

A photograph of a cracked egg on a dark, textured surface. The egg is cracked open, with a bright yellow yolk visible in the center. The eggshell is white and broken into several pieces, with one large piece on the left and another on the right. The background is a dark, mottled grey or black surface.

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February 2002

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Abortion and Euthanasia
Independently Interdependent
Who Killed Tommy Bower?**

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

The Asian Assemblies

The final message to the Church is recorded in Revelation 2-3. Any comprehensive study of the Church must include these chapters. Too often we assume that God's final command to the Church was the Great Commission. I submit that the final command to the Church is, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches . . .," (Rev. 2:7).

The Book

To understand the addresses to the Asian assemblies, we need a basic understanding of the book of Revelation. Some believe that Revelation is an absolute mystery that cannot be understood and, consequently, they never read it. When one ignores this final book in the Bible, he misses some of God's pertinent truths regarding the Church. A special blessing is promised to those who read it (Rev. 1:3).

The human *author* is John the beloved disciple. The *aim* of this book is to unveil Jesus Christ. Revelation is one continuous unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ. An *analysis* of this book reveals three parts: *Christ's Character* (1:1-20), *Christ's Church* (2:1-3:22) and *Christ's Coming* (4:1-22:21).

It was written from Patmos at the direct command of the Lord. The condition of the Asian assemblies demanded a direct communication (for those who were suffering persecution and those in danger of heresy), and there was a need for unveiling the future for the instruction of the Church at large. Without this book, the Bible would be incomplete.

There are several approaches to interpreting the book of Revelation. The views range from historical to spiritual to literal to futurist. But regardless of

the view one holds, there is something important here that God wants His people to know.

The Benefits

Reading this book can be very beneficial. It is for Christians of all ages. It is the last of all scriptural revelations and it consummates the revelation of God. Much of the book explains itself. More quotations from the Old Testament are found in this book than in any other New Testament book. It is the only book in the Bible which promises a blessing to those who read, hear and obey it.

It centers in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Special curses are pronounced upon those who add to the book or subtract from it. This book reaches further into the future than any other book in the Bible. Neglecting this book means that we neglect much of what God has revealed concerning the future.

The Bodies

Revelation 2-3 record letters specifically addressed to seven local churches located in Asia Minor. The *purpose*

of these letters is to provide a *composite* portrait of the spiritual history of the Church, though not necessarily chronologically, to give *commendation* and to give *correction*.

These messages were given to meet the present condition of the addressed churches and contain a perpetual message for the Church during all ages. These letters commend, correct and challenge the Church and the individual believer through all ages.

The *pattern* of these letters. In each letter there is the *inscription, inventory, indictment, instructions* and *incentives*.

The *practicality* of these letters. These letters give us a history of the Church. The final word to the Church is not the Great Commission, although it is the program to the end of the age. Our Lord's last command to the Church is to repent (Rev. 2:5-16). This command is given to five of the seven churches. This admonition is still timely today.

The *perspective* of these letters. A wave of church activity is not a sign of revival. Most of the churches addressed in these letters were busy and active. The greatest need is not more members, buildings or money. The Church needs revival which comes only after sincere repentance. The Church did not need revival in Acts, but the Church does need one in Revelation 2-3.

The addresses to the seven churches call the Church to repentance. One of the greatest tools for revival in our day in any church or in the heart of any believer is a prayerful study of these addresses to the Asian assemblies. The condition of society, condition of the saints and the coming of the Savior reflect the need to study these letters.

The Church would do well to heed the last command of Christ, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:29). ■

The Secretary's Schedule

February 2002

- 3-6 Michigan Minister/Layman Retreat
- 5-8 Heritage Week
Free Will Baptist Bible College
- 14-16 West Meade Fellowship
Couples' Retreat
- 20-23 California State Men's Retreat
- 24 Sherwood Forest FWB Church
El Sobrante, California



A physician examines the slippery slope of America's growing death culture

Abortion and Euthanasia

By Mark Paschall

Few issues have polarized our society as much as those of abortion and euthanasia. It is essential that Christians have a clear understanding of the forces behind these movements and the biblical basis for opposing them.

Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy which results in the death of the developing fetus. By anyone's reasoning, therefore, it always involves the death of a living creature. Abortion has been practiced around the world as a crude form of birth control since ancient times, and it was only in the 19th century that it was considered illegal.

Starting with the former U.S.S.R. in 1920, however, one country after another, including the U.S. in 1973, legalized abortion, and no longer considered it murder. It is estimated that 46 million abortions are now performed worldwide each year, 1.8 million of those being in the U.S.

Roe v. Wade

The Supreme Court ruling in the U.S. which legalized abortion is known as Roe v. Wade. This ruling stated that until a human being is viable, i.e. able to live outside of the

womb, a state may not restrict a woman's fundamental liberty of terminating that developing life in her. The developing baby is thus deemed to have no protection of law by virtue of either the Ninth or the Fourteenth amendments.

This ruling goes on to imply that the developing baby is a non-person, with no protection against being killed; it has no rights, and the mother may choose to kill it for any reason, and at any time prior to birth.

Fetal Development

It has been suggested by some that abortion is not actually the taking of a life, but only the removal of a mass of cells that is merely an extension of the mother's body. However, even a cursory look at fetal development exposes this fallacy.

At only 10 days after conception, often before a woman knows she is pregnant, the developing baby has implanted itself in the womb and is sending its own chemical message to the mother that it has arrived, and that changes in the mother's body will be necessary during the next nine months. As the pregnancy progresses, the following milestones are then reached:

- 18 days—heart begins to beat
- 4 weeks—eye, ear, respiratory systems start to form
- 40 days—brain function begins
- 6-7 weeks—baby first moves
- 6½ weeks—all 20 milk-teeth buds present
- 9 weeks—baby squints, swallows, moves tongue
- 11-12 weeks—fingernails are formed
- 13-15 weeks—taste buds present
- 16 weeks—eyelashes present
- 16-20 weeks—fingerprints are formed
- 6th month—responds to light, sound; sleeps, hiccups

We also know that babies in very early stages of development have purposeful movements and sleep cycles, just like adults. Babies at only 14 weeks of development have been known to slowly move their hands to cover their eyes and ears when exposed to bright lights or loud music. Clearly, this is a developing human being from the moment of conception.

Abortion Methods

The details of the various abortion methods will not be detailed here, but suffice it to say that the various methods of killing the developing baby, including suctioning, cutting and burning with chemicals, occur at all of the above stages of development.

Most recently, it has even become legal to perform a “partial birth abortion” in this country. This is the killing of a fully developed baby by a brutal method of removing the brain, and then delivering the lifeless body of the infant. This may be performed at any point prior to natural birth, and is done with no anesthesia to the baby. Sadly, this is occurring on a daily basis in the U.S.

Most abortions are performed in free-standing clinics which are exempt from the usual government regulations regarding potentially dangerous procedures. Furthermore, abortions are performed without the usual stringent requirements of informed consent.

This means that little, if any, information is provided to a woman prior to the abortion. What is offered is often misleading, and parents of a minor need not be informed at all. A physician cannot legally treat a minor’s sore throat without parental consent.

However, it is not necessary for that same physician to inform the minor’s parents of a pregnancy or planned abortion, and furthermore, it is actually illegal to discuss the situation with the parents without the minor’s permission.

There are arguments against abortion from every possible perspective, and we will explore three of these.

Biblical Arguments

While the Bible says nothing specifically about abortion, it is certainly implied in commands against murder without just cause. The same Hebrew word is used for the unborn as for a young child, and there seems to be no distinction between these two in God’s mind.

Various passages, most notably Psalm 139:13-16, indicate that God is intimately involved in the life and development of the pre-born infant, and is the One who forms us in the womb. The Bible never refers to the unborn as a mass of cells or protoplasm, but makes it quite clear that

there is a continuity of life from the moment of conception all the way to mature adulthood.

Psalm 51:5 even implies that the sin nature we all possess was present in David as he was developing in the womb. The developing baby must be seen as made in the image of God, which is the very essence of humanness.

Medical Arguments

There are convincing arguments against abortion from a purely secular, medical perspective, as well. At the moment of conception, the newly-formed creation possesses all 46 chromosomes needed for life.

The thousands of new and unique DNA combinations formed will determine hair color, height, personality and all the other physical traits that will make this a unique individual, unlike any other in the world. The embryo is genetically distinct from the mother, and the only other thing required for progression to maturity, at this point, is continued development in the womb.

It is impossible to define when the developing baby becomes a person, if this is not accepted to be at conception. Various attempts have been made to define the beginning of life, such as the onset of brain activity, the ability to experience pain or independent movement.

All of these are flawed in their logic, however, as none of these developmental milestones confer personhood. That was done by God at conception. Medical science confirms that the developing baby is a whole person and leads to a pro-life perspective.

Legal Arguments

Honest legal scholars agree that *Roe v. Wade* violated standard legal reasoning, and that from a purely legal point of view, abortion should not be allowed. The Supreme Court overturned all existing state laws protecting the unborn in 1973, without the slightest constitutional defense of such a sweeping decision.

It decided to *not* decide when life begins, but then violated the very spirit of this legal principle by acting as if it had just proven that no life exists in the womb.

In this country one role of government is to protect life, and it cannot remove a segment of the population without adequate justification. In our legal system the burden of proof must lie with the life-taker, not the innocent, voiceless victim. The burden of proof must lie on the entity that would take away life, and the benefit of the doubt must lie with the defense. *Roe v. Wade* contradicts these basic fundamental standards.

Defiance against God

While the evidence is overwhelming for life beginning at conception, and the only logical conclusion is that abortion is the murder of a defenseless, developing baby, the issue ultimately comes down to a matter of the will. Abortion is sin, and is thus tantamount to defiance against God.

Multiple studies have shown that the overwhelming reasons for abortion are not for medical reasons, as the proponents of abortion would have us believe. The reasons are almost always social, i.e. reasons of convenience to avoid conflicts with education plans, jobs, finances, re-

relationships with others, etc.

Robert Bork remembers giving a talk on abortion and casually noting that surely those who supported abortion would change their minds when they realized that this killing was being done for mere convenience. He was startled at the anger that this supposition evoked, and he was told, in no uncertain terms, that the issue had nothing to do with the humanity of the fetus, but had everything to do with the freedom of the woman.

Harry Blackmun, who wrote the majority opinion in Roe v. Wade, remarked that this decision was a landmark on women's march to equality. Apparently, equality in this view means that if men do not have to bear children, then women should not have to either. We understand this, within our theological framework, to be blatant rebellion against God.

The Slippery Slope

Despite assurances that the abortion decision in this country did not start us down a slippery slope of disregard for the sanctity of human life, that is clearly where we are headed now, and we are gathering speed. The systematic killing of unborn children in huge numbers has allowed us to cross lines that were unthinkable 20 years ago.

We kill unborn children for convenience, remove tissue from live fetuses, create embryos in labs destined for destruction in research, experiment with assisted suicide and now contemplate active euthanasia. Abortion has surely coarsened us.

If it is permissible to kill the unborn at the beginning of life, it will soon be acceptable to kill those at the other end of their life span. Convenience has become the theme of our culture, and humans tend to be inconvenient at both ends of their lives.

Will a society which has assumed the right to kill infants in the womb because they are unwanted, imperfect or inconvenient, have difficulty in assuming the right to kill other human beings, especially the elderly, who are judged to be unwanted, non-productive or a social nuisance? The same principles that apply to the sanctity of life in the womb may be applied to the issue of euthanasia and physician assisted suicide. These issues all arise from the same humanistic, selfish perspective that there is such a thing as a life that is not worthy to be lived.

We as Christians must oppose this point of view at every turn. If we are to reach our world for Christ, we must help people see the truth of Christianity and must stand against the loss of humanness in all its forms. These issues reflect not a cultural ill or the demise of a single country's ideology, but rather the spiritual ill of the depravity of man's soul apart from Christ—an ill that He alone can cure. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Mark Paschall is senior staff physician at St. John Hospital in Detroit, Michigan. He is a member of Central Free Will Baptist Church in Royal Oak.

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Another look at what Free Will Baptists
can do together as a movement

We Can Do Better

By James Forlines

Is hard to find anything positive concerning the events of September 11, 2001. But in spite of the terror that this date brought us, there are some things which have been good to see. Americans, no matter what their color, were waving the flag once again. Authority figures such as policemen, firemen and politicians were honored for their bravery and leadership. In a scene I never imagined, nearly the entire congressional delegation stood on the steps of the Capital and spoke as one concerning their resolve.

As they were disbanding the hastily called news conference, several congressmen started singing, "God Bless America." Those who were leaving stopped in their tracks and the entire delegation—Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Democrat, Republican and Independent—joined in singing. In a show of unity, the President asked for \$20 billion in emergency funds to deal with the disaster, and the Congress approved \$40

billion. Nearly unanimous votes were the order of the next several days.

Just 24 hours earlier, no one could have imagined this type of cooperation. What happened? For the first time since World War II, the United States had a clearly defined enemy—terrorism.

The survival of our way of life was at stake. This then, at least for the moment, was paramount. It was clearly understood. If terrorism held us in its grip, other divisive issues had to fade into insignificance. It is not that they were not important. They were. They just were not primarily important. At least, not then. And yes, Congress will go back to disagreeing. But it was different, at least then. We all had a common enemy.

Application for Free Will Baptists

I see a very important application to us as Free Will Baptists. I believe God wants to use us. There has not

been a time when our denominational distinctives need to be heard by our culture more than now.

Yes, we as Free Will Baptists do face a war. But our foe is not among us in the flesh in our movement. Our enemy is not a fringe group in the eastern part of the country. It is not in Nashville. The Mississippi is not the line drawn in the sand. Yes, we do have an enemy, but it isn't us. The enemy is Satan, the one who has blinded the minds of them who believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine unto them and they be saved.

Satan has tried to get us to believe that we are the enemy of each other. He can only do that if we allow it. If he is successful in getting us to believe that, then we will use our time, energy, creativity, finances, anger, resentment, hostility and enmity and direct them against our own brothers. The body is made up of many members and I am convinced they will not all look like me, thankfully. I emphatically say,

Brethren, we are not the enemy!

Some might say, "What does it hurt? We don't agree on many issues. Why don't we just splinter and get with those with whom we agree?" I believe it does make a difference. And it does hurt. There are five things that happen when we view our brothers as the enemy.

It causes us to demonize our brothers.

In any sort of war it is important for military and political leaders to create an image of the enemy which is as bad as possible. In military terms it is called "psychological operations" (psy-ops), or "propaganda." In these operations the complete truth is sacrificed for the end result, to demonize the enemy.

Perhaps this is to be expected in military combat, but it surely is a sad day when it becomes common fare among brothers and sisters in Christ. Instead, we should be careful about one another's reputation and endeavor as much as possible to live peaceably with all men. Scripture (i.e. Romans 12:10) and our *Covenant* (paragraph 5) have much to say about how we treat a brother.

We are not able to enjoy the victories of others.

We hear of some major victory in the ministry of someone else, someone who is "not on our side." Immediately, we view it with suspicion and try to explain it away. Paul said to "rejoice with them that rejoice," (Rom. 12:15), yet we lose the opportunity to do so when we are cynical of another's motives, methods or means.

We start using non-flattering biblical analogies to describe each other.

When speaking passionately on areas of disagreement, if we are not careful, we can compare those with whom we disagree to a whole host of negative characters in the Bible. By association they become the unbelieving Jews who refused to enter the Promised Land or the 10 unbelieving spies, any number of references to false prophets, Ahab or one of the other compromising kings, Sanballat and Tobiah, the Pharisees, the Judaizers or other examples.

The best of God's people will dis-

agree with each other, but let us take great caution not to overstate the case and compare men of God to those who will not join the redeemed in Heaven. Once again, God's Word urges us to bear with one another with all lowliness, meekness and longsuffering (Eph. 4:2).

We cease to learn from each other.

The fact is, at times we are in error and someone needs to bring that to our attention. But the cautions and concerns raised by "the enemy" are always ignored, many times at our own peril. When viewed as "the enemy," we take as much stock in their concerns as Nehemiah did the words of Sanballat and Tobiah.

We need to remember that when we identify someone as an adversary we cease to have an impact from them, and they cease to learn from us as well. When you are being attacked, you don't care that the person attacking you may have a valid point. Instead of aggression, let us practice I Thessalonians 5:11.

We cannot encourage each other when cast down.

We all have friends who have been deeply discouraged and at the point of quitting. Likewise, we all have friends who have fallen. But we are more prone to help and encourage a brother than we are an enemy (even though Jesus encouraged us to help even our enemies—Matt. 5:43-46).

Being discouraged, or even falling into sin, is not the direct result of any ideological persuasion. If we are not careful, instead of reaching down to help and encourage, we can feel that "they are just getting what they deserved." Because of the potential judgment which may ensue, many wounded people never seek help until it is too late. Isn't Galatians 6:2-3 clear along this line?

Doing Things Differently

So what is my point? Are we just to agree with each other for the sake of unity? Do I suggest unity at any cost? Should we not bring up issues we feel are vital? Let me assure you, I don't believe that disagreements will stop until

we all gather round the throne in Heaven and the Lord straightens us all out. There are things I feel strongly about, and I plan to vocalize them. But I am committed to doing a few things differently.

I am not going to demonize my brother with whom I disagree. I want to enjoy the victories of others, even those whose methods I may never adopt. And by the way, if you want to soil the victory banner of someone else, please don't share it with me. Life is too short and defeats come too often to the best of us.

I commit not to use biblical analogies of unbelievers in scripture to compare to anyone who is my brother. As God is my helper, I do not want to unfairly use the leverage of scripture in this way. And I want to learn as much as I can from everyone who loves our Lord. This one is not always easy, and it will not be for me. But by God's grace I want to be a gracious learner.

And finally, I want to be able to lift up my brothers and sisters, no matter what "side" they are on. One good way is to sincerely pray for each other. No harm can come of that. And, when we hear of a brother going through a tough time, let's rally and try to help.

I am one of those people who firmly believes that we can do more together than we can ever do apart. I just have to believe, and I think you will agree with me, that if the democrats and republicans can stand on the capital hill steps and sing, "God Bless America," together, then there should be a way for Free Will Baptists to bind together and accomplish something significant for His name around the world. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend James Forlines is general director of the Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department.

A home missionary describes the servant's heart

Motivations for Ministry

By Clifford D. Donoho

What motivates you to work for the Lord? What is it that motivates you? In I Samuel 12:22-24 the writer tells us, "For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. . . . Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you."

We could ask the question in a different way, "What inspires you to serve God?" In verse 24, Samuel instructs us to "fear" the Lord. The word *fear* comes from the Hebrew word, *yare'* (yaw-ray'), which means to reverence. In other words, we shouldn't serve God out of fearful intimidation, but in grateful appreciation. Verse 24 goes on to say, ". . . consider how great things he hath done for you."

Loving, obeying and serving are at the heart of these verses. What is it that motivates you for ministry?

A Race to be Run

Hebrews 12:1,2 describe that race, its participants and the watchers. The idea suggested is a picture not unlike our own modern day Olympics. The author shows a stadium filled to capacity with on-lookers. This metaphor shows us Old Testament and New Testament saints who have already gone on to be with the Lord. We are running this race before them; they have already finished their course.

The picture then is that they are watching us as we are on the playing field of life, and they are encouraging us to give our best. Paul gives the picture of loved ones who have impacted our lives for Christ and who have gone on to be with Jesus, cheering and encouraging us. Now, it is our turn on the playing field—facing the contentions, the conflicts and the clashes of life on a daily basis.



A race has three parts. First, of course, we have the start. It is mentioned in verse one, ". . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Anyone who has run in competition remembers the weights worn around the ankles in practice. People run mile after mile in practice with those weights around their ankles. However, when it comes to the actual race, they remove those ankle weights, wanting nothing holding them back or weighting them down.

There is not any part of the race that a runner works harder on than the start. Making sure that the starting blocks are in exactly the right position. They crouch in the starting blocks placing their fingers on the track, tuning everything out except the sound of the starter's pistol.

Like a coiled spring, they explode out of the blocks with arms pumping. They want to get the best start possible, because they feel it is the most impor-

tant part of the race. That's how it should be with us as we begin this race of the Christian life.

There are few things we should put more effort in than the start of the race. The start can not only determine the course but the entire outcome of the race. How many have fallen prey to Satan's favorite sin? It is, of course, procrastination! One day I will get involved; one day I will give my heart to Jesus Christ; one day I will turn my life around and start to church; one day.

Yet, with the best of intentions, they never give their life to Christ. How sad that some will waste life with good intentions until they hear, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," (Jer. 8:20).

Second, we have the race itself. Look again at Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. . . ." I am no rocket scientist, but a successful racer does not race facing backward. He is not concerned with how the other runners are doing.

His job is not to look right or left checking on the other runners. He is not to be looking at the ground watching his feet to see if he is striding correctly. A successful racer sets his eyes on the finish line. Focused on the goal.

There are too many distractions if he is not properly focused. Imagine a runner stopping at the popcorn machine or perhaps the hotdog vendor. He orders a couple of dogs and a diet Coke. While trying to eat a hotdog and drink the Coke, he remembers he is in the race. We would laugh at that and agree he does not have a chance.

However, how many of us in this race of life have been distracted along the way? The devil uses our work or our hobbies as distractions. Many involved in civic organizations that do wonderful things for their communities suddenly find themselves distracted in this race of life and serving the

Lord. It may be a side interest or a financial pursuit that distracts and keeps you from running the race that has been set before you.

Satan will offer you every excuse imaginable and if one of them does not tempt you, he will find out what your favorite distraction is and make sure it gets in the way. Why did the writer call the Christian life a race? Simply because of the brevity of life. Life passes quickly.

I still find it hard to believe that I have children in their twenties. However, when I speak with one of our senior saints and mention my age of 47, they reply how they wish they were 47 again. Life is short compared to eternity. Many Christians wander over here or over there wasting their entire lives of service for the Lord—always intending to get busy in ministry.

Psalms 90:12 instructs us, "... number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

Romans 13:11 informs us, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Third, we have the finish. The Bible mentions the finish in I Corinthians 9:24, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." Paul is telling us to not only finish the race, but run it to win.

It is not the start of the race that determines the winner, but the finish. You can be a fast sprinter and explode out of the blocks at the start of the 100-yard race; if you quit at 90 yards because you are winded—you will lose the race.

If you stop along the way, for whatever reason, the slowest person in the race will eventually pass you. Much like the story of the tortoise and the hare. A good start is important, but it is the finish that counts. The scripture tells us to not give up. It is the runner with bursting lungs and calf muscles on fire, lunging for the finish line who wins.

A Job to Be Done

Jesus tells us in John 9:4, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." God did not save us to sit but to serve. We who are saved

have been called to work for Christ.

Matthew 5:16 prompts us, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Free Will Baptists do not believe that good works is the process "for" salvation, but the product "of" salvation. Titus 3:8 instructs us, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that, they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

We need to realize that we are God's plan to save the world. Many believers just want to leave "ministry" to somebody else. There are many equipped to fill a vacant position or job in the church, but we are too busy in our private lives and we leave the task to someone else.

We who are saved have been called to work for Christ, and we who are saved have been commissioned to witness for Christ according to Acts 1:8. If we will warn, witness and win the lost, we are fulfilling the mandate of the Great Commission.

If we do not go, who will? If we do not tell, who will? If we do not share the gospel, who will? The answer is simply this—we are God's workers. We are God's witnesses and there is a job to be done. None of us know if we have 40 minutes or 40 years left in our Christian race.

A Prize to Be Won

The Bible talks about a prize in Philippians 3:14. "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." What we do now lasts for all of eternity. That also means that what we "do not" do now will last for eternity as well.

What is this "prize" the scripture speaks about? I believe it is the prize of godly approval. "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord," (Matt. 25:23).

There is also the prize of a glorious announcement. Matthew 25:34 says, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the

world." What is 20 years, 40 years, 60 years of difficulty compared to what God has in store for us in Heaven?

Our hymn books are replete with songs that tell us it will be worth it all when we see Jesus. You will be glad you got involved in the race of life on *that* day. You'll be glad you got involved in the work of the Lord when you see Him face to face.

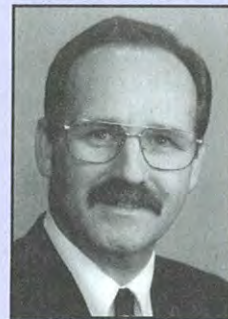
There is also the prize of a general acceptance. Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Perhaps that is what he meant when he wrote in I Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Why do people compete in the Olympic Games? Hour after hour of grueling practice and pain become commonplace. I will tell you why—there is a gold medal, a prize to be won.

Christians, there is also a prize for you. Many Christians will do things for others that no one knows about. Everything from helping the sick to slipping the homeless man five dollars. You did not do it for show or for acclaim. God knows about it and He is keeping a record. However, He not only sees the good we do that might go unnoticed, but He sees the bad as well.

God's Word is clear for the Christian when it comes to what motivates us for service. Our service should not be to keep the preacher happy or our spouse happy. It should not be for grief or fear or other emotions that drive us. Our motivation should be the race to be run, the job to be done, the prize to be won. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Clifford D. Donoho is a home missionary who pastors Priest Lake Free Will Baptist Church in Antioch, Tennessee.

Free Will Baptist National Agencies Serving Together

Independently



Interdependent Part II

By Roy Harris

National Agencies— dependent on the National Association of Free Will Baptists

The National Association, soon after its formation in 1935, made plans to accomplish its stated purpose for existing. According to the *Treatise*, its purpose for existence is: "extending the witness of Christ and building of His Church throughout the world." God blessed the infant association with men of vision and character. They looked beyond obstacles, lack of resources and decades of obscurity. They saw a higher plane and dared to look through the eyes of heaven to see what could be.

These visionary giants wanted to do it right. They were not willing to compromise the biblical truth that Free Will Baptists had held dear for centuries. They were deliberate in their approach and humble in their desire for God's direction in the formation of this new association. They came from different states and backgrounds, yet were able to agree on principles that our denomination has safely rested on for seven decades.

Our national agencies were begun with the goal of fulfilling the denomination's purpose for existing. Each agency has responsibilities assigned by the National Association. Each national agency was founded by the National Association, funded by the National Association and made formally account-

able to the National Association.

National Agencies— independent from each other

The national agencies are dependent and accountable to the National Association, but each is unique and special. Oversight is delegated to individual boards and leadership provided by directors selected by each board.

No agency can interfere with another agency. Each has its own charter and elects its own officers. Each builds its budget, hires its personnel and sets policy. The *Treatise* protects the autonomy, within the boundaries of National Association accountability, of each national agency. They truly are independent from each other by design.

National Agencies— dependent upon each other

The National agencies are independent from each other, but they are also dependent on each other in many ways. All the National agencies are needed. Each agency provides specific roles in the great task of "extending the witness of Christ and building His Church around the world."

Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions has the awesome task of marshalling personnel and resources to carry the good news to the ends of the earth. The Foreign Missions Department is

dependent on several other agencies to assist them in accomplishing that great task.

New missionaries must be prepared for the field. The agency requires completion of college level missions degree. Free Will Baptist Bible College has been entrusted as the primary missions training school for Free Will Baptists (other Free Will Baptist Colleges also make great contributions to this end). The Foreign Missions Department depends heavily on Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Free Will Baptist Bible College depends on the Home Missions Department. New churches are essential for supplying future students who will be equipped for service at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Without "new blood" Free Will Baptist Bible College will be limited in the quality and quantity of young people who can be equipped to fill the roles of service our denomination demands. The Foreign Missions Department also depends on the Home Missions Department. New churches not only produce new missionaries, but also the added funds necessary to effectively expand our foreign missions world outreach.

The Home Missions Department needs both Free Will Baptist Bible College and Foreign Missions. The expansion of the gospel into new areas of North America will require more pastors. Home Missions must look to Free

Will Baptist Bible College to equip and prepare more young men to fill our pulpits. Even if these young men do not go directly into church planting, they must be ready, willing and able to step into pastorates vacated by more experienced men who leave their churches to begin new ones.

Home Missions is also dependent on Foreign Missions. With the unprecedented arrival of ethnic peoples from the four corners of the earth to almost every hamlet and city in America, Free Will Baptists possess the greatest opportunity in history to reach the world without leaving home. Home Missions has been given the monumental task of developing ministries that cross cultural lines in America. Home Missions needs the experience of the Foreign Missions Department to aid them in this great endeavor.

Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, Home Missions and Bible College all depend on the Women Nationally Active for Christ. The prayers, perseverance and projects of Free Will Baptist women are legendary. The provision closet, national projects and educational loan fund are but a few examples of the dependency of other departments on WNAC. WNAC has done an exceptional job assisting national agencies behind the scenes. They have made the commitment to furnish a missions residence that will be built on the new campus of Free Will Baptist Bible College.

The Master's Men Department has provided a "helping hand" to struggling mission works across America. The department also birthed "Operation Saturation" which resulted in the greatest one-day national focus on Home Mission works in history. The department will make a great contribution to world evangelism by constructing the missions residence on the new campus of Free Will Baptist Bible College. A veteran missionary fresh from the field will live on campus each year and work with Bible College missions' students to help in their preparation to join the ranks of our foreign missionaries.

The Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement and Insurance offers a safe haven for Free Will Baptist people in ministry. Our people can invest in a plan now that will generate streams of revenue during years of retirement when they will need them most. Our national agencies need a safe harbor in which they can safely

anchor the investment funds of each national employee.

The Board of Retirement and Insurance also needs the other national agencies. The department needs funds generated by the trust and investment of the national agencies. It needs the good will and promotion of the department on the field that other national agencies can provide. The expression of satisfaction and value by the leadership of the other national agencies lends credibility and approval among our denominational constituency. This should result in more participants in the overall national Free Will Baptist retirement program.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation is one the least understood, yet has the potential to revolutionize all our national agencies. The department exists to collect and distribute funds for local, state and national ministries. It is a serving arm for all the national agencies. It exists to provide avenues of long-term support for all the national agencies.

Funds managed by the foundation are distributed according to the wishes of the donor. The Free Will Baptist Foundation can impact each agency by collecting and distributing funds that the agencies would probably not have received any other way.

The Foundation also needs the national agencies. The Foundation does not have the resources to aggressively seek funds for individual national agencies. It must depend on the agencies to make the contacts and guide Foundation representatives to potential donors.

Randall House Publications (Sunday School and Church Training Department) plays a vital role in the ministries. It aids the Home Missions Department by supplying, free of charge, materials printed in Spanish to our Spanish-speaking churches. They give future denominational leaders their first look at national ministries through Truth & Peace, Youth Evangelistic Teams and the Leadership Conference. All national agencies benefit from young lives that are touched and that will one day take their places in the ranks of national denominational service.

Randall House prints *Contact*, *Heartbeat*, *Aim* and the annual *Free Will Baptist Yearbook*. The national agencies are dependent on Randall House Publications. Randall House is

also dependent on the national agencies. It needs the revenue derived from producing materials needed by the national agencies. It also needs the support and good will of the leadership of the national agencies.

The Executive Office is the common thread that binds the Free Will Baptist national garment together. The other agencies depend on the Executive Office to coordinate national efforts to fulfill the purpose and mission of the National Association of Free Will Baptists. The Executive Office brings the national agencies together through regular directors' meetings, the annual Leadership Conference and national conventions.

The Executive Office depends on the national agencies. Without the national agencies, the Executive Office would have no purpose and thus would not need to continue.

National Agencies— working together in the 21st century

Each national agency is independent and yet interdependent. We have a right to expect both. We should expect each agency, without interference from other agencies, to carry out the mission and purpose as outlined in its charter, constitution and by-laws. But we also should expect the agencies to work together and not in direct competition with one another. The task is great and the time is short. We must move forward with a sense of urgency and a spirit of cooperation. We must not lose sight of our purpose for existing and be busy "extending the witness of Christ and building His Church around the world." ■



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.



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

First Things First

By Kevin Riggs¹

Habit #1 –
A Successful Person
Places God First in all Areas of Life

words of God, they are absolutely true, eternally relevant and totally independent of changing attitudes, cultures or situations. I cannot break the Commandments without being broken by them.

Commandments Given to God's People

The Commandments were not meant to give a step-by-step procedure to God. They were given to a group of people God had set free from bondage. Therefore, I should obey the Commandments, not as my attempt to choose God, but because God, through Jesus Christ, has chosen me, setting me free.

"But God be thanked, that ye were servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered

you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."¹²

Obedience to the Commandments is my response to the grace, mercy and love God bestowed on me by setting me free. My obedience should be based on gratitude not guilt.

God Deserves First Place

Because God is All-Knowing and All-Powerful, the Commandments are His Commandments and He has set me free from sin. He deserves nothing less than first place in my life. To put any other god(s) before Him is foolishness. There are no other gods except God. All other gods are my attempt to glorify, lift up and worship myself.

To put anything before God is like jumping out of an airplane without a parachute. No one is stopping me; I can do as I please, but my jump (or at least my landing) will not be successful.

First Habit of Highly Successful People

God commands that I put nothing before Him. In order to be a highly successful person, I must place God first in every aspect of life. I must not allow

Almost every adult in America believes in God, gods or some Higher Power.² Yet, on any given Sunday, only 40% of Americans attend church;³ less than 35% read their Bibles on a regular basis;⁴ only 40% are "absolutely committed to Christianity";⁵ the average adult Christian only gives \$300 to church annually;⁶ and a mere 50% believe you can lead a full and satisfying life without spirituality.⁷

Nearly everyone wants to believe in God, but few are willing to give God first place in their lives. There have been times when I treated God like a good luck charm, keeping Him in my pocket, until I need something from Him.

But the Bible says, "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God."⁸ God is not content to be a *part* of my life; He desires to *be* my life. He will not share the spotlight with anyone—or anything—else.

The Ten Commandments

Through the Ten Commandments God entered into a covenant relationship with His people, spelling out what He expected of His followers. The Commandments teach how I am to live in relationship with God (Commandments

1-5), and how I am to live in relationship with others (Commandments 6-10).

This is why Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."⁹

Success is being able to hear God say, "You are my treasured possession, My kingdom of priests, and My holy nation."¹⁰ According to God, that type of success can only happen when I obey Him fully, making the Commandments the habits of my life.

The first habit of a highly successful person is found in the First Commandment, "And God spake all these words, saying, 'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.'"¹¹

Commandments Originate with God

At Mount Sinai, God spoke. What was written on the two stone tablets were more than suggestions for a better society. The Ten Commandments were, and are, the declarations of God.

When I disobey them, I am disobeying God Himself. Because they are the

anything—any person, hobby, philosophy, purpose, career or church—to get between God and me.

The first Commandment challenges me to take my relationship with God seriously. Habit number one is foundational. If God is not first in my life, something else will be.

I grew up in a Christian home, was baptized at age 6 and called into ministry at 15. Surely, I am not tempted to break this Commandment. When I look into my heart, I know the temptation is there. There is always the temptation to climb the ladder of success, pursuing titles and prestige, instead of obeying God.

Furthermore, I must constantly fight the desire to pursue possessions. God has set me free, but if I don't keep Him first, I can walk right back into bondage, wrapping the chains of materialism tightly around my neck, wrists and ankles.

If I am not careful, I can place *power* or *people* before my relationship with God. Sometimes I place my *feelings* before God and push my *personal agendas* ahead of His plans for me. These things point to the one being I am tempted to place before Him every day; that being is *self*. All attempts to remove God from the center of my life are selfish efforts to place *me* before *Him*.

It is easy to say the words, "God is first in my life," but is He? A few years ago my computer contracted a virus without my knowing it, and I have no idea how many files it infected before it was discovered. After it was repaired, I had no other choice but to purchase a virus scan. Now, every time the computer is turned on and every time a disc is inserted, my computer automatically scans for viruses, cleaning any it finds.

Sometimes I place things before God unintentionally. Before I know it, my spiritual life is infected with a virus. I have discovered two questions I can ask myself that serve as a virus scan in my life. The two questions test everything to see if anything has come before God.

What is My Source of Self-Worth?

Who do I look to for acceptance and approval? If my self-worth is wrapped up in what I do, then my career (even though I am a pastor) has become my god. If I feel inferior because others have more than me, then possessions have become my god. If I keep rules and regulations to ratify my life, then religion has become my god.

My self-worth needs to focus on my relationship with God. If no one else loves me, God loved me enough to die for me. If I never amount to a hill of beans, God says as I obey His Commandments that I will be a treasured possession, part of His kingdom of priests and a citizen in His holy nation.

What is My Primary Consideration in Decision-Making?

If I base my decisions solely on finances, if every decision I make is based on personal happiness, if I make decisions based entirely on an effort to please someone else, guess who my god is.

The Bible tells me, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."¹³ Like my self-worth, my decisions are to be based on my relationship to God and His will for my life.

Conclusion

C. S. Lewis said, "Our problem in life is not that we love things too much but that we love God too little." I will be a success the moment I put God first in every area of my life. How do I do that? How do I make sure He is F.I.R.S.T?

F – Follow through with my profession of faith.

God will only be first in my life when I ask Him to be first. As a child, I asked Jesus into my heart; as a teenager, I recommitted myself to Him and surrendered my life to His will. Now, as a pastor, every day I need to give my life to Him and follow through with that profession of faith I made years ago. It's not enough that He was first yesterday. He must be first today.

I – Include God in every aspect of my life.

I am an organized person with a tendency to segment my life—this part for my family, this part for my ministry, this part for me and this part (a small corner in the back) for God. Success doesn't work that way. If I am to be successful, I must put God first in every aspect of my life.

R – Rely on God for guidance and direction.

Sometimes, in spite of my best efforts to make God first, I fall back into the sin of relying on myself. Afterwards I pray for God to clean up the mess and make everything better. I need to constantly remind myself that the Bible "... is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path"¹⁴ and that God has promised, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."¹⁵

S – Stand up for what is right.

This can be costly, even in ministry. It is never right to do wrong, and it is never wrong to do right. When I place God first in my life, I will stand up for what is right at all times and in all places.

T – Tell others about Christ.

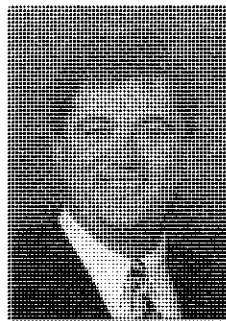
The best way to demonstrate that God is first in my life is by telling others about Jesus Christ. Everyone wants to be successful. If I know the answer, don't you think I should tell others, especially those I love?

The first habit of a highly successful person is that God is first in all areas of life.

Lord, forgive me for the times when something or someone else has been first. I give You my life, asking You to be first in all areas. Amen. ■

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. Numerous studies have shown that 96% of Americans believe in God, gods or some sort of Higher Power. One such study, and one good resource to check regularly, is Barna Research Online, at www.barna.org.
3. Taken from an article from Barna Research Online titled, "The State of the Church, 2000." In the early 1990s nearly half of all adults were found in church on Sunday. Now, however, only 28% of Baby Busters (18-24 year olds); and only 55% of adults over 55, attend church weekly.
4. George Barna. 1996. *The Index of Spiritual Indicators*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 99.
5. Ibid.
6. www.barna.org. "Stewardship."
7. *The Index of Spiritual Indicators*, 99.
8. Deuteronomy 4:24.
9. Matthew 22:37-40. Jesus was quoting from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.
10. A paraphrase of Exodus 19:5-6.
11. Exodus 20:1-3.
12. Romans 6:17-18.
13. Proverbs 3:5-6.
14. Psalm 119:105.
15. James 1:5.



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

National Convention Announces College Intern Program

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

The program will allow up to eight students to work on staff during this year's annual July meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. Participants will have opportunity to work in one or more of eight areas: registration, audio/video production, technical set-up, stage management, exhibition, ushering, publications and safety/security operations.

Selected participants will receive pre-convention training and on-the-job experience, as well as room and board during their stay in Memphis on July 18-26.

College students are encouraged to request more information by contacting Dean Jones, convention manager, via email at dean@nafwb.org or by calling 615/361-1221, ext. 344.

Executive Committee Recommends Keith Burden

ANTIOCH, TN—The Executive Committee voted to recommend 48-year-old Oklahoma moderator Keith Burden as executive secretary for the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Reverend Burden pastors First FWB Church in Locust Grove, Oklahoma, and serves as National Association clerk.

Burden was one of three candidates interviewed during the Executive Committee's December 5-6 meeting after the Leadership Conference in Nashville. The four-step procedure to elect the executive secretary now moves to step three as the Executive Committee prepares to recommend the Oklahoma pastor to the General Board at the July 2002 national convention in Memphis.

If the General Board concurs with the Executive Committee's decision, that board will then recommend Burden to convention delegates. The executive secretary will be elected by a majority vote of National Association delegates.

Brother Burden is a 1976 graduate of Hillsdale FWB College. He completed 12 hours at the Free Will Baptist Bible College Graduate School by 1989 when the school closed. He earned a master's degree at Moody Bible Institute Graduate School in 2001.

Burden has pastored for 26 years—22 years in Oklahoma and four in California. He has served five churches: First FWB Church,



Holdenville, OK (1975-77), First FWB Church, Locust Grove, OK (1977-80, 1999-present), Harmony FWB Church, Fresno, CA (1980-84), West Tulsa FWB Church, Tulsa, OK (1984-87), First FWB Church, Ada, OK (1987-99).

He was elected moderator of the Oklahoma State Association in October 2000. He previously served 15 years as clerk of the Oklahoma State Association and 18 years as assistant clerk of the National Association.

Keith and Debbie Burden have two children, Jennie (24) and Katie (17). Debbie, daughter of the late Reverend Jerry Dudley, also graduated from Hillsdale. She is a church pianist and children's choir director. Debbie served seven years on the Hillsdale College Board of Trustees and is a leader in Oklahoma Women Active for Christ.

Board Names Ron Hunter General Director

NASHVILLE, TN—The Sunday School and Church Training Board named 34-year-old Ron Hunter as general director during their December 2001 board meeting in Nashville. The Florida native comes on staff March 1 and will serve as general director-elect alongside Dr. Alton Loveless until August 15 when Loveless retires.

Reverend Hunter is executive pastor at Cofer's Chapel FWB Church in Nashville and creative director for the denomination's Media Commission. He was licensed to preach in 1984 and later ordained by the North Florida Association.

Hunter is completing his MPA (Master of Public Administration) degree at Tennessee State University. He is a 1989 graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He also completed a Military Science Program at Vanderbilt Uni-



versity as well as other extensive military training—U.S. Army Jump School, Air-Assault School; Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Warfare School and more.

His denominational experience includes 11 years in the pastorate in Florida and Ten-

nessee, chairman of the Florida C.E. Board, assistant clerk of the Florida State Association, Mission Board chairman (Indian River Association) and Florida state Camp Board member. He serves as layout and designer for the Florida state paper (*The Coordinator*).

Brother Hunter brings a broad range of media and marketing skills to his new position. He was an owner-partner in the Advertising Agency, Inc., a full-service advertising agency. He also served as a news print advertising consultant and as an account executive with WTLH-TV FOX 49. Earlier, he served as hub supervisor for United Parcel Service. He was an academic All-American in high school.

Ron and Pam Hunter have been married 14 years. They have two children—Michael (8) and Lauren (6).

Reverend Glynn Campbell Dies



POCAHONTAS, AR—Long-time Arkansas minister, Reverend Glynn Campbell, died November 24, 2001. He was 75 and had celebrated 50 years in the ministry the previous July. He was pastor at Grandview FWB Church in Maynard at the time of his death.

Reverend Campbell founded First FWB Church in Walnut Ridge in 1952. He subsequently pastored six other churches

in Arkansas and Missouri during his ministry.

Brother Campbell was an amateur ventriloquist and was frequently featured in Vacation Bible Schools and special services.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Lereau Douthit Campbell in 1978. He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Lottie Gray Campbell; one son, Reverend Timothy Campbell (director of stewardship development at FWBBC); and two step-children, Ricky Gray and Robin Roberts.

Funeral services were conducted at First FWB Church in Walnut Ridge. Reverends Nelson Henderson and Melvin Shelton officiated. All visiting ministers served as honorary pallbearers.

Hillsdale Breaks Ground

MOORE, OK—More than 300 people were on hand November 17, 2001, when Hillsdale FWB College broke ground for a 40,000-square-foot, multi-purpose facility to be named the Bill J. and Alma Lou Barber Center.

Groundbreaking ceremonies met on campus in conjunction with a statewide prayer rally called "Partners in Prayer." The new center will include classrooms, a chapel, recital hall and cafeteria.



Breaking ground for the Bill J. and Alma Lou Barber Center

Akers to Lead Master's Men



ANTIOCH, TN—After serving nearly two years as director of ministry development with the Master's Men Department, Reverend Kenneth Akers was named general director during the December 2001 board meeting. He succeeds Tom Dooley who resigned to return to the pastorate.

Akers (44), a licensed optician, sold his business that he had operated since 1983 to become part of the Master's Men staff in April 2000. He assumed his new responsibilities in January.

Tom Dooley told the Master's Men Board in December, "I know

of no one better qualified or prepared to lead this ministry than Kenneth Akers."

Kenneth brings a variety of experiences and enthusiasm to the position. He said, "I want to see the men of our denomination step up and be the spiritual leaders God expects. I believe when our men serve God like we are capable, we will make a difference in our families, churches, and communities."

Kenneth and Sandra Akers have been married 21 years. They have two sons, Brandon (19) and Ryan (16).

Tom Dooley Resigns, Returns to Pastorate

ANTIOCH, TN—Reverend Tom Dooley resigned and announced plans to pastor First FWB Church in Austintown, Ohio, at the December 5, 2001, Master's Men Board meeting. Brother Dooley served as general director of Master's Men since July 1998.

When addressing the board, Brother Tom shared: "Just as God called me here, He has called me away. I have accepted the call to pastor First FWB Church in Austintown, Ohio."

Dooley said he considered it a great privilege to serve the Master's Men Department and the Free Will Baptist denomination. He expressed appreciation to the Master's Men Board for the confidence they had placed in him.



Dooley continued, "I also want to express my gratitude for the tremendous staff at Master's Men. Delois Loveless has been with me almost the whole way. Her gra-

riousness, diligence and willingness to give of herself to the Lord's service has been a blessing. Carol Jennings also has been a great asset and a blessing. I commend her hard work and competence. Brother Ken Akers is more than a staff member; he is a friend. He has tirelessly labored and has been a model of faithfulness to the Lord and His work. I have been fortunate to work with this group."

Reverend Dooley's work at Master's Men will continue. He will serve as a publications assistant. He will continue to develop the Direction Bible Study Series, work with Master's Men Family Enrichment Conferences, and he will also edit the Master's Men *Newsletter*.

FWBBC Registers 242 at Welcome Days

NASHVILLE, TN—The Enrollment Management Office of Free Will Baptist Bible College enrolled 242 visitors for Welcome Days, November 15-16, 2001, according to Stewart-Allen Clark, acting director. The total included 194 prospective students and 48 sponsors.

Welcome Days guests came from 54 churches in 19 states. The largest state representation was 45 from Tennessee. The most from any church was 10 from Calvary Chapel FWB Church, Hollywood, Florida.

The theme, "Christmas in November," included lighted trees and costumes by Welcome Days greeters. Special events for the occasion included basketball games, class visits and a music/drama service.

The college's next Welcome Days is scheduled for March 28-30. For information or reservations, call 1-800/76-FWBBC, or email recruit@fwbbc.edu. The cost is just \$30 per person for those staying on campus

Leadership Conference Meets in Nashville

NASHVILLE, TN—More than 140 Free Will Baptist state and national leaders met at the Maxwell House Hotel to consider “Growing a Great Commission Denomination.” The December 3-4, 2001, Leadership Conference featured five sessions by Atlanta-based Larry Reesor, founder and president of Global Focus, as well as two question and answer sessions with Reesor fielding questions.

National agency personnel participated in the Q & A sessions. As a result of the two-day conference, denominational leaders will meet in the spring to determine if the program proposed by Dr. Reesor can be adapted to the denomination. Attendees expect to consider some proposal regarding Global Focus during the national convention this July in Memphis.

The Publications Committee, appointed by Moderator Carl Cheshier at the national convention in Detroit (July 2001), met with denominational editors Monday afternoon. The committee’s work is on-going concerning the feasibility of combining several national publications into one enlarged monthly publication.

The National Association’s Nominating Committee met Tuesday afternoon to consider board and commission vacancies for the 2002 national convention. Rick Cash (AL) chairs the committee.

Moderator Carl Cheshier chaired a Monday afternoon meeting with the chairmen of all national boards.

The 2002 Leadership Conference is scheduled December 2-3 at the Maxwell House Hotel.



Dr. Larry Reesor, president of Global Focus



Fred Hanson (L) and Lynn Wood



Every space was filled at plenary sessions.



Landon Reesor (L) and Will Harmon



Keith Burden (L), Melvin Worthington and Nathan Ruble



Mike Mounts, Ohio assistant moderator



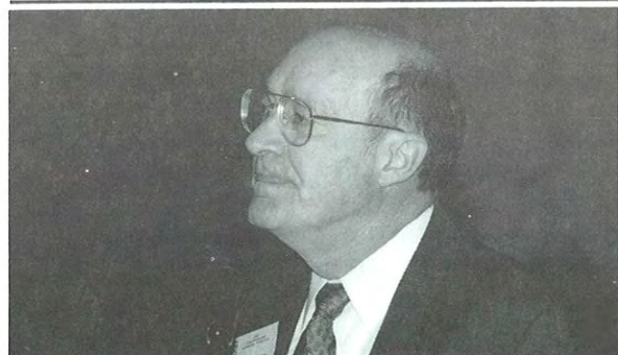
Edwin Hayes (R) and David Williford confer at registration table.



Virginia General Board member Glen Johnson



Tim York (L) and Tim Hall are ready to eat.



Leroy Lowery thinks about it.



James Kilgore (L) and Matt Pinson

2002 State Association Meetings

State	Date/Time	Location	State	Date/Time	Location
Alabama	Starts: Nov. 6 7:00 pm Closes: Nov. 8 3:30 pm	Eastside FWB Church 1679 E. Main Street Dothan, AL	Mid-Atlantic District	Starts: Nov. 2 9:30 am Closes: Nov. 2 12:00 pm	Hope FWB Church 152 Silver Lake Road Bridgeton, NJ
Arizona	Starts: Mar. 9 10:00 am Closes: Mar. 9 3:00 pm	North Valley FWB Church 18220 W. 20th Street Phoenix, AZ	Mississippi	Starts: Nov. 1 9:00 am Closes: Nov. 2 Noon	Buckatunna FWB Church 2236 Buckatunna/Chic/Clara Road Buckatunna, MS
Arkansas	Starts: Aug. 6 7:30 pm Closes: Aug. 7 9:00 pm	Conway Public School Aud. 2300 Prince Street Conway, AR	Missouri	Starts: Jun. 3 7:30 pm Closes: Jun. 5 Evening	Cowan Civic Center 500 E. Elm Lebanon, MO
Atlantic Canada District	Starts: Jun. 29 9:00 am Closes: Jun. 29	St. John Valley Bible Camp Route 5 Hartland, New Brunswick	New Jersey District	Starts: Mar. 15 7:00 pm Closes: Mar. 16 Noon	Thompson Memorial FWB Church 1520 S. Orchard Vineland, NJ
California	Starts: May 30 7:30 pm Closes: Jun. 1 Noon	California Christian College 4881 University Avenue Fresno, CA	New Mexico District	Starts: Apr. 4 7:00 pm Closes: Apr. 6 4:00 pm	First United FWB Church 601 E. Skelly Hobbs, NM
Colorado	Starts: May 4 9:30 am Closes: May 4 Noon	Mile High FWB Church 9821 N. Huron Street Northglenn, CO	North Carolina	Starts: Jun. 3 10:00 am Closes: Jun. 4 Noon	Parker's Chapel FWB Church 2241 Old Pactolus Road Greenville, NC
Florida	Starts: May 8 7:00 pm Closes: May 11 Noon	Jacksonville Marriott 4670 Salisbury Road Jacksonville, FL	Northeast District	Starts: Jun. 7 4:00 p.m. Closes: Jun. 8 Noon	First FWB Church 20 Depot Road New Durham, NH
Georgia	Starts: Mar. 14 10:00 am Closes: Mar. 16 Noon	Camden FWB Church 965 Gross Road Kingsland, GA	Northwest District	Starts: May 17 7:30 pm Closes: May 18 Noon	New Hope FWB Church 13414 S.E. 272nd Street Kent, WA
Idaho	Starts: May 17 7:00 pm Closes: May 18 Noon	Buhl FWB Church 728 14th Avenue N. Buhl, ID	Ohio	Starts: Jun. 21 9:30 am Closes: Jun. 22 Noon	No location determined as yet.
Illinois	Starts: Mar. 15 9:00 am Closes: Mar. 16 3:00 pm	Green Rock FWB Church 918 Second Street Colona, IL	Oklahoma	Starts: Oct. 14 7:00 pm Closes: Oct. 17 Noon	First FWB Church 332 W. Carl Albert Parkway McAlester, OK
Indiana	Starts: Jun. 14 7:00 pm Closes: Jun. 15 3:00 pm	Emmanuel FWB Church 129 Southwood Drive Wabash, IN	South Carolina	Starts: Feb. 21 9:30 am Closes: Feb. 22 3:00 pm	Peace FWB Church 121 Old Converse Road Spartanburg, SC
Kansas	Starts: Jun. 6 7:30 pm Closes: Jun. 8 Noon	Sunrise FWB Church 1720 E. 6th Street Emporia, KS	Tennessee	Starts: Nov. 11 7:30 pm Closes: Nov. 13 Noon	First FWB Church 208 Maple Avenue Church Hill, TN
Kentucky	Starts: Jun. 14 7:30 pm Closes: Jun. 15 Noon	Catalpa FWB Church US 23 North Louisa, KY	Texas	Starts: Jun. 5 7:00 pm Closes: Jun. 7 Noon	First FWB Church 1415 W. Wheatland Road Duncanville, TX
Mexico	Starts: Dec. 20 Closes: Dec. 22	Altamira, Tamaulipas Mexico	Virginia	Starts: Jun. 13 7:00 pm Closes: Jun. 14 9:30 pm	Esserville FWB Church 5338 Esserville Road Norton, VA
Michigan	Starts: May 16 7:00 pm Closes: May 17 4:00 pm	McCamley Plaza Hotel 50 Capital Avenue S.W. Battle Creek, MI	West Virginia	Starts: Jun. 7 9:30 am Closes: Jun. 8 3:00 pm	Mona Hill FWB Church Wilkinson, WV

currently

Members of **Hilltop FWB Church** in **Wewoka, OK**, celebrated their 60th anniversary. Pastor **Russell Ryker** said that 114 attended the festivities, and four people were converted. The congregation is in its third location since purchasing a building in 1942 and constructing a new auditorium and sanctuary in 1957. Members **Albert** and **Mary Reich** gave a six-acre tract in 1990 on which to erect a new sanctuary, the church's present location three miles west of Wewoka.

United FWB Church in **West Plains, MO**, dedicated a 10,000-square-foot multi-purpose building which includes a sanctuary, children's church, classrooms and other meeting space. Pastor **Glenn Murray** presided over the dedication service. A video documented each phase of the building's construction. Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the dedication message. Associate pastor **Clarence Burton** led the congregation in the official dedication.

Pastor **John High** reports five conversions and baptisms at **Weavers Chapel FWB Church** in **Batesville, AR**. The congregation plans to erect a 250-seat sanctuary. The church recently began a van ministry, a Master's Men chapter, a youth ministry called S.O.S. (Serving Our Savior), and built a new metal sign on Highway 167.

Reverend **Henry Desmond Mathis** (88), a founding member of **First FWB Church** in **Auburndale, FL**, died October 20, 2001. Brother Mathis was converted in 1929. He and his wife moved to Auburndale 56 years ago.

Pastor **Bobby Bowers** has led **First FWB Church** in **Greenville, SC**, for 35 years. The congregation remodeled the family life center into a 250-seat sanctuary and vestibule on the lower level, with construction continuing on the upstairs sound room and six addi-

tional Sunday School rooms. Members honored Pastor Bowers with cash gifts and cards of appreciation during their homecoming activities.

Bethany FWB Church in **Timmonsville, SC**, honored two members who have given a combined 81 years of service. Certificates of appreciation (and a standing ovation) were given to **Randall Kirby** for his 48 years as a deacon and to **Rudolph Vause** for 33 years as a trustee. **Phil Bozeman** pastors.

Pastor **Donnie Miles** led dedication services in the new sanctuary at **Peace FWB Church** in **Florence, SC**, which featured testimonies, special music and a message by the pastor. The last sermon in the old sanctuary was preached by former pastor **Danny Keen** before the congregation began the victory celebration in the new church.

Pastor **Chad West** reports nine baptisms at **Northgate FWB Mission** in **Greer, SC**. The congregation purchased five acres for \$90,000 on which to build. They erected a new sign to signal the community that a new church will be built soon.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Florence, SC**, celebrated their golden anniversary year, according to Pastor **Mike Creech**. Charter members who attended were given afghans with a picture of the original church building embroidered on them. The church grew out of a tent revival preached by **Charles Thigpen**. **Luther Sanders** served as the church's first pastor. A slide presentation of the history of the church brought younger members up to speed on the beginnings.

Jefferson Road FWB Church in **Sumter, SC**, logged 30 years of service at their anniversary/homecoming celebration. Pastor **Tony Trott** introduced former pastor **Phil Ange** who preached the anniversary message.

Members of **Rock Springs FWB Church** in **Charlotte, TN**, honored

Pastor **Mike Crews** with a special program, a cash gift, a kitchen shower and a surprise lunch. At the conclusion of the activities, Pastor Crews baptized two converts.

Retired Free Will Baptist minister **George Lee** recently completed a book titled *The Musings of a Man* in which he reflects on his five decades in the ministry, life as a preacher's kid and growing up in the Great Depression. Copies sell for \$12 each. Get one from him at 303 Veronica Avenue, Goldsboro, NC 27534, or e-mail him at gcllee@esn.net.

Pastor **Tim Rabon** reports 129 professions of faith, 42 baptisms and 35 new members at **First FWB Church** in **Raleigh, NC**.

Bear Point FWB Church in **Sesser, IL**, witnessed seven baptisms. **Larry Cook** pastors.

Pastor **Kenneth Edwards** reports four baptisms and six new members at **Harmony FWB Church** in **West Frankfort, IL**.

Nine baptisms and five new members made Pastor **David Baker's** day at **Beulah FWB Church** in **Pensacola, FL**. The congregation completed 35 years in the community.

It was a once-in-a-lifetime event at **Mt. Bethel FWB Church** in **Rose Bud, AR**, as the congregation observed their centennial celebration. Pastor **Bob Brown** published a history of the church compiled from the minutes; it included pictures of former pastors and one of the church's cotton patch from 1951 that members used to raise funds. The church began with seven members in 1901. They called **Lawnie Coffman** as their first full-time pastor in 1953. Eleven men have been called into the ministry from the church. ■

People reaching age 65 join the fastest growing segment of the population. Americans are living longer than ever before and may spend 20 - 30 years or more in retirement with approximately 40,000 new leisure hours. This increased leisure time can either be a blessing or a curse.

The need for productive activity doesn't stop in retirement. Planning for and implementing the productive use of leisure time often becomes more important than financial or health concerns. Retirement gives opportunity to fulfill the dreams of a lifetime. You now have the freedom to embark on a new and vital phase of life, one filled with fresh opportunities, expanded interests, new friends and deep satisfaction. There will be many choices and challenges: full-time careers, part-time employment, volunteer work, long-sought leisure pursuits or any combination of these activities. It can be the most enjoyable and productive time of your life.

Remember, it's the time in your life; spend it well.

Your Board of Retirement does not advocate that those who reach this "magical" age step down from the pulpit, classroom or choir never to do anything else in the Lord's work. There is still a lot of work for them to do in retirement.

Retirement does not need to be the end of something, but the beginning of new adventures and new directions. It is a transitional passage. Volunteering can ease the transition into retirement by providing the same sense of identity, self-worth and usefulness that many people derive from work. Through volunteering, retirees can retain the structure, status and social contact that work once provided. Consider the value of volunteering when you retire.

You will need to decide what you want to do and what you can do. What are your past and present interests? What have you always wanted to do, but never had a chance to do? What skills or experience would you like to share with others? Are you a patient teacher? A good listener? A born sales-person? A talented engineer? An organizer? Every ability or gift has a volunteer application.

Once you have considered your own interests and preferences, you must investigate where you can serve best. Volunteering should be a mutually beneficial relationship. You contribute your talents, time and skills to help-

Volunteering In Retirement

By D. Ray Lewis

ing others; the volunteer experience helps you grow.

One place in need of volunteers is your local church. You

might consider: (1) working in the nursery, (2) helping with the building and grounds, (3) delivering meals on wheels, (4) teaching a Sunday School class, (5) leading a weekday Bible Study, (6) organizing and maintaining a prayer chain, (7) an accountant might assist the financial officer or help with members' tax preparation, (8) participating in a senior adult group, (9) serving as an usher or greeter, (10) decorators can offer decorating skills, (11) serving in a nursing home ministry, (12) organizing a group to help with mass mailings. The list is endless. The point is, there is something you can do in your church, even after you retire. Don't wait to be asked, volunteer.

There are places to serve in your local, state and national ministries. Several people volunteer in the national offices. There are places outside the church and denomination to serve also. Nursing homes and hospitals offer rewarding opportunities for volunteers.

Many communities have volunteer centers that act as clearinghouses for nonprofit and governmental agencies looking for volunteers. To find a volunteer clearinghouse, look in the phone book under Volunteer Center or under the name of the organization that interests you. In smaller towns and rural areas, contact the Cooperative Extension Service or the educational branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The federal government's ACTION programs offer several volunteer opportunities (some with stipend) specifically for older persons. Foster Grandparents, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Senior Companion Program (SCP).

Leisure time in retirement is your day-to-day reality rather than a break from your daily routine. Get involved with people and things outside yourself. Think about the suggestions made here and others that

have occurred to you. Make specific plans to explore these ideas. Then act on those plans. If you take positive steps now, you'll be well on your way to a meaningful and enjoyable retirement. ■

The following have given gifts for the Bill Gardner Endowment in memory of Joan Gardner:

Home Missions
John & Vivian Mouser
Mr. & Mrs. George Allen

The following gave a gift to the Retired Minister's Endowment in memory of Bill & Joan Gardner:

Herman & Vernie Hersey

Retirement  & Insurance

Absolutely amazing! That is my assessment of the Legacy of Praise quartet ministry trip to Côte d'Ivoire in November of 2001. The quartet includes keyboard player Rodney Bowen, Darin Miles, Jeremy Robinson, Jerrod Pilgrim and me. The wives of Jeremy and Jerrod went with us.

The trip was born out of a challenge by Eddie Payne, director of mobilization and recruitment for Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions, during a special service for Shane Davison. He was getting ready to leave for Ivory Coast to teach music at International Christian Academy. Shane had sung with our quartet for most of the 10 years since the group formed.

Mr. Payne's challenge to use our musical talents in Ivory Coast started us thinking and praying. Later we met with missionary Clint Morgan who encouraged us to pursue this ministry opportunity.

Planning began in August of 2000, so it took 15 months of working, preparing, raising funds and organizing. This gave the churches and missionaries plenty of time to actually coordinate the activities and services on the field. Shane did much of the coordinating and corresponding with the help of Clint Morgan and Mike Cousineau.

We left the United States on November 12 and returned on November 26. With travel, this gave us 12 days in Côte d'Ivoire.

Our primary focus was to use our music to minister to churches and to provide an outreach tool in the markets, schools, villages, etc. At every stop we sang and gave our testimonies with someone translating. One person from the group gave a special gospel presentation at each service.

Our first service was with Pastor George at the mission church in a small room in Bouaké. It was filled to capacity that day with people standing outside. It was the same in all our services in Africa.

We desired to help financially with a project in Ivory Coast. Shane Davison proposed helping with Bouaké Project 2002, an effort to raise funds to buy land and build a church and parsonage for the first real Ivorian national home mission work.

The quartet decided to take on the project by



The Legacy of Praise group stands behind the king of the Canton of Akidom on his throne.

“Legacy of Praise”

By Bobby Edwards

more than doubled that of the first night. We were told that many of the people who came to hear us had never heard a gospel message before.

Due to our ministry in the Gouméré area, the king of the Canton of Akidom came to meet us and honored us with an invitation to his village. He expressed a genuine interest in the message we presented.

According to Clint, the crowd at the Bouna church was the largest ever to attend a Wednesday night service. Some of the teachers in town came to the service.

God showed me that He could use things about me that I take for granted to present the gospel to people for the first time. We were white, American, and English-speaking, so people would come out to see us and hear us sing just for that. God can take everything about us and use it to bring glory to Himself and present the gospel of salvation.

I also recognized the importance of the church working together to proclaim the gospel. Africans were excited about our being there. We saw that they relied on the expertise of the missionaries and on things we had to say.

People everywhere seemed to really enjoy having us there. They really appreciated the songs we learned in French and African tribal languages. God used us to minister to them and used them to minister to us and teach us.

I would encourage Christians to allow God to use them and their talents to reach out to people overseas. The amazing experience will change their lives forever.

Who?

Master's Men in partnership with **WNAC** invite couples to come and hear **Drs. Richard and Rebekah Land**

What?

National Couples Conference

When?

April 5-7, 2002

Where?

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Why?

An opportunity to fortify your marriage, family and church

National Marriage Enrichment Conference



Dr. Richard Land

Dr. Richard Land has championed the interests of American families for more than a decade as president of the SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. He reaches more than 1.5 million listeners each week on more than 550 radio stations across the country through the 30-minute weekday program, *For Faith and Family*.

Dr. Rebekah Land is a psychotherapist in private practice in Nashville, Tennessee.

Registration fees include two nights' accommodations at the Smokey Shadows Conference Center, Saturday evening banquet, continental breakfast and all conference sessions.

Conference Agenda

Friday

- 4:00 p.m. Check in at Smokey Shadows Conference Center
- 7:00 p.m. First Session Dr. Richard Land

Saturday

- 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Second Sessions
 - Men Only Dr. Richard Land
 - Women Only Dr. Rebekah Land
- 10:45 a.m. Third Session Dr. Richard Land
- 7:00 p.m. Fourth Session / Couples Banquet Dr. Richard Land

Sunday

- 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Fifth Session / Worship Service Dr. Richard Land

National Marriage Enrichment Conference

April 5-7, 2002

Pigeon Forge, Tennessee

Registration

Name _____

Address _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____ / _____
area code number

We are registering for

Couples Registration • \$175

Mail Registration to:

Master's Men
P. O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

Registration Deadline: March 1, 2002

Master's  Men

“You Can Join Right Now”

By Debe Taylor

It finally happened! I had arrived! I was in the fourth grade. The long awaited day dawned. At last, I was old enough to become a member of GTA—Go Tell Auxiliary (the forerunner of Actionettes). No one would ever know how I had anxiously waited for this time. Since I first heard about GTA, I had wanted to be a member.

Sharing in the projects, taking part in the programs, memorizing God’s Word—for one whole year I was a faithful member of Go Tell Auxiliary. Then the unthinkable happened. Dad resigned as pastor of the First FWB Church in Norman, Oklahoma. My tenure as a GTA member was over. It was a sad day.

Several years passed before my family belonged to a Free Will Baptist church with an auxiliary program. When I was 16, I asked my pastor’s wife, June Rolen, (at Memorial FWB Church in Fresno, California) how old I had to be to join Woman’s Auxiliary. Her reply?

“Why, Debe, you can join right now.” I didn’t wait for a printed invitation. Next time they met—I was there.

Since that day, I have continued to be active in WNAC, serving in the local, district, state and national programs. WNAC has been a vital part of my life.

Iremember receiving packages from our auxiliaries around the United States during my parents’ term as home missionaries in Idaho. Although our mission church did not have an auxiliary, still the ministry of WNAC was touching my life.

Striving to find my part in the mission outreach of the church, I found a place to serve in Women Nationally Active for Christ. I believe that being part of this

vital organization has helped me touch more lives with the gospel than I ever could have done on my own.

The organization’s new brochure states, “At WNAC, we show women how God has a place for each of us in the Great Commission, how each one of us can help enlarge God’s kingdom around the world.” We can do more together than we could ever do as individuals. Through WNAC, Free Will Baptist women have proven this truth.

Many changes have taken place in WNAC during my years as a member, but our purpose remains the same: to know Christ and to make Him known. At one time, WNAC was heralded as *the* mission arm of the church. WNAC continues to actively support and promote foreign and home missionary causes. However vital, giving and support do not fulfill the Great Commission. Fulfillment includes personal involvement.

Knowing God has placed each woman in her own specific mission field, WNAC is committed to ministry and evangelism in the home, the church, the community and around the world. It’s an organization that God has used; it’s an organization that should continue—a ministry worthy of your support.

For the past two years, I have had the privilege to serve as WNAC’s president. Who would have thought it? Certainly not my GTA sponsor. ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Debe Taylor is president of Women Nationally Active for Christ. She is a member of Lake Hills Free Will Baptist Church where her husband, David Taylor, pastors. Debe is a graduate of California Christian College and the daughter of Dr. Wade Jernigan.

Women Nationally **WNAC** Active for Christ



Garnett Reid

Thumbing Through Mrs. Maureen's Bible

Mrs. Maureen's well-worn Bible: I recall seeing her carry that Bible and teach from it in church when I was just a boy in her class. Later I realized what a becoming testimony that much-read Bible was and how well it fit the life Maureen Poole lived.

My Bible, and probably yours, too, has certain "run to" spots, places I "run to" often for help and blessing and encouragement. Those pages are more faded and tattered than others; some even have tape holding them together.

If you love the Bible and read it, you probably have your favorite books, chapters and verses you especially enjoy. As creatures of habit, that's the way we are. We tend toward the familiar, the "comfortable" parts of the scriptures. Likely as not, those spots include certain Psalms, places in the gospels, chapters in Romans and maybe Ephesians and Philippians.

I suspect, too, that you've had my experience of every so often reading a verse or passage and saying to yourself, "I never noticed that before," or "that's the first time I've read it that way." The verse has been there all along, I assure you, but it may hit you a different way.

Why is that? How come this old Book can be constantly new, ever surprising and engaging in those phrases and cadences we may have heard all our lives? How is it, too, that it can continue to be relevant and up-to-date to new generations of readers who discover its treasures anew in a fresh millennium?

Several reasons come to mind. Scripture is the Word of the God who is living. "The word of God is alive," the writer of Hebrews declares, and it is powerful! Because it is His Word, the Bible never changes; it is always relevant. Works that are time-bound and contemporary go out of date and

wind up on the out-of-print list. The Bible is never passé since it majors on timeless truths.

The more you study it, the more you learn how much you *don't* know about the Bible. No wonder we're constantly learning new things about it. That's why we must be curious and investigate its depths. Each text invites us to play "detective" and search out all our leads to unlock its mysteries.

I'm certain it's also true that we view passages differently at various stages of our lives. As our experiences change, so does our perspective on the application of truth to our needs. How exciting when the Spirit opens our eyes to see truth as we've never seen it before! I remember :

- when Psalm 57:1-2 came alive for me and my wife as we waited on God during the premature birth of our second son
- how Jeremiah's life and message helped to shape my own sense of call and purpose in ministry
- finally seeing the relationship of the Old Covenant to the New in the promise fulfilled by Christ.

If you're a Bible reader and treasure its words, I know you, too, could give testimony of similar surprises when God opened your heart to see new things in the old Book.

I also know, however, that there are passages I overlook, chapters I neglect for whatever reason. So for our next series of Bible studies, I'm asking for your help in dealing with chapters that may be underestimated as we read the scriptures. Of course, that's not to say that any chapter or portion of God's Word is unimportant; all scripture is "God-breathed" and is profitable.

But if there are chapters that seem neglected or underappreciated in your

view, I'd like to hear from you. E-mail me or send me a note at the address below and let me know one (only one, please) chapter in the Bible you think is overlooked and I'll focus on some of these texts in future columns.

May our attitude be that of the scribes of old who were admonished, "You must get every detail of the text correct, for if you miss one letter, heaven and earth may fall." I think Mrs. Maureen would have said "Amen" to that!

Garnett Reid

3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205
greid@fwbbc.edu

Know someone who deserves a journalism scholarship?

Each year the Evangelical Press Association awards several scholarships to deserving students. They must be 3rd or 4th year undergrads when they receive the grant and planning on a career in print journalism.

Applications for the 2002-2003 academic year must be received by March 15, 2002. For an application write to:

The Evangelical Press Association

694 Berkmar Circle

Charlottesville, VA 22901

or e-mail: director@epassoc.org





Delilah Scott

Her Secret Source

By Delilah Scott

I was a dreamy-eyed eighth grader when I first caught a glimpse of him, just a half-nanosecond glimpse, as he passed by in a crowd. Our eyes did not meet until the following school year. Once my eyes met his, I knew the future held something special for us, but never could I have ever imagined the route our lives would take together. I was 13.

When I was 14, I prayed for God to give me a husband and I asked specifically, by name, by his full and given name: Ronnie Scott. I also asked secretly. I didn't tell my best friend. I didn't tell him. I only told God.

Two years later, on a snowy Christmas evening, Ronnie went to church with me. Three weeks later he was saved. I had asked secretly, and I was rewarded openly and abundantly.

On April 21, 1967, four years from the time I had prayed for Ronnie to be my husband, we were married. We exchanged vows before the same altar where he had been lifted from sin to God and a new life.

Secret Power

Secret prayer is the most powerful weapon ever known to man. It is the secret of all the prevailing prayer warriors who ever lived. Moses went up alone to talk with God upon the mountain. Jesus prayed alone, while in the distance His disciples slept.

It was by the faith of our fathers, whose secret prayers moved the right arm of God, that we were blessed with His favor and mighty revivals swept through our nation in its infancy, founding it upon the Rock, our Lord.

Hudson Taylor, the first missionary to inland China, while preparing for his departure from England in 1853, vowed that he would move man through God by prayer alone! (*Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* by Dr. & Mrs. Howard Taylor,

Moody Bible Institute, 1989, p. 32)

When our praying and our pleadings are for God's ears and His alone, then our God who hears in secret will answer openly. "Pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," (Matt. 6:6).

Prayer in our home has made all the difference. Prayer is the conception, the labor and the delivery of God's will, His work and His way in all of Heaven and in all the world. Its birthing in our hearts and homes is of far more value than all the diamonds, the gold and the treasures He has hidden away in the womb of the earth.

The best praying is secret praying. Often, when we are making a public request for prayer or when we tell someone that we are praying for them to do such and such, we may in reality be trying to help God out, as though He needed help! It is when our faith, our confidence and our only hope is rested upon God that He hears from Heaven and answers our sincere, specific and secret praying.

When we tell none other than God of our request, when our prayers are between ourselves and God alone, then our God who hears in secret will answer openly. "Pray to Thy Father which is in secret, and Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly," (Matt. 6:6)

Family Power

Our family has prayed together and stayed together. Had it not been for God's response to our praying, our feet would have stumbled and the walls of our home would have imploded around and down upon us. Through prayer God has been mighty to save and always by our sides in the night season and all the day long.

Dear pastor's wife, when you are

volleyed from pressure cooker to frying pan and dashed from delight to despair, when one phone call or one Sunday service sweeps you away to Mt. Pisgah's lofty heights and the next slams you head first into the depths and stench of the Dead Sea, remember this: Waiting by His throne room door, God has a huge box of blessings addressed to you and ready to be shipped out immediately upon His directive to your pastor/husband if you will only pray.

From your holy living and your faithful, specific and secret praying, the wheels of God's chariot will race to your cry and deliver posthaste to your front door all your needs. He will defeat all your enemies and bless everything your hand turns to do.

Here then is the yeast in the flour of your husband/pastor's ministry: your praying!

My husband? Most people know him now as Pastor Ron Scott. I know him as Ronnie, my childhood sweetheart and my wonderful husband, as the good and godly father of our three children, the grandfather of our three grandsons and as my pastor.

My pastor is my favorite preacher and I am his favorite fan! ■

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ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Delilah Scott, a West Virginia native, is a member of Laurel Free Will Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.



Randy Sawyer

Preaching and Theology

The "Summer Sermon Series" at my church last year was titled, *A Christian Answer to the Critics*. The series considered four key questions often raised by opponents of the Christian faith: "Is God for real?" "Is the Bible the Word of God?" "Who is Jesus?" and "Why does a good God allow suffering?"

The questions were examined in light of biblical passages, as well as historic positions of the Church in general and our denomination in particular. Throughout the series several doctrinal themes of the faith were presented: *the Trinity, creation, inspiration, incarnation, justification, regeneration, free will, and sovereignty.*

After discussing the sermon series with a friend, he said, "Don't you know you can't preach theology to a local church congregation?" Though his comment was made tongue-in-cheek, many do feel that way. To them preaching must always be popular, practical and relevant . . . as if Christian theology isn't any of those things. The truth is, theology is decidedly practical and relevant, and when preached with passion and personality, can be popular as well, at least for the hungry believer.

Preaching Theology: Why?

There are several reasons why a pastor must preach from the great theological themes of the Bible. For example, the very nature of scripture demands it. The term "theology," derives from *theos*- God and *logos*- word. "Theology" etymologically means "a word about God." However, *logos* is typically understood to mean, "study of," therefore, "theology" has come to refer to "the study of God."

According to the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, a first principle of Christian theology is that God alone can speak His own words about Himself. Consequently, the first and

continuing task of Christian theology is to listen, and then reflect upon that which it hears. And where does God speak these words about Himself? The answer is clear, in scripture.

The Bible is God's self-revelation. When we preach from the scriptures we are dealing with theological material, with what God wants us to know about Himself, His character and His activity. In this light, each preacher is a theologian for his congregation, and every preaching event an opportunity to teach Christian theology.

A pastor must preach the great doctrinal themes because of our need for balance. The preaching of theology is not intended to be a mere academic exposition, but a practical influence. The presentation of doctrine to the exclusion of its practical and ethical implications may leave the hearer intellectually stimulated but unable or unwilling to connect theological themes to daily living.

On the other hand, preaching the practical without a substantive foundation in theology may produce a dogmatism that has no real theological or historical precedent. Moral and ethical judgments made for the wrong reasons will invariably become mere preference. Christian theology demands right thinking and right practice.

A pastor must preach the great doctrinal themes because of the nature of the Church. The Church has been around a long time and her confessions and creeds reproduce the doctrinal content of the scripture. When we study the Bible, we are not in uncharted territory, but are building upon 2,000 years of spiritual scholarship and understanding. We are standing on the "shoulders of giants."

Our people need to be aware of their heritage, of what the Church believes and has believed for centuries. If a person does not learn to interpret the

Word based on the presuppositions of the past, he will substitute his own presuppositions in the present. We must hold hands with our ancestors while building a bridge for our descendants.

Preaching the great doctrinal themes will add stability and purpose to our own denominational enterprise. We must not only preach the theology of the Church in general, but we must sound out the distinctives of Free Will Baptists in particular. Free Will Baptists have a history and a creed, and our people need to know both.

Why are we losing some of our best and brightest? Why do so many of our church members feel intimidation when challenged by other beliefs? Maybe we haven't given them a reason to remain with us. Maybe we haven't provided a thorough understanding of our theology. We must not reduce our theology to a few catch phrases and well-worn clichés; we need to preach the grand themes that define us as a part of the universal Church.

Preaching Theology: How?

In preaching the great theological themes of scripture, there are two dangers to avoid. First, we should not turn the pulpit into a lectern. Theology cannot be taught in the pulpit the same way it is taught in the classroom. Theological terms must be clearly defined, explained and illustrated. The pastor must avoid the temptation to be exhaustive, presenting everything he knows about a certain theme or doctrine. The presentation must be passionate, creative and personal.

The goal is communication, and the usual principles of effective communication must be employed. We must not seek to impress or display our knowledge or ability. Preaching is about God, not the preacher; theology is about God, not the theologian.

There is one other danger that must

be avoided in preaching from the great theological themes of scripture. We must not lose focus on the hearer. Thomas Chalmers said that when preaching theology a preacher should isolate each hearer and "make him feel that the matters wherewith you are charged are addressed specifically and individually to him."

Our hearers come with various needs, questions, emotions and dreams. Theological presentation can quickly become cold and pedantic. But it doesn't have to.

For the lonely, we can preach the God who is "everywhere present at once." To the hurting, we can introduce the "Comforter." For those who have made wrong choices, and wonder if things can ever be right, we can tell them about a loving and forgiving God. Keep the congregation in view.

What God has revealed in His Word is for the people of God. If it is in scripture, it is theological; if it is theological, it needs to be heard. Let us not be afraid to address great themes that define us as His people. After all, we are "stewards of the mysteries of God." ■

Directory Update

FLORIDA

Kenny Thompkins to First Church, Ocala

GEORGIA

Johnny Lewis to New Home Church, Colquitt from Sardis Church, Eufaula, AL

Len Blanchard to Shallowford Church, Marietta from First Church, Wattsville, AL

ILLINOIS

Mike Gillock to First Church, Mt. Vernon from Ashland City Church, Ashland City, TN

OHIO

Tom Dooley to First Church, Austintown from Master's Men Department as general director

THE TOGETHER WAY

November 2001

Receipts: State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 353.49	\$ 161.34	\$ 514.83	\$ 4,731.08	\$ 1,940.92	\$ 6,672.00
Arizona	.00	92.00	92.00	30.00	421.00	451.00
Arkansas	20,899.11	10,493.34	31,392.45	228,848.16	183,354.12	412,202.28
California	.00	1,072.94	1,072.94	883.54	12,479.83	13,363.37
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	56.25	.00	56.25
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	399.54	9,999.00	10,398.54
Georgia	29,216.49	1,590.68	30,807.17	350,847.46	18,072.75	368,920.21
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	9,815.80	2,352.77	12,168.57	98,193.31	22,907.81	121,101.12
Indiana	3,642.37	423.18	4,065.55	21,689.41	2,490.06	24,179.47
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	2,188.63	2,188.63
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	318.71	318.71
Kentucky	1,637.08	253.89	1,890.97	6,661.37	10,665.10	17,326.47
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	60.00	20.00	80.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Michigan	18,864.25	2,117.69	20,981.94	228,379.58	27,766.54	256,146.12
Mississippi	12,981.13	934.84	13,915.97	91,743.14	7,128.11	98,871.25
Missouri	59,339.29	13,543.25	72,882.54	469,327.60	159,639.69	628,967.29
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	90.00	.00	90.00
New Mexico	539.48	44.74	584.22	5,353.87	556.95	5,910.82
North Carolina	4,388.90	2,697.89	7,086.79	19,097.57	32,372.04	51,469.61
Ohio	38,143.65	7,417.75	45,561.40	159,549.31	34,248.61	193,797.92
Oklahoma	8,856.32	11,071.12	19,927.44	489,838.88	123,832.50	613,671.38
South Carolina	48,423.10	.00	48,423.10	523,809.45	1,188.20	524,997.65
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	10,606.30	961.18	11,567.48	130,909.53	21,968.59	152,878.12
Texas	6,386.97	291.03	6,678.00	86,645.95	3,293.98	89,939.93
Virginia	635.87	.00	635.87	4,450.05	1,316.36	5,766.41
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	5,345.17	175.55	5,520.72	23,469.87	1,319.93	24,789.80
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	1,321.93	22.53	1,344.46	6,942.25	123.27	7,065.52
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	1,035.26	.00	1,035.26
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(0.06)	(0.06)	.00	(0.26)	(0.26)
Totals	\$ 281,396.70	\$ 55,717.65	\$ 337,114.35	\$ 2,953,042.43	\$ 679,612.44	\$ 3,632,654.87
Disbursements:						
Executive Office	\$ 2,336.41	\$ 25,072.96	\$ 27,409.37	\$ 21,119.88	\$ 305,825.77	\$ 326,945.65
Foreign Missions	138,328.41	7,048.30	145,376.71	1,682,700.08	85,970.97	1,768,671.05
FWBBC	23,434.32	7,048.30	30,482.62	257,477.14	85,970.97	343,448.11
Home Missions	101,492.87	5,516.06	107,008.93	832,097.47	67,281.64	899,379.11
Retirement & Insurance	404.54	4,290.27	4,694.81	5,040.18	52,330.24	57,370.42
Master's Men	353.86	4,290.27	4,644.13	4,672.45	52,330.24	57,002.69
Comm. for Theo. Integrity	74.53	153.20	227.73	1,043.43	1,868.85	2,912.28
FWB Foundation	290.27	1,838.69	2,128.96	3,489.26	22,427.21	25,916.47
Historical Commission	54.96	153.20	208.16	363.23	1,868.85	2,232.08
Music Commission	2.91	153.20	156.11	105.22	1,868.85	1,974.07
Media Commission	302.48	153.20	455.68	1,740.39	1,868.85	3,609.24
Hillsdale FWB College	1,932.24	.00	1,932.24	20,993.00	.00	20,993.00
Other	12,388.90	.00	12,388.90	122,200.70	.00	122,200.70
Totals	\$ 281,396.70	\$ 55,717.65	\$ 337,114.35	\$ 2,953,042.43	\$ 679,612.44	\$ 3,632,654.87

Truth & Peace 2

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The T&P2 Junior High Conference is a fun-filled, challenging weekend designed exclusively for 6th-9th graders. During the conference your students will be dared to have a deeper spiritual life! We look forward to seeing you and your students there!



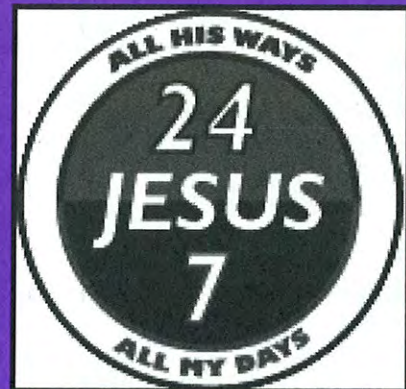
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April 4-7, 2002
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April 11-14, 2002
Camp Caleb ◉ Paintsville, Kentucky



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Jack Williams

Who Killed Tommy Bower?

M eet Thomas F. Bower, age 47. Blond hair, big brown eyes. He drives a Ford Crown Victoria to work five days a week. Down at the bank, they call him "Mr. Bower." He's the president.

Tom married his high school sweetheart, Deborah Johnson. They have three kids—Maria (a college senior), Melody (a college freshman) and Fred. Fred's a first grader and can't figure out why his sisters are so much older than he. Tom just grins and looks at Debbie.

But today at 2:00 p.m. a 19-year-old crack addict walked into the bank and pointed a shotgun at a teller. When Tom stepped out of his office and asked what was going on, the young addict shot him. Twice. He never knew what hit him.

The police called it murder. Tom's elderly mother, Mary, cried.

Meet Tom Bower, age 28. Blond hair, fiery brown eyes. He drives a 1999 Ford Taurus to work five days a week. Down at the bank they call him "Tom." He's a senior loan officer in the fast lane.

Tom married his high school sweetheart, Deb Johnson, when he finished college. They have a daughter, Maria. She's two. They plan to have one more child, a boy. They'll name him Fred after Tom's dad.

But today at 2:00 p.m. a 19-year-old crack addict walked into the bank and pointed a shotgun at a teller. When Tom stepped from his cubicle and asked what was going on, the young addict shot him. Twice. He never knew what hit him.

The police called it murder. Tom's mother, Mary, cried.

Meet Tommy Bower, age 17. Wavy blond hair, chocolate brown eyes. He drives a 1987 Ford Escort to school five days a week. Down at Roo-

sevelt High, they call him "The Long Rifle." He's all-state quarterback on the Rough Riders football team and can throw the ball 70 yards.

Tommy dates the prettiest cheer leader in school, Debbie Johnson. They plan to get married after Tommy goes to college. Tommy wants to be a banker. He and Debbie love kids; they want to have a boy and a girl after they get married.

But today at 2:00 p.m. a 19-year-old crack addict walked into the locker room and pointed a shotgun at the football coach. When Tommy stepped out of the shower and asked what was going on, the young addict shot him. Twice. He never knew what hit him.

The police called it murder. Tommy's mother, Mary, cried.

Meet little Tommy Bower, age 6. Curly blond hair, sparkling brown eyes. He rides a big yellow bus to school five days a week. Down at Lincoln Elementary School, they call him "Cotton Top." He's in the first grade.

Little Tommy sits next to the cutest girl in class, Debbie Johnson. They hold hands when the teacher's not looking. Tommy's saving his allowance to buy Debbie a birthday present.

But today at 2:00 p.m. a 19-year-old crack addict stepped onto the school bus when it stopped to unload students and pointed a shotgun at the driver. When little Tommy stood up and asked what was going on, the young addict shot him. Twice. He never knew what hit him.

The police called it murder. Little Tommy's mother, Mary, cried.

Meet the unborn baby (age 22 weeks) growing inside Mary Bower. It's a boy! Blond hair, bright eyes that will melt some girl's heart. Ten long fingers and two strong legs; he may be a quarterback some day. A well-formed head

and a brain that will one day function better than a million-dollar computer.

Mary Bower lives next door to her best friend Maria Johnson who is also pregnant. Mary and Maria laugh together wondering if their unborn children will like each other. Mary's husband works at a downtown bank. He's a teller.

But today at 2:00 p.m. 19-year-old Mary Bower walked into a family-planning clinic and said she'd changed her mind. She wanted a career, not a baby. The attending physician told her she could undergo a commonly used procedure to end her pregnancy. Mary, scared, agreed to the suggested "salting out" procedure.

Mary was placed on a treatment table and a long needle inserted through her abdomen directly into the fluid-filled sac surrounding her baby. Then a concentrated salt solution was injected.

Some of the salt solution entered the baby's mouth and some went into the lungs. The baby's sensitive skin was severely burned and slowly his life was snuffed out. About an hour after the injection all movement ceased.

The next day Mary went into labor and delivered her dead, shriveled baby boy. She did not cry.

A feminist pressure group called it pro-choice. The family planning clinic called it abortion. Mary Bower called it her right. None dared call it murder. ■

CONTACT

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