

Who is a missionary's best friend?

The inside scoop on the National Convention

Take it to TAMPA!

I'm Young,
But This I've Learned
About Marriage

Contact

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May 2003
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Keith Burden

Do You Know Who I Am?

Some things are worse than dying. That was the conclusion I reached after watching my mother suffer from the ravages of Alzheimer's disease. For years I erroneously believed this condition affected only the mind. Our experience proved otherwise.

To be perfectly honest, we didn't recognize some of the more subtle signs in the early stages. We attributed things like forgetfulness, episodes of confusion and mood swings to aging or poor circulation. In spite of these minor irregularities, she continued to function at an amazing level of normality.

Eventually the telltale signs became too obvious to overlook or ignore. Mom was unable to perform the simplest household tasks. Paranoia, depression, personality changes and the tendency to become quiet and withdrawn signaled that something was seriously wrong.

Her doctor believed she had Alzheimer's. That diagnosis led my wife to a book written by prominent physicians on the subject. The more she read, the more convinced we became that Mom had all the classic symptoms of this disease. She was a textbook case.

From Bad to Worse

It wasn't until my father became ill and had to be hospitalized, however, that we recognized the full extent of her condition. During the month Mother stayed in our home, we observed behavior that was nothing short of incredible. It was almost as though a stranger was living in her body.

Her condition deteriorated to the point we were forced to place her in a nursing home and then later a lock-down Alzheimer's facility. The downward spiral continued. Mom fell three times, resulting in broken hips and sur-

geries. A failing appetite, subsequent weight loss and a progressively failing memory characterized the months that followed. She would eventually stop walking or talking.

During one of my regular visits, I walked into her room unannounced. Moving carefully to her bedside, I took her hand and leaned near her face. She looked at me as though I was a total stranger.

Softly I said, "Do you know who I am?" After a moment's hesitation she smiled and replied, "Yes! Do you?" In spite of her diminished mental capacity, she hadn't lost her ability to make me laugh. Although she never called my name or acknowledged who I was, she was able to make me think ... deeply.

Knew Me

Since that experience with Mom, I've thought a lot about that question. Did she really know who I was? If you're referring to that moment, that day in her room, the answer is no. The disease had eroded her memory to the point that she didn't recognize her own son. If, however, you're asking if she knew who I was during the years that preceded her illness, the answer is a resounding yes!

Knew I Was Her Responsibility

She didn't pawn me off on someone else. She cared for me and nurtured me. She fed me and clothed me. She loved me unconditionally and, yes, she disciplined me. She attended every ballgame and made sure I did my homework.

Knew I Was a Sinner

On more than one occasion she spoke to me about my spiritual need. It was during a revival meeting in 1965 that she slipped her arm around my

shoulder and whispered, "Don't you want to give your heart to Jesus, Son?"

That gentle nudge was all I needed. When I finished praying the sinner's prayer at the altar that evening, I looked up and she was kneeling by my side.

Knew I Was a Preacher

She was at the youth camp in 1970 when I answered the call to preach. She heard my first sermon—all 12 minutes of it. She gave me my first chain-reference study Bible—I still have it. She encouraged me all the way through college. She attended my ordination service. Every time we were in a church service together after that, she told all her friends, "That's my son. He's a preacher you know!"

Knew I Was Grateful

When I was growing up there was not much public display of affection in our family. After I left home and got married that all changed. I seldom said goodbye to my mother, especially in the latter years, without first giving her a kiss, a hug and saying, "I love you." I made a conscious, deliberate effort to let her know that I was thankful for her love, prayers and support.

When it Was Important

She knew me when it counted, and she helped me know myself. Through her influence I learned that I am "fearfully and wonderfully made." Because of her witness I saw the need to be "crucified with Christ." As a result of her prayers I can say that I have been "made the righteousness of God in him."

Yes... my mom knew who I was, and thanks to her, I know who I am today. ■



Preview of the 2003 National Convention

Take It to Tampa!

By Jack Williams



Yep, it's a long way to Tampa, but when you get there, you'll know you've come home. Tampa—where the weather's right, the shopping's bright, the hotels handy, the people glad to see you, the convention center is new . . . and it's all wrapped and ready in that beautiful city by the bay.

Take it to Tampa this July. The 67th annual Free Will Baptist National Convention meets July 20–24 in Tampa's 600,000-square-foot, tri-level convention center with its 40 breakout rooms and easy access to downtown hotels. Everybody wins in Tampa; nobody goes home a loser.

Take it to Tampa this July. Be part of the come-as-you-are town that

hugs you at the city limits and waves a friendly "Y'all come back now," when the lights go out and you head home. Get here any way you can—drive, fly or float. You've certainly got enough options

with 17 airlines dropping off passengers five miles from downtown, two interstates circling the city and deep-water ports nudging both sides of town.

Take it to Tampa this July. Enjoy the rich Spanish heritage of an old-world, modern city. Museums, amusement parks, cruises, sports, the arts, world-class restaurants, more shopping than you can imagine, let alone get to. Tampa has it all and they want to share it with you.

Florida's 6,100 Free Will Baptists and 70 churches host the national convention for the third time. The convention previously met in Florida in 1967 (Jacksonville) when 3,000 registered, and in Tampa (1989) when 5,700 registered. Executive secretary Keith Burden and convention manager Dean Jones expect 6,000 or more people to register for the five-day event.

Convention officials blocked more than 900 rooms in four downtown hotels. The headquarters hotel, Tampa Marriott Waterside, sits across the street from the convention center. The longest walk is no more than four blocks.

Badges Required!

You heard it here first. Name badges will be required at Tampa. No exceptions. Yes, this even includes the Sunday morning service. So come prepared.

We regret any inconvenience this new policy may cause you. However, safety concerns because of terrorism threats at all large gatherings make this precaution necessary. National Association delegates adopted this "Badge Required" policy during the 2002 convention.

Registration opens Saturday afternoon to help expedite the badge process. The best way to handle the matter is to pre-register for the convention using the forms in *Contact* or pre-register online

Get here any way you can—drive, fly or float.



at www.nafwb.org. Then drop by the registration counter in the convention center Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning to pick up your badge. Remember: **No badge; no admittance; no exceptions.**

Convention Business

While it's true that the national convention is the annual business meeting for the National Association of Free Will Baptists, there's more to the July gathering than parliamentary procedures and departmental budgets. However, that's what calls us together from 40 states—time to take care of business.

Convention delegates will examine denominational budgets exceeding \$22 million as moderator Carl Cheshier gavels the voting body through electing 30 board and commission members and general officers. Each national agency and commission will submit an annual report to delegates during the two-day business session Wednesday and Thursday.

One major business concern will be electing a new moderator to succeed Carl Cheshier who announced that he is stepping down after seven years behind the gavel. That vote takes place Thursday morning as one of the last items of business in Tampa.

Meet the Speakers

The 2003 convention theme, "Founded On the Rock—Focused On the Future," will be developed by five ministers, all of whom lead national agencies. A sixth national director, Kenneth Akers, will teach the Adult Sunday School class.

Sunday School—Kenneth Akers

Forty-four-year-old Kenneth Akers, general director of the Master's Men Department, is active in youth work and Sunday School outreach at Cookeville FWB Church in Cookeville, Tennessee. He was ordained to the ministry in 1989. He and his wife Sandra have two sons, ages 20 and 17.

Kenneth is an alumnus of Upper Cumberland Bible Institute and Caribbean College of the Bible. He owns Visual Fashions Optical, and served eight years as an optician in Crossville

(TN). For the past 18 years, he has directed the Upper Cumberland Youth Camp and the youth work in Tennessee's Liberty Association.

In the broader community, Kenneth served seven years as a sports announcer on radio station WXVL. He was appointed to the Advisory Board of Roane State Community College and to the Tennessee State Licensing Board. He chaired the Tennessee Dispensing Opticians Educational Foundation. He has coached baseball, basketball and football for local youth, and was elected president of the PTO in Monterey (TN).

Sunday Morning—Ron Hunter

Reverend Ron Hunter, general director of the Sunday School and Church Training Department since August 2002, preaches the opening sermon at the Tampa convention. He brings a broad range of media and marketing experience as well as denominational leadership to the platform.

The 36-year-old Florida native was licensed to preach in 1984 and subsequently ordained to the ministry by the North Florida Association. He pastored 11 years in Florida and Tennessee, chaired the Florida C. E. Board and provided layout and design for the state paper (*The Coordinator*). He served six years on the national Media Commission. He was an owner-partner in a full-service advertising agency in Florida.

Hunter is completing his MPA (Master of Public Administration) degree at the University of Colorado. He is a 1989 graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He completed a Military Science Program at Vanderbilt University as well as extensive military training—U. S. Army Jump School, Air-Assault School; Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Warfare School and more. Ron and Pam Hunter have two children, ages nine and seven.

Sunday Evening—Larry Powell

Although the second annual "Free Will Baptist Singing" kicks off Sunday evening, Home Missions director Larry Powell will preach at a strategic point in the program. Powell (64) was ordained to the ministry in 1960 in his home state



**Kenneth Akers, Director
Master's Men
Sunday School**



**Ron Hunter, Director
Randall House
Sunday Morning**



**Larry Powell, Director
Home Missions
Sunday Evening**



Keith Burden
Executive Secretary
Monday Evening

of Georgia. He and his wife Wanda have three children.

He served 20 years (1966–1986) as a home missionary in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Texas. He also pastored 15 years in Georgia, Florida and Tennessee. Larry chaired the Texas Home Missions Board five years and the Tennessee Home Missions Board six years. He served eight years as vice-chairman of the Free Will Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees.

A 1964 graduate of FWBCC, he is also an alumnus of the University of Georgia, Bob Jones University and the University of Puerto Rico Language School. Brother Powell came on board as general director in 2001. He is a widely-used speaker, a proven church organizer and Christian School advocate/organizer.

Monday Evening—Keith Burden

Executive secretary Keith Burden (49) will deliver the keynote address at the national convention. He was elected last July during the 2002 convention and moved to Tennessee from Oklahoma in late August.

Burden was pastor of First FWB Church (Locust Grove, OK), moderator of the Oklahoma State Association and clerk of the National Association when elected executive secretary. He previously served 18 years as assistant clerk of the National Association.

A 1976 graduate of Hillsdale FWB College (OK), Burden studied at the FWBCC Graduate School and later earned a master's degree at Moody Bible Institute Graduate School (2001).

Keith is a writer, speaker and administrator as well as a veteran of 26 years in the pastorate. He and his wife Debbie Dudley Burden have two daughters.

Tuesday Evening—Matt Pinson

Newly-inaugurated Free Will Baptist Bible College president Matt Pinson steps to the pulpit Tuesday evening. The 35-year-old educator is the college's fifth president in just over 60 years. He is a philosopher, preacher, teacher, writer and an avid historian.

Ordained to the ministry in 1994, Pinson pastored 12 years in Alabama and Georgia before taking the reins at FWBCC last spring. He currently serves in two other denominational roles as well—member of the Commission for Theological Integrity and member of the Higher Education

Task Force. He was moderator of Georgia's Martin Association and chaired the Ordaining Council.

Brother Pinson is an alumnus of FWBCC; he earned master's degrees at the University of West Florida and Yale University. He is completing studies toward a Ph.D. at Florida State University. He published two books: *A Free Will Baptist Handbook* and *Four Views of Eternal Security* (served as editor). Matt and Melinda Pinson have two children, ages three and one.

Wednesday Evening—James Forlines

Foreign Missions director James Forlines will preach what's traditionally the most anticipated sermon at the national convention—the Wednesday night missionary service. The 44-year-old Tennessee native should feel right at home with the big missions-hungry crowd. This marks his fifth year with the Foreign Missions Department.

Forlines pastored 16 years in Indiana and Arkansas after serving a two-year hitch as youth pastor in North Carolina. He served four years as moderator of the Arkansas State Association, four years on the Foreign Missions Board and five years as Teen editor with Randall House Publications.

He graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1986, did two years of graduate study there as well, and studied three years at Anderson School of Theology. He was ordained to the ministry in 1980. James and Anita Ganey Forlines have three children.

Pastors/Laymen Conference

Noted author, speaker and educator Ted S. Rendall will address the Monday afternoon Pastors/Laymen Conference at 3:00 p.m. in Ballroom-B at Tampa Convention Center.

Dr. Rendall is chancellor emeritus at Prairie Bible Institute and pastor emeritus at Prairie Tabernacle Congregation, both in Alberta, Canada. He has written seven books, including *Fire in the Church*, *In God's School*, *Jeremiah: Prophet of Crisis*, *Give Me That Book!* and hundreds of articles.

Rendall (69) served 42 years on the staff at Prairie Bible Institute and 43 years as a pastor in Canada. He was also editor of *The Prairie Overcomer* (1955–1986).

Special Seminars

John Weaver, missionary and author of *Inside Afghanistan*, will speak and conduct a book sign-



Matt Pinson, President
Free Will Baptist Bible College
Tuesday Evening



James Forlines, Director
Foreign Missions
Wednesday Evening

Pre-register and beat the June 16 deadline (see convention insert).

ing at Tuesday morning's Foreign/Home Missions Rally (8:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.) in Ballroom-A at Tampa Convention Center. He will be joined on the program by the Spanish Youth Choir from Ebenezer FWB Church (Miami, FL). Mike Cousineau, who kept the world informed as gunfire erupted in Ivory Coast last fall, will also address attendees at the rally.

Other seminars being finalized at press time include Theological Trends and Music Commission.

WNAC Overview

The annual WNAC convention will bring 1,000 Free Will Baptist women together for two days of business and fellowship. The 2003 theme is "Lifting Up Our Eyes" (Ps. 121:1).

Two Monday afternoon seminars will meet at Tampa Convention Center. Members of the Free Will Baptist French Muslim Team will give a 60-minute presentation at 1:30 p.m. led by Jill Warren, Di Keener, Becky Derby and Dana Portell.

A seminar on personal finances gets underway at 3:00 p.m. Details were being finalized at press time.

The business side of WNAC opens Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. with a special presentation by WNAC executive secretary-treasurer Marjorie Workman. WNAC president Debe Taylor will gavel delegates through reports and votes. Ivory Coast missionary Deleen Cousineau will deliver the keynote address at WNAC's 11:00 a.m. missionary service in Tampa Convention Center.

The WNAC Fellowship Luncheon at nearby Wyndham Harbour Hotel features Rosalie Ranquist with New Tribes Mission (NTM). She worked in teaching literacy and as a literacy consultant out of New Guinea 27 years. Since 1993 Ranquist has served from the NTM international headquarters in Florida.

NYC Notes

National Youth Conference director Dean Jones expects more than 1,500 participants for the 36th annual conference. The conference theme is "Stand Still" (Ps. 46:10).

Service opportunities through NYC's "Reach That Guy" service projects will branch out in the city of Tampa as Free Will Baptist youth work in homeless shelters, food banks and inner-city educational programs.

Numerous worship services as well as tutorials, seminars and special events are planned for youth. They start early and go late. More than 800 entries will crowd the annual Music and Arts Festival and Bible Competition.

Behind the Scenes

Seven Florida Free Will Baptists serve on the national Steering Committee to coordinate the 2003 convention:

Randy Bryant (Vero Beach) — Chairman/Steering Committee

Tim Owen (Chipley) — State Moderator

Pat Portervint (Brandon) — Hospitality Committee Chairman

Jim Christian (Cocoa) — Prayer Committee Chairman

Jimmy Aldridge (Brandon) — Ushering Committee Chairman

Diana Bryant (Vero Beach) — State WAC President

Danny Conn (Pensacola) — State NYC Advisor

Don't Miss the Boat

There's still time for you to **Take it to Tampa in July!** Beat the June 16 deadline and pre-register for the convention. Don't delay; get it done today.

There's something special in the air about the Tampa meeting. You'll want to join us as more than 6,000 Free Will Baptists gather in Florida to sing, to pray, to fellowship, to take care of business. Meet us there. We're counting on you. ■



He needed a miracle.

THE LAST

I am the product of a less than perfect home. My mother died when I was three. From the time I was 10 until I left home and finally found independence, I was raised in New Jersey by a woman who had mental health problems. My main problem as an adolescent was

that I relied on myself for making most, if not all, my life decisions. I left God completely out of the picture. I was angry at God for allowing me to experience so much pain as a young boy. Thank God, I now understand Romans 8:28.

My grandmother was a devout Methodist and encouraged my father to drop me off at the Vincentown Methodist Church every Sunday. Dad was a good man but did not know the Lord as his Savior. He came to church with me on a few occasions. I seldom missed more than three Sundays a year in Sunday School, and I had a string of attendance pins to prove it. However, I rarely attended church services.

The Downward Spiral

When I got into my late teen years, my Sunday School attendance dropped and soon I was not attending at all. I became like my father—a good, hard-working and honest person. Nothing more. I married when I was 20. The main reason I married was I wanted a family. Being an only son and raised by a mentally ill lady was not what I thought life should be.

I met a Catholic girl and was soon in love and married. Just over four years later, my wife died. I could see my life being relived in the lives of my son and daughter. I wanted to put my kids up for adoption but was convinced that this was not the right thing to do. My nine-month-old daughter was to be raised by my mother-in-law, and I was to raise my son.

Within six months, my mother-in-law said she could no longer keep my daughter, and I had to find a place for her that afternoon. I soon ran out of family placements for my daughter and had to place both her and her brother into

foster care with the Department of Human Services. I was emotionally torn apart every time I visited and had to leave them.

I decided I needed to remarry and have a home for my kids. I went through all the women I knew, but none would marry a man with two children who were now almost two and five years old. Then I met Joy Reedman and soon married her. I only married a mother for my kids—not a woman I loved. However, I can say today that I love her just a little less than I do the Lord.

Drowning the Pain

From the time my first wife died until I was saved, I drank liquor to ease some of the pain which life had dealt me. I soon became abusive to Joy. She left me twice; both times I persuaded her to come back because I was going to change.

Money was no problem. I operated my own business as an auctioneer and was quite successful. I decided I needed stable hours and a better environment to control my behavior, so I took a job selling cars for Reedman Motors, Joy's family's business in Langhorne, Pennsylvania. Drinking and car sales seem to go hand-in-hand. I ate most of my meals at the local bar.

As you can guess, Joy left me again. This time she said she was not coming back. All I could see was the home I wanted for the kids slowly but surely crumbling. In November 1980, I overdosed on gin and Valium.

No One Cares

This is where, I believe, God started to deal with me. He put me on my back so I had to look up and focus on Him.

Photos: Don Worrell teaching when he was director of education at the Nashville Union Mission, ca. 1991 (top). Driving a fork lift unloading food, ca. 1998 (left). Explaining the gospel while working as an evening chaplain, ca. 1985 (left bottom). Unloading food, ca. 1995 (right bottom).

His life and family were falling apart.

ANGRY MAN

By Don Worrell

The first day after I was released from intensive care, a Presbyterian minister came by my room and asked me what I had tried to do. I became quite rude and started to insult him. He would not quit talking or leave. He asked me why I tried to end my life.

I answered him by telling him how my life was going, how wrong it was and how no one cared. He said something I will never forget—"God cares." He was a volunteer, and I have never seen him since.

Those two words, *God cares*, made a powerful impact on me. I started to look at life more positively. When I was discharged from the hospital a few days later, I began to rebuild my life. I convinced Joy to leave New Jersey and go someplace where I was not known so we could begin our life again. She agreed, and we landed in Smithfield, North Carolina, in February 1981.

Saved at Last

I knew my life had been better when I went to church, so I decided to get back in church. I do not know why, but I ruled out the Methodist church at one end of our street and chose West Calvary Free Will Baptist Church that was at the other end of the street. That's where I met Pastor Sam Truett. I began attending church by myself and taking the kids.

Joy had never attended church except on special occasions. She agreed to attend for the first time Easter Sunday, 1981.

We were accepted and loved almost instantaneously by that church. I had gained a lot of Bible knowledge from my Methodist Sunday School days which caused many church people to think I was already saved. I

could talk Bible with the best of them. We felt so at home we attended almost all the services.

During the 1981 fall revival, I was saved in the Thursday evening service, and Joy was saved Friday evening. The passage that was preached the night I was saved was I Corinthians 6:9-11. When the evangelist, Dr. Melvin Worthington, expounded on the phrase, "... and such were some of you ...," I could not control myself.

I knew then, for the first time, I could have freedom from the guilt I carried. I accepted Jesus Christ that evening as my Lord and Savior. Joy and I have both served God to the best of our ability since then.

New Vocation

I was impressed by God to attend Free Will Baptist Bible College in the fall of 1983. I loaded up my wife, four children and dog into our car, rented a U-Haul and headed toward Nashville on July 31. God called me to preach in

October 1984. I began praying about a ministry at this time while I was still in school.

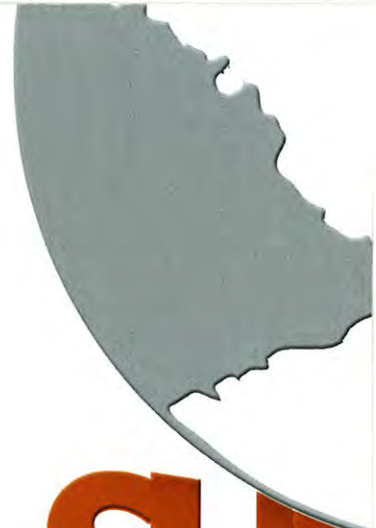
The Nashville Union Mission made an announcement during chapel for an evening

counselor in December 1984. I applied and began my ministry with the Nashville Union Mission on January 2, 1985.

God is so great. He delivered me from the worst problem I ever faced which was myself and my own destruction. When I finally gave Him my life, He gave me what I had always wanted—a loving family and unconditional love. ■

About the Writer: Reverend Don Worrell is senior vice-president at Nashville Union Mission in Nashville, Tennessee. He graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1988. He pastored in Marion, North Carolina (1989-1991) before returning to Tennessee to work with Nashville Union Mission full time.





SUN

The Incredible

The missionary's best friend is often an unseen staff member who prepares a mailing or makes a phone call.

The business world measures success by what is accomplished at the end of each workday. A growing business expects to face new challenges and obstacles regularly. When challenges are met with excitement and skill, the result is usually both success

and satisfaction—a special feeling that you made a difference in the company.

While many companies are started by individuals, successful companies are made by teamwork. The fast-paced business world demands that you constantly move forward. Just like the Christian walk, if you are not moving forward then you are moving backwards. Moving forward requires a network of people to make the business succeed.

My World

I speak from experience about the importance of teamwork. The successes of my businesses rely on my support staff.

In my businesses of physical therapy and sports acceleration, we always face daily challenges. The other therapists and I are busy treating patients and making sure there is a healing environment. We can only do so many things effectively because of time.

We need help with the initial details in order for the office to work efficiently. We must have support help. My office staff is my support staff. I do not have time to combine the patient's treatment with the daily work in the front office.

The office staff gathers the patient's information, calls to verify insurance coverage, schedules appointments, transcribes

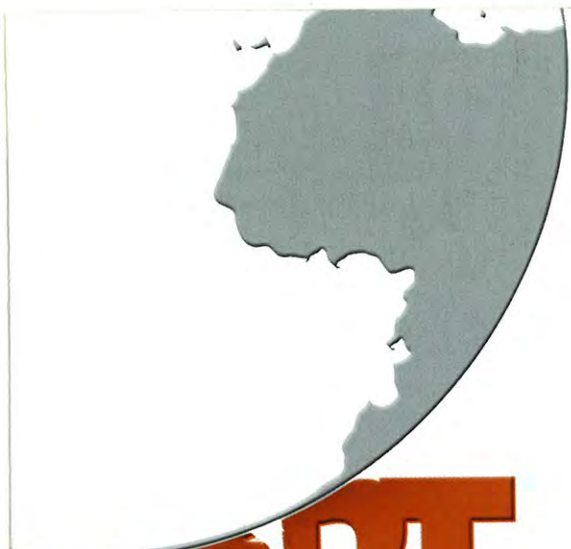
dictations, works with the billing company and doctors' offices, and has the patient's chart ready for us. If I had to do all of that, I would not have time to do what I am trained to do. My office staff relieves me of many behind-the-scenes duties that are essential.

Our Missions Departments

When I think about the importance of my support staff, I remember the importance of the support staff for Free Will Baptist Home and Foreign Missions Departments. When you consider the job they do for our denomination and missionaries, it should make you proud that you are a Free Will Baptist.

They take care of many details the missionaries don't have time to do. Because of the home-office staffs, our missionaries are able to stay on their respective fields doing what they are called and trained to do. I have had opportunity over the last several years to see the missions staffs in action, to observe a group of people who truly love what they do. Their desire to serve and run effective departments is a testimony of their calling from God.

The support staff could easily have secular jobs and be considered successful by those standards. But people in both departments that I have had the pleasure to know are suc-



REPORT

Staff

By Cameron Lane

cessful in their own right. Their potential and professionalism are exactly what our denomination needs to lead us into the next generation.

Last year when the frightening incident happened in Ivory Coast, I observed as the Foreign Missions support staff went into action. Their quick actions aroused a national scene of news and stories that swept the country. They were there for our missionaries, our children and our denomination. Their wisdom from God and quick actions helped secure a situation that could have easily become worse.

“Mighty Men”

The two offices of Home and Foreign support services remind me of the “mighty men” that King David surrounded himself with for support. The Lord chose King David to lead Israel and used the “mighty men” as his support staff.

Twice a year we remember the support services with the Benjamin Randall and Laura Belle Barnard World Missions Offerings. I encourage you to join me in remembering the staffs year round with prayer and financial support. Let's give a heartfelt thanks to the workers in the Home and Foreign Missions Departments for their dedication and work ethic. They are making an eternal difference. ■



Home and Foreign Missions joint prayer meeting (top left). Home Missions retired volunteer Iva Mae Bracey prepares prayer card packets (top right). Foreign Missions staffer Geneva Walker receipts gifts (center right).



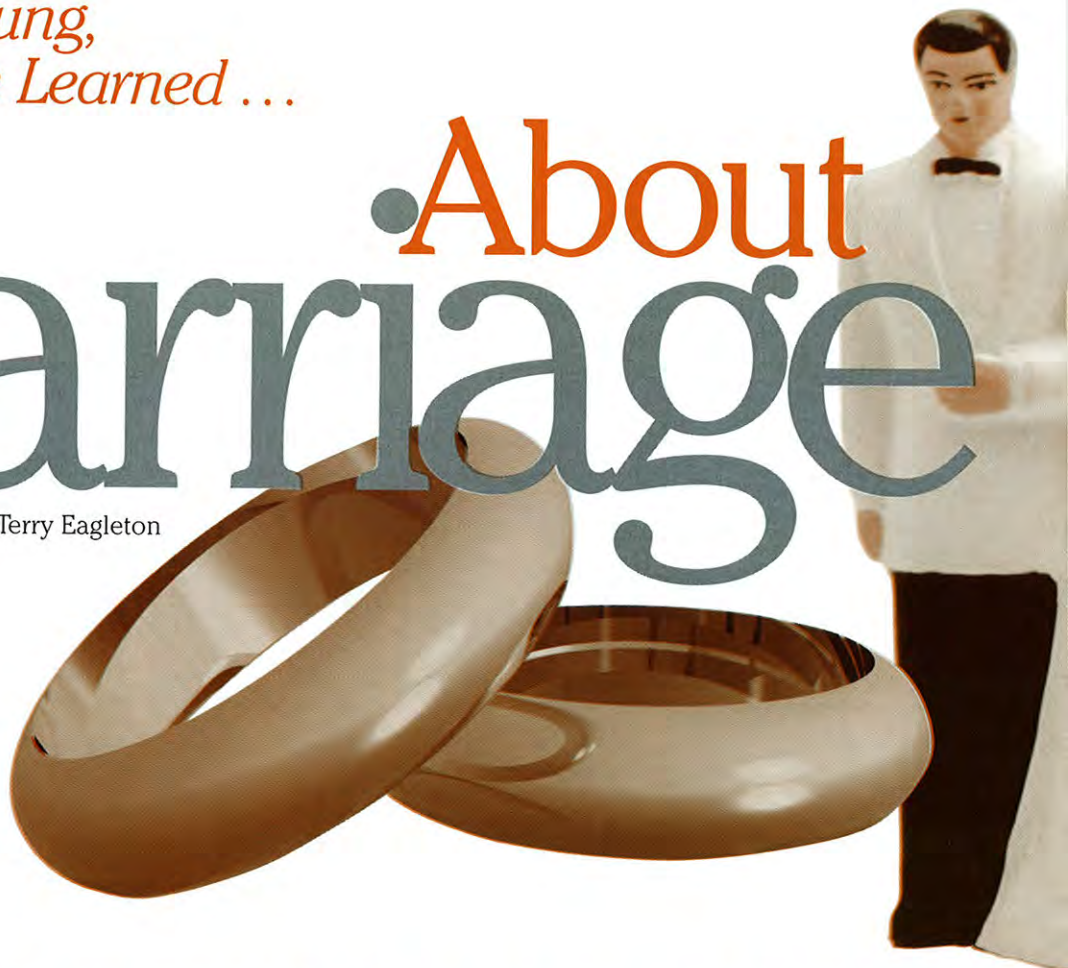
About the Writer: Mr. Cameron Lane is a deacon at First Free Will Baptist Church in Russellville, Arkansas. He owns Lane Physical Therapy Center and Lane Sports Acceleration. Cameron is an alumnus of Free Will Baptist Bible College; he earned a master's degree from the University of Central Arkansas.

Part five of an 11-part series.

*I May Be Young,
But This I've Learned ...*

• About Marriage

By Terry Eagleton



I mourned with the widow as she contemplated 45 years of marriage while attending her husband's funeral on their wedding anniversary. The incongruity was disconcerting to all—except her. What appeared to everyone else as a cruel irony, for her was covered by God's gracious comfort. She took solace in the completion of a marriage union that had experienced all the best that God had designed for them.

By contrast, most of us are surrounded by too many unhealthy marriages. I thank God for parents who were beautiful models of His design. I'm young, but this I've learned about marriage.

God-Designed Institution

I've spent most of my life unaware of the profound significance of recognizing the origin of the marriage institution. I don't mean I wasn't aware that God was present when Adam and Eve

were united. Rather, it took some maturity before the importance of the divine origin of the institution started to become clear to me.

Divine origin explains why marriage is not just a socially acceptable way for two people to share their lives, but is in fact, God's institution for the foundation, proliferation and social nourishment of the human family. As founder of the institution, it was His prerogative to set

its norms. As such, He built it on a heterosexual, monogamous, life-long covenant.

Today, many around us are committed to the erroneous and arrogant notion that in an evolving society, marriage and all its privileges can be experienced by any two humans. I can think of no greater fallacy and threat to the social fabric of mankind. In our best interest, this absurd notion must be corrected.

Mystical Union

Not long ago I walked past a television tuned to a daytime talk show. The topic of the day must have been, "When Opposites Attract." I'm talking big, fat men with itty-bitty women. Giants married to midgets. Squanderers attached to misers. Shaking my head, all I could do was observe again how I never cease to be amazed by us humans. Interesting as those couples were, they are not the mystical unions that most amaze me.

Speaking of married people, God said, "...they are no more twain, but one flesh... what therefore God hath joined together, let not

Who fully understands all the ramifications of two individuals becoming one? It has to mean more than shared light bills, groceries, laundry and beds.

man put assunder," (Matt. 19:6).

That is mystical!

Who fully understands all the ramifications

of this truth? It has to mean more than shared light bills, groceries, laundry and beds. I'm convinced that marriages would benefit from husbands and wives, mystically united, finding and fulfilling God's purposes for their oneness.

More Than Love

Marriages are complex relationships built on multiple ingredients. Only the most naïve and immature among us can believe a single sentiment can serve as an adequate foundation, frame and shelter for all the responsibilities and privileges of marriage.

While love is a desirable ingredient, marriage takes more. Trust, responsibili-

ty, humility, leadership, commitment and a dozen other ingredients are required for a successful marriage. Fortunately, these can be matured along the way.

Money Matters

Scripture is often misquoted as saying money is the root of all evil. The truth is Paul said the *love* of money is at the root of all kinds of evil, (1 Tim. 6:10). A similar mistake is made when we hear people carelessly say, "More marriages break up over finances than any other cause." These are actually otherwise weak and unhealthy marriages that find finances an easy exacerbation of fundamental flaws.

There are too many strong marriages among the financially destitute and weak marriages among the monetarily wealthy to diagnose funds as the fatal

meaning pastors in their zeal to communicate the sacredness of marriage ignore the dark reality of some who are in danger of losing their lives attempting to be true to what I would consider erroneous teaching of scripture.

Rich and Rewarding

I try not to carelessly categorize statements for the sake of emphasis. But I have no hesitation in saying that marriage is one of the most rewarding of all human relationships. God did His part to make it so. When it is not, it is our fault. In such cases, we have given too much lead to our sinful nature to enjoy God's gift.

While a good marriage requires constant attention and no small effort, the rewards overwhelm any unpleasant memory of the exertion. This explains

disease of deceased marriages. I understand I may be accused of merely toying with semantics, but all who understand the difference are liberated to appreciate the role of finances in marriage.

Some Must Cease

With great anguish of spirit I've come to conclude that, on rare occasions, some marriage contracts must be broken. As one committed to laboring to strengthen families in all their relationships, it has been wrenching for me to come to this conclusion. The only solace I take is that it is the result of "applied theology."

In good conscience I can not interpret that God requires a wife to endanger her life and the lives of her children to satisfy a contract already broken, in action, by her husband—or vice versa. I mention this because I believe well-

why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one (Matt. 19:5).

On August 26, 1999, Mom watched Dad slip into eternity, satisfied they had built a good marriage—leaving an irreplaceable inheritance to their descendants. ■



About the Writer: Reverend Terry Eagleton pastors Horton Heights Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

Editor's Note: After this article was written, Terry's mother slipped into eternity with his father on February 21, 2003.

A Diamond

By Roy Harris

A thought-provoking suggestion on how to fund future denominational outreach.

The story is told of a farmer in South Africa who sold his land and sought his fortune in diamonds. He found none and died penniless. After his death, gold was discovered on the very land that he had sold. He looked for treasure beyond his personal resources when more wealth than he could ever have imagined lay in a stream only a short distance from his farm house.

We must look deeply at our own resources as a denomination. God has blessed Free Will Baptists financially. By His hand we have made great strides since the formation of our National Association in 1935. Patterns and methods of support were established which have worked well.

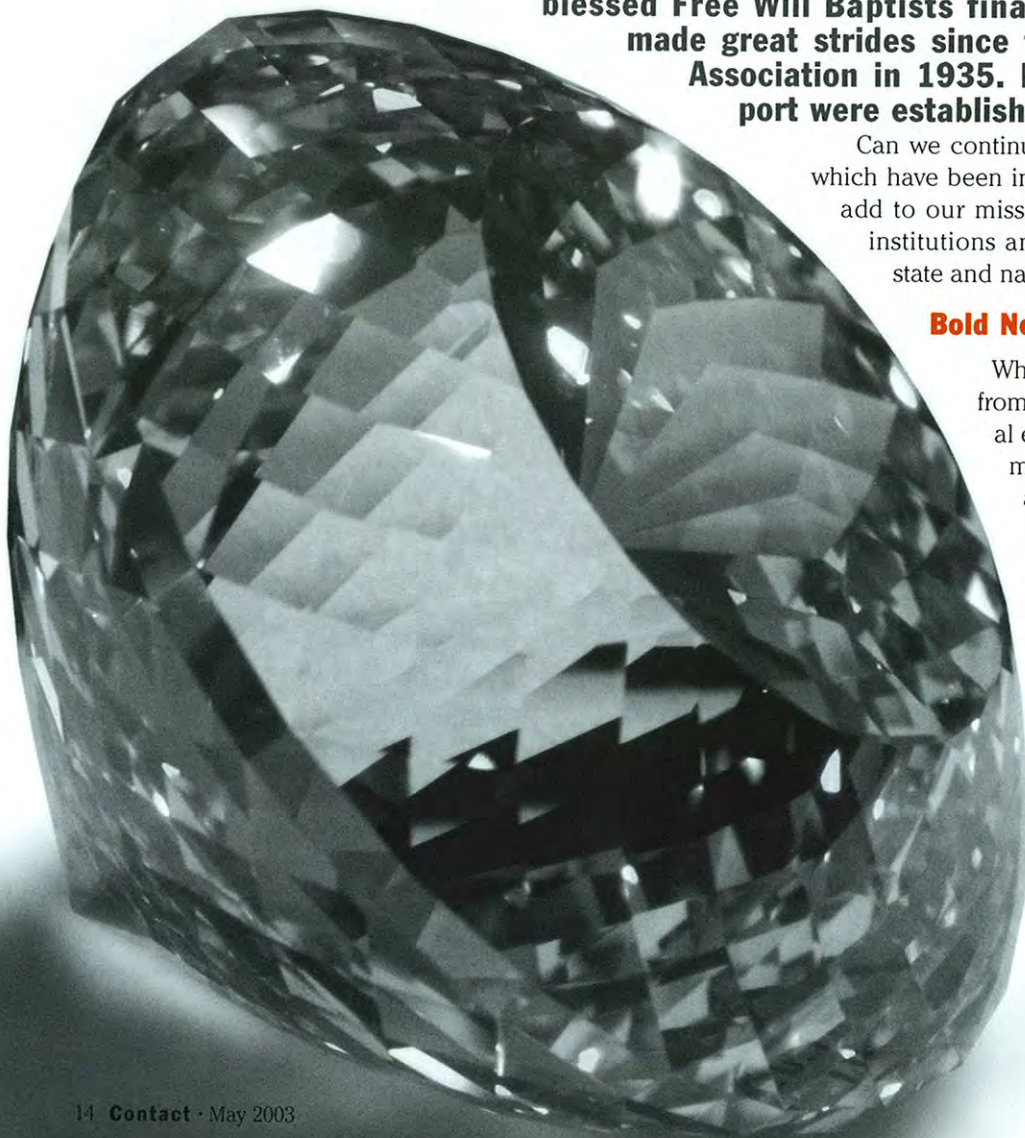
Can we continue to operate using those same methods which have been in place for almost 70 years? How will we add to our missions outreach, expand our educational institutions and construct needed facilities on local, state and national levels?

Bold New Steps

While it is true that funding may be available from outside sources for some denominational enterprises, by and large, Free Will Baptists must pay their own way in fulfilling the role assigned by God to reach the world with the gospel. There is no golden formula that will solve all our denominational financial needs. We must become creative and future-thinking if we are to broaden our horizons and aggressively reach our world for Christ in the 21st century.

We must take bold new steps to face present and future needs which could not have been imagined by our denominational fathers.

Is there a resource available that could help propel our Free Will Baptist work to new levels in the 21st century? I believe there is. The Free Will Baptist Foundation is a vehicle our people can use to more effectively reach the world for Christ. The



in the Rough

Foundation is quickly approaching asset levels that will enable it to operate independently from the Board of Retirement and Insurance.

Due to staff limitations, the Free Will Baptist Foundation has been limited to primarily responding to requests by individuals and agencies for assistance with trust generation and funds management and disbursement. The department has done a commendable job with a limited amount of time and resources. Now is the time to begin thinking about the future role of the Foundation.

Stewardship Training

Stewardship responsibilities begin in the heart of every believer. We all hope to hear the Savior say some day: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many."

Our goal should be to invest "where moth and rust doth not corrupt" and where the investment will pay eternal dividends. There is no substitute for personal responsibility and no doubt of personal accountability to God for the time, talent and treasure He has entrusted to each believer.

Stewardship training in local churches is essential if believers are to truly understand individual responsibility and accountability. Pastors are the key to helping our people understand the biblical mandate of stewardship.

Other than the occasional sermon on tithing, pastors are sometimes at a loss on how to develop and implement a program of stewardship in our local churches. Most pastors would welcome help in this area. The Executive Office has developed materials on stewardship and made them available.

The ultimate aim of the Free Will Baptist Foundation should be helping believers manage their assets so they may be able to accomplish their personal stewardship goals. As the Foundation

soon comes of age, it can play a vital role in the development of a stewardship program for our denomination.

The aim of this program would be to design, produce and distribute stewardship materials for Free Will Baptists. The program would help individuals, pastors, churches, local associations, state associations and national agencies develop stewardship plans and materials.

There is a desperate need for more help in local churches in knowing how to determine readiness for new construction, and how to design and implement capital campaigns for raising funds necessary for construction. This could be another arm of the stewardship role of the Foundation.

New Look—New Name

The Free Will Baptist Foundation can take on a fresh look and a new name as it becomes independently recognized by our denomination. A name like "Free Will Baptist Foundation and Stewardship Department" might be appropriate. (Realizing, of course, that a name change must be considered in light of present legal identity.)

This fresh old/new agency could serve as the flagship for the denomination in assisting churches, local and national organizations and agencies in accumulating and managing funds for the purpose of extending the gospel at home and around the world. The agency could serve the denomination by helping with stewardship in four areas:

- Assist individuals, churches, local and state associations/organizations and national agencies with advice, instruments for wills, trusts, etc., and management of funds received through these instruments.
- Assist individuals, pastors and churches with programs and stewardship materials for stewardship development on each level.

- Assist pastors, local churches, local and state associations/organizations with analysis and step-by-step procedures for investigating and launching capital campaigns.
- Assist pastors and local churches in discerning readiness for new construction.

The Free Will Baptist Foundation receives funds through The Together Way plan. It also receives management funds from revenue received made by the Foundation. Income for the department is nearing sufficient levels to adequately fund additional personnel. This department has the potential of becoming self-sufficient within a few years.

Resources at Home

Free Will Baptists must take a hard look at how we hope to fund our work on all levels. The answer does not lie in seeking resources from without. We possess the resources to fulfill the role God has assigned for Free Will Baptists.

Diamonds are rare and valuable. Many times they are hidden and hard to find. The Free Will Baptist Foundation has been part of our denominational landscape for years. We have yet to tap its potential. The Free Will Baptist Foundation is truly a diamond. It has great value and can play a vital role in the stewardship of the Free Will Baptist denomination. It may be a diamond in the rough now, but its glow will grow brighter with each passing year until Jesus returns. ■



About the Writer: Reverend Roy Harris pastors Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

What do your clothes and your attitudes say about you?

“Are You a Priest?”

By David A. Joslin



IHOP (International House of Pancakes) recently opened a restaurant in Conway, Arkansas. On Thursday, December 5, 2002, my wife Mary Kay was visiting her mother. Since I was

home alone, I made the decision to have a late breakfast.

The Hispanic cashier was cordial as he seated me. After finishing, I approached the register to pay the ticket. The next statement the cashier made was unexpected.

He inquired, “Are you a priest?”

Unsure of what he had said, I asked, “What did you say?”

He looked straight at me and repeated, “Are you a priest?”

Knowing he was from Mexico, and apparently Roman Catholic, the question was the product of his background.

My reply was, “Well, yes, you could say that, but really I’m a preacher . . . a pastor . . . a Free Will Baptist minister.”

Again, he said, “Are you a priest?” He continued, “You look like a priest.”

Subconsciously I wondered, *How could he make such a statement? Dressed in casual*

pants, plaid shirt, leather jacket—yet I looked like a priest!

Such is a silent witness. Every pastor, preacher, minister *should look like a priest*. The pastor’s looks should reveal his profession. The inward being is revealed outwardly. Without a single word being spoken, a witness had been given. Every believer should look like a priest. One’s behavior, conduct, mannerisms and actions should reflect one’s relationship with the Lord.

This question could be asked of all: “Are you a priest? Do you look like a priest?” ■



About the Writer: Reverend David Joslin resides in Conway, Arkansas. He retired in 2002 as executive director of the Arkansas State Association of Free Will Baptists. He is a writer, conference speaker, historian and interim pastor.

Free Will Baptist National Convention

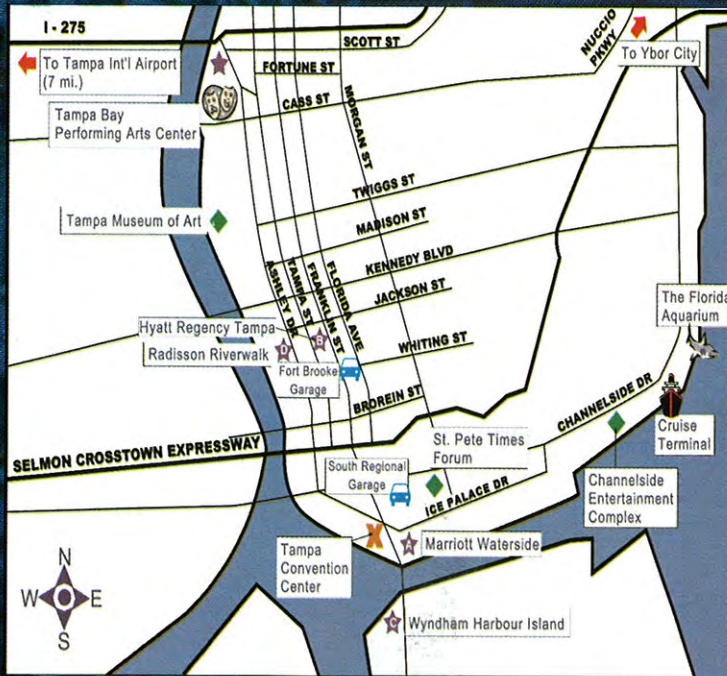
FOUNDED
ON THE ROCK

FOCUSSED

ON THE FUTURE

Tampa, Florida
July 20-24, 2003

TAMPA INFORMATION



Hotel Information

Hotel	Map Location	Room Rate	Distance From Convention Center	Parking
Tampa Marriott Waterside	A	\$124	1 Block	\$12 Self or Valet
Hyatt Regency Tampa	B	\$118	3 Blocks	\$7-Self \$12-Valet
Wyndham Harbour Island	C	\$126	2 Blocks	\$10 Self or Valet
Radisson Riverwalk	D	\$109	4 Blocks	\$5 Self or Valet



Location

Tampa Bay is located on Florida's West Coast. The convenient location makes it easy to get to all of the attractions in central Florida. Orlando is just 84 miles east of Tampa.

Climate

Through the summer, visitors to Tampa will experience mostly sunny days that are often cooled by quick afternoon showers. Don't forget to pack the sunscreen if you are likely to spend time outdoors.

TAMPA TRAVEL TIPS

HARTline is Tampa's public transportation system, and operates a free uptown/downtown connector trolley service in downtown Tampa. For HARTline route info, call 813-254-4278.

For the latest information about Tampa, please go to www.visittampabay.com.

The main interstates that run throughout Tampa are I-75, I-275 and I-4.

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Tampa Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau

1-800-44-TAMPA

Travelers Aid

813-273-5936

Tampa General Hospital Emergency Room

813-251-7100

Local Weather

813-645-2323

General Police Information

813-276-3200

Emergency

911



HOUSING FORM

National Association of Free Will Baptists
Women Nationally Active for Christ
National Youth Conference
Tampa, Florida - July 20-24, 2003

INSTRUCTIONS

Personal Information

Complete the **Personal Information** box. The contact name is the person to whom you want the confirmation sent. List each person who will be staying in this room. Don't forget the **Special Requests** box to the right. All special requests will be noted but cannot be guaranteed.



Hotel Information

Mark the box on the grid to the right, indicating the **hotel** in which you would like to reserve a room, and the **room configuration** you want.

Don't forget to include your arrival and departure dates. Please see **page 2** for more information about the hotels.

Payment Options

Complete the **Payment Options** section by indicating how you will be paying for your room. You may pay by credit card or check. If you pay by check, make it payable to the hotel.

Reserving a Room

Reserve your room via phone, mail, fax or internet. If mailing or faxing, please print or type all information requested on this form and **send it directly to the hotel** no later than Friday, June 20, 2003. Reservations received after this date are subject to availability and may be at a higher rate.

Any changes or cancellations should be communicated directly to the hotel. Check with your hotel regarding cancellation policies and check-in times.

**SEND ONLY ONE
FORM PER ROOM
REQUEST.**

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Confirmations will be mailed to this person only.

Contact name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone # _____ Fax # _____

Room Occupants
(List each person.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS

- Wheelchair Accessible Room
 Rollaway Bed (see chart below)
 Crib Non-Smoking Room
 Other _____

HOTEL INFORMATION

The rates below do not include the current hotel tax of 12%.	SINGLE 1 BED/ 1 PERSON	DOUBLE 1 BED/ 2 PERSONS	DBL/DBL 2 BEDS/ 2 PERSONS	TRIPLE 2 BEDS/ 3 PERSONS	QUAD 2 BEDS/ 4 PERSONS	ROLL- AWAY BED	PARKING RATES
Tampa Marriott Waterside <i>Headquarters Hotel</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$124	<input type="checkbox"/> \$124	<input type="checkbox"/> \$124	<input type="checkbox"/> \$124	<input type="checkbox"/> \$124	\$15/day	\$12-Self \$12-Valet
Hyatt Regency Tampa	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	<input type="checkbox"/> \$118	Single or Double rooms only	\$7-Self \$12-Valet
Wyndham Harbour Island	<input type="checkbox"/> \$126	<input type="checkbox"/> \$126	<input type="checkbox"/> \$126	<input type="checkbox"/> \$126	<input type="checkbox"/> \$126		\$10-Self \$10-Valet
Radisson Riverwalk	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	<input type="checkbox"/> \$109	\$15/day All rooms	\$5-Self \$5 Valet In/Out

ARRIVAL DATE ____ / ____ / ____ DEPARTURE DATE ____ / ____ / ____

TAMPA MARRIOTT WATERSIDE
700 South Florida Avenue
Tampa, FL 33602
Tel 888-268-1616
Fax 813-204-6349
www.tampawaterside.com
Group Code: FWBFWBA

HYATT REGENCY TAMPA
Two Tampa City Center
Tampa, FL 33602
Tel 800-233-1234
Fax 813-222-4964
www.nafwb.org/convention
click on Hyatt link

WYNDHAM HARBOUR ISLAND
725 S. Harbour Island Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33602
Tel 813-229-5000
Fax 813-229-5322
www.wyndham.com
Group Code: 030718

RADISSON RIVERWALK HOTEL
200 N. Ashley Drive
Tampa, FL 33602
Tel 813-223-2222
Fax 813-273-0839
www.radisson.com
Promotional Code: FREE

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Credit Card # _____ Exp _____

Name on Card _____

Check Enclosed. Check # _____
Make check payable to the hotel.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

An advance deposit of \$140 is required. Without complete credit card or check information, your reservation will not be processed.

**DON'T DELAY!
RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE
BY JUNE 20, 2003.**

Schedule

Saturday, July 19

Registration Opens

3:00 pm-7:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Sunday, July 20

Sunday School

10:00 am-10:45 am
Tampa Convention Center

Morning Worship

11:00 am-12:00 Noon
Tampa Convention Center

Evening Worship

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Worship Services

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Monday, July 21

General Board Meeting

8:00 am-2:30 pm
Tampa Marriott Waterside

NYC Competitive Activities

8:30 am-4:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Seminars

1:00 pm-4:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

WNAC Seminar

1:30 pm-2:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

WNAC Seminar

3:00 pm- 4:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Exhibit Area Open

3:00 pm-10:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Monday, July 21

Pastors/Laymen Conference

3:00 pm-5:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Children's Banquet

5:00 pm
Wyndham Harbour Island

Tweener Banquet

5:00 pm
Wyndham Harbour Island

Evening Worship

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Worship Services

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Truth & Peace Alumni Reunion

9:00 pm-11:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Youth Worker Reception

9:00 pm-10:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Tuesday, July 22

NYC Competitive Activities

8:30 am-4:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

WNAC Convention

8:30 am-10:50 am
Tampa Convention Center

Exhibit Area Open

10:00 am-10:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Seminars

10:00 am-4:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Tuesday, July 22

Theological Trends Seminar

11:00 am-12:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

WNAC Missionary Service

11:00 am
Tampa Convention Center

Hillsdale College Luncheon

12:00 noon
Tampa Marriott Waterside

WNAC Luncheon

12:30 pm-2:30 pm
Wyndham Harbour Island

Evening Worship

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Worship

7:00 pm-8:30 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Youth Banquet

9:00 pm-11:00 pm
Wyndham Harbour Island

Wednesday, July 23

NYC Competitive Finals

8:00 am-11:00 am
Tampa Convention Center

Convention Business Session

9:00 am-4:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

NYC Seminars

10:00 am-4:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

Exhibit Area Open

10:00 am-10:00 pm
Tampa Convention Center

of Events

Wednesday, July 23

FWBBC Luncheon

12:00 noon-1:15 pm

Tampa Convention Center

Evening Worship

7:00 pm-8:30 pm

Tampa Convention Center

NYC Awards Ceremony

9:00 pm

Tampa Convention Center

Thursday, July 24

Exhibit Area Open

9:00 am-12:30 pm

Tampa Convention Center

Concluding Business Session

9:00 am-adjournment

Tampa Convention Center

Worship Service Information

Adult worship is scheduled Sunday morning and each evening Sunday through Wednesday.

Student worship (grades 7-12) is scheduled Sunday morning and each evening Sunday through Tuesday.

Tweneer worship (grades 4-6) is scheduled Sunday morning and each evening Sunday through Tuesday.

Children's worship (grades 1-3) is scheduled Sunday morning and each evening Sunday through Tuesday.

Preschool worship (ages 3-6) is scheduled Sunday morning and each evening Sunday through Wednesday.

Convention Speakers



Ron Hunter, Director
Randall House
Sunday Morning



Larry Powell, Director
Home Missions
Sunday Evening



Keith Burden,
Executive Secretary
Monday Evening



Matt Pinson, President
Free Will Baptist
Bible College
Tuesday Evening



James Forlines, Director
Foreign Missions
Wednesday Evening



Ted S. Rendall
Pastors/Laymen
Conference



Deleen Cousineau
Cote d'Ivoire
WNAC Convention



John Weaver
Shelter Now
NYC-Sunday



Barry St. Clair
Reach Out Ministries
NYC-Monday/Tuesday

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS
NAFWB
FREE WILL BAPTIST CONVENTION
WNAC CONVENTION
NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE



PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

National Association of Free Will Baptists
 Women Nationally Active for Christ
 National Youth Conference
 Tampa, Florida July 20-24, 2003

Did you know that you could Pre-Register online?
 Visit www.NAFWB.org today!

One Person Per Form

Name Desired On Badge: First _____ Last _____
 Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (____) _____ Email _____
 Church You Attend _____
 Church Location: City _____ State _____

**Badges Required
 At All
 Convention Events
 Lost Badge Fee
 \$5**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

All voting delegates must be members in good standing of a Free Will Baptist church.

Voting Delegates:

- National Board/Commission Member
- State Delegate
- Local Church Delegate* → → → \$50
- Foreign Missionary
- Home Missionary
- Ordained Deacon
- Ordained Minister

*DOCUMENTATION
 REQUIRED

Non-Voting Attendees:

- Licensed Minister
 - Visitor
- Fee \$ _____

WNAC CONVENTION

Voting Delegates:

- National Officer
- State President
- State Field Worker
- State Delegate
- Local WNAC Delegate* → → → \$5

*DOCUMENTATION
 REQUIRED

Non-Voting Attendees:

- Missionary
 - Visitor
- Fee \$ _____

NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

- Grades 1-12*** → → → \$25
 Required to attend NYC Events or Competition
- Preschool Worship*** → → → \$25
 For children ages 3-6 who have not started 1st grade
- Visitor-Adult**
- Visitor-Ages 3-6** not attending **Preschool Worship**

*ON-SITE
 REGISTRATION
\$35

Fee \$ _____

EVENT TICKETS

- Children's Banquet** → → → Qty. _____ x \$10= _____
 Monday, July 21, 5:00 pm
- Tweener Banquet** → → → Qty. _____ x \$10= _____
 Monday, July 21, 5:00 pm
- Youth Worker Reception** → → → Qty. _____ x \$20= _____
 Monday, July 21, 9:00 pm
- WNAC Luncheon** → → → Qty. _____ x \$25= _____
 Tuesday, July 22, 12:30 pm
- Hillsdale Luncheon** → → → Qty. _____ x \$20= _____
 Tuesday, July 22, 12:00 noon
- Youth Banquet** → → → Qty. _____ x \$22= _____
 Tuesday, July 22, 9:00 pm
- FWBBC Luncheon** → → → Qty. _____ x \$27= _____
 Wednesday, July 23, 12:00 noon

DEADLINE JUNE 16

**NO REFUNDS AFTER
 JUNE 16**

Ticket(s) \$ _____

Grand Total \$ _____

- Paying by check (Payable to FWB Convention)
- Paying by credit card (Discover, MC, Visa only)

Card # _____ Exp. / _____

Name on card _____

Return Form & Fees to:

Convention Registration
 P.O. Box 5002
 Antioch, TN 37011-5002
 Fax: 615-731-0771

Questions?
877-767-7659
exoff@nafwb.org

**Beginning April 1:
 Pre-Register Online!
www.nafwb.org**

**For Office
 Use Only**

_____	Date Rcvd
_____	CK/MO#
_____	Amount
_____	From

Confirmation Letters Will Be Mailed.

MUSIC NOTES

The Free Will Baptist Music Commission has released the rehearsal and performance schedule for the Convention Choir and Men's Chorale for this year's National Convention, July 20-24 in Tampa, Florida.

The **Convention Choir** will be singing in the Sunday evening, Monday and Wednesday services. The rehearsal schedule is as follows:

Sunday 4:00 pm & 8:30 pm
Monday 5:30 pm
Tuesday 6:00 pm & 8:30 pm
Wednesday 5:30 pm

The **Men's Chorale** will be featured during the Tuesday evening service. They will rehearse Monday, 8:30 pm and Tuesday, 5:15 pm.

The 2003 National Convention will feature an orchestra comprised of volunteers from across the denomination. For more information, call or write by June 1:

*Bethel Free Will Baptist Church
Attn. Chris Truett
1936 Banks School Rd.
Kinston, NC 28504
(252) 522-2451 ext. 229*

Orchestra Rehearsals At 4:00 PM Daily

SECURITY NOTICE

In light of security concerns, official convention name badges will be required for all convention events.

Please be diligent in this area for yourself and those for whom you are responsible.

National Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc.

**P.O. Box 5002
Antioch, TN 37011-5002
877-767-7659
www.nafwb.org
exoff@nafwb.org**

All photos courtesy of Tampa Bay CVB.

2003 Local Church Delegate Card

This certifies that _____
(Name)
is a duly authorized delegate to the National Association of Free Will Baptists.
Church Name _____
Church City State _____

Pastor's or Church Clerk's signature
Important: This card properly signed and accompanied by a **\$50 registration fee** entitles a local FWB church delegate to register for voting privileges.
Only one delegate allowed per church.

2003 Local WNAC Delegate Card

This certifies that _____
(Name)
is a duly authorized delegate to the Women Nationally Active for Christ Convention.
Church Name _____
Church City State _____

Local Coordinator's or Local Secretary's signature
Important: This card properly signed and accompanied by a **\$5 registration fee** entitles a local delegate to register for voting privileges.
Only one delegate per church.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS
NAFWB
FREE WILL BAPTIST CONVENTION
WNAC CONVENTION
NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

**Second Annual
FWB Classic**

**The 2003 National
Youth Conference**



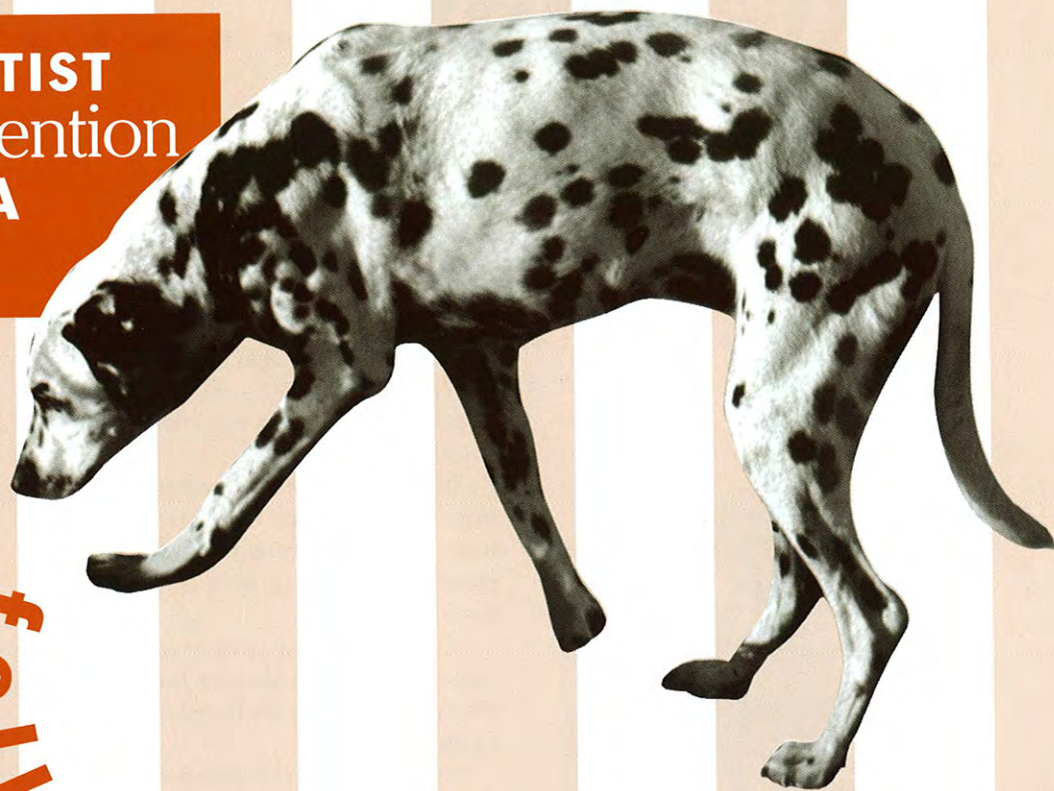
**Make an impact
on the city of Tampa!**

**Call 1-800-877-7030
For information or to register**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS
NAFWB
FREE WILL BAPTIST CONVENTION
WNAC CONVENTION
NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

National Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc.
P.O. Box 5002
Antioch, Tennessee 37011-5002

**FREE WILL BAPTIST
National Convention
TAMPA, FLORIDA
July 20-24**



follow your nose

Contact BOOTH

-  Daily drawings for prizes.
-  Free tote bag (\$14.95 value) with 2-year Contact subscription.
-  Free ID wallet with 1-year Contact subscription.
-  Last chance for \$15 yearly subscription rate. Price will increase to \$18 August 1.

at the
specials
our
convention

Convention Orchestra Seeks Instrumentalists



KINSTON, NC—The 2003 Convention Orchestra needs to sign up instrumentalists for the national convention as soon as possible, according to Chris Truett, the instrumental director.

Truett said, "We are inviting anyone from the ninth grade and older to participate in the Convention Orchestra. We would like to have as many adults participate as possible."

The orchestra will accompany congregational selections Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights in the Tampa Convention Center, July 21–23.

The orchestra will practice daily at 4:00 p.m., beginning Sunday afternoon, July 20. Practice sessions will meet on

stage in Tampa Convention Center's East Hall.

Those who wish to participate in the Convention Orchestra should send name, address, phone number and church name to:

Bethel Free Will Baptist Church
Attention: Chris Truett
1936 Banks School Road
Kinston, NC 28504
252-522-2451, Ext. 229

Please specify instrument(s) and how many years of experience in playing the instrument. Notify Chris Truett by June 1 so that music can be mailed prior to the convention. Call the number above with questions.

Veteran Tennessee Pastor, Winston Sweeney, With the Lord



KINGSPORT, TN—Reverend Winston Sweeney, a colorful and influential pastor for 55 years, died March 3 shortly after being diagnosed with a brain tumor. Reverend Sweeney (75) was pastor of Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church at the time of his death. He completed 43 years at the church in August 2002.

Born the son of a coal miner in 1927 in Dungannon, Virginia, Brother Sweeney was converted at age 16 and ordained to preach at age 21. He pastored six years in Virginia and North Carolina before starting his 43-year tenure at Fellowship FWB Church in Kingsport.

A long-time leader in Tennessee, he served as moderator of the Tennessee State Association and the Union Association. Through the years, he also served as clerk of the Union Association, moderator of the Eastern Quarterly Meeting (Union Association) and was elected to the Union Association's Ordaining Council.

Reverend Sweeney was well-known for his support of home and foreign missions. He led 34 tours to the Middle East and

served 30 years on the Board of Trustees of the Free Will Baptist Family Ministries (Greeneville, TN). He wrote three gospel tracts, one of which was reprinted four times ("Get Right, Stay Right, Die Right").

Sweeney preached the keynote message at the 1969 Free Will Baptist national convention in St. Louis, Missouri, where he spoke on "The Church and Her Lord" from Ephesians 1:22–23 and Matthew 16:18. He was scheduled to preach the opening sermon at the 2000 national convention in Anaheim, California, when declining health forced him to cancel that engagement.

He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. Sweeney attended Graham Bible College and Institute three years. He later did external studies at Moody Bible Institute and Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Funeral services were conducted March 6 at Fellowship FWB Church. Hundreds of people stood in line to greet the family and hear final remarks. Dr. Charles Thigpen and Reverend James Cox officiated.

Reverend Sweeney is survived by his wife, Jewel Addington Sweeney; one daughter, Dawn Sweeney of Church Hill; two sons, Winston L. Sweeney of York, PA, and Rick Sweeney of California; four grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Georgia Church Sets Jubilee Celebration



SAVANNAH, GA—First F.W.B. Church in Savannah plans a three-day Jubilee Celebration May 23–25, according to Pastor Steve Hughes. The big event kicks off with a Friday golf tournament and features a day-long series of speakers and meals on Sunday.

Pastor Hughes said that a huge choir featuring current and former choir members, soloists and quartets will perform Saturday night and Sunday morning. Several former ministers of music will participate.

Eight former pastors will preach messages. Friday evening Glenn Poston and Roy Harris will speak. Saturday features four messages by Randy Corn, Bill Robinson, Billy Hanna and Rolla Smith. The final two sermons will be preached Sunday morning by Henry Van Kluyve and Damon Dodd.

Several catered meals await attendees for the weekend activities. Pastor Hughes said that 20 rooms had been reserved in a local Hampton Inn for out-of-town guests.

The church designated the May 25 homecoming offering for their “Bridge to Tomorrow Building Fund.” The funds will launch a just-approved, two-phase building program to remodel current facilities and erect a new fellowship hall.

Reverend Steve Hughes has pastored First F.W.B. Church five years. He is the Church’s 10th pastor in 50 years.

Oklahoma Church Marks 75 Years



Oklahoma Executive Board member Mike Wade (L) presents plaque to Pastor Charles Bigger.

NORMAN, OK—Some 150 people gathered at Pleasant Hill F.W.B. Church in Norman to celebrate the church’s 75th anniversary according to Pastor Charles Bigger. The week-long anniversary revival culminated November 10, 2002, with a Sunday of special events.

Pastor Bigger said, “The highlight of the celebration came when James and Barbara Clark presented themselves for

membership. James was saved a week earlier while working on the church remodeling effort. He and his wife were baptized the next Sunday night.”

Former pastor Chris Clay preached the anniversary revival services. The Oklahoma State Association prepared a plaque recognizing the church’s 75 years of service. The plaque was presented by Mike Wade on behalf of the Oklahoma executive director’s office.

Pastor Bigger led the congregation in a major remodeling campaign in the sanctuary this past year. The project included textured walls, new ceiling and baptistry, new lights, refinished pews and sidewalks.

Pleasant Hill F.W.B. Church was founded in 1927 with 20 charter members. It has remained at its 48th and Franklin Road location after meeting the first nine years in a school. Elmer Barnard donated an acre on which to build in 1936.

The first building was erected with B. C. Monks as pastor. Three additions have been made to the original building.

In 1971, then pastor Louis Wickham led the church to build a 200-seat, brick sanctuary. In February 1981, under the leadership of then pastor Mark Barnes, members constructed a new fellowship hall and classroom building. The original building was demolished.

The Pleasant Hill Church is a member of the First Oklahoma Association.

Directory Update

Arkansas

Levan Hubbard to Oak Park Church, Pine Bluff from Fellowship Church, Bryan, TX

Florida

Robert Wells to First Church, Pensacola

North Carolina

Melvin and Milton Worthington to Liberty Church, Ayden as co-pastors

Wyoming

Robert Bragan to First Church, Cheyenne from Lebanon Church, Effingham, SC ■

Reverend Tom Scott Retires from Pastorate

RED BAY, AL—After 48 years in the ministry, Alabama pastor Tom Scott (71) retired on February 23. Some 350 people were on hand at Red Bay FWB Church as members, family and the community saluted Scott's 15-year tenure with the north Alabama congregation.

The church grew from 60 to over 300 members under Pastor Scott's leadership. The congregation employed a full-time youth pastor in 1990. In 1996 the church built a family life center housing a gymnasium and fellowship hall.

Members honored Reverend Scott and his wife Paulette with a time of personal testimonies, special music and a \$2,500 check.

In his last editorial in February 2003 edition of *The Voice*, Red Bay's monthly publication, Pastor Scott said, "The people of this church have worked with me and always treated me with respect. I

commend those who make up our church family. There is a sweet spirit in this place."

Brother Scott, an Alabama native, was converted in 1955 and licensed to preach that same year. He was ordained to the ministry in 1956. He pastored in Alabama, Tennessee, Florida and Louisiana. While serving in the military, he organized four mission churches. He attended Free Will Baptist Bible College, and later studied administrative management courses while in the U.S. Air Force. He was awarded the Air Force commendation medal four times.

In addition to pastoral duties, Scott conducted radio and television ministries. He was frequently elected to positions of denominational responsibility. He served as moderator of the State Line Association. He also chaired ordaining councils, served on youth camp boards and championed youth work that



earned numerous national awards by Red Bay youth.

The Scotts will continue to reside in Red Bay. Tom plans to conduct revivals and do pulpit supply as needed.

BEYOND BELIEF



Ohio Pastor, Homer Brooks, Dies

S. CHARLESTON, OH—The Reverend Homer Brooks, long-time Ohio pastor, died February 11, after serving 54 years in the ministry. He was pastor of South Charleston FWB Church at the time of his death.

Reverend Brooks' entire ministry was spent in Ohio. He pastored Sunset FWB Church in Springfield 18 years. He then moved to South Charleston where he built the S. Charleston FWB Church and pastored there for 35 years.

Ohio executive secretary Edwin Hayes said, "Brother Brooks stayed busy right to the end. He was in both morning and evening worship services the Sunday before his death. For much of his ministry, he would preach 26 weeks of revivals each year for other churches."

Reverend Clyde Perry, clerk of the Little Miami Conference, said in a tribute to Brooks, "Brother Brooks was the senior minister in the Little Miami Conference. It can be said of him that he was firm with himself, fair with others and faithful to God."

Brooks was elected moderator of the Little Miami Conference several times, and also served many years on the Credentials Board. He sang bass in a quartet he organized.

Funeral services were conducted February 15. Reverend Brooks is survived by his wife Alice Brooks and two children. ■

Missouri: The first service at **Words of Eternal Life FWB Church** (Hispanic) in **Monett** reports 11 attendees with three conversions and two rededications. The second service logged 24 attendees . . . and one family got lost on the way. **Bud Bivens** pastors.

Seventeen people attended the first service at **Liberty FWB Church** in **Nevada** (MO), according to Pastor **Robby Rutledge**. State home missions director **Dale Skiles** led dedication services January 12 with state executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preaching that afternoon.

Members of **Cross Roads FWB Church** in **Lebanon** honored **Quenton Adams** for 50 years' service as a deacon. The day included a "This is Your Life" presentation and dinner. In addition to his duties as a deacon, Brother Adams also served as Sunday School superintendent, Sunday School teacher and 42 years as a trustee. His great-grandmother was a charter member of the church when it organized in 1892. **Russell McDaris** pastors.

Sunnyview FWB Church in **Lebanon** dedicated a 2,400-square-foot addition. Pastor **John Uder** welcomed former pastors **Milan Ruble** and **Teddy Starnes** to the service. The building was completed debt-free, thanks to volunteer labor by men of the church.

Michigan: The first-year anniversary at **Sawyer FWB Church** in **Gwinn** counted 127 people in the pews. Home missionary **Greg Floars** said attendees included the mayor, community leaders, a librarian and seven students from nearby Northern Michigan University.

North Carolina: **Victory FWB Church** in **Goldsboro** purchased property adjacent to the church, according to Pastor **Rick Cason**. A house is located on the property.

Pastor **Gordon Sebastian** has led **Peace FWB Church** in **Wilson** for more than 35 years. The congregation hope to dedicate their \$3.3 million addition on

Easter Sunday. The 36,000-square-foot building project includes a worship center, office complex, nursery and eight classrooms.

Oops! The January 2003 issue of *Contact* erroneously reported that Dr. **Milton Worthington** served 12 years on the Sunday School and Church Training Board. The correct information is that Worthington served 26 years on the board, 16 as chair. We regret the error and are happy to set the record straight.

Ohio: Pastor **Tom Hamblen** said it only took eight years, but **Rock of Ages FWB Church** in **Cleveland** finally received city approval for a parking lot. Two members have answered the call to preach.

Bloom FWB Church in **S. Webster** reports five conversions. **Roger Lavender** pastors.

Pastor **Tim Simpson** and **Oak Hill FWB Church** in **Oak Hill** log in with seven conversions and two baptisms.

Twelve new members at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Columbus** sent Pastor **Tim Stout** to the baptism.

Pastor **John Meade** has completed 25 years at the helm of **Southwest FWB Church** in **Columbus**. The church gave him a plaque to commemorate the occasion. During a recent revival, 32 people were saved.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Marion** honored **Boyce Ray Mullins** with a plaque for 50 years in the ministry. Pastor **Grover Caudill** reports water damage to classrooms following a thunderstorm. The damage has been repaired.

Evangelist **Clovis Vanover** witnessed 75 conversions in 30 revivals during 2002.

Oklahoma: The **Tulsa Area Association** voted to pay the registration fee for all association pastors who attended the March 3-5 Oklahoma Ministers' Retreat. Speakers included executive secretary **Keith Burden** and Hillsdale College administrator **Stephen Ashby**.

Fourteen new members and seven baptisms keep Pastor **Joe Grizzle** smiling at **First FWB Church** in **Norman**.

New Home FWB Church in **Tulsa** celebrated 75 years of service to the community. Oklahoma Executive Board member **Glenn Lewis** presented a plaque to Pastor **Roy Dale Smith**. The church organized in November 1927 with 13 charter members. Fifteen men have served as pastor. The longest pastorate was 21 years by **J. B. Chism**. Pastor Roy Dale Smith has served 14 years.

Members of **First FWB Church** in **Ardmore** purchased 10 acres for \$50,000 on which to relocate. **Frank Young** pastors.

Pastor **Waldo Young** reports 10 conversions at **Northwest FWB Church** in **Oklahoma City**.

Oklahoma's **Arkansas Valley Association** built a new tabernacle for associational events. **Don Goddard** preached the first message in the debt-free tabernacle.

Several youth pastors decided to begin the **Oklahoma FWB Youth Ministry Network**, an informal quarterly gathering to exchange resources, trends, ideas and for fellowship. Full-time and part-time youth pastors can participate. Point men **Greg Conner**, **Kevin Harper**, **Jeff Henson** and **Casey Cariker** will answer questions.

Members of **Norris FWB Church** in **Red Oak** dedicated their remodeled sanctuary and new baptistry. Pastor **Oren Barlett** baptized four converts.

More than 600 people were on hand to help Pastor **Frank Wiley** celebrate 30 years at **Sunnylane FWB Church** in **Del City**. Stories and memories from members and staff highlighted the day.

Members of **Grace FWB Church** in **Broken Arrow** gave nearly \$1,900 to Home Missions following week-long two-a-day VBS Sessions. Pastor **Mike Hutsell** reports seven conversions that week. **Carrie Benson** directed the creative VBS. ■

How to Pay for College

By Jeff Caudill
Director of Student Financial Aid

Paying for college can be a bit overwhelming. At times, there is a high level of anxiety when it comes to the cost of a college education. Hopefully, this information will help reduce that anxiety.

1. Understand that college is expensive. Do not be surprised by the cost. College costs are ever increasing, so know that up front. Every gift to FWBBC helps us keep the cost down, but, even with all our efforts, it remains a major investment.

2. Recognize the benefits. According to the U.S. Department of Education, college graduates earn an average 73% more than those with just a high school diploma. More importantly, the right college is a great place to prepare for a lifetime of service to God in whatever area He has planned. FWBBC gives its students the tools to make life's decisions wisely and in harmony with God's Word.

3. Know the basics about financial aid. Here are a few things to do now to offset the cost of a college education.

- **Apply for federal aid. Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The FAFSA is available via the web at www.fafsa.ed.gov, or a paper version may be obtained from the high school guidance office or the FWBBC Student Financial Aid Office.**
- **Start to search for scholarships as early as the junior year of high school. Beware of scholarship scams. Use only free searches. The web is a good source.**
- **Check into any state aid that may be available.**
- **Contact your church, as well as local and state associations, for grants.**

- **Call the FWBBC Student Financial Aid Office to see what institutional aid is available.**
- **Research possible grants from local clubs, civic groups, your employer, etc.**
- **The high school guidance office and any college financial aid office are good sources of information.**
- **Claim the Hope and/or Lifetime tax credits via your tax return. Check with your tax preparer or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for details.**
- **Students and their parents should begin early to save (yes, I said "save") for college. Start now. Students can contribute a considerable amount by working summers, both before and after they enroll.**

Do not let the cost of a college education keep your children from being all God wants them to be! With His help and some work on your part, you can do it. We have seen many people come to FWBBC and finish, when it looked humanly impossible.

We would love to help. Contact us at any time with your questions, and we will do our best to assist you in the process. ■



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Free Will Baptist
Bible College

Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus

- College graduates earn an average 73% more than those with just a high school diploma
- Know the basics about financial aid available for education

Everything You Wanted to Know About the Foundation But Were Afraid to Ask

By David L. Brown

The Free Will Baptist Foundation operates under the radar of many people.

It's as if we are the stealth department. Many are not aware that we exist; others know we exist but have no idea what we do or why we do it. So what exactly is the Foundation?

The Foundation is the planned giving arm of the denomination. Planned gifts come in three general varieties with many applications. The simplest planned gift is an endowment. The Foundation manages endowments for every national department, many regional or state ministries and local churches.

Endowments are permanent, irrevocable gifts that pay out the earnings only to the ministries they benefit. The principal remains to continue paying out earnings until Jesus returns. Endowments may be established by individuals, and the entire gift value will be tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Some endowments have been established following an individual's death through a trust or will. In either case, these individuals liked the idea of continuing support to their favorite ministries via endowment earnings even long after they have gone on to be with the Lord.

Another way to make a planned gift is through a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust. These gifts are also irrevocable, but they offer unique benefits to the donor not available through endowments.

The donor receives an income stream from the trust for life, and at death the remainder of the trust will go to the Free Will Baptist ministry the donor selected. When this type of trust is established, the donor receives an income tax deduction for only part of the gift. It's kind of like having your cake and eating it too, with the added benefit that what's left of the cake will go to the Lord's work when you die.

The Foundation also manages revocable trusts, known as money management trusts. These trusts earn a rate of return usually better than the best money market accounts available. Since they have no locked-in period, you have the freedom to fully or partially withdraw the funds from the trust without penalty at any time.

Individuals must designate a Free Will Baptist ministry to receive 20% of the trust assets upon their death, but they may fully revoke the trust at any time. Since the trust is revocable, it is

not a completed gift and, therefore, no tax deduction is available for a money management trust.

Some may wonder if the Foundation has to be one of the chosen Free Will Baptist ministries that will benefit by your trust or endowment. The answer is absolutely not.

Less than .001% of the assets the Foundation manages will directly benefit the Foundation. We are a unique ministry in that our goal is to help all Free Will Baptist ministries financially by managing planned gifts that will benefit them.

The makeup of our board reflects this goal. Our board is composed of the nine members elected by the National Association (the Board of Retirement), plus the directors of all our national departments. This means that Foreign Missions, Free Will Baptist Bible College, Home Missions, Master's Men, WNAC, Executive Office and Randall House all have a say in how the Foundation is operated. In that respect we are held more accountable than any other national department.

All of these departments either currently or in the past have trusted the Foundation to manage their excess funds through revocable trusts. However, this ministry is not limited to national departments since we are currently managing planned gifts that benefit many regional, state and local ministries.

Some may wonder how we fund the department since we manage trusts and endowments that do not greatly benefit the Foundation. We receive a service fee of approximately 1% of all trust assets. This means that if we are paying 4.5% on money management trusts we are really earning about 5.5%. The difference is our service fee to operate the department. We also receive a small portion of The Together Way income.

Perhaps you would like to benefit your favorite ministry with a planned gift today. Remember, when you establish a planned gift through the Free Will Baptist Foundation, you are benefiting both your favorite ministry and indirectly benefitting the Foundation. Please call toll-free 877-336-7575 for more information without cost or obligation. ■

Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus


THE
FREE WILL
BAPTIST
FOUNDATION

- The Foundation's goal is to help all Free Will Baptist ministries financially by managing planned gifts

Planned gifts come in 3 general varieties

- Endowments
- Charitable gift annuities
- Revocable trusts

Saluting the Past Year and Focusing on the Future

By Larry A. Powell, General Director

Praising for the Present

What an exciting year we had in the Home Missions Department with new records set for our church planting efforts! During the year 2002, the Home Missions Board approved the following missionaries for the harvest field:

Rufo and Maria Gomez	Lexington, KY
Paul and Stephanie McKissick	Fredericksburg, VA
John and Cheryl Reed	Green Bay, WI
Jeff and Charissa Isaacs	Battle Creek, MI
Gerardo and Maria Rodriguez	Spartanburg, SC
Jarvis and Kelly Reed	The Woodlands, TX
Shane and Lupita Wilson	Johnson City, TN
Jim and Kim Fairchild	Cabot, AR

The following church planters brought their missions to self-supporting status:

Tim and Robyn Osborn	Memphis, TN
Jon and Debbie Cannon	Mascoutah, IL
Kerry and Janet Gandy	Maumelle, AR
Darrell and Sandy Smith	Oregon City, OR
Jeff and Sherri Sloan	Ft. Wayne, IN
Russell and Vonda Johnson	Cheyenne, WY

Our missionaries are experiencing God's blessings as they purchase land, build facilities and win precious souls to the Lord.

Our cross-cultural ministry continues to do well as they win souls among Hispanics, Koreans and Russians. At this time, there are Hispanic works in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Kentucky, North Carolina and Tennessee, with at least six more works to be started in the near future.

Our Free Will Baptist chaplains continue to win and disciple souls for Christ in the USA, Afghanistan, Germany, Spain, Macedonia, Bosnia and Kuwait. At the time of this writing, a number of our chaplains are preparing to be deployed to possible war zones. Your prayers for this ministry are of extreme importance, and we thank you for your faithfulness.

Focusing on the Future

Our department needs your prayers and support in order to accomplish some special goals. We will be focusing on recruiting qualified church planters who have a passion for souls. We want to equip them with skills that will enable them to plant solid Free Will Baptist churches in the shortest time possible. This platform will enable us in turn to help the Foreign Missions Department plant churches all over the world.

We are continuing to train our missionaries to sharpen their skills for greater effectiveness. Our goal is to retain their loyal services as seasoned missionaries so that they can plant not just one but several churches in their particular area or state.

Our desire is to create a positive image for Home Missions, one of an aggressive and fervent spirit for souls. We want Free Will Baptists to see that Home Missions takes excellent care of our missionary families with a sense of pride in their worth.

We have a great desire to bring financial stability within our department and to increase unified participation from the entire denomination. Please pray that God will help us bring these goals to fruition as we focus on the future.

We thank you for your valuable help and support down through the years, now and on into the future. We are excited at the prospect of working with all of you in the future. We also encourage you to contact our offices at any time, and we would be honored to have you come visit with our staff whenever possible. Thank you for all you do for the Home Missions Department. You are playing a vital role in leading the lost to Christ. ■



Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus

Goals

- Recruit qualified church planters
- Equip church planters with skills that will enable them to plant solid FWB churches
- Train current missionaries to sharpen their skills for greater effectiveness
- Reach financial stability within Home Missions
- Increase unified participation



TEAM church

A New Program Sponsored by Randall House Publications

By Alton Loveless, TeamChurch Coordinator

Let me introduce an exciting, new program called TeamChurch. TeamChurch is a regional/state Christian education event that provides top-notch training for Sunday School teachers and volunteers in the local church. By pooling the resources of

a large number of churches, we broaden the range of Christian education and increase the numbers of conference attendees from church, region or state.

Why do we need TeamChurch? While many state Christian education boards provide conferences for pastors, TeamChurch is designed to include the entire church, from Sunday School teachers to nursery workers and teen volunteers. History has proven that churches grow much more quickly when a congregation is prepared to integrate guests into the church.

Wise churches prepare *before* the harvest. Well-trained congregational leaders are the foundation of a wise church. To put it most simply, the purpose of TeamChurch is **T**raining, **E**quipping **A**nd **M**obilizing the church.

TeamChurch is already providing training in several areas of the country. In addition, organizations in more than 14 states and regions have made plans for future TeamChurch conferences.

The beauty of TeamChurch is that we can customize a plan for every need and size requirement. We can tailor a program to meet your particular needs.

Another facet of TeamChurch is the development of a Teacher Certification Program for teachers who wish to deepen their knowledge of Free Will Baptist doctrine and learn better ways to

present the Word of God to their students. These teachers can receive a nationally recognized certificate by completing a series of training courses.

A specialized course is available for teachers in every age group. This training program is designed for teachers who want to be more confident, who want to rise above the norm and who want to impact their students for Christ more effectively. The program can be completed by correspondence, through classes in a local church or in a regional Bible institute. Teacher certification will be available soon, so watch for its announcement.

We are building a network of TeamChurch leaders across the country. If you are an experienced seminar leader and have an interest in joining TeamChurch, write:

**Alton Loveless
Randall House Publications
P. O. Box 17306
Nashville, TN 37217**

or email teamchurch@randallhouse.com.

Brochures about TeamChurch are available from the address above or you may download a brochure online by going to www.randallhouse.com and clicking the *Training* link on the navigation bar. ■

Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus



- Churches grow more quickly when a congregation is prepared to integrate guests into the church
- TeamChurch can customize a plan for every need and size requirement
- The training program can be completed by correspondence, through classes in a local church or in a regional Bible institute



Garnett Reid

One New Man Ephesians 2:11–22

Face it, we're part of a world

divided. Just name the issue and opinions differ. As I write today, war seems imminent. By the time you read this piece, the conflict may rage full-scale. Our nation parts ways over whether or not to go to war. Congress splits down the middle over legislative issues. Ethicists debate opposing sides of critical topics.

Divisions filter down even to what we eat, drink and wear. Which is it for you, Campbell's or Progresso soup? Sprite or Sierra Mist? Here lately, I prefer suspenders to belts, thank you.

In Ephesians 2:11–22, Paul applies the great truth of individual salvation he's just explained (2:1–10) to the most divisive issue in the early church. Did Gentiles in Christ have an equal place with believing Jews? This question tore at the unity of Christ's body in the first century.

The apostle explains that God has created an entirely new entity, one body to which all—Jew or Gentile—belong who are in Christ.

A House Divided (2:11–12)

Paul insists that his readers "remember" their past ("in time past," v. 11; "at that time," v. 12). "Remembrance" is a vital concept in scripture. In the Old Testament, Israel built memorials to remind them of important events they dared not forget. Memory gives a sense of "roots" and origins; it conveys knowledge gained from the past to influence behavior today and tomorrow.

Yesterday, Paul says, Jews derided these Gentiles as "uncircumcised," out-of-the-loop in terms of their ancestry. The Old Testament detailed God's plan to bring Christ into the world, and that plan focused on the line of Abraham in Israel. Non-Jews were on the outside looking in. They were "aliens," not citizens. The Old Testament covenants God

made involved Israel exclusively at the outset.

No wonder Paul describes Gentiles as having "no hope." God's only plan of salvation led through Israel to the Messiah. Even though Gentiles in the Old Testament could come to faith (remember Job, Melchizedek, Rahab and others), by their very nature they were depraved and separated from God through sin ("without God," v. 12). Of course, so were the Jews, but they didn't like to admit it.

As Hendriksen summarizes, "Paul portrays Gentiles as 'Christless, stateless, friendless, hopeless, and Godless' in verses 11–12."

A House United (2:13–18)

"But now," Paul insists, things are different. Through Christ's blood those "far away" Gentiles are "near" (v. 13). He stresses "peace" (vv. 14, 15, 17) because of the Savior who *is Himself* our peace. That "middle wall" dividing Jew from Gentile crumbled beneath the weight of the cross (vv. 14–15).

This "wall" is a metaphor illustrating the role of the Mosaic law in the Old Covenant, according to v. 15. The law served to remind the Gentiles of Israel's favored status as God's covenant people. Yet the Jews also took offense to Gentile disregard for the law, and the predictable result was "enmity."

Yet Jesus "abolished" that enmity. Note that Paul does not dispute the continued relevance of the law since it expresses God's moral character for all times and people. What is different, however, is that the Old Covenant in the Mosaic law no longer defines the people of God.

"One new man," Christ's body, the church, has emerged from the two. All who are reconciled to God through Christ, Jew or not, "have access by one

Spirit" to the Father (v. 18). Don't miss the emphasis here on "one" (vv. 14, 15, 16, 18). Even as Jesus died on the cross, so, too, did the enmity separating all people willing to die with Him (v. 16b)

A House Inhabited (2:19–22)

A great theme running throughout scripture emerges in these final verses of Ephesians 2. *God lives with and in His people!* We see it in Eden, in the tabernacle and temple, in Christ's incarnation, in the believer's indwelling by the Spirit, in the church, and, finally, in Heaven itself.

No "strangers" live in God's house. Instead, the church is a family ("household," v. 19). Families are not *uniform* in their makeup; individuals differ at my house, as I'm sure they do at yours. *Unanimity* seldom shows up at our place, either. That is, family members sometimes disagree. But the family *unity* we enjoy in God's household finds its support in the deep, durable foundation whose cornerstone is Christ Himself (v. 20).

The structure growing out of this firm footing is "fitly framed together." No part is less significant than any other part. Even though the church is a work in progress, it stands as a "temple" for the Lord's glory. His Spirit lives there (vv. 21–22; see I Cor. 3:16–17), and it's your address, too, if you know Christ's reconciling love.

In a day when the gospel is changing multitudes of people in China, Russia, Korea, Africa, Southeast Asia and across the world (just check out the International Fellowship of Free Will Baptists!), we must avoid a great pitfall. Our cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences must not impede our recognition that we are "one new man" in Christ. Despite our diversity, He calls us to celebrate the unity of His church. ■



Thomas Marberry

The Incomparable Christ

By John Stott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001, 250 pp., hardback, \$22.95).

John Stott is a prolific writer

and a leader within the evangelical wing of the Church of England. He takes the Bible seriously and encourages others to accept its teachings and put them into practice in their daily lives. Today he is known around the world as a preacher, author, evangelist and conference speaker.

This book is neither a survey of the life of Christ nor an examination of the doctrine of Christology. It is, rather, a carefully drawn analysis of two major subjects. First, it analyzes how Christ has been presented by the writers of the New Testament and by leading Christian thinkers throughout history. Second, it analyzes how Christ has impacted the lives of men and women and how He challenges our lives today.

The author states his purpose: "So I send the book on its way, with the hope and prayer that many readers will acknowledge Jesus Christ as the proper object of our worship, witness and hope, and as deserving the description 'incomparable.' For he has neither rivals nor peers."

This work brings together the disciplines of church history and New Testament studies. It helps us to understand what it meant to follow Christ in the past and what it means to follow Him now.

The first section examines how New Testament writers present the person and work of Jesus Christ. Stott correctly notes that much recent scholarship has been preoccupied with the accuracy of the New Testament's description of Jesus. Traditional scholars have argued that the New Testament documents give an accurate and reliable portrait of what Jesus said and did. Many scholars, however, are skeptical of what the New Testament documents (particularly the gospels) say about Christ.

For example, a group of scholars in the United States called "The Jesus

Seminar" has met since 1985 to deal with this issue. They posit that "82% of the words spoken by Jesus in the Gospels were not actually spoken by him." Stott rightly rejects such skepticism. He argues that the gospel writers are historians, evangelists and theologians. Each presents the Gospel message in his own distinctive way, but he does so without misrepresenting what Jesus said and did.

The second section of the book is historical. The author analyzes how leading Christian writers and thinkers have interpreted Christ and presented Him in their writings. Stott writes, "... the fact is that down the centuries of the Christian era hundreds of different Jesuses have been on offer in the world's religious supermarkets." The sad truth is that "... the church has displayed a remarkable ingenuity in adapting, shaping, and presenting its own images of Christ."

Many Americans would be surprised to learn of Thomas Jefferson's interest in the study of the New Testament. His contribution was not, however, a positive one. According to Stott, "Jefferson twice produced his own edition of the gospels, from which all miracles and mysteries had been eliminated."

The third section of this book is testimonial in nature. It tells the story of men and women whose commitment to Christ led them to make a difference in society often at great personal cost. Father Damien was one of those. He sailed to Hawaii as a missionary in 1863. He volunteered to live among lepers on the island of Molokai. There he lived and ministered to society's outcasts until he himself died of leprosy in 1889.

Dr. Thomas Barnardo was converted to Christ at age seventeen. He entered medical school planning to go to China as a medical missionary. He never made it. Instead he discovered the plight of London's street children. In 1870 at the age of 25, he opened his first home for

them. As Stott explains, "In forty years he raised £3.25 million, established a network of homes for the reception, care and training of homeless, needy and afflicted children, and rescued 60,000 boys and girls from prostitution."

In the final section Stott returns to the New Testament. He examines the Book of Revelation and how this book's varied portraits of Christ challenge us in different ways. He notes that the book of Revelation presents Christ as "the first and the last, the lamb and the lion, the thief in the night, the King of kings, the divine judge and the heavenly bridegroom."

Chapter one of Revelation presents Christ as both the Eternal One and as the Resurrected One. Because Christ is both of these, "death has lost its terrors and we have every reason to rejoice, and not be afraid."

The author devotes most of this section to his interpretation of the book of Revelation. He recognizes that much of the language is symbolic. He argues, for example, that the millennium, or 1,000-year period, of chapter 20 should not be interpreted literally. It is "a very long though unspecified period, in fact the whole gospel age." He advocates an amillennial interpretation of the book similar to that presented by Hendricksen in his book *More Than Conquerors*.

The Incomparable Christ is worthy of serious reading and consideration. Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Bible and the most important historical person who ever lived. Most Christians do not have an adequate understanding of how the life and ministry of Jesus Christ have been interpreted and presented throughout history. This book can help us to understand how much He has impacted both our world and our personal lives. ■



Randy Sawyer

Get Fit for Life

One of the great ironies of

pastoral ministry is that often in developing a work for God, we fail to cultivate our walk with God. Consequently, we end up laboring in the energy of the flesh rather than the power of the Spirit, and soon find ourselves vulnerable to spiritual attack.

The Attack

In *The Divine Conspiracy*, Professor Dallas Willard cites a well-known Christian leader who said, "In these last four decades my faith has truly taken a beating." He tells how at an early age he was taught, "If I was a Christian, then people would see a marked difference in my life! And... that the closer I was to God—the more spiritual I was—the greater and more visible that difference would be."

Now, he concludes, "I have seen so many of my mentors stumble and fall, never again to recover their faith; so many 'truths' about the Gospel that turned out to be false; so many casualties, so many losses, so many assumptions that turned out to be just that—assumptions, not truth, that I don't believe that anymore."

He quickly added that he still believes Jesus changes you, but notes, "Whatever the change is, it is not as much outward as it is inward.... The change is often visible only to God."

While I would be quick to refute the conclusion that sanctification is only internal, I am sympathetic with the sentiment that observation and even personal experience sometimes substantiate that notion. Most Christian leaders and laymen struggle daily to bring some sort of balance to their lives and wrestle to achieve a sense of spiritual victory. Just when it seems one battle has been won, another attack assures us that we are perpetually engaged in a ruthless, never-ending battle for spiritual survival.

The Antagonists

The antagonists in this contest are easy to spot. They are:

- **The Devil—the evil prince.**

- **The World—the evil system.**
- **The Flesh—the evil traitor.**

As believers, we know this axis-of-evil to be our constant adversary, ever seeking our demise. These are things of which we are certain. The not-so-easy part is how to defeat them.

The Arsenal

The scripture instructs us, however, that for each member of this evil trio there is an appropriate spiritual weapon. Against...

- **The Devil—Determination, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," (Jas. 4:7).**
- **The World—Discernment, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind," (Rom. 12:1-2).**
- **The Flesh—Discipline, "Exercise yourself unto godliness," (I Tim. 4:7-8).**

But once more we wonder, how? Where do we get the courage to *resist*? How do we develop a *discerning mind*? How can we *discipline* the flesh against wrong desires?

The Activities

If you think back to the life of Christ, you will find the secret. Jesus, though God-in-flesh, *exercised Himself unto godliness* by regularly practicing certain spiritual disciplines. Among these were solitude, prayer, study, fasting, celebration and acts of service. These disciplines were part of His daily life and serve as a fine example for us.

In order to live the Christ-life, we must live life as He lived it. To bring our work for God into balance with our walk with God, we must *exercise unto godliness*.

The most common New Testament word for exercise is *gumnazo*, which not only occurs in I Timothy but also in II Peter 2:14 and Hebrews 5:14 and 12:11. It is associated with our English word *gymnasium* and conjures images of physical exercise and discipline. With this picture in mind, Paul encouraged Timothy, his young friend in ministry, to strenuously practice to bring his physical life

into balance with his spiritual life. It implies regular, specific, disciplined living.

In *The Life You've Always Wanted*, John Ortberg argued that to live what he chose to call a well-ordered life, the believer must develop a "rule of life." He noted that the Latin word for rule is *regula*, implying something that is done with regularity. He writes, "a rule of life involves rhythm for living in which we can grow more intimately connected to God."

Even a casual study of Christ's life reveals that He engaged regularly in specific activities or disciplines from which He drew immeasurable strength for life and ministry. The same such disciplines will help bring our lives balance as well. They include:

- **Solitude—A life in communion with itself.**
- **Prayer—A life in connection with its Creator.**
- **Bible Reading—A life in contact with God's will and work.**
- **Fasting—A life in balance with its needs.**
- **Celebration—A life in accord with its purpose.**
- **Service—A life in fellowship with others.**

In doing these things we follow Christ's example and gain spiritual power for our own work and walk.

The Application

... Slow Down

Three key principles guide in the development of our own *rule of life*. First, we must slow down. Scripture frequently admonishes us to *be still, wait, to listen*. But our calendars are so over-crowded that we scarcely make time to *wait upon the Lord*. God speaks, but we can't hear His voice. God manifests Himself, but we don't recognize His presence.

Our mentors encouraged us to cultivate a *quiet time*, but we're too busy for quiet time these days. We even pride ourselves that we're in such demand. A hurried life, however, is not necessarily a holy

THE TOGETHER WAY

February 2003

life and a frantic pace doesn't provide for intimacy. A.W. Tozer believed that "God waits to be wanted." Do we want Him enough to wait?

... Give-Up

Second, we must give up, that is, exchange the good things for the best things. In short, prioritize! Vance Havner observed that it's impossible to be a "Hail fellow well met," and the life of every party and live in close communion with God. The pastor who attends every meeting, enjoys every luncheon and participates in every sporting event, is likely spread too thin to be very deep. He may be a great preacher, an able administrator or an outstanding dinner guest, but performance is a poor substitute for purity.

... Look Within

Third, we must look within. The heart of the matter must become the heart of the matter. David was once identified as "a man after God's own heart." During that season of his life, his heart burned to know his God and would not be satisfied with less. That is what the disciples are all about. They allow us to concentrate on finding God and enjoying intimacy with Him. It takes exercise, work, discipline. Time spent in the spiritual gymnasium is rewarded with strength for our work and joy in our walk. Let a final word from Tozer encourage you.

"To have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love, scorned indeed by the too easily satisfied religionist, but justified in happy experience by the children of the burning heart. The man who has God for his treasure has all things in one. Many ordinary treasures may be denied him, or if he is allowed to have them, the enjoyment of them will be so tempered that they will never be necessary for his happiness. Or if he must see them go, one after another, he will scarcely feel a sense of loss, for having the source of all things he has in One all satisfaction, all pleasure, all delight." ■

Receipts:			Year To Date	Year To Date	Year To Date	
State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Designated	CO-OP	Total
Alabama	\$ 479.71	\$ 151.86	\$ 631.57	\$ 992.35	\$ 510.28	\$ 1,502.63
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	103.50	103.50
Arkansas	7,922.41	14,387.72	22,310.13	21,511.78	43,360.56	64,872.34
California	.00	1,217.28	1,217.28	.00	2,454.40	2,454.40
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Georgia	35,300.58	1,566.92	36,867.50	76,684.36	3,762.80	80,447.16
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	12,707.74	1,947.25	14,654.99	24,278.60	4,186.29	28,464.89
Indiana	3,165.53	383.35	3,548.88	5,476.49	783.37	6,259.86
Iowa	.00	65.00	65.00	.00	65.00	65.00
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Kentucky	.00	871.13	871.13	350.00	2,359.53	2,709.53
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Michigan	22,958.26	2,418.45	25,376.71	53,035.61	6,614.66	59,650.27
Mississippi	13,039.09	903.03	13,942.12	23,568.56	1,457.15	25,025.71
Missouri	36,584.94	14,108.53	50,693.47	113,190.31	36,389.19	149,579.50
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	456.44	23.22	479.66	456.44	23.22	479.66
North Carolina	170.00	2,072.36	2,242.36	4,224.47	5,944.97	10,169.44
Ohio	16,387.30	5,351.15	21,738.45	46,682.80	9,635.59	56,318.39
Oklahoma	42,231.40	9,442.06	51,673.46	173,174.30	22,940.50	196,114.80
South Carolina	33,274.81	55.21	33,330.02	78,318.58	100.31	78,418.89
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	10,522.73	1,908.24	12,430.97	20,647.05	2,160.99	22,808.04
Texas	7,389.48	9.00	7,398.48	25,489.46	734.07	26,223.53
Virginia	219.25	.00	219.25	571.85	11.20	583.05
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	570.00	121.57	691.57	1,160.00	198.69	1,358.69
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	804.00	12.00	816.00	1,308.98	26.77	1,335.75
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	.04	.04	.00	.04	.04
Totals	\$244,183.67	\$ 57,015.37	\$ 301,199.04	\$671,121.99	\$143,823.08	\$ 814,945.07

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 1,505.67	\$ 25,656.90	\$ 27,162.57	\$ 3,729.54	\$ 64,720.38	\$ 68,449.92
Foreign Missions	144,853.48	7,212.45	152,065.93	376,287.89	18,193.62	394,481.51
FWBBC	19,138.05	7,212.45	26,350.50	52,552.85	18,193.62	70,746.47
Home Missions	66,061.15	5,644.52	71,705.67	212,806.01	14,238.48	227,044.49
Retirement & Insurance	496.94	4,390.18	4,887.12	908.65	11,074.38	11,983.03
Master's Men	1,945.25	4,390.18	6,335.43	2,261.99	11,074.38	13,336.37
Comm. for Theo. Integrity	75.74	156.79	232.53	142.32	395.50	537.82
FWB Foundation	222.56	1,881.53	2,104.09	515.28	4,746.22	5,261.50
Historical Commission	75.74	156.79	232.53	142.32	395.50	537.82
Music Commission	30.38	156.79	187.17	65.51	395.50	461.01
Media Commission	80.38	156.79	237.17	165.51	395.50	561.01
Hillsdale FWB College	1,792.85	.00	1,792.85	4,709.15	.00	4,709.15
Other	7,905.48	.00	7,905.48	16,834.97	.00	16,834.97
Totals	\$244,183.67	\$ 57,015.37	\$ 301,199.04	\$671,121.99	\$143,823.08	\$ 814,945.07



Spotlight on National Youth Conference

By Dean Jones, NYC Director

A black and white photo taken in June 1948 hangs on the wall outside my office. The photo was taken at East Nashville FWB Church. The occasion was the first nationwide Free Will Baptist League Conference. This predecessor of our modern day National Youth Conference pictures dozens of eager students and adults with one common goal—"Approved Unto God."

As I scan through the sea of faces, several stand out as "famous" Free Will Baptists—Dr. L.C. Johnson, Dr. LaVerne Miley and Reverend Robert Crawford—among many others. Their attendance at such an event some 55 years ago displays the importance of youth gatherings throughout our denominational history. I'm sure that each face in the picture could tell a story of a life impacted and influenced by their local church, participation in youth rallies, league events and fellowship with other young believers.

History allows us to jump forward to 2003. This July hundreds of students, youth workers, teachers, coaches, parents and pastors congregate at the location of the Free Will Baptist convention in Tampa, Florida. While our programming continues to change over the years, I still find a bond among our students similar to that so many years ago.

I see students eager to be approved unto God. I see adults who have sacrificed time, energy and money to invest in the lives of 'their' kids in order to place them in a setting that will provide the Lord multiple opportunities to speak to them.

Students will find a variety of activities, training workshops, service projects and fellowship in Tampa. The National Youth Conference provides programming for ages three through college age. This year's event theme, *Stand Still*, will feature worship services for all ages emphasizing listening to God. Our attention to Psalm 46:10 will draw students to a greater understanding of their Lord.

Junior high and high school students will be challenged in Student Worship by John Weaver and Barry St. Clair. John is known as the last American remaining in Afghanistan after the United States attacked following September 11th. His work with Shelter Now and his obedience to God will inspire students to *Stand Still* and listen to God.

Barry St. Clair returns this year to challenge young people to take the next step in their walk with God. Barry knows how to communicate to young people, and his ability with students is refreshing.

College students will find APEX a rousing opportunity to fellowship and worship with their own age group. Special activities, service projects and worship times are planned.

Preschool worship for ages 3–6, children's activities for grades 1–3 and tween activities for grades 4–6 will provide our children with an opportunity to expand their horizons and comfort zones as they are challenged to *Stand Still!*

We've come a long way and we have a long way to go, but our children and students continue to be challenged by our National Youth Conference. Whether they participate in competition, a special worship service, a banquet, impact Tampa through our service project program or simply make new friends from across the globe, Free Will Baptist students have the opportunity of a lifetime this summer. Don't miss out on this life-changing event! ■

For more information, e-mail the National Youth Conference at youth@randallhouse.com.



Jack Williams

The Saturday Bully

The Saturday afternoon bully

worked Fiske Theater after the lights went down and the cowboy double feature started. One day he demanded that my little sister, younger brother and I give him the penny left over from our allowance. He bullied everyone, of course, not just us. He got away with his extortion racket because he was older, bigger and he talked ugly.

My father heard how the bully was squeezing us to pay up or else. Don't look at me, because I sure didn't tell him. I was horrified at Dad's solution to the problem. Instead of thumping that bully's ear like a father should, he dropped it squarely in my lap and insisted that I stand up to the Saturday thief.

The next Saturday while Roy Rogers was handling some thugs down on the border, "The Penny Boy" (as we called him) came by to collect. I reluctantly stood up and told him no. The words were barely out of my mouth when he grabbed my shirt collar and repeated his demand for our pennies.

The second time I told him no, the Penny Boy raised his voice. He snarled and blustered and made quite a scene. We were sitting in the second row, so everybody in the theater saw and heard it all. No one so much as whispered a word of encouragement while the Penny Boy went through his shakedown routine.

He squinted at me through harsh brown eyes glittery with anger, jabbed his finger in my chest and said he'd meet me behind the theater next Saturday night and "bust my nose" if we didn't surrender our three pennies. He told me I'd better be there or he'd come in the theater and drag me out. I believed him.

All week long, I was sick with fear. Couldn't eat. Couldn't talk about it. Couldn't avoid it. I wanted to run away. The Saturday bully would stomp me in the dirt behind Fiske Theater. He was bigger, he was older,

he was meaner. He was in charge when the lights went down in the theater, and we all knew it.

When Saturday came, I had already died a thousand deaths thinking about the unavoidable showdown. I felt that I was marching to my own execution. I wondered if Roy Rogers ever wanted to run away instead of taming the border bad guys. Saturday night I did the last thing in the world I wanted to do—I walked behind Fiske Theater and waited to die when the bully came after me.

The Penny Boy wasn't there when I arrived, but I knew why. He wanted me to sweat. I did. He wanted me to wait and let the fear build. It did. He wanted me to realize I was about to be crushed. It worked. I wondered why nobody offered to help me. It was quiet as a morgue behind Fiske Theater. I could smell the dust on the grass.

Then I heard footsteps moving through the darkness toward me. I almost screamed in fright. The Penny Boy was coming to kill me. I would die alone. Maybe I'd get in one good lick before he knocked me out. I took a ragged breath and turned toward the heavy footsteps.

A calm voice said, "He's not coming."

The voice belonged to Henry, my friend from school. He had walked through the theater looking for the Penny Boy. But for the first Saturday in a year, the bully was not making his rounds collecting from cowed victims. No one knew where he was. I didn't care where he was just as long as he was somewhere else.

The bully didn't show up. I breathed the first breath of freedom in a week. I thought I had risen from the dead. While the Penny Boy did return on later Saturdays, he never again came after my sister, my brother or me. He glared at us several times. We kept our pennies.

I never discussed that Saturday night with my father. He didn't ask, but I sus-



pect he knew. He always seemed to know more than I wanted him to know.

That Saturday night, alone in the darkness behind Fiske Theater at 11 years old, I faced the first of life's great issues—my fear of the hometown bully. Other bullies down through life did show up, of course. But the willingness to face the Penny Boy taught me that I could confront the bigger, the threatening, the intimidating. I liked knowing I could be afraid and still do what was right.

Bullies feed off fear. Your bully probably won't call you out to a fist fight behind the theater. Your bully may threaten to embarrass you in public or spread a false rumor in the community. He may belittle your work in the office, ridicule the way you dress, laugh at your manners or imply that you're a racist or guilty of homophobia.

Bullies have one thing in common—they must be confronted or they will grow more belligerent, more demanding. They won't go away, and they won't grow out of it. They push and shove until someone says no.

Got a bully in your life today? Here's some hard-earned advice. Do that bully a favor. Tell him no. ■

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