? Sometimes when I am tempted to gas it, I realize I'm not really in any hurry. Often the speed of the cars around me pressures me—no one wants to be called a slow-poke!

Another sticking point is intersections—stop lights and stop signs. I see someone blatantly run a light almost daily here in Nashville.

The Bible is clear on the matter of law: Christians are to obey it. Some laws we understand; the need for them is obvious. Others we're not so sure about. But as long as the law of the land meshes with the law of God, we as believers are to live by *both*.

Christians are to respect their nation's authorities. In the Old Testament, the governing authority was often a king. Given the opportunity, David refused to lay a hand on King Saul, though Saul had tried to kill him. David viewed Saul as God's anointed leader.

David's son, Solomon, said, "He who keeps the law is a discerning son . . ." (Prov. 28:7). Solomon also said, "Obey the king's command . . ." and "Since a king's word is supreme, who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'" (Eccl. 8:2,4).

Paul tells Titus to "Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good . . ." (Titus 3:1).

Peter concurs: "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority in-

stituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors . . ." (1 Pet. 2:14-a). Peter then sums up his instruction with a good life principle in 2:17, "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king."

Paul writes to believers in Rome: "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. *For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong.*" (Rom. 13:1, 2-3a; italics mine).

That last line reminds me how some folks' driving habits undergo a radical reform when they spot a policeman. Those obeying the law don't have to worry. In verse 4 of Romans 13, Paul says that because the authorities are given by God, they do not "bear the sword for nothing." Without intending irreverence, might I add the radar gun?



Mirror Christ

It's 7:45 a.m. You have just enough time to get to work—if the heavy traffic you're in continues creeping at the same pace. Everywhere you look, you see vehicles; you wonder if one more car would fit on this roadway. Then you approach a ramp where cars are attempting to merge onto the already packed interstate.

More cars!? you mumble, making sure to close the distance between your car and the one you follow. *No room here*, you think to yourself. At the last second, someone zooms to the end of their merge lane and attempts to get over just in time. You're thinking, *They're crazy if they expect . . .*

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets," (Matt. 7:12).

You're cruising along, minding your own business, when a car comes up beside you, passes, and then cuts in front of you so narrowly that you're forced to hit the brakes. At this point you consider your options:

Well, I could either speed up and ride this guy's bumper for awhile, or I might pass him and give him a taste of his own medicine. Either way, I'm going to let him know he can't just . . .

"But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also," (Matt. 5:39).

Once again, you're driving along, listening to the radio, when you notice the car behind you following too closely. You glance at your mirror a few more times, and they are still there. Now you're thinking, *They have three other lanes they could use to get around me, yet they insist on riding my bumper. Hmm—a nice, firm press of the brake pedal ought to back them off. . .*

"Do not repay anyone evil for evil . . . Do not take revenge . . ." (Rom. 12:17a, 19a).

As we get into our vehicles and onto the roads, let's make sure we are taking our Christianity and our submission to God and His authorities with us. Think about biblical principles and how they relate to driving situations. Remember that your Christian testimony is at stake wherever you are, not excluding stuck in traffic. Obey the laws of driving, displaying respect for authority and drive selflessly, evidencing a Christlike attitude. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Jonathan L. Turnbough is a ministerial student at Free Will Baptist Bible College. He recently completed pastoral internship at Cross Timbers Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

Independently Interdependent

The National Association of
Free Will Baptists

We even refer to our national denominational organization as an "association," denoting in the name itself the independence and voluntary mem-

Dependent on the Godhead

walk. We are dependent on our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, without whom we could not enjoy the freedom from guilt and sin afforded us because of His great work on Calvary.

We are born with an inward desire to form relationships with God, the created order and other people. We are social creatures and need relationships beyond ourselves. We long to share the difficult and delightful events that mark the days in our lives. We need others to share our sorrows, bol-

ster our burdens and join in our joys.

Dependent on Our Churches

Our churches provide a place of warmth and belonging. They offer opportunities for service where we can exercise the spiritual gifts God has given each of us.

Our churches extend helping hands in times of hardship, extend arms of comfort in times of calamity and words of encouragement in times of adversity. They provide preaching points where the truth of God's Word is taught and preached plainly and boldly. We are truly dependent on our local churches.

Dependent on Local Associations

Our busy schedules have negatively impacted participation in local associations. Some see little value in denominationalism as a whole and identification with a local association in particular. But we do need our local associations.

The primary reason local churches form local associations is to enjoy fellowship with believers of like faith and the camaraderie of fellow soldiers in the ranks of God's army. Local associations bring young people together for youth rallies, summer camps and retreats where they meet other Christian young people and are challenged to find and do the will of God.

Pastors befriend other pastors and talk and pray about things they never share with their congregations. Our local associations sponsor missions conferences that challenge every believer and raise support to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. We depend on our local associations to accomplish what we could not accomplish in individual churches alone.

Dependent on State Associations

Our state associations are as different from each other as the spelling of their names. They meet on different dates, in different locations and in different settings. Some gather in hotel conference rooms, others in convention centers or municipal auditoriums, and most in local Free Will Baptist churches. Some open their meetings with evening services while others begin mid-to late-morning.

Even though they are different in some ways, they are alike in others. They all are comprised of local associations that have banded together to accomplish tasks, both state and nationwide, that could not be accomplished within the confines and limitations of individual local associations.

They help underwrite new mission works within the state. They plan and underwrite retreats for ministers so they can come apart before they "come apart." They promote nationwide and worldwide ministries by marshalling resources to get the gospel to the ends of the earth. Without our state associations, we could not be as effective in reaching our states, nation and the world for Christ.

Dependent on the National Association

Sometimes our feeling of independence wrongly fails to appreciate our need and dependence on the national work. Some feel that because the National Association depends on us for its existence and support, that we have no real dependence on it. All the dependence is one-sided. We need only to look back a few years to realize the value and need of the National Association.

In our modern history, 1935 till the present, Free Will Baptists have come a long way. We were losing our brightest young people to other denominations, because we had no place at which they could be trained as Free Will Baptists. We had no combined missionary efforts and were barely holding our own with half-time and quarter-time churches. We depended on others who were not Arminian in doctrine to supply literature and educational materials.

Our National Association serves as a liaison between Free Will Baptists everywhere and the U.S. Government. It serves as a recognized body for the deployment of missionaries to foreign fields and as co-signer for missionaries on the home front for planting Free Will Baptist churches across the nation.

It equips young men and women, through Bible-based education at its national college, to serve Christ and His church.

It provides a publishing house that produces educational and training

materials true to the word of God and Free Will Baptist doctrine. It provides national summer training programs challenging young people to find the will of God and become 21st century leaders. While we are independent, we depend on our National Association far more than most of us realize.

We are both independent and interdependent. That within itself creates a unique tension, but this is both natural and healthy. We are independent in our congregational government, yet dependent on the triune Godhead. We are independent in our individual relationships with Christ, yet we need the fellowship and support of other Christians.

We are independent in our local churches, yet we need and depend on the fellowship of churches in our local associations for mutual uplifting, fellowship and encouragement. Each local association is responsible for its business and projects, yet acknowledges its need and dependence on our state associations to reach gospel-deprived areas.

Our state works are independent from each other and the national work, yet they depend on our national agencies to help implement the massive job of moving a nation and world for Jesus Christ and Free Will Baptists.

Thank God for men and women of character who have a global perspective and give of their independence. We need and depend on them. Great and gifted leaders live and function in every local association, state association and national association meeting. While we may be independent, we are also gladly interdependent on one another. ■

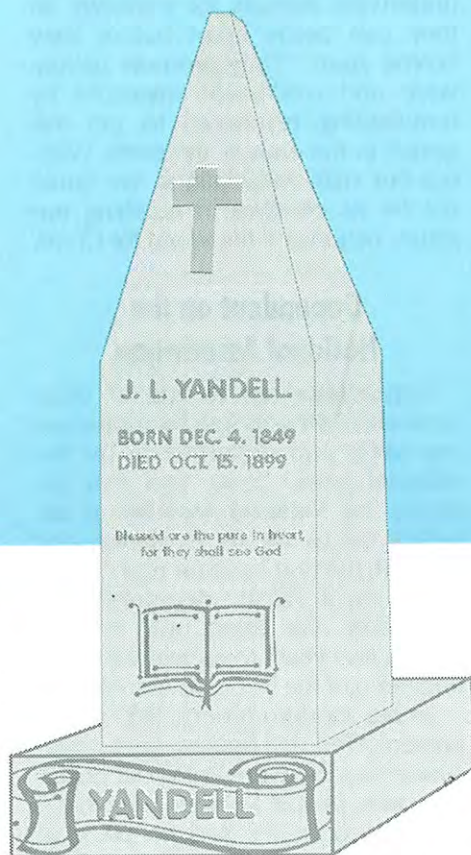


ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Roy Harris is director of advancement at Free Will Baptist Bible College and is nearing completion of a Ph.D. degree in church administration.

He traveled 2,000 miles to meet a man who died a hundred years ago.

The Grandfather I Never Knew

By Jonathan Yandell



It is a beautiful grave marker. Not a flat stone, but more like a short, four-sided tower. It's perhaps 20 inches square at the bottom and rises like a tiny skyscraper to a blunted point almost four feet high. It sits at the back of the old country cemetery, a little taller than most of the other grave markers, like a sentinel that's been given watch over the rest.

I couldn't help feeling a little strange, standing there about 1,400 miles from home, looking at the grave of a man I'd never met. In fact, a man whose name I had first heard less than three days before.

My wife and I were in Oklahoma City to drop off our daughter for the fall semester at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. At the same time, we had been trying to see family and friends in both Arkansas and Oklahoma.

On a visit to see a second cousin, I was intrigued by the fact that he and his wife had located the grave of my great-grandfather, Joseph Larkin Yandell (my father's grandfather). Prior to that visit I didn't even know my great-grandfather's name, much less where he was buried, and I quickly made a mental note to be sure to visit that site at a future date.

That visit came earlier than I expected. As the Lord would have it, things quickly fell into place at the school and we had one free day before we were to leave for our Southern California home.

Armed with my cousin's directions, we left Oklahoma City that morning driving east, almost to the Arkansas border, and then south through the little towns of Panama and Cameron. At the post office in Cameron, a woman gave me directions to the cemetery in typical country fashion:

"Go back out here and get on 110 going east," she drawled in a heavy Southern brogue.

"Go two miles to Bobo's Conoco and turn left," she continued. "Then go to the Hog Eye Fire Station . . ." (I tried hard to stifle a laugh), "... then turn left onto the

dirt road—be careful, it's pretty rough—and go about six mile . . ." (no "s") "... and you'll see the Royal Oak Free Will Baptist Church and cemetery."

I thanked her for her help and managed to hold my laughter until I got to the car. It seemed like I had walked into an old episode of "Green Acres."

Her directions, however, were right on target and though our car got a heavy coat of Oklahoma red dirt on the way, we made it. No one was around the church or the cemetery when we arrived, but with only a little searching we located the marker.

I read the deeply carved markings. His name appeared near the top, "J. L. YANDELL." Beneath the name it read, "BORN DEC. 4. 1849. DIED OCT. 15. 1899." Then, in smaller type, was the phrase, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Etched deeply on the wider base of the tower was the name we share: "YANDELL." A foot stone bearing his initials stuck up out of the ground at the other end of the grave.

A warm, but bittersweet feeling came over me as I thought about this grandfather I never knew. My cousin's research had discovered that he had been a Confederate drummer boy during the Civil War. His older brother had

died fighting for the South—passing away behind the lines 12 days after being wounded in battle. I thought of the horrific hand-to-hand fighting and primitive medical care that marked that awful war. No telling what sort of atrocities my great-grandfather experienced in those tender years of his life.

I tried to imagine what his life must have been like with no tractors, automobiles, telephones, indoor plumbing, electricity, radio, television and air conditioning. He probably rode horseback or drove a wagon, farmed the land and made do with whatever God provided.

He'd been born in Arkansas, we knew that to be a fact, but he'd died and been buried when Oklahoma was still Indian Territory—almost three decades before my father, who bears a portion of his name (Larkin), was born. Did he ever drive cattle, like my grandfather did? Did he plow with a team? Did he carry a pistol? Was his skin burned brown from long days in the hot sun? Did he like to fish? Did he have a beard? Questions flooded my mind.

Yet, one set of facts stood out above all the rest. According to my cousin's research, my great-grandpa was a deacon in the Free Will Baptist church and everywhere he lived he started a church. He began by starting a Sunday School. Then he would call a preacher to hold regular services. He apparently wasn't a pastor, but he was a church planter, and a man who loved God.

Who led him to Christ? I don't know. Was he the first member of the Yandell clan to be a Christian or to be part of the Free Will Baptists? I don't know. What I do know is that among his children were two brothers, Isaac Wilson Yandell (more commonly known as "Doc") and Joseph Elza Yandell (my grandfather). Though, as far as I know, neither boy was a saint in his youth, both accepted Christ and became evangelists and pastors.

Working together and independently, Doc and Grandpa won hundreds—perhaps thousands—to Christ in brush arbor and country church revivals over the course of their ministries. Stories of God's manifold blessings abound—all day baptisms, standing room only crowds, notorious sinners converted, amazing answers to prayer, spirited debates and wisdom that confounded their opposition. Though both men are long dead, even today I meet people

who remember their unique and fruitful ministries.

More importantly, though, these men also passed that spiritual legacy onto their children, some of whom entered the ministry as well. Among them were my father, Larkin, his brother Orville (who entered the ministry as a middle-aged man), a cousin L. D., and the cousin who piqued my curiosity about all this to begin with, DeArthur.

Although Orville is deceased, Dad and DeArthur have each spent about 50 years declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ. Both, in their 70s, are still pastoring today. Of course, other children on both sides are also serving God in other capacities.

In my generation, both my cousin Jimmy and I are pastors and several others are very active in their local churches and beyond. And the legacy goes on, as my children and many others in their generation continue to serve the Lord.

Did my great-grandfather have any idea what he had begun? I doubt it. He died before his sons ever made their mark for the kingdom of God. Yet, the spiritual legacy of a man who loved God continues to grow. Every soul that has come to Christ, every believer who has been built up in their faith, every hurting person who has been comforted, every couple united in marriage and many that have been saved, every dollar given, every song sung, every funeral conducted, every message preached and lesson taught; all these are fruit to my great-grandfather's account.

Of course, ultimately, as all these men would be quick to point out, all credit belongs to God. What a great and gracious God we serve that He would place His hand upon a family that has had neither wealth, nor power, nor fame, and use them in His divine work! All glory be unto Him!

At the cemetery that day, I knelt in prayer at my great-grandfather's grave, thanking God first that, though whatever is left of his earthly remains are there where they were placed over a century ago, Joseph Larkin Yandell is not. He is, as the Apostle Paul said, "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord."

And I thanked God for the legacy he had left to me. One godly man, buried in a country cemetery, within sight of a church he may well have started more than 100 years ago. A man, like us all,

who probably had many faults, failures and inadequacies. But a man who managed to pass the torch of faith to his children, who passed it to my father's generation, who passed it to my generation, who are passing it to my children's generation, who will one day pass it on to their children who, by God's grace, will continue this chain of faith until Jesus returns.

I have said for years that the most important and fruitful thing you will ever do in this world is to lead your children to Christ. Now I believe it more than ever.

The Psalmist wrote: "I will utter things hidden from of old—things we have heard and known, things our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done . . . so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God . . ." (Ps. 78:1b-4,6,7a NIV).

Maybe your family has not been blessed with such a legacy of faith. If not, I don't share this story to brag on anyone but God and to encourage you to seize the opportunity God has given to you to start it! It's the best gift you could ever give to those who walk in your footsteps. No amount of money, fame or power, can compare. This I know for certain. ■



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

Reprinted by permission from *Rejoice!*, September 19, 2001, issue.



Part one
of an eleven-part series
on
"Habits of Highly Successful People"

Redefining Success

By Kevin Riggs¹

Two Kentucky farmers owned racing stables and developed a keen rivalry. One spring each entered a horse in the local steeplechase. Thinking that a professional rider might help, one of the farmers hired a world-class jockey. On the day of the race the two horses were neck and neck with a large lead over the rest of the pack at the last fence, but suddenly both fell, unseating their riders. The professional jockey remounted quickly and rode on to win the race.

Returning triumphantly to the paddock, the jockey found the farmer who had hired him fuming with rage. "What's the matter?" the jockey asked. "I won, didn't I?"

"Oh, yeah," roared the farmer. "You won all right, but you crossed the finish line on the wrong horse."

Everyone is in a race to be successful. Sadly, once they cross the finish line, many will realize they were riding the wrong horse. Is striving for success wrong? Absolutely not! But there is a right kind of success and a wrong kind. I have not always felt that way, but over time I learned to redefine the meaning of success. The Ten Commandments were my teacher.

God's Covenant with His People

For all intents, the people of Israel were failures. They were slaves to the Egyptian government with no rights of their own. They were despised by the Egyptians and had no social or economic standing of their own. They were considered the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor.

God, however, saw things differently. In an incredible display of love, mercy and grace, God called Moses and equipped him for the task of freeing Israel from bondage. Miraculously, after hundreds of years in slavery, Israel was set free.

For three months the Israelites traveled, and every day they saw the hand of the Lord provide.² Even though they had nothing they could call their own, no idea where they were going and an uncertain future, for the first time in centuries they were beginning to experience success.

After weeks of traveling, they came to Mount Sinai and "pitched (their tents) in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount."³ Mount Sinai was a rugged, barren, desert mountain reaching 7,500 feet at the summit. At the base

of the mountain was a broad plain on which Israel camped. God called Moses up the mountain, and from the mountain gave him the Ten Commandments.⁴

Exodus 19 is the turning point of the Old Testament. Here, God speaks to Moses and enters into a covenant relationship with His people. It is here that God defines success.

Redefining Success

God said to Moses, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."⁵

For me, success would be hearing God say, "Then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me . . . and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

If that is true, then the secret to success is obeying God and keeping His covenant. Success is not measured in terms of how much I gain or lose. Success is not measured by my accom-

plishments. Success is measured in terms of my relationship with God and my obedience to Him.

When this realization came to me, I admit I struggled. Did this definition put too much weight on the Commandments? After all, I am no longer under the law but under grace. I don't have to obey the Commandments to be a Christian, do I?

Then it dawned on me; God's Covenant (spelled out by the Ten Commandments) was not given as steps to become a follower of God. Instead, they were given to those who were already His followers as a sign that they were His followers. We who are saved keep the Commandments, not as our attempt to choose God, but because God, through Jesus Christ, has already chosen us.

Out of these Ten Commandments flow the other 600-plus laws in the Old Testament. The Apostle Paul said the law was given "to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster."⁶

The original ten declarations⁷ of God's Covenant with His people are still valid and relevant today. If I obey them I will be a success. If I break them, I set myself up for failure.

How to Be a Success

When I am at my lowest point and when I am at my highest point, I remind myself that success is measured in terms of my relationship with God. This means that success requires me to commit to three things.

The first commitment is to take God up on His Covenant. In the Old Testament a "covenant" was an agreement between two unequal parties in which the stronger party obligated himself to the weaker party through a promise.

What this means to me is that God—the party of the stronger part; has obligated Himself to me—the party of the weaker part; through His Promise of Jesus Christ.

The day I placed my faith in Jesus, my sins were forgiven and I received abundant life on this earth as well as eternal life in heaven. This, however, was the beginning, not the end of my journey toward success.

The second commitment I need to make is to engrave the Commandments on my heart in the same way God engraved them on stone for

Moses. The condition of my salvation was faith in Jesus Christ. The condition of my success will be obedience to God by keeping His Covenant—the Ten Commandments.

In a sense, the Ten Commandments were a piece of paper that God and Israel signed to represent their covenant to one another. What's so important about a piece of paper?

The United States Constitution is just a piece of paper, but the original is kept in a helium-filled bronze case in the Library of Congress. At a moment's notice it can be lowered into a fireproof, shockproof safe. What's so important about this piece of paper? It represents our freedom as a country!

Likewise, the Ten Commandments are our declaration of independence. The Israelites were no longer slaves to the Egyptians; they were sons and daughters of God. Through Jesus Christ I am no longer a slave to sin, but a child of God. God's Commandments do not enslave me; rather, they give me complete liberty.

My birth certificate is just a piece of paper, but I have one safely tucked away in my top drawer. My birth certificate establishes my rights as a United States citizen, and it gives me my identity. Likewise, the Ten Commandments identify who I am and whose I am. I am God's treasured possession; I am a part of His kingdom of priests and His holy nation.

Under no circumstance would I ever refer to my marriage certificate as just a piece of paper. That single piece of paper signifies all the thousands of details involved in two people sharing life together. My marriage license symbolizes intimacy with my wife.

More than anything else, the Ten Commandments—a piece of tablet—tells me God desires a personal, intimate relationship with me. He cares about me. He cares about how I treat others, how I treat myself and how I treat Him. He loves me and cares about my success. He wants to know me and wants me to know Him. If I want to be a success, I need to engrave the Ten Commandments into the stone tablet of my life.

Third, I must make a commitment to never look back and never compromise. Many times the difference between success and failure is that success gets up one more time. Success

keeps going and keeps believing. Success doesn't fall for the relativism of today. Success recognizes there are at least ten absolutes in life.

For me, I have redefined success to be hearing Jesus say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."⁸ Success is measured in terms of my relationship with God. My relationship with Him is the only thing that will outlast this life.

At times I have been like that jockey riding the wrong horse to victory for the wrong guy. I have repented, and God in His grace has forgiven me and given me a new start on a fresh horse. Now I know that by taking God up on His Covenant, engraving the Commandments into my life and never looking back or compromising, I will be a successful.

But that's just me. What about you? How do you define success? ■

Endnotes

1. I would love to hear from you with your questions and comments. Please feel free to email me at kevin@franklincommunitychurch.org.
2. On the Israelites' behalf, God opened the Red Sea so the people could cross on dry ground (Ex. 13:21-14:31). During the day God led them with a "pillar of cloud," and at night He led them by a "pillar of fire" (Ex. 13:22). When they were hungry God provided "manna" and "quail" (Ex. 16:13-16); and when they were thirsty, He provided water from a rock (Ex. 17:5-7). These were just a few of the miracles God provided on behalf of the Israelites.
3. Exodus 19:2. Parentheses added. All scripture quotations are from the King James Version.
4. Exodus 20:1-21. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments sometime between 1446-1406 B.C.
5. Exodus 19:5-6.
6. Galatians 3:24-25.
7. "Declarations" or "Sayings" is a more literal translation of the Hebrew word "Commandment."
8. Matthew 25:21.



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

Tennessee Christian Workers' Conference Organizes

NASHVILLE, TN—After an October 12, 2001, planning session, a group of Tennessee Free Will Baptist pastors and leaders organized the Mid-Tenn Christian Workers' Conference (MTCW) for the purpose of training more and better Christian workers and leaders.

The first MTCW conference will meet April 20 at Free Will Baptist Bible College. The 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Saturday conference will include a five-track format: Early Childhood, Elementary, Teen, Adult and Administrative/Pastoral.

Keith Kennemer, a church training consultant, met with the concerned group at Randall House Publications in October. The late Dr. Jonathan Thigpen, then president of the Evangelical Training Association, had encouraged Kennemer to assist Tennessee Free Will Baptists in their training effort.

As many as 40 workshops are tentatively planned. The workshops will be specifically geared for pastors, lay leaders, children's church directors, Sunday School teachers, CTS workers and worship leaders.

Officials said that those who pre-register and attendee groups from one church could expect registration savings.

For additional information, contact Billy Brown at Randall House Publications.

Oklahoma Adopts \$4.2 Million Budget

ADA, OK—Delegates to Oklahoma's 93rd annual state association approved ministry budgets for 2002 topping \$5.2 million, according to moderator Keith Burden, who was re-elected. Hillsdale FWB College will receive more than \$3 million, state missions—\$1.4 million.

A \$530,000 cooperative plan budget includes the following distribution percentages: State Executive Office (22%), State Mission Board (15%), Christian Education Board (6%), Hillsdale FWB College (33%), National Ministries (24%).

The October 15-18, 2001, session met at First FWB Church in Ada. Some 524 registered for the state association, 161 for the Ministers' Conference, 110 for the Master's Men and 102 for the OWAC. Officials reported 130 ministers, 41 lay delegates and 21 deacons in the registration statistics.

Delegates authorized Hillsdale FWB College to proceed with construction of a \$3.9 million chapel/classroom building. A special appeal for funds raised more than \$300,000 on Wednesday of the meeting.

Former moderator David McDougal received a plaque for seven years of service.

Four ministers preached sermons developing the association theme, "What Does the Lord Require of You?" Home Missions director Larry Powell shared pulpit duties with Oklahoma pastors Scott Real (First FWB Church, McAlester), Danny Phillips (Airport FWB Church, Tulsa) and Dale Smith (Folsom FWB Church, Coleman).

The 2002 state association will meet October 14-17 at First FWB Church in McAlester.

Theology Symposium Meets at Hillsdale College

MOORE, OK—Forty people attended the sixth annual Free Will Baptist Theology Symposium at Hillsdale FWB College, according to spokesman Daryl Ellis. The November 5-6 meeting included eight presentations with a primary focus on Free Will Baptist distinctives.

Students, programs, denominational workers and pastors participated in the event sponsored by the Commission for Theological Integrity.

"The new format of presentations with a prepared response was well-received," according to Reverend Ellis.

The 2002 Symposium will meet November 4-5 on the campus of Free Will Baptist Bible College. Those interested in reading a paper should contact Matt Pinson at mattpinson@FWBBC.edu or 912/758-6221.

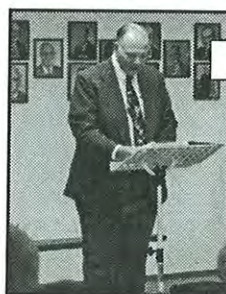
Papers from the 2001 symposium have been bound into one volume. Please send \$20 to the Commission for Theological Integrity, 1405 Butterfield Road, Aurora, IL 60504. Contact Daryl Ellis, 630/851-4211.



Tim Eaton



Paul Harrison



Steve Ashby



Matt Pinson

Some of the men who read papers at this year's Theological Symposium.

Bible College Names Outstanding Students

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College officials announced that 12 seniors, chosen by the faculty, will be included in the 2002 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." They are:

Brandon Atwood, Huntsville, AL
 Brooke Atwood, Huntsville, AL
 Gowdy Cannon, Turbeville, SC
 Leah Chamberlin, Greeneville, TN
 Bryan Hughes, Wilson, NC
 James Kessinger, Springfield, TN
 Jenny Lewis, Nashville, TN
 Amy Lytle, Nashville, TN
 Chris Sargent, Nashville, TN
 Jennifer Stone, Hampton, VA
 Joni Thomas, Albany, GA
 Donna Jo Williford, New Bern, NC

The volume includes the names of outstanding students enrolled at more than 2,300 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and several foreign countries. It has been published since 1934.

The criteria considered for selection included such things as scholastic achievement, spiritual maturity, social skills and extra-curricular contributions.

These "Who's Who" seniors will be recognized during graduation week in May.

Mississippi Studies Coordinated Calendar

FULTON, MS—Delegates to Mississippi's 37th annual state association instructed officials to study the feasibility of publishing a coordinated state-wide calendar of events that can be used by quarterly meetings, local churches and state ministries. The move will help eliminate overlapping events and programs.

State clerk Dick Williams said that 130 people registered for the November 2-3, 2001, meeting at Fulton FWB Church. Thirty-eight ministers, 28 lay delegates and 11 deacons participated in the two-day gathering.

Officials reported that \$216,000 in Together Way Plan funds were receipted through the executive director's office. Another almost \$32,000 was receipted for the Mississippi Missions Action Plan.

Moderator Charles Walden was elected to his third term. Three Mississippi pastors (Ron Dail, Wayne Robinson, Johnny Cook), as well as Hispanic Ministries director Rick Bowling and Home Missions director Larry Powell, preached during worship services.

The 2002 state association will meet November 1-2 at Buckatunna FWB Church.

currently

Pastor **Robert McLain** baptized five converts at **Charity FWB Church** in **Laurel, MS**. A fifth-Sunday praise/worship service lasted three hours, according to church reporter, **Gail Landrum**.

Members at **Bethlehem FWB Church** in **Pontotoc, MS**, began construction on a new sanctuary after an attendance surge. They pulled down the old sanctuary to make room for the expanded model. Pastor **Jack Whitley** reports nine conversions among the church's youth.

Peace FWB Church in **Wilson, NC**, reports six new members. **Gordon Sebastian** pastors.

Bethel FWB Church in **Kansas City, KS**, witnessed 17 conversions and rededications in a six-week period last fall. For the year, Pastor **Clifford Ball** said that 54 people had been converted. Pastor **Ball** baptized 10 on October 28.

Reverend **Ernie Holiday**, a **Missouri** minister for 27 years, died at age 65. He answered the call to preach in 1974 and pastored six churches in his ministerial career. He was instrumental in helping start two **Missouri** churches.

Hazel Creek FWB Church in **Kirksville, MO**, celebrated 105 years of service to the community. Some 113 people attended the event and heard former medical missionary to Africa, **La Verne Miley**, speak. Members honored former pastors with a lunch and a time of sharing. Pastor **Rick Chapman** delivered the afternoon message.

A new puppet ministry at **Victory FWB Church** in **Mascoutah, IL**, has energized the youth. Member **Philip Renfro** answered the call to preach and delivered his first sermon in September. **Jon Cannon** pastors.

Pastor **John Hollis** is smiling. Someone sold a car and gave the proceeds to **Crossroads FWB Church** in **Effingham, IL**.

Five years after fire destroyed **Bethel FWB Church** in **South Roxana, IL**, the firemen who fought the blaze attended morning services with the congregation and shared a fellowship meal with

members. **Bill Crank** pastors.

Berea FWB Church in **Battle Creek, MI**, celebrated their fifth anniversary, according to Pastor **Robert Trimble**. Seventy people attended, and a 20-year-old man (**Nicholas Chirbas**) was saved. He is the son of the first convert at the church, **Cathy Wagner**. During the service, the church burned the mortgage. Two **Michigan** pastors, **Rex Evans** and **Ron Helms**, preached.

Pastor **Walter Statzer** just logged 29 years at **Shiloh FWB Church** in **Bristol, VA**. He also conducts a radio broadcast in addition to his pastoral duties.

Patrick Baze has been named youth director by the **Arkansas** State Association. He began his work in June 2001. Brother **Baze** previously pastored three **Arkansas** churches (1990-2001) at **Cave City**, **Atkins** and **Dardanelle**. He has served as moderator of the **Polk Bayou** and **Fellowship** Associations.

Members of **New Bethel FWB Church** in **Melbourne, AR**, dedicated their new building in October, according to Pastor **Vince Daniel**. The church is three years old. Brother **Daniel** is their first full-time pastor.

Pastor **Curtis Booth** reports 41 conversions and rededications and 12 new members at **Gahanna FWB Church** in **Gahanna, OH**.

Pickerington FWB Church in **Pickerington, OH**, welcomed 11 new members. **Paul Collins** pastors.

Pastor **Wiley Perkins** reports eight baptisms at **Samantha FWB Church** in **Leesburg, OH**. The congregation observed their 50th anniversary.

Members of **Lighthouse FWB Church** in **Elmsmere, KY**, burned the mortgage and celebrated their 20th anniversary. **Bobby Courtney** pastors.

More than 200 people showed up for open house when **Marysville FWB Church** in **Marysville, OH**, completed their new church. Pastor **Jon Montgomery** presented plaques of appreciation to **C. A.** and **Ollie Newman**. The church reports four baptisms and 10

new members. The 7,000-square-foot structure which will seat 300 people was erected at a cost of \$200,000.

Verdella FWB Church in **Liberal, MO**, gave \$15,000 to complete a church building in **Brazil**. Missionary **Curt Holland** leads the work in **Campinas**. Pastor **Milan Ruble** said the **Missouri** congregation gave the funds in the name of their youth.

Living Hope FWB Church in **Hutchinson, KS**, dedicated their church this past summer, according to Pastor **Larry Collins**. **Dale McCoy** preached the dedication message; two people were saved in the morning service.

Reverend **Leon McBride**, retired **Illinois** pastor, and his wife **Carrie**, gave a house in **Johnston City** to the **Illinois** Board of Missions. The house will be sold and the proceeds given to **Illinois** missions, according to chairman **John Hollis**.

Pastor **Raymond Capps** passed the 17-year mark at **New Hope FWB Church** in **Spring Garden, IL**.

The ground-breaking ceremony one year ago turned loose the construction crews who built a new worship center at **Pearce Chapel FWB Church** in **Washington, NC**. Pastor **Ed Hill** said the 6,000-square-foot facility also includes a fellowship hall, classrooms, pastor's study and baptistry.

Pastor **Roger Raper** reports five conversions at a funeral preached for a 44-year-old man. **Raper** leads **First FWB Church** in **Fort Collins, CO**. ■

No, this is not a robbery. You remember the story of Moses, when the children of Israel were fighting Amalek. When Moses held up his hands, Israel prevailed (Ex. 17). But, when he got tired and dropped his hands, Amalek prevailed. So, Aaron and Hur came to help Moses. They held up his hands until the battle was over.



Let's Hold Up Matt!

By Bert Tippet
Public Relations Director

A great battle is raging for the hearts and minds of Free Will Baptist youth. If this generation is lost, the denomination is lost.

Some will choose colleges and universities where their faith in Christ will be shaken, perhaps destroyed. I spoke with a mother recently who told me her daughter, raised in church and taught the Bible, had gone to college and turned away from all she had been raised to believe.

On the other hand, as fine as other Bible-believing, Christian colleges may be, they generally syphon off the young men and women we send there, incorporating them into their own ranks. They are frank to admit that our Free Will Baptist youth have made great workers in their denominations.

James Matthew Pinson is coming to the leadership of Free Will Baptist Bible College, eager to reach out to our children and challenge them to spend their lives in the denomination that produced such saints as Laura Belle Barnard, Carlisle Hanna, and LaVerne Miley. He is ready to excite them with the prospect of saturating themselves with the Word of God and training themselves to become fishers of men, whatever their vocation.

But there is no way one man can win the hearts of our Free Will Baptist youth unaided. There is no way a single man can win this battle alone. Others must step up beside him and lift his arms while the war rages on.

Please allow me to suggest some ways every Free Will Baptist can come alongside FWBBC's new president.

Hold him up in prayer

I almost hesitate to say that. We so often solicit prayers and we so glibly promise to pray for one another.

Please pray daily for FWBBC, especially for James Matthew Pinson. It is on his shoulders the great burden of this ministry falls. Such a load, without the Lord's help, could crush a man!

Direct your children (and grandchildren) to FWBBC.

As a parent, you are the most influential person in your son's or daughter's life. If you say to them, "I really hope you will consider going to FWBBC," it will carry great weight. And we are praying that you will!

Matt is asking Free Will Baptist pastors to send him the names of those in their

congregations who should consider FWBBC. He is especially seeking young men who are considering God's call to preach.

Make FWBBC a major recipient of your giving.

The college's needs have never been greater than they are right now. The challenge to meet those needs is massive. Your help is needed—in a significant way—if the college is to finish the year in the black.

Whatever you have done in the past, please consider increasing it now. The college is doing much to make supporting methods as flexible as possible. Consider this:

- You can give through your local church or state cooperative program. Just earmark your gift for FWBBC.
- If you want to give directly, the college will provide 12 postage paid envelopes for you to use month by month. Just write or call.
- Checkbooks and bank drafts are available for those who want to give monthly, but don't want to be bothered with writing checks.
- We are even preparing so you can give online (www.fwbcc.edu) using your credit card.

Perhaps you will consider putting the college in your will or taking out a life insurance policy naming FWBBC as beneficiary. Last year, bequests were a tremendous blessing, as friends of the college left one final gift to help us train the next generation of Free Will Baptist leaders.

So, will you help to hold up Matt? If left alone, his arms will grow tired. His spirit will flag. He will begin looking around and asking, "Where are those who will help?"

I sincerely hope you will be there for him and for the Free Will Baptist leaders of tomorrow.

Free Will Baptist Foundation and Board of Retirement—Two Different Animals

By David L. Brown

People often confuse the ministries of the Foundation and the Board of Retirement. This is understandable to some extent since both departments share employees and board members. However their mission and investment styles are totally different.

The ministries of the two departments are quite different. You must be employed by a Free Will Baptist church or agency to open an account with the Board of Retirement. The main focus of Board of Retirement is to help Free Will Baptist employees prepare for retirement. In contrast to that, any Free Will Baptist individual can use the services of the Foundation. The focus of the Foundation is to introduce Free Will Baptists to planned giving opportunities and maximize the assets of Free Will Baptists.

Individuals often assume the rate of return the Board of Retirement has is the same return for Foundation investments. This is not the case, since the investments are totally separated. The investment objectives of the Foundation are not necessarily the same as the Board of Retirement.

The Board of Retirement basically has one pool of investments while the Foundation has many. Perhaps explaining the purpose of each of the Foundation's investment pools will shed light on the differences.

Endowments

The Foundation endowments are long-term investments designed to provide a return of 8-12% over a long period of time. The pool is a balanced investment with bonds and stocks approximately equal, although there is latitude to shift up to 60% to either stocks or bonds depending on market conditions. The pool is designed to give steady returns without a lot of volatility.

Unitrusts and Annuity Trusts

These funds are currently divided into three separate pools to meet the needs of the various trust agreements.

the needs of the individual, it is possible to have several pools of investments for these funds. The current pools range from conservative to moderately aggressive.

Gift Annuities

These agreements are currently all in a balanced pool somewhat similar to the endowment funds. Because some states require that gift annuity investments be limited to certain types of investments, we have the potential in the future to add a more aggressive or conservative pool.

Money Management Trusts

These trusts have been referred to as Revocable Trusts in the past. These funds are invested in government-backed bonds and certificates of deposits. The purpose of this fund is to provide a safe place for ministries and individuals to place their excess funds and earn a money market rate of return. This pool is designed to offer good rates of return without risk to the principal. The rates of return in this pool will never be

as high as the pools mentioned above, but they will not have volatility.

The Foundation also manages a few specific trusts for agencies and individuals of the denomination that are designed to meet their needs.

Just remember that the Free Will Baptist Foundation

and Board of Retirement are separate departments with different goals and ministry objectives. You should never assume that what applies to one ministry or investment pool applies to the other. We are always happy to answer questions.

Give us a call toll-free at 877-336-7575 for the Foundation and 877-767-7738 for the Board of Retirement. (See they even have separate toll-free numbers). ■

Bill Gardner Memorial Endowment:

Karen James
First Bible FWB Church
New Castle, Indiana

Free Will Baptist

the
free will
baptist
foundation

Foundation

Reviewing the Past

Eighteen years ago, Home Missions started Roll Call Sunday across the denomination. The last Sunday of March, every church would report morning worship attendance to a designated person in their state who in turn would report it to the Home Missions Department. The total number of people in Free Will Baptist churches that Sunday would be published in *Missions Grams*, (now *AIM*) along with the top 100 churches in attendance on that day.

During that 18-year period, the low attendance on Roll Call Sunday was the first year at 198,000. The high attendance was an Easter Sunday at just over 273,000. For the 18 Roll Call Sundays, there was an average attendance of 227,000 people in Free Will Baptist churches. Only eternity will reveal the number of souls saved and lives changed because people were invited to church on Roll Call Sunday, accepted Christ and became an active part of the body of Christ.

Restating the Purpose

As a pastor, I participated in Roll Call Sunday the first 12 years. Roll Call Sunday was used as a motivational tool to encourage personal visitation, and to challenge members to get unsaved and unchurched friends and family members to attend our church. It also provided numerous prospects for our church who could be followed up throughout the year. On one Roll Call Sunday we had over 250 first-time visitors. Some were won to the Lord and became vital members of our church. I always thought that was the purpose of Roll Call Sunday.

I have now been on staff with Home Missions for six years, and I have heard positive and negative comments about Roll Call Sunday from pastors. Roll Call Sunday will become whatever the local pastor promotes it to be. If it is only promoted as a number, then it will never be anymore than a number. Used effectively, Roll Call Sunday could be one of the greatest outreach tools you have at your disposal.

The Purpose:

1. To introduce your church and ministry to more people in your community, town, city, county and state.
2. To challenge your people to invite their friends, relatives, associates and neighbors to church.
3. To build a database of prospects for follow-up by your church.
4. To see souls saved and lives changed for the glory of God.
5. To stimulate evangelism and church growth in every local church.
6. To make more people aware of who Free Will Baptists are and what we believe.
7. To present Christ to a lost and dying world and thus glorify the Father.

Roll Call Revival

By David Crowe
Director of Church Growth and Evangelism

Revising the Plan

The first change in the plan of Roll Call Sunday is that it will be on Easter Sunday each year instead of the last Sunday in March. Next year Easter Sunday is the last Sunday of March, so the two

events will coincide. The following year, 2003, Roll Call Sunday will be on Easter Sunday, April 20. Some people who might never attend your church on any other Sunday will consider coming on Easter.

The other change in the plan of Roll Call Sunday is that we want to state some guidelines for counting. It will not be our intent to attempt to police these guidelines in any church, and we will simply print the results that are given to us. We trust each pastor and church to be ethical and honest. The guidelines for the Roll Call Sunday count are:

1. Get as accurate a count as possible.
2. Count your morning worship service attendance only.
3. If you have multiple worship services that morning, count each person only once. When counting in each service, simply request that anyone who was there previously remain seated or otherwise note that they are not to be included.
4. Ask the ushers to do the counting and present the totals to the pastor.
5. Be creative and innovative. Use special themes and a different emphasis each year.
6. Set a goal for your church and then work hard to reach it.

Reporting Procedure

Each church will receive a packet of information concerning Roll Call Sunday along with information about reporting the results. We would like to have the following information: (1) Total attendance number. (2) Total number of first time salvation decisions. (3) Total number of first-time visitors. We will publish these totals in *AIM* magazine. We also will list the increase over last year's total for each church.

Reviving the Program

Listed below are the dates for Roll Call Sunday for the next six years.

2002 - March 31	2004 - April 11	2006 - April 16
2003 - April 20	2005 - March 27	2007 - April 8

I believe that if we work, witness, invite, pray, preach and promote, we can reach these goals and see thousands of souls saved and lives changed. ■

Home



Missions

Why Do We Need a Teaching Organization?

By Alton Loveless

The basic reason for the Sunday School is to enable the church to carry out fundamental ministry tasks. These include Bible study, ministry, outreach and fellowship, all of which can be accomplished more effectively and more personally in a small-group setting, rather than in the larger congregation. A Sunday School is organized to meet life needs of all age groups, babies through senior adults, in appropriate settings and by using learning methods appropriate for each developmental level.

Our personal philosophical and theological background is evangelical Christianity that is affiliated with the National Association of Free Will Baptists, a denomination which consistently has about 70% of its members in Sunday School enrollment. From the beginning, our denomination has been firmly committed to promoting evangelism, missions and Christian education through the Sunday School. That mission has not changed. We still believe that it is through the Sunday School that the church has the unique opportunity to reach and teach people of all ages and from all walks of life about Christ.

The role of the Sunday School has been affected greatly over the last two decades in nearly all denominations as well as in the independent church community. In fact, over the last 30 years the American church has been on a decline with all areas of the church suffering. During the 1970s Sunday School had about 41 million attendees, but that fell to about 31 million in the mid-1980s. Likewise, another swing began to form.

In the early 1970s more people attended Sunday School than worship and they encouraged people to stay for church worship. Today there has been a great reverse with those in worship trying to get people to come to Sunday School or Bible study. The church is suffering due to a lack of teaching and training.

However, I am convinced that the basic organizational and relational principles, firmly founded on biblical guidelines and on current knowledge

about such areas as group dynamics, can work again in any church setting.

The primacy of evangelism and world missions is to reach the lost for Christ. We believe that the primary purpose of the church is to reach men, women and children with the Good News of salvation by grace. Through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8-9; Matt. 28:19). It is not sufficient that we hold a high view of scripture and a biblical understanding of the doctrine of the church, Christology and soteriology unless we are willing to work at teaching it to all. This can be done best in our Sunday School and other small group programs.

Unless we are willing to take the Word of God (the Bible) seriously ourselves, we have no right to criticize others who do not. Therefore, the primary emphasis must be on our purpose. We are thankful for our identity which is summarized in terms of our stand on scripture and the authority of the congregation; nevertheless, all of these must be in service of our purpose.

I believe we were called into being to reach the bleeding, the lonely, the rejected and the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ and to draw them into the fellowship of Christ-honoring congregations. So we can begin "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matthew 28:20. ■



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

Randall



House



Garnett Reid

Amazing Grace

Many years ago the phone would ring at my mother's office. She'd answer, and the voice on the other end would say, "Grace? Grace?"

"This is she," my mother would reply.

"Grace?" the caller would repeat.

"Yes," my mother would affirm once more.

"Oh, I didn't want anything in particular. I just love saying that word, 'grace.'"

The caller was her pastor's wife, Mrs. (Mary) J. L. Welch. My mother loved those calls and she loved the Welches.

She also loved her name and the word itself—Grace. Her full name was Willie Grace. She didn't care for "Willie," but "Grace" always resonated with her and those who knew her. In fact, some folks called her "Amazing Grace."

When she went home to Heaven last October, I had the privilege of preaching my mother's funeral. The subject was easy; her name and her life chose it for me. John Newton's great song of testimony provides a refrain for the story: "*Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound . . .*"

Sound of Favor Offered to the Least Deserving

(Rom. 3:24) The Old Testament phrase is, so and so "found grace"—"Noah found grace," for example. Grace is never worked for or earned: "The Lord will give grace," the psalmist reminds us. Our instincts tell us to do something to merit God's favor. Grace tells us we need do nothing, just believe and receive.

Sound of Jesus Living with His People

(John 1:14, 17) God's grace is not merely an abstract truth. It comes to life in the person of Jesus. He embodies grace. In Jesus God gives Himself to us in flesh, in person.

Sound of Fulness Poured upon Those Who Are Empty

(John 1:16) This message may find

you frustrated over a deep emptiness in your life. You've tried to fill the void with all sorts of things, but the only thing left inside is a vast hunger nothing satisfies. God gives "grace upon grace," overflowing, abounding through Christ. His grace alone quenches the thirsty spirit.

Sound of Righteousness Imputed to Transgressors

(Rom. 5:17; Titus 3:7) How do you hope to get to Heaven? God accepts only one standard: absolute righteousness—nothing less. You must make "100" on this test! All else fails. But you can't meet that standard. None of us can. We're guilty of transgression; we "fall short" of God's glory. Our only hope is the One who is righteous. Jesus' righteousness must make up the difference where we have none, and that happens only by faith.

Sound of Testimony Given by His Witnesses

(Acts 4:33; Col. 4:6) Those who know the grace of Christ testify to its work in their lives. Not that any of us are perfect; Grace Reid would tell you that she often missed the mark. Yet she was quick to add that any good in her, any change for the better, came through the grace of God.

Sound of Growth Designed for Believers

(Acts 20:32; Titus 2:11-15; II Peter 3:18) You may know the Lord, but sense a coldness, an indifference in your Christian life. God's grace provides all you need to get back on track: His Word, the Holy Spirit, a community of believers, His gifts in your life, communion with Him in prayer—all there for you to access for growth. All that's needed is your willingness to use them.

Sound of Strength Provided for Those Who Are Weak

(II Cor. 12:9; Heb. 13:9) When we are "maxed out," when we have gone

as far as we can and can go no farther, with no hope and no reserve left, we then—and only then—know our greatest strength. Then we realize it is God's strength (it was all along, anyway!) making a way. His strength succeeds when our weakness fails.

Sound of Comfort Offered to the Hurting

(II Cor. 1:1-4; Heb. 4:16) All of us hurt today. A huge sense of loss engulfs us. Yet God assures us that He understands what we feel. He's been here. Many of you have told me, "I've been there; I know how you feel." Those words have given me comfort and I'm grateful for them. But nothing calms my spirit like the sweet presence of the One who loves me so much that He gave His Son for me.

Sound of Good News Delivered to Sinners

(II Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9) All of us have sinned and face the judgment of a holy God. But His grace has provided a way out, an escape. Jesus took our penalty on the cross, and by trusting Him we receive forgiveness and a whole new life. Long ago my mother introduced me to that peace found only in knowing Christ. She'd do the same for you if she could.

Sound of Victory for Those Facing Defeat

(Rom. 5:20-21) I grieve my mother's passing; but much more, I celebrate her victory. Because of Christ's triumph over sin and death, those in Him "reign through righteousness to eternal life."

"'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home." God's grace led my mother home. It will see you home, too. ■

THE PASTOR'S WIFE



Suzan Hutchinson

Myth of the Pastor's Perfect Wife

By Suzan Hutchinson

Timothy, look out and see if someone just turned into the driveway." My young son ran to the window overlooking the driveway and peeked out the window.

"Yes, Ma'am! It's a lady from the church!" he yelled.

"Oh, great! Just what I don't need right now," I thought as I glanced around the parsonage. It showed that I had placed playtime ahead of housework.

"Quick! Grab the vacuum and drag it into the middle of the living room floor, Amy! Timothy, go to the kitchen and begin pulling everything out of the lower cabinets!" I shouted orders as I grabbed the laundry basket and dumped its clean contents onto the sofa and ran to grab the damp towels and dirty clothes from the bathroom floor.

"Amy, shut the bedroom doors," I hissed as I flew past her with my load.

Timothy was emptying the cabinets into the kitchen floor as I breezed into the room. "Grab that can of furniture polish and spray it one time in the living room!" I whispered as I glanced out the window and picked my way toward the washroom.

"Ding Dong" the bell rung as I stepped into the washroom and opened the back door, still holding the full laundry basket.

"Well, hello! What a surprise! It's so good to see you. Come on in," I said as I turned to set down the laundry basket.

"Did I come at a bad time, Dear?" my visitor asked as she glanced into the kitchen.

"Oh, no," I assured her. "I'm afraid the house is a little bit strewn. Be careful as you . . ."

"My, someone has been busy! It looks like you've been doing some major housecleaning. I see you've pulled everything out of the cabinets. I do hate to see messy cabinets, you know?"

"Why don't we go into the living room and visit? I'll clear off the sofa so we can sit together. Timothy, come help me move these clean clothes."

"I'm so sorry to have interrupted your cleaning. Perhaps I should come back another time," she offered.

"Oh, no! I'm not that busy," I began.

"No, we weren't doing anything until we saw you drive up!" Amy said.

I remember that day like it was yesterday. It was a turning point for me as a pastor's wife. I saw myself for who I was and I didn't like what I saw.

And, more importantly, I knew God didn't like what He saw, either. He has this thing about hypocrites, you know? He expects honesty, not only in our speech, but in our actions as well.

It's easy to get caught up in the expectations of others. Round and round we go trying to please, never quite reaching the mark of that ever illusive thing called "the perfect pastor's wife."

God has gifted and equipped us in unique and wonderful ways. Instead of looking to others for our worth and approval, let's look to God.

Be yourself. God didn't create you to be anyone else.

Be real. Women long for truth in every aspect of their lives.

Be approachable. Admit your faults and weaknesses . . . and accept the same in others.

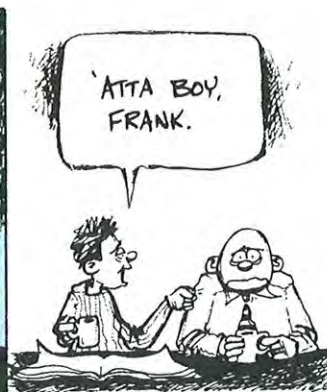
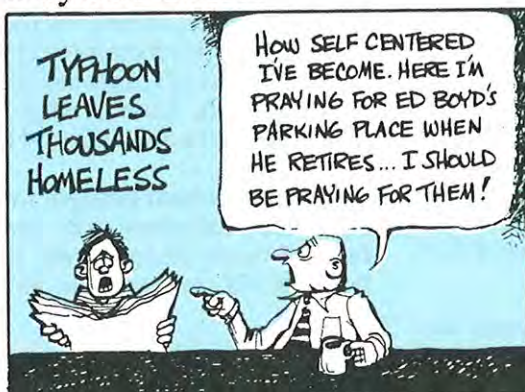
God has enabled and empowered you to be and to do what no other can. Your experiences, triumphs and failures endow you with wisdom and the ability to touch lives in a unique way.

Esther 4:14b ". . . who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Don't settle for trying to live the myth of the perfect pastor's wife. That's settling for less than God intends! ■

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Suzan Hutchinson is a busy mother of two, Timothy (18) and Amy (17). She's a neighbor, friend and dragon slayer, as well as an agent with the American General Life and Accident Insurance Company. Suzan has been a pastor's wife 21 years. Her husband Tim pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Dublin, Georgia.

Beyond Belief





Randy Sawyer

Which God? Whose Truth?

President George W. Bush called the nation to “*a day of prayer and remembrance*” on September 15, 2001. In the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, America’s political and military leaders joined the President at a national prayer service at Washington National Cathedral. The service, televised around the nation and the world, included patriotic songs and religious hymns, readings from the *Bible* and Islam’s holy book, the *Koran*, as well as comments and prayers from leaders of three major religions—Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Some held the day to mark a revival of patriotism and nationalistic furor, and a return to prayer and faith. After all, on that day America cried out to God for healing and justice, and turned to His Word for consolation and direction. But “*which God,*” and “*whose truth?*” The national “*day of prayer and remembrance,*” was in fact, a clear demonstration of the pluralism that our country has so firmly embraced.

Demonstration of Pluralism

According to Nicholas Rescher, pluralism suggests that any ultimate question has a “variety of plausible but mutual responses.” The argument is that we must simply “agree to disagree.” This does not require that we yield our perception of truth but that we accept the validity of other perspectives. We should “strive to make the world safe for disagreement.” D. A. Carson adds to our understanding with a much more detailed definition of pluralism in his major tome, *The Gagging of God*.

Carson bases his definition on three kinds or types of pluralism. First, there is a “growing diversity.” This type of pluralism is simply a reference to the factual diversity that exists in the West today. This form is neither good or bad; it simply is present-day fact.

Second, “cherished pluralism,” according to Carson, adds the element of affirmation or approval to the diversity. In other words this type of pluralism has become a value in itself, even a priority; it is cherished. To a degree, it is easy to see how any individual could celebrate such diversity.

After all, we drive Japanese cars, eat at Mexican restaurants (howbeit in America, it is more Tex-Mex than anything else), and enjoy a myriad of musical and entertainment styles; life in the West is a smorgasbord of opportunities.

Third, and most seriously, is the development of what Carson calls “philosophical pluralism.” Philosophical pluralism is a direct attack on any *absolute* creed, suggesting that each worldview is equally valid. This theory asserts that nothing is right or wrong. Truth is socially constructed and reality is arbitrary. No one group or religion has a claim on truth. Therefore, some find truth in the *Bible* while others see it in the *Koran*.

America has always been a multicultural society, described as the “melting pot.” Having immigrated to America from all over the world, people of varied cultural diversity were blended into one people.

The very name, “United States,” and the motto “*e pluribus unum*,” identifies the intention of our founding fathers to join all peoples into one republic. To be sure, democracy and freedom allowed the immigrants to retain family customs and celebrate ancestral identity. Yet the diverse groups were homogenized into a uniform people, all answering to the label American.

However, the onset of philosophical pluralism has led to an insistence on disunity. America is no longer considered the melting pot, now the appropriate metaphor is the “tossed salad.” No longer is it simply “American,” but “Anglo-American,” “Afro-American,” “Native-American” and “Asian-American.”

can.” The goal is no longer to melt all peoples into one stew, but to arrange the smorgasbord in order to allow each dish to stand on its own.

Challenge of Pluralism

This philosophy has many difficulties. First, as with any paradigm shift, the pendulum has swung too far. In order to allow previously marginalized groups to move into the center, others have been marginalized. “Euro-centric” has given way to “Afro-centric” and “patriarchy” to “matriarchy.” As children are taught to celebrate Cinco de Mayo, the Anglo-European heritage of others is suppressed. “The romance of the marginal” is philosophically preferred and educationally meritorious.

Another inherent danger of philosophical pluralism is that it almost invariably implies relativism. One group’s view on truth is as valid as any other, and it is not even necessary to be consistent in your worldview.

One pastor tells of a young parishioner who claims to believe in the inerrancy of scripture, orthodox theology and reincarnation. Never mind the contradictions. He likes what he likes. But then again so does everyone else; and this is perfectly acceptable in a pluralistic cultural.

A third danger of philosophical pluralism is that the rule of faith and practice becomes pragmatic and “me-centered.” That is, methods are calculated according to productivity and the individual, or at least individual communities, determine their own belief system. The only caution with any of this is that we must not invade the space occupied by another. Each group must be free to express itself according to its values and worldview.

There is clearly a crisis for truth in today’s world, with competing truth-claims vying for the public’s allegiance. The situation presents obvi-

ous ministry challenges for the church. The question is simple; how do we present an *exclusive message* in a world that glorifies tolerance?

Rather than bemoaning the state of things, the church of Jesus Christ stands at the threshold of an unbelievable opportunity. The early church faced a similar situation as it proclaimed the good news. The world of the first century was filled with diversity, yet the church met the challenge. How should we respond to philosophical pluralism?

Response to Pluralism

Whatever else we might say in response to this question, we must agree that our strategy is to be thoroughly scriptural. Biblical literacy appears to be at an all-time low in the West. The truth claims of God's Word must be presented to counter-balance society's propensity toward relativism.

Paul instructed Timothy to "preach the word," "give attention to reading and doctrine," and "to be instant in season, out of season." He then clearly stated that the need for such a biblical ministry was predicated on the fact that in the latter times "men shall not endure sound doctrine." Paul's prescription for a sick society was to faithfully minister the Word.

Whether we choose to call it expository, textual or simply biblical, our preaching must be thoroughly grounded in the Word of God. We dare not ignore the exclusive claims of Christ, even for the sake of national or international unity. His Word alone can call a nation to repentance and hearts to Himself.

Pastor, help your people recognize the philosophical pluralism that grips today's cultural scene, help them identify the inherent dangers of such a mindset, and then boldly declare the Bible and Christ as God's only word to man. ■

THE TOGETHER WAY

October 2001

Receipts:

State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 871.04	\$ 318.28	\$ 1,189.32	\$ 4,377.59	\$ 1,779.58	\$ 6,157.17
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	30.00	329.00	359.00
Arkansas	27,363.88	16,398.02	43,761.90	207,949.05	172,860.78	380,809.83
California	.00	1,084.70	1,084.70	883.54	11,406.89	12,290.43
Colorado	56.25	.00	56.25	56.25	.00	56.25
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	25.00	.00	25.00	399.54	9,999.00	10,398.54
Georgia	33,381.84	1,698.32	35,080.16	321,630.97	16,482.07	338,113.04
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	9,203.03	1,734.55	10,937.58	88,377.51	20,555.04	108,932.55
Indiana	150.00	.00	150.00	18,047.04	2,066.88	20,113.92
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	2,188.63	2,188.63
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	318.71	318.71
Kentucky	1,661.00	1,200.82	2,861.82	5,024.29	10,411.21	15,435.50
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	60.00	20.00	80.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Michigan	24,188.36	4,784.90	28,973.26	209,515.33	25,648.85	235,164.18
Mississippi	.00	.00	.00	78,762.01	6,193.27	84,955.28
Missouri	45,691.95	17,435.79	63,127.74	409,988.31	146,096.44	556,084.75
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	90.00	.00	90.00	90.00	.00	90.00
New Mexico	1,052.67	76.33	1,129.00	4,814.39	512.21	5,326.60
North Carolina	2,022.82	2,026.40	4,049.22	14,708.67	29,674.15	44,382.82
Ohio	.00	.00	.00	121,405.66	26,830.86	148,236.52
Oklahoma	4,420.38	13,341.17	17,761.55	480,982.56	112,761.38	593,743.94
South Carolina	60,249.55	89.44	60,338.99	475,386.35	1,188.20	476,574.55
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	1,984.72	1,293.97	3,278.69	120,303.23	21,007.41	141,310.64
Texas	8,643.04	325.00	8,968.04	80,258.98	3,002.95	83,261.93
Virginia	311.43	131.25	442.68	3,814.18	1,316.36	5,130.54
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	127.42	.00	127.42	18,124.70	1,144.38	19,269.08
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	.00	.00	.00	5,620.32	100.74	5,721.06
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	1,035.26	.00	1,035.26
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.01	.01	.00	(0.20)	(0.20)
Totals	\$ 221,494.38	\$ 61,938.95	\$ 283,433.33	\$ 2,671,645.73	\$ 623,894.79	\$ 3,295,540.52

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 1,636.55	\$ 27,872.55	\$ 29,509.10	\$ 18,783.47	\$ 280,752.81	\$ 299,536.28
Foreign Missions	134,263.55	7,835.27	142,098.82	1,544,371.67	78,922.67	1,623,294.34
FWBBC	19,151.36	7,835.27	26,986.63	234,042.82	78,922.67	312,965.49
Home Missions	51,811.20	6,131.93	57,943.13	730,604.60	61,765.58	792,370.18
Retirement & Insurance	242.65	4,769.32	5,011.97	4,635.64	48,039.97	52,675.61
Master's Men	531.51	4,769.32	5,300.83	4,318.59	48,039.97	52,358.56
Com. for Theo. Integrity	42.59	170.33	212.92	968.90	1,715.65	2,684.55
FWB Foundation	141.46	2,043.97	2,185.43	3,198.99	20,588.52	23,787.51
Historical Commission	23.02	170.33	193.35	308.27	1,715.65	2,023.92
Music Commission	8.02	170.33	178.35	102.31	1,715.65	1,817.96
Media Commission	192.58	170.33	362.91	1,437.91	1,715.65	3,153.56
Hillsdale FWB College	2,239.49	.00	2,239.49	19,060.76	.00	19,060.76
Other	11,210.40	.00	11,210.40	109,811.80	.00	109,811.80
Totals	\$ 221,494.38	\$ 61,938.95	\$ 283,433.33	\$ 2,671,645.73	\$ 623,894.79	\$ 3,295,540.52



Thomas Marberry

"Romans" in *The NIV Application Commentary*

By Douglas J. Moo

(Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000, 532 pp., hardback, \$27.95).

Douglas J. Moo is Blanchard professor of New Testament at Wheaton Graduate School and has authored or coauthored numerous books on various aspects of New Testament thought.

This commentary, like the other volumes in the series, devotes more attention to application than do most traditional commentaries.

This series recognizes the importance of correctly determining the original meaning, but it does not stop there. It seeks to bridge the broad time and culture gap that separates us from the writer and his original readers.

Moo's introduction to the epistle is brief, at times too brief. He notes that the book was written while Paul was in Corinth during his third missionary journey, about A.D. 57. He briefly summarizes what we know about the makeup of the church in Rome.

The author acknowledges that the purpose or purposes of the book are hard to determine with certainty. Everyone recognizes that Paul is writing to a church he has never visited, and it is difficult to determine how much knowledge Paul had of events in Rome.

This has led some scholars to suggest that Paul's circumstances in Asia Minor have provoked him to write this epistle. Others suggest the letter itself demonstrates that Paul had at least some knowledge of events in Rome and that he was writing to meet the specific needs of this local congregation.

One of Paul's purposes in writing Romans is to clarify and defend the gospel that he had preached in Asia Minor and in other regions. Moo explains, "One of the reasons he writes such a long and theological letter to the Roman Christians is to disabuse them of some wrong ideas about his own view of the gospel which they have probably heard."

The author's analysis of the opening chapters of Romans is quite helpful. He

outlines the major themes that Paul develops and how he develops them. His discussion of Romans 3:9-20 is particularly helpful. He points out that Paul is debating a Jew about the nature of salvation.

Moo suggests that the Jew of the first century may not have had the legalistic concept of salvation that is normally attributed to him. Jews did not believe that obeying the law saved them. They believed that they were saved because God had chosen them. They did not obey the law in order to earn their salvation, but "to stay saved and to honor the God who had chosen them."

Most scholars agree that chapters 9-11 form the most difficult and controversial section in Romans. By the time Paul wrote this epistle, "... it has become clear that most Jews have not responded to the good news." Most Jews have rejected and continue to reject the Gospel; the vast majority of new converts are coming from the various Gentile people groups in the Roman Empire.

How is this to be understood in light of the promises God made to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament? Paul's response is that God's promises have not failed. The problem is that the vast majority of the Jewish nation has continued in its old pattern of unbelief and rebellion against God. Moo emphasizes, quite correctly, that chapters 9-11 are not about Israel. They are first and foremost about God and what He has done.

The subject of election comes up often in any discussion of Romans 9-11. As Moo correctly notes, Romans 9:6-23 is often used to defend a Calvinistic conception of election. He defines the Calvinistic conception of election in these words, "Calvinists think that God chooses individuals to be saved based on nothing but his own free decision. Nothing a person had done or will do—not even faith—has any bearing on God's choice."

Arminians, of course, would not share such an interpretation. Moo summarizes

the two most common interpretations of this passage defended by Arminian commentators. First, some Arminians posit that Paul is speaking of the election of individuals but that election is contingent upon God's foreknowledge of the individual's faith. In other words, God elects those individuals who will exercise faith in Christ.

Second, some Arminians teach that this passage does not deal with individual election at all. It is talking about the election of groups, especially Israel and the Gentiles.

Moo defends the Calvinistic interpretation of this passage, but he concedes that "both Calvinism and Arminianism are fully orthodox views."

The most difficult single phrase in Romans is "And so all Israel will be saved," found in 11:26. As Moo points out, most commentators adhere to one of three major interpretations. First, many of the Protestant Reformers as well as several modern scholars interpret the words "all Israel" in a spiritual sense referring to the church.

Second, some commentators interpret the words "all Israel" to mean spiritual Israel, the elect Jews from within the nation of Israel.

Third, most modern commentators take the words "all Israel" to refer to the "totality of national Israel."

This third view is the one that Moo defends. He argues, however, that these words do not mean that every single Israelite will be saved in the end time. He suggests that it refers to "some Israelites as a representative whole."

It is also a fair commentary in that it recognizes the value of both Calvinistic and Arminian interpretations of controversial passages. Commentaries stand or fall on how they handle the difficult passages in a book. This one handles the difficult passages in Romans well; it deserves a place on your shelf. ■

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Jack Williams

Solve the Right Problem

Syndicated columnist Ann Landers said if she were asked what she considered the single most useful bit of advice for all humanity, it would be this: Expect trouble as an inevitable part of life and when it comes, hold your head high, look it squarely in the eye and say, "I will be bigger than you. You cannot defeat me."

That's good advice. It's doubly good when you're climbing out of a year that began with terrorists at the Canadian border and was punctuated by hijacked airliners, exploding buildings, a nationwide anthrax scare and a shooting war half a world away.

The 21st century was still in knickers when bad guys started a fire in the sky above New York City that left 6,000 dead. The new millennium promise of technological miracles, programmable super children and multi-cultural equality took a wrong turn and stumbled into December with a broken heart.

If 2001 had been a manned space flight, the command pilot would have radioed on September 11, "Houston, we have a problem."

Which puts us in the starting blocks for 2002. Do we cower under the bed and tremble when something goes bump in the night? Or do we put into practice the words of Habakkuk? When faced with national calamity on an unprecedented scale, the Hebrew prophet wrote what became the marching orders for the Protestant Reformation, "... the just shall live by his faith" (2:4).

Something is broken and needs to be fixed. That's no surprise, of course. The same thing was broken this time last year. We can't fix it if we're unwilling to get our hands dirty, if we refuse to acknowledge the problem, if we cut and run when a bully swaggers down the street.

Most of what's broken is a sin issue and must be laid in repentance at the mercy seat of the Almighty. God oper-

ates the only get-out-of-sin business on the planet. That's a one-on-one personal issue between a man and his Creator.

On the other hand, some of what's broken has to do with attitude. Michael Hodgkin had the right idea when he described a second grader's tough day.

David was pushed while getting on the school bus and got a two-inch cut on his cheek. Roughhousing at recess, he collided with another boy and lost two teeth. At noon, while sliding on ice, he fell and broke his wrist. Later at the hospital, his father noticed David clutching a quarter in his good hand.

David said, "I found it on the ground when I fell. This is the first quarter I ever found. This sure is my lucky day." Sometimes it all comes down to attitude.

The Apostle John found it necessary to remind persecuted believers in Asia Minor that the polytheistic Roman government could not overcome the people of God. Neither could the arrogant false prophets, nor the antichrist spirit of 90 A.D., "... because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world," (1 John 4:4). They believed John, acted on that belief and changed their world.

No, that didn't shut down persecution nor shut up false prophets, but it did shut off whining from Christians who should have known better than to gauge their faith by what passed for newspaper headlines in those days. Faith does not look to CNN for assurance, but to the Rock of Ages.

Writer/philosopher Frank Tyger said, "Opportunity's favorite disguise is trouble." Storms in life blow some amazing choices our way.

Storms eliminate the easy, the obvious and the soft, leaving us with the difficult and the hard. They give us a chance to confront the impossible at a critical point when it really matters.

That happened to Jesus' disciples in

Matthew 14 when a terrifying night storm at sea swept them into the jaws of death. But from the deep there arose a message, the likes of which men had not heard since the days of Moses, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid," (v. 27).

Jesus came to them out of the howling wind, and gave Peter courage to attempt the impossible (v. 29). Don't be too hard on him because he faltered. Remember, he walked where no man had ever gone before. The same crisis that shatters one man unleashes greatness in another. Peter never regretted his short walk in the storm, and we're still talking about it 2000 years later.

One wag said, "If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere." Step aside, all you spiritual couch potatoes. This is no time for runs. This is a day for men who dare, men who do not flinch, men who will not be denied.

I like Barbara Reynolds' observation, "Whatever reason you had for not being somebody, there's somebody who had the same problem and overcame it."

Is something broken in your life? Identify it; acknowledge it; fix it; move past it.

Roger Von Oech tells about a confrontation between bandleader Count Basie and a club owner whose piano was always out of tune.

"I'm not returning until you fix it," Basie told the owner.

A month later, Basie got a call that everything was fine. When he returned the piano was still out of tune.

"You said you fixed it!" an irate Basie roared.

"I did," came the reply. "I had it painted."

Are you solving the right problem?

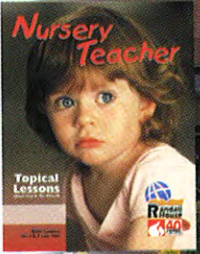
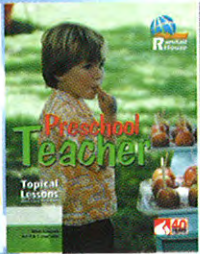
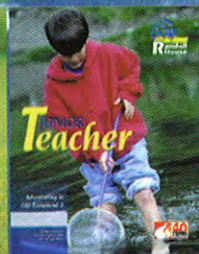
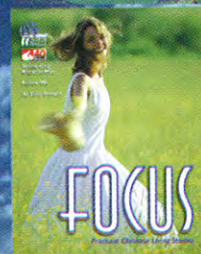
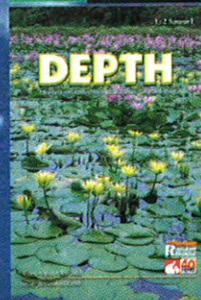
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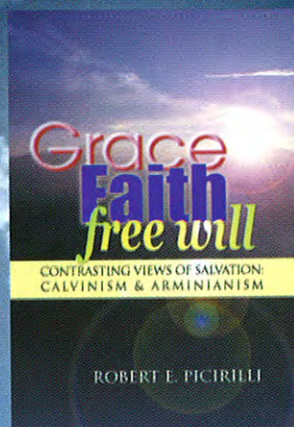
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