

June 2003

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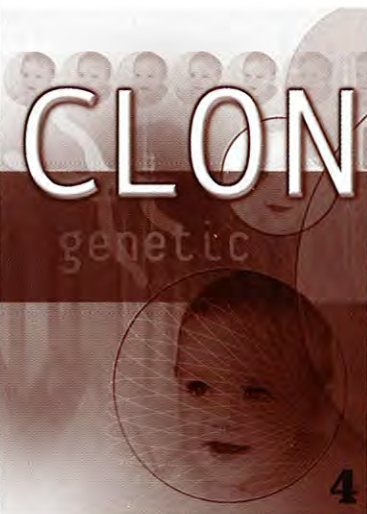
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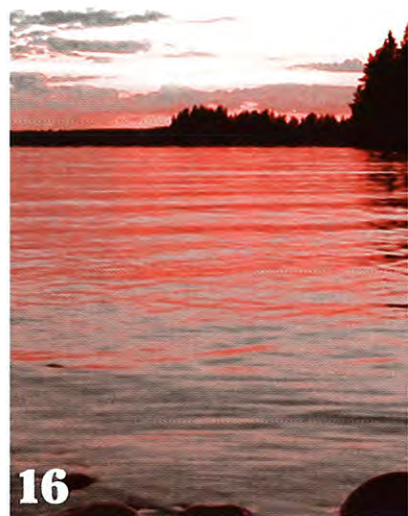
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Keith Burden

A Providential Train Wreck

It was a normal part of his daily routine, something he had done a thousand times. He could almost do it with his eyes closed.

Charles would rise early, shower, shave and then make his way into town to buy a newspaper before joining his friends for coffee and doughnuts. His rural home was only a few miles from a sleepy little community.

The dusty lane from his house to the county road crossed a railroad track where freight trains sped past several times each day. There were no crossing signals—local residents had learned to approach the railway with caution.

Familiarity Breeds Contempt

Perhaps his mind was on something else, or maybe he was distracted. Charles had difficulty recalling what happened. He remembers approaching the tracks, but from that point on everything became fuzzy.

The engineer said he blew the whistle several times, yet for some unexplainable reason the motorist pulled onto the tracks. The impact was violent, the crush of metal muffled by the locomotive's roar.

The force of the collision slammed the car several feet down the track before it began to roll. Apparently the driver's side door came open and Charles was ejected. To this day no one can explain how that happened.

Because of its high speed and tremendous weight, the train traveled a considerable distance before the conductor brought it to a stop. He rushed back to the accident scene fearful of what he might see.

He was surprised and greatly relieved to find Charles sitting on the side of the road, dazed and dirty, but alive. Incredibly, he had only a broken

collar bone, minor cuts and abrasions. Still, as a precaution the engineer called 911 and summoned emergency personnel.

Houston, We Have a Problem

Charles was transported by ambulance to a local hospital for examination. The emergency room nurse on duty that day was Rick, a member of Charles' church. He determined the patient had no serious injuries from the collision, however, he heard something with his stethoscope that concerned him.

The attending physician shared the nurse's concern and ordered an X-ray of Charles' abdomen. The test results confirmed the medical staff's suspicion—there was a large aneurism on the aorta just below his stomach. If it ruptured, death would be almost instantaneous.

In short order a medical flight crew transported Charles to a trauma center in a larger city. The next day a cardiovascular surgeon repaired the damaged aorta and averted a near disaster.

A Fortunate Collision?

During the course of these events an amazing discovery was made. According to the doctor, the aneurism was not caused by the accident. Apparently, it was developing long before the collision. Had it gone undetected, Charles would likely have died without warning in a matter of days.

As it turns out, the wreck probably saved his life. Were it not for the accident, Charles would not have received medical treatment and the subsequent diagnosis. In the words of the surgeon, "If anyone was ever fortunate to be hit by a train, you are that man."

Romans 8:28 Principle

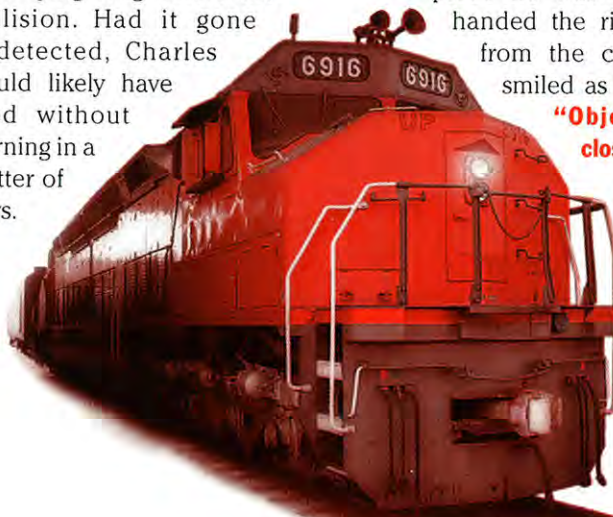
That incident reminded me of a familiar, yet often overlooked, scriptural principle. Paul stated it in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

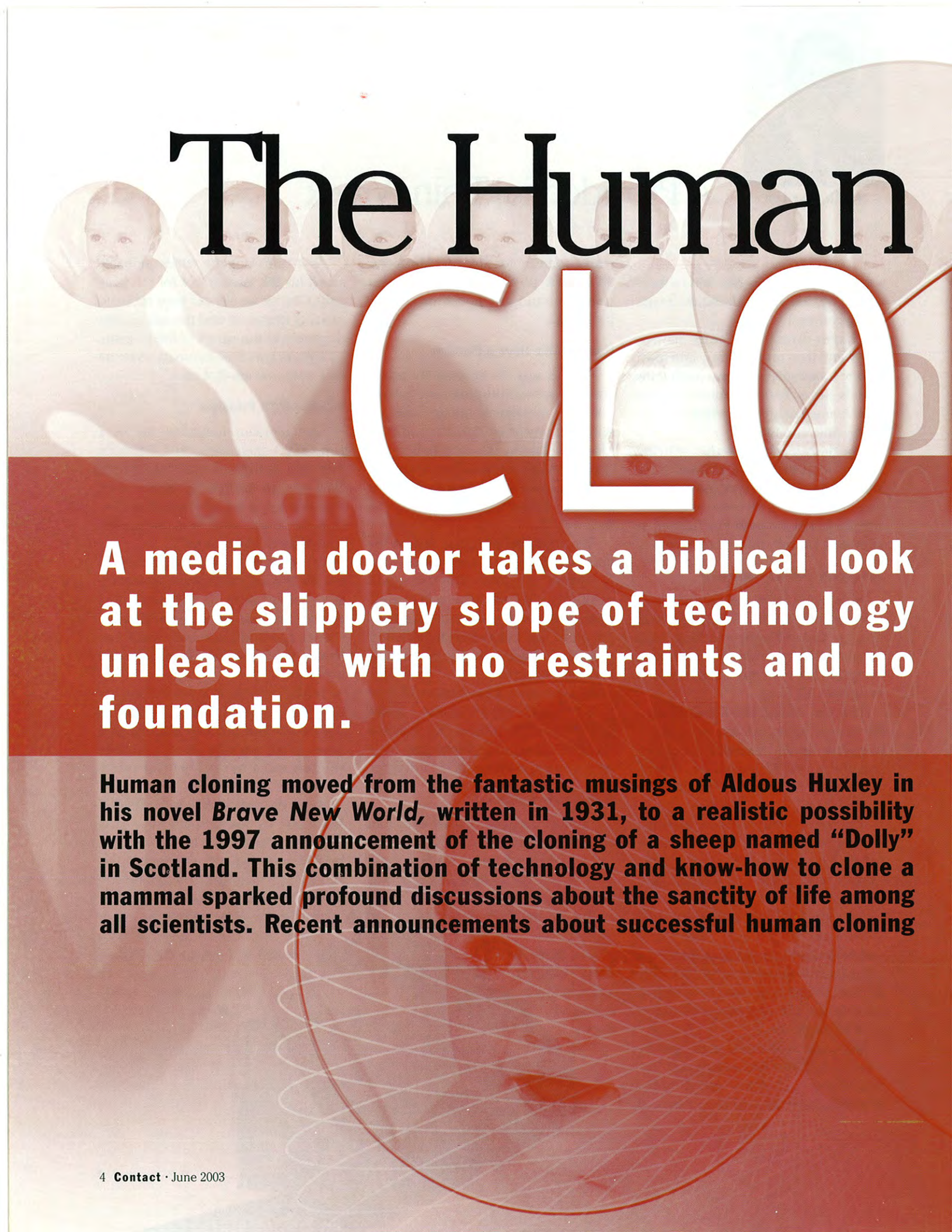
God delights in using experiences in our life that are painful and problematic to bring glory to His name and accomplish our good. Something as serious and tragic as a train wreck can have a good outcome if we love and trust Him.

Am I suggesting that you pull in front of a train to test this principle? No, of course not. But chances are that God wants to use the difficulty or challenge you face today to teach you the practical truth of Romans 8:28.

A few days after his surgery, Charles' son came by the hospital for a visit. With a grin on his face he reported that he had seen his father's wrecked car, and it was a total loss ... except for one piece he was able to salvage. He handed the right, side-view mirror from the car to his dad who smiled as he read the words—

"Objects in mirror are closer than they appear."



The background of the page features a collage of several baby faces, some of which are partially obscured by the large title text. A prominent DNA double helix structure is visible, winding across the lower half of the page. The overall color palette is a mix of soft pinks, reds, and whites.

The Human CLO

A medical doctor takes a biblical look at the slippery slope of technology unleashed with no restraints and no foundation.

Human cloning moved from the fantastic musings of Aldous Huxley in his novel *Brave New World*, written in 1931, to a realistic possibility with the 1997 announcement of the cloning of a sheep named “Dolly” in Scotland. This combination of technology and know-how to clone a mammal sparked profound discussions about the sanctity of life among all scientists. Recent announcements about successful human cloning



WINNING Debate

By Mark R. Paschall, M.D.

have intensified this debate, and the evangelical response must be informed, intelligent and unified.

What Is Cloning?

Human cloning is the asexual production of a new human organism that is, at all stages of development, genetically identical to an existing human being. Cloning, then, intentionally copies the genetic code of one person, in order to create another with the same genetic material.

The method employed to accomplish this is called "nuclear transfer," which involves the removal of the nucleus of an unfertilized cell, replacing it with the nucleus of a donor cell,

and then applying a small electric pulse to stimulate the newly constructed cell into the division process.

Reasons to Oppose Human Cloning

The research necessary to develop human cloning will cause the death of human beings.

In the process used to clone Dolly, there were 276 failed attempts at the nuclear fusion process, these sheep embryos either failing to develop fully or being destroyed due to other complications. Experimenting on and destroying human embryos can never be considered ethical or accepted by Christians. If this

CLONING

Each individual reflects not only the image of the Creator, but also the blended DNA of two separate individuals. Each human is truly unique, endowed with dignity and infinite worth.

process were applied to people, thousands of human infants would be lost, before even one human being was successfully cloned.

Furthermore, cloned embryos remain at risk, even after a successful nuclear transfer. There is an enormous incidence of malformations and deformities among attempted clones of animals, and at present, the deformed animal fetuses are aborted without question. The implications of this for human cloning are unacceptable.

The creation of humans is a Divine right which belongs to God alone.

The Old Testament opens with God creating the world and the first man, while the New Testament opens with the story of the Incarnation of our Lord. Human cloning is an attempt to wrest the power of creation from God in an act of proud defiant independence.

Human cloning is essentially an attempt to create another human in "man's image," instead of God's image.

This is both wrong and fraught with the possibility of abuse. In procreation, God's plan for propagating the human race, humans participate with God in creating new life, and each individual reflects not only the image of the Creator, but also the blended DNA of two separate individuals.

Thus, each human is truly unique, endowed with dignity and infinite worth. Cloning intentionally produces an exact genetic copy of one individual, and thus contradicts the principle of biblical creation.

Cloning a human being, then, reveals an undercurrent of idolatry. One can easily imagine attempts to create "designer babies," exclusively with attributes that are deemed desirable. A child would be manufactured according to the will of the parents, and could

be discarded in embryonic form if it didn't meet the expected specifications.

This selection process for desirable traits is called eugenics, and we have unfortunate examples of failed attempts at creating super-humans or even super-races in the past. Human cloning raises eugenics to a potentially disastrous level and the moral implications are myriad. The eugenicist vision represents the creature's attempt to define himself and plot his own destiny. He would improve himself, replicate himself and ultimately attempt to redeem himself through genetics.

The Bible portrays children as the fruit of a one-flesh love relationship, but in human cloning the child becomes merely a product: one manufactured, not created.

In the biblical model, children flourish as their full humanity is respected and nourished. Those who provide them with physical (genetic) life also care for their ongoing physical as well as nonphysical needs. The nuclear family unit has found itself under increasing attack by a secular society, and human cloning allows for the final emancipation of human reproduction from the marital relationship.

Indeed, cloning would allow for the emancipation from any relationship, as no "parent" is truly necessary. At this point, women would still be needed as available wombs, but would be mothers only in the biological sense, not fulfilling that biblical relationship that is so vital to normal child development.

The assault on the family would thus be complete with the development of cloning, as the family would be rendered biologically unnecessary. According to scripture, the family is God's gracious gift for our protection, sexual integrity and enjoyment. The blessing of children is the intended result of the marital bond and conjugal

act, not the by-product of a scientific experiment.

Call to Action

We believe that human beings, like all creation, were created in order to glorify God. However, humans were also given the capacity to know, reverence and worship the Creator. We are thus not mere biological accidents, but were created for a unique, special purpose. It is the rejection of this worldview that has given rise to abortion, euthanasia, genetic manipulation, infanticide and now human cloning.

In 1971, James Watson declared the advent of "clonal man." While Watson has championed the rise of genetic knowledge and technologies, he also warned that "if we do not think about it now, the possibility of our having a free choice will one day suddenly be gone."

That day may very well be close at hand, and Christians of this generation must contend for the sanctity of all created life, as well as the distinction between the creature and the Creator.

The tangle of ethical issues involved in genetic technologies represents an urgent challenge to the Christian Church. The new technologies cannot be naively dismissed nor embraced. We must maintain the discipline of moral discernment as we seek to remain culturally engaged. The Brave New World is upon us, whether we want it to be or not. ■



About the Writer:
Dr. Mark Paschall is vice-chief of the department of Family Medicine at St. John Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, and program director for the Family Practice Residency. He is a member of Central Free Will Baptist Church in Royal Oak.

A man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie, is looking down at a book he is holding. The background is a warm, reddish-brown color with vertical folds, possibly a curtain.

**A Free Will Baptist leader's final testimony
to the denomination he loved.**

My Last Word for Free Will Baptists

By Roy Thomas

When I arrived home from a revival meeting in Springdale, Arkansas, on September 16, 2002, I received shocking news. Doctors at Greeley, Colorado, Medical Clinic had conducted tests to determine the cause of pain in my stomach—the tests revealed advanced pancreatic cancer that had metastasized to my liver.

My daughter secured an appointment for me at the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona, the following week. Their tests confirmed advanced pancreatic cancer. Those doctors advised me to go home, begin chemotherapy and set my house in order, because my life expectancy could be measured in a few weeks or months. In spite of the bad news, I appreciate the Mayo Clinic doctors who urged me to remember that the Great Physician has the final word on how long I would live.

The peace that flooded my soul when doctors gave the devastating news let me know that God gives saving grace, living grace and dying grace. I am ready to go home and be with the Lord, but humanly speaking, I want to live as long as I can. I have scheduled 15 revival meetings this year and hope to conduct them all.

Cause for Thanks

This ordeal has caused me to review my past. My life has been filled with wonderful experiences, events and people

that have molded me into what I hope is conformity to the likeness of Christ.

I am thankful for my family. My wife, Pat, has been my sweetheart, my wife and my best friend for 49 years. Both my children, Patsy and Mark, followed our example and went out with their spouses as home missionaries. Now their children also carry the burden to help establish churches.

I am thankful for the greatest event of my life which occurred the last Sunday night in December 1951 when I found Christ as my personal Savior. Through my search for peace of mind and meaning in life, I enlisted in the Air Force during the Korean War.

About that time a Free Will Baptist preacher named Jake Gage came to Idaho and held a revival meeting in which my parents were saved. Although I was 1,500 miles away in basic training, their prayers, letters and phone calls plowed my soul under with conviction until I realized I needed Christ as my Savior.

A few weeks later, a Free Will Baptist preacher from Oklahoma named Virgil Florence came to Idaho, and with the converts of that previous revival meeting, started the only Free Will Baptist church within a 1,000-mile radius of Buhl, Idaho.

I got a furlough before going to Korea. The weather was so

bad that I couldn't make it home for Christmas and go with my family Sunday morning to that church about which they had been writing. However, I made it for the Sunday

Commendations for Free Will Baptists

I commend our denomination for its solid Bible doctrine of free will, free grace and free salvation. I am grateful to men like Benjamin Randall, David Marks, Paul Palmer and other forefathers who took the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice.

These men, from a sense of Christian duty, took a stand while enduring persecution. They publicly and fearlessly advocated our great Bible doctrines and established our policies and practices. I am also thankful for men and women of great vision who carried the torch into the 20th century and developed the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

I commend Free Will Baptists for the clean, separated living of our constituency. I traveled among our churches from coast to coast and have been impressed with the dedication and commitment of our pastors and laymen. These unsung heroes have served the Lord faithfully through the decades. We also have choice Free Will Baptist young people with bright futures in the Lord's work.

I commend Free Will Baptists for our educational endeavors in establishing Sunday School and discipleship curriculum, Bible institutes and colleges. I am thankful for the contribution Free Will Baptist Bible College made to my life. That institution taught me much about the Bible and Christian living, and opened doors of service for me.

While a student at the Bible College, I pastored First FWB Church in Springfield, Tennessee, and Shady Grove FWB Church near Clarksville, Tennessee. (I apologize to those two congregations for the foolish mistakes I made while serving as their young pastor, and thank

them for how well they treated my family and me.)

I commend Free Will Baptists for evangelistic fervor in church planting and worldwide missions outreach. I have always had a burden for the needy cities in the West. The summer after graduation from Bible College, I received a letter from Dr. Homer Willis, general director of Home Missions saying, "The National Home Missions Board has voted to send you and your family to start a Free Will Baptist church in Denver, Colorado." Pat and I are probably the only home missionaries who never met with the Board!

We began deputation services in Tennessee. Then I learned about the Arkansas State Youth Camp, and we attended it. While there we scheduled several weeks of services in



Photos: Roy Thomas at prayer—Little Rock National Association of Free Will Baptists' Convention 1984 (previous page); Reports to delegates—Phoenix convention 1990 (above left); At Home Missions booth—Tulsa convention 1986 (above right); In conversation with Wade Jernigan—Columbus convention 1983); With Chaplain Terry Austin—1991 convention.

night service. When Brother Florence gave the invitation, I made the smartest move in my life when I went to the altar and met Jesus.

Years later while doing research in preparing for my part in the funeral service for Rev. Harry Staires, I learned that the Home Missions Board had sent \$100 to Rev. Virgil Florence to help start that church in Idaho. I believe that money was well spent. Nothing I have written about would have happened if Brother Florence had not gone to Idaho.

I am thankful for the four years I spent in the U.S. Air Force and the excellent government programs I enjoyed as the result. I got saved, started preaching, met and married my wife Pat, and established a Free Will Baptist church during those years. I went to Free Will Baptist Bible College on the G.I. Bill, bought a house with a G.I. loan and now get my prescription medicine from the Department of Veteran Affairs.

I did not know that night I knelt at the altar in Buhl, Idaho, of the exciting life God had for me.

Arkansas churches. From there we went to the Oklahoma State Association which was meeting at First FWB Church in Tulsa. The kind moderator asked Pat and me to sing.

First, I thanked the Oklahoma brethren for sending Brother Florence to Idaho, and then as a scared young couple we sang, *I Want to Stroll Over Heaven with You*. When those Okies finished shouting, I got enough services from that state association to raise the rest of our support. I owe a great debt to the pastors and people of Oklahoma.

We arrived in Denver on February 10, 1961, and had our first service in a rented ballet studio the first Sunday in March. Two years later, March 1963, the church became self-supporting with its own property and building, a full-time pastor's salary and some of the most precious people I have ever known.

I was elected to the Home Missions Board that year. The next year I was elected chairman of the board. I attended board meetings from 1963 to 1995, and served with a long list of dedicated, godly, burdened men during those 32 years. I owe a debt of gratitude for the contribution they made to my life and to Home Missions.

In December 1970, our family moved to Nashville, Tennessee, because I was elected to serve on the Home Missions staff. I served under the direction of Dr. Homer Willis two years and under Rev. Bob Shockey five years. Both men were good to me and my family. I owe them a debt of gratitude for allowing me to serve, and for suffering the consequences for the mistakes I made.

I was made general director of the Home Missions Department in May 1978, and served 18 years in that capacity. Ours was a three-fold responsibility. First, we were to start new churches. I thank the Lord for the dedicated men and women who labored as home missionaries in hard places under difficult circumstances to plant Free Will Baptist churches. Over 200 self-supporting churches now exist that were established during those years by these gallant missionaries.

Second, we were the endorsing agent for the Free Will Baptist chaplaincy. Our chaplains have been a credit to the

Lord and our denomination. I thank them for their courageous and outstanding service in the military.

Third, Home Missions was the department of evangelism. Hundreds of evangelism conferences were conducted by the staff across the country. Those conferences gave me the privilege to preach with such great men as Trymon Messer, John Gibbs, Connie Cariker and Richard Adams. Oh, how I miss those days!

I was privileged to serve in an office in our National Office Building longer than any other person during that 25 years, and was impressed with the faithful, dedicated, hard-working, clean-living Christians employed



there. My life was enriched by theirs.

I thank our pastors for what they have done for me. They supported Home Missions and allowed me to preach in their churches. I have received phone calls from pastors every day since my cancer diagnosis, plus many cards, e-mails and other expressions of love. I did not know that night I

knelt at the altar in Buhl, Idaho, of the exciting life God had for me. I had no idea that the Free Will Baptist denomination would love me and use me as it has.

Cautions for Free Will Baptists

I have lived to see our denomination make many changes. Free Will Baptist Bible College grew from one house to the impressive campus we have today, plus the new property and future building plans. The National Offices moved from a dwelling house to the beautiful building in Antioch. Randall

continued on page 30



Taking a new look at an old practice.

The Case for Feet Washing

By Danny Dwyer

I was riding the trolley at the Free Will Baptist national convention in Memphis, Tennessee. The car was crowded, and I was standing beside a lady who was seated with her two children. She saw my badge and politely asked, "So . . . what is a Free Will Baptist?"

She said she was a Baptist, too, and wondered what the difference was between her church and ours. I have answered that question many times so I explained a couple of the usual similarities and differences. She said, "That's what I believe."

I replied, "Then, you really are a Free Will Baptist."

Identity is important to all of us. Among our identity differences with other groups is the belief that Jesus meant for His example of washing the disciples' feet to be practiced as a memorial ritual, an ordinance. But should it be understood that way?

Photo Credit: Keith Johnson

Three Phrases

Ultimately, the answer to the question depends on two considerations. The first is how we interpret the scene in John 13:1-17. The wording is specific and determining in three key phrases.

"...Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." The word translated "ought" (*opheilete* from *opheilo*) means to be under obligation, bound by duty or necessity (Thayer, p. 469). It carries the idea of owing a debt.

"I have given you an example..." The word translated "example" (*hupodeigma*) means an example for imitation (Thayer, p. 642).

"...that ye should do as I have done..." In this form it means "to do in the same manner" (Thayer, p. 526). "Jesus has given the disciples an object lesson in humility..." (Robertson, p. 241).

The event was so impressive that a great number of Christians from the first century until today have practiced feet washing as an ordinance to remind them of the humility of Christ and our personal relationship with one another.

I do not think any of us would disagree that the meaning behind the picture is the most important issue here. Nor would we argue about the pretentiousness of the ritual without the practice of a true servant's heart in other situations. But that principle is true about all of Christian life. And certainly it's true with any memorial ritual performed in the church.

The spiritual truth is greater than the form in which it is presented. However, certain forms are appropriate reminders of the larger truth they display. That brings us to the second consideration which is usually phrased this way, "Does the event of Jesus washing the disciples' feet qualify as an ordinance?"

Clear Definition

In my opinion, that is the wrong question to ask. The reason I object to this question is that the definition of "ordinance" is an arbitrary one based on a particular church's tradition. One can consult any number of reference sources to verify this.

I believe we ought to rather ask, "Does the biblical text warrant the conclusion of the church observing the form as well as the meaning?" May I, then, be so bold as to offer what could be considered a biblical definition of an ordinance?

A biblical ordinance is a practice that was personally exemplified by Christ that pictures an element of His redemptive work and is commanded to be observed by His followers as memorials of that truth.

When this criteria is applied, it appears that there are three acts in the ministry of the Lord Jesus that fit this definition. Feet washing shows the humiliation of Christ in His condescension to become a man (Phil. 2:5-11). The Lord's Supper (Communion) shows the sacrifice of His blood and body for our sins (1 Cor. 11:24, 25). Baptism shows His death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:4).

These three elements are indispensable in the redemptive role of Christ. They picture, as well, the work of Christ within the life of the believer as he identifies with the Lord in salvation's gift and new life. All three have specific acts or forms that represent the larger meanings and are commanded by our Lord to be observed.

Not one area can be omitted and still retain the total picture of the Savior's work. In fact, some have, throughout the history of the church, tried to alter or omit one of these truths to their own hurt and the undermining of biblical truth and balanced theology. Why would we not want to portray these essential truths in our memorials unto "Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us," (Eph. 5:2)?

Although John Calvin did not believe feet washing should be an ordinance, his words seem to not only interpret the text but, in my opinion, the main reason why it is not regarded by some as such, when he said, "Pride hinders us from fostering the equality which ought to flourish among us," (Calvin, p. 60).

God's Visual Aids

Anyone who has taught knows the importance of using visual aids for the learning process. In the Old Testament,

the Lord commanded that Israel regularly observe certain rituals and journeys that identified them as His covenant people and portrayed His redemptive plan. As each generation practiced these and answered the questions of their children and foreigners (Deut. 6:20-25) as to their meaning, they became powerful teaching tools about the spiritual truths they represented. They became a part of their core beliefs and lifestyle.

The Church has, likewise, been given examples, albeit fewer than Old Testament Israel, that picture the foundational pillars of our core beliefs and lifestyle. Baptism usually follows soon after a person is saved (Acts 2:41). Communion is observed, "...as oft as ye eat ... drink," (1 Cor. 11:26). Since feet washing was performed just after communion by the Lord Jesus (John 13:4ff), it fits well in the heart preparations that accompany communion's observance and the essence of relationship within the Christian community. What great, timeless teaching events these are that picture the redemptive work of the Savior and key principles in the life of the believer! ■

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About the Writer:
Dr. Danny Dwyer pastors First Free Will Baptist Church in Florence, Alabama. He also serves on the denomination's Sunday School and Church Training Board.



Georgia Adopts \$700,000 Budget

COLUMBUS, GA—The 67th annual Georgia State Association met March 13-15 at Calvary FWB Church in Columbus and adopted a \$700,000 state budget for 2004, according to clerk Keith Lloyd. That amount included \$254,000 in Cooperative Plan disbursements, plus The Together Way giving.

Pastor Len Blanchard (Shallowford FWB Church, Marietta) was elected moderator, succeeding Paul Smith who moved to another state. In the interim, Albany pastor Billy Hanna moderated the 2003 session. Statesboro pastor Wayne Miracle was elected assistant moderator.

Forty-nine ministers registered for the meeting, along with 41 lay delegates, 13 deacons and 103 visitors.

Four Georgia pastors preached sermons during worship sessions: Stewart-Allen Clark (Double Branch FWB Church, Hawkinsville), Michael Bryan (Ebenezer FWB Church, Glennville), Kent Barwick (Colquitt FWB Church, Colquitt) and Tim Horne (New Hope FWB Church, Jesup). Executive secretary Keith Burden preached twice at the Thursday morning Bible Conference.

Delegates adopted a resolution calling for prayer on behalf of the nation, its leaders and military. Another resolution recommended to the National Association's Executive Committee that "Awana" and other groups that require churches to teach eternal security in order to use their material be prohibited from exhibiting at the national convention.

In other action, Dr. Lucy Hyman was recognized by Randall House Publications for her 20-year contribution to Spanish literature.

During the Friday evening "Georgia Praise Gathering," some 282 people enjoyed Gaither-style singing with choirs, quartets, trios, duets and solos.

The 2004 association will meet March 18-20 at First FWB Church in Jesup.



Forrest Keynotes Illinois State Association

CHICAGO, IL—Reverend Terry Forrest, pastoral counseling instructor at Free Will Baptist Bible College, preached three times at the 43rd annual session of the Illinois State Association. Forrest addressed the 85 registered attendees on the new non-believers, how to reach them and how to respond to the new realities of a postmodern world.

The March 21-22 gathering met at Northwest FWB Church in Chicago. Moderator Daryl Ellis was elected to a second term, as was assistant moderator David Burgess.

Meeting under their "Loving Leadership" theme, delegates adopted a \$250,000 state budget. The Together Way funds will be allocated: National Ministries (25%), Illinois Missions (28%), Promotional Fund (16%), Camp (16%), General Fund (8%), Christian Education (3%), Church Training Service (3%), Master's Men (1%).

Pastor Bill Crank (Bethel FWB Church, South Roxana) conducted a local church stewardship workshop.

Host pastor David Potete and members of the Northwest FWB Church prepared a banquet for delegates and shared a preview of the birth and growth of the mission work.

The 2004 state association will meet March 19-20 at Heritage FWB Church in Springfield.



South Carolina Overhauls Constitution

FLORENCE, SC—The Executive Committee proposed 17 adjustments to the South Carolina State Association's constitution when delegates gathered February 27-28 at Peace FWB Church in Florence. Clerk Todd W. Smith confirmed that delegates to the 61st annual session focused their energies on the revisions.

One change named the state executive secretary as South Carolina's General Board member to the National Association. Another dissolved the Poston Baggett Loan Fund Board and specified that the

state treasurer serve as liaison with Free Will Baptist Bible College where the funds are loaned to South Carolina students.

Moderator Sherwood Lee was elected to his seventh term. Some 157 people registered for the meeting, including 96 ministers as well as 30 deacons and lay delegates.

Three sermons and two devotions developed the association theme, "Building His Church." Pastor Richard Huggins (Damascus FWB Church, Conway), Pastor Larry McAlister (Gilead FWB Church, Lake City) and Home

Missions director Larry Powell preached during worship sessions. Robbie Hiott (Charleston) and Jake Creech (Turbeville) led devotional services.

The 2002 S.C. Plan of Support reported \$937,000 from the various conferences and individuals. Some \$328,000 of that total went to Foreign Missions, nearly \$127,000 to Home Missions and \$119,000 to the S.C. Children's Home.

Delegates recognized Ben Stone for 14 years of service on the Children's Home Board.

The 2004 association will meet February 26-27 with the Beaver Creek Association at a site to be determined.

Dr. Roy Thomas, Former Home Missions Director, Dies

GREELEY, CO—Dr. Roy Thomas, who served 25 years with the Home Missions Department as general director (18 years) and associate director (7 years), died March 23 at his home in Greeley, Colorado. He was 72.

Thomas was born in Greeley but grew up on a farm near Buhl, Idaho. He attended the University of Idaho (1948-49) before joining the U. S. Air Force (1951-55) where he served in Korea and Japan. He was home on leave in 1951 when he was converted at age 21 in the only Free Will Baptist church in the state of Idaho (First FWB Church, Buhl).

Dr. Thomas was licensed to preach in 1953 and ordained in 1954. His 50-year ministry made him a household name in Free Will Baptist churches across America. He was a church planter, home missionary, board member and denominational executive with the Home Missions Department.

Brother Thomas' earliest sermons were preached in Artesia, New Mexico (1954-56), where he organized First FWB Church. Two years later he enrolled at Free Will Baptist Bible College and graduated with honors in 1960. While a student at FWBBC, he pastored two churches—Shady Grove FWB Church (Clarksville) and First FWB Church (Springfield).

Dr. Thomas was sent to Denver, Colorado, as a home missionary by the

Home Missions Board in 1961 where he established First FWB Church. The church became self-supporting in two years, after which he served two terms on the Home Missions Board. He continued his education by earning a Master of Divinity degree from Luther Rice Seminary in 1978. Bethany Seminary bestowed the Doctor of Divinity degree on him in 1989.

Elected to the Home Missions Board in 1963, he served until 1970, five years as chair. In December 1970 he was appointed associate director of the Home Missions Department and filled that position until 1978 when he was named general director. He retired in December 1995 after 18 years as director.

More than 200 churches were established under his leadership. The department sponsored numerous evangelism and church growth conferences in those years, as well as the Old Time Camp Meeting at the national convention. Thomas also started the Church Extension Loan Fund, the Helping Hands Church Building Team, the Associate Missionary Program, the Aquilla and Priscilla Program and the Tentmaker Program. He also wrote one book, *Planting and Growing a Fundamental Church*, published *The Journal of Benjamin Randall* and other historical Free Will Baptist and church growth books and materials.



After retirement, Roy served as an evangelist, conducting over 150 revivals and conferences from his home base in Greeley. He was moderator of the Colorado District Association when he died.

Funeral services were conducted March 28 at Highland Hills FWB Church in Greeley where Dr. Thomas' son, Mark Thomas, pastors. Reverends Mark Thomas (son) and Howard Gwartney (son-in-law) officiated.

Dr. Thomas is survived by his wife of 49 years, Pat King Thomas; one daughter, Patsy (Mrs. Howard) Gwartney; one son, Reverend Mark Thomas; three grandchildren; and two brothers, Reverend Bob Thomas and Ron Thomas.



48 Attend Arizona Meeting

TUCSON, AZ—Delegates to the First Arizona District re-elected Phoenix pastor George Harvey, Jr., as moderator in their March 8 meeting. The session met at First FWB Church

in Tucson and registered 48 attendees.

Eight ministers, 12 lay delegates and two deacons joined with visitors for two worship sessions. Executive secretary Keith

Burden and FWBBC's director of institutional advancement, David Williford, preached the morning and afternoon sermons.

Delegates welcomed West Valley FWB Church (Buckeye) into membership. The host church served lunch for attendees.

The 2004 meeting is set for March 13 in Phoenix at a church to be determined.

FWBBC Brings Teachers into Homes

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College has an offer for people who want to study the Bible at home. The Lifetime Learning Program brings FWBBC's teachers right into the living room through video to teach courses like Free Will Baptist Doctrines, Old Testament Survey, and Marriage and the Family.

Video courses may be taken for college credit or for personal enjoyment and spiritual growth.

The following are currently available, with more to come soon:

COURSE

Old Testament Survey: Law and History
Old Testament Survey: Poetry and Prophecy
New Testament Survey: The Gospels
Psalms
Eschatology (Last Things)
Systematic Theology I, II
Free Will Baptist Doctrines
Homiletics
Marriage and the Family

TEACHER

Dr. Garnett Reid
Dr. Garnett Reid
Dr. Stanley Outlaw
Dr. Garnett Reid
Rev. Leroy Forlines
Rev. Leroy Forlines
Dr. Robert Picirilli
Rev. Ralph Hampton
Dr. LaVerne Miley

For more information, check the FWBBC website at www.fwbcc.edu/prospective_student/lifetime.html or contact:

Lifetime Learning
c/o Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205

Phone: 1-800-76-FWBBC
E-mail: rcampbell@fwbcc.edu

FWBBC Students Elect Officers



NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College students chose their 2003–04 officers in elections held on campus in March.

Paul Bryant, a junior pastoral training major from Vero Beach, Florida, was elected president. Paul was president of his freshman and sophomore classes, president of his society, and a member of the Rejoice ministry team for two years. He also has served as a prayer captain on campus.

Serving with him are:

Vice President: Brandon Roysden, a sophomore Teacher Education major from Anderson, Indiana.

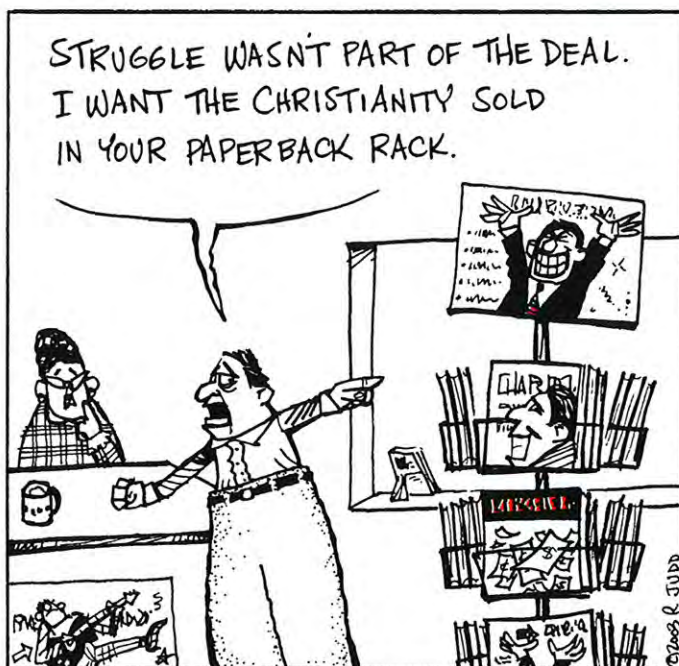
Secretary-Treasurer: Hollie Hubbard, a junior Missions major from Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

Chaplain: John Kellis, a senior Pastoral Training major from Winfield, Alabama.

Worship Leader: Corey Hawkins, a sophomore Music Performance major from Greenville, North Carolina.

Please pray for these new student leaders who will begin their service at the beginning of the fall semester in August.

BEYOND BELIEF



Arizona: **First FWB Church** in **Tucson** witnessed eight couples march down the aisle to renew their wedding vows after Pastor **Eddie Young** scheduled a "Heart of Love Sunday." The church even arranged an eight-couple reception in the fellowship hall. Some 127 people were on hand for the unusual event.

North Valley FWB Church in **Phoenix** plans a 1,800-square-foot addition, according to Pastor **George Harvey**. That will include six new classrooms and children's church. The church began in a mall space in 1990, relocated in 1996 and became self-supporting in 2000.

Arkansas: Pastor **Gene Cullum** reports 20 new members at **First FWB Church** in **Crossett**. The church honored long-time custodian **Austin Rodgers** who retired from his duties after 20 years.

Grace FWB Church in **Diaz** now have a new sanctuary in which to worship and a growing congregation eager to fill it. The building is debt-free. **Orville Berg** pastors.

When **Cavanaugh FWB Church** in **Fort Smith** began experiencing overcrowding in the sanctuary and in the parking lot on Sunday mornings, members agreed on the solution—start another service. Their "Sunrise Worship" begins at 8:00 a.m. **Will Harmon** pastors.

Canada: **Serenity FWB Church** in **Fredericton, New Brunswick**, purchased 100 chairs to start the new year in their new building. When winter hampered travel, Pastor **Jeff Crabtree** adjusted immediately. He discovered that follow-up lessons can be done online and discussed over the telephone. More first-time visitors had attended by mid-February than came all of last year.

South Carolina: **Rickey Evans** was named assistant director/book store manager at

the state's Christian Book and Supply Store in Florence effective January, according to **Mike Jones**, executive secretary.

Pastor **Kenneth Upright** of **Liberty FWB Church** in **Manning** announced his retirement after 40 years in ministry, the last 17 years at Liberty Church. Members gave him a \$1,000 check. Brother Upright will continue his Christian book store and tax business in the city. He has been active in youth camps, taught at Bethel Bible Institute, operated a prison ministry and was headmaster at a private school.

Damascus FWB Church in **Conway** installed a new sign beside Highway 378. Members gave Pastor **Richard Huggins** a new guitar to show appreciation.

After **Immanuel FWB Church** in **Santee** approached Lakeland Investors, Inc., about purchasing 1.07 acres in front of their building, the realtors decided to give the property to the congregation. Pastor **Herman Hyman** said that seven members read the Bible through last year.

Two members of **Bethany FWB Church** in **Timmons ville** received plaques in recognition for service. Deacon **Dick Granger** (50 years) and trustee **Major Tedder** were cited by Pastor **Phil Bozeman**.

Twelve members of **First FWB Church** in **Kingstree** read the Bible through last year, according to Pastor **Wayland Owens**.

Pastor **Kenneth Cash** said that 10 members of **Una FWB Church** in **Una** read the Bible through.

Tennessee: **Donelson FWB Church** in **Nashville** welcomed 23 new members, according to Pastor **Rob Morgan**. Member **Ron Beasley** was inducted into the American Academy of Floriculture for his 35 years of service in the floral industry.



Heart Stone Farm truck & trailer,
Free Will Baptist Family Ministries

Free Will Baptist Family Ministries in **Greeneville** reports 33 children converted, six rededications and nine baptisms. The home also received a 2003 Freightliner truck with a crew cab and a 32-foot EBY livestock trailer as a gift from **Scott Niswonger** and **Tim Fyda**.

Contact welcomes **The Key Stone**, publication of **Limestone FWB Church** in **Limestone**. The four-page, four-color newsletter includes church news, a message from Pastor **Ronnie Mitchell**, devotional materials and a handy calendar of events.

Free Will Baptist Bible College in **Nashville** announced two faculty-staff additions. Dr. **Kevin Hester** will teach Bible and humanities; **Jennifer Dycus** will serve as retention coordinator in the enrollment management department.

Texas: Pastor **Nick Stewart** baptized six people at **Lighthouse FWB Church** in **Victoria**. The church is praying to add one new family each week. Their new riding lawn mower is debt-free. The church received gifts of a music stand and a podium.

Virginia: Members of **Bloss Memorial FWB Church** in **Arlington** purchased a new van this spring after their well-traveled mini-van shut down. Pastor **Steve Faison** said the replacement van was located and financial arrangements made within a week. Faison's sermon series, "Free to Dream," has members eager to hear what's coming next on Sunday mornings. ■

Part six of an 11-part series.

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

About Be

By Terry W. Eagleton

When my wife and I were called to serve the church I currently pastor, we moved across town and into the church parsonage. We were eager to become active members in our new community. A lot was going on in our lives at that time. We were excited about my new job, our new house, new people to meet and

young children to raise. We arrived in our new neighborhood as enthusiastic residents.

As soon as we got the boxes out of the middle of the floor and the beds set up and made, we were ready to try out our new sleeping quarters. It never has taken me long to fall asleep, and peaceful slumber was a welcome companion

bedroom community. Several men from the church helped us move and by nightfall all was in place. In the cool of a clear spring evening, I walked out into my new back yard and gazed into the skies.

I couldn't believe my ears. Silence. Deafening silence! I was then reminded of the peaceful silence of rural life. Contrasting those two experiences, I

become besieged with anxiety. Our senses are being overwhelmed.

A few years ago the news anchor looked straight into the camera and read the news. One anchor with one or two field reporters completed the full cast. Today, multiple anchors, numerous field reporters around the world compete with streaming video, a collage of

Our inner person craves being at peace. The juxtaposition of an innate need for peace and the sensational pace we live, demands a resolution to the conflict.

that night. Peaceful that is, until someone called 911. Not 200 yards from our new bedroom sat the West Sector Police Station. With time, we adjusted to all the traffic, the sirens and the bustle of living on a busy thoroughfare.

With God's help, after a couple of years we were in the position to buy a house. It was located in a nearby, rural

have recognized that though I'm young, this I've learned about being at peace.

Rare

We have all heard or complained that modern conveniences seem to make our life more hectic than peaceful. The communication age is a two-edged sword. With knowledge we live wiser, more productive, healthier, happier lives. With information overload, we

still graphics and scrolling "breaking" news. It's a full frontal assault.

I watch the digital newscast on my large screen, hear it in surround sound and feel it while my furniture and floor vibrate . . . all while I talk on one of my three phone lines. And that is what I do to wind down from a work day.

Scary

I well remember the first Sunday we began observing a time of silent

Being at Peace

meditation during our morning service. When the congregation had been silent for about 30 seconds, some began to look around to see who had missed their cue. We are so accustomed to activity that silence often makes us uncomfortable, even frightened.

When we find ourselves in situations where our senses are not being stimulated, we frequently become disoriented and spring into activity as if silent, meditative contemplation is to be avoided at all cost.

Necessary

In spite of the tempo of life we live, most of us believe our pace is not in our personal best interest. My suspicion was supported this week as I sat in the hospital lobby waiting on news from the doctor who was operating on a parishioner.

As we sat waiting, I asked a companion "waiter" if she were a Christian. She responded in the affirmative—30-plus years. I asked her how much time she imagined the average believer spent in contemplative meditation, soothing and

nourishing the soul. After stammering and stuttering she said she just didn't want to answer that question. Reality was too painful.

Our inner person craves being at peace. The juxtaposition of an innate need for peace and the sensational pace we live, demands a resolution to the conflict.

Possible

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace," (Psa. 29:11).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee . . .," (Isa. 26:3).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," (John 14:27).

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost," (Rom. 15:13).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace . . .," (Gal. 5:22).

"... the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds . . .," (Phil. 4:7).

"Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means . . .," (II Thes. 3:16).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," (Rom. 5:1)

Peace is not found in our circumstances. It is the gift of a state of spirit because of our relationship with God. He designed us to enjoy peace with ourselves, our fellow man, the universe we are charged to manage and Himself. ■



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

FOUNDED ON THE ROCK FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

67th Annual Session • July 20–24, 2003
Tampa Convention Center
Tampa, Florida

Includes National Youth Conference and WNAC programs

Moderator: Carl Cheshier
Music Coordinator: Scott Bullman
Organist: Jamie Patrick
Pianist: Jerry Carraway
Instrumental Coordinator: Chris Truett
Registration Coordinator: Dari Goodfellow
Headquarters Hotel: Tampa Marriott Waterside
Convention Office: Rooms 3–4/Tampa Convention Center

All events are at Tampa Convention Center unless otherwise specified.

Saturday Afternoon / July 19

3:00–7:00 Registration Registration Level

Sunday Morning / July 20

8:00–10:00 p.m. Registration (continues until Thursday at 9:15 a.m.) Registration Level

10:00–10:45 **Sunday School**
Adult Class East Hall
Preschool Class (Ages 3–6) Rooms 10–12
Children's Class (Grades 1–3) Rooms 13–14
Tweeners Class (Grades 4–6) Rooms 15–16
Teen Class (Grades 7–12) Ballroom B

10:45 Intermission

11:00–12:00 noon **Morning Worship**
Adult Church East Hall
Preschool Worship (Ages 3–6) Rooms 10–12
Children's Worship (Grades 1–3) Rooms 13–14
Tweeners Worship (Grades 4–6) Rooms 15–16
Teen Worship (Grades 7–12) Ballroom B

Sunday Afternoon / July 20

12:15 NYC Personnel Luncheon Room 18

12:30–1:15 WNAC Executive Committee Luncheon Marriott Waterside Meeting Room #2

1:30–4:30 WNAC Executive Committee Meeting Marriott Waterside Meeting Room #2

3:00 Music Rehearsal East Hall

4:00 TruthQuest Room 7
Pre-Test Session #1

4:00 Reach That Guy Service Project Orientation Room 5

4:00 Convention Choir Rehearsal (Homecoming Service) East Hall

5:00 Usher Orientation Room 35

Sunday Evening / July 20

7:00–8:30 **Convention Assembly** East Hall
Preschool Worship (Ages 3–6) Rooms 10–12
Children's Worship (Grades 1–3) Rooms 13–14
Tweeners Worship (Grades 4–6) Rooms 15–16
Teen Worship (Grades 7–12) Ballroom B

8:30 Convention Choir Rehearsal East Hall

9:00–10:00 NYC Judges Reception Room 18
Children's Activities Rooms 13–14
Tweeners Activities Rooms 15–16

9:00–11:00 Youth Activities Ballroom B

Monday Morning / July 21

7:00–7:45 General Board Breakfast Marriott Waterside Salon III

7:30–8:30 Missionary Orientation (For Exhibit Schedule) Room 5

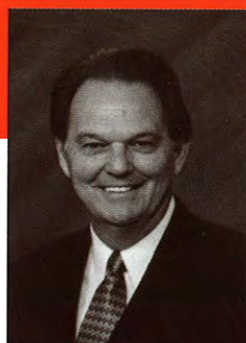
8:00–2:30 p.m. General Board Convenes Marriott Waterside Salons IV, V, VI

8:00–5:00 p.m. NYC Art Gallery Opens Room 1
Table Top Displays

8:00–10:00 p.m. Registration Continues Registration Level



Ron Hunter
Sunday School Department



Larry Powell
Home Missions Department



Keith Burden
Executive Office



Matt Pinson
Free Will Baptist Bible College



James Forlines
Foreign Missions Department

8:30—12:00 noon NYC Competitive Activities

Music and Arts Section 1
Music and Arts Section 2
Music and Arts Section 3
Music and Arts Section 4
Bible Bowl
Bible Tic Tac Toe
Sword Drill
Bible Memorization

Ballroom B
Ballroom A
Rooms 20–21
Rooms 22–23
Room 19
Rooms 13–14
Room 24
Rooms 15–16

9:00—10:00 Reach That Guy Service Project Orientation

Room 5

9:00—11:00 WNAC Nominating Committee

Marriott Waterside
Meeting Room #2

Monday Afternoon / July 21

1:00—2:30 General Board Reconvenes

Marriott Waterside
Salons IV, V, VI

1:00—4:00 **NYC Youth Seminars**
NYC Children's Seminars
Sunday School Workshop

Room 9
Room 7
Room 5

1:00—4:30 **NYC Competitive Activities**

Music and Arts Section 5
Music and Arts Section 6
Music and Arts Section 7
Bible Bowl
Bible Tic Tac Toe
Sword Drill
Bible Memorization

Ballroom A
Rooms 20–21
Rooms 22–23
Room 19
Rooms 13–14
Room 24
Rooms 15–16

1:30—2:30 WNAC Seminar

Rooms 24–25

2:30—4:00 WNAC Seminar

Rooms 24–25

3:00 Exhibit Area Opens

Ballrooms C–D

3:00—5:00 Pastors/Laymen Conference

Ballroom B

3:30—4:30 TruthQuest
Pre-Test Session #2

Room 6

5:00 Florida WAC Executive Dinner

Wyndham Harbour Island
Fletcher Room

5:00 Music Rehearsal

East Hall

5:00 Children's Banquet

Wyndham Harbour Island
Ballroom I

5:00 Tweener Banquet

Wyndham Harbour Island
Ballroom II

5:15—6:30 Benjamin Randall Appreciation Dinner

Room 18

5:30 Convention Choir Rehearsal

East Hall

Monday Evening / July 21

7:00—8:30 **Convention Assembly**
Preschool Worship (Ages 3–6)
Children's Worship (Grades 1–3)
Tweener Worship (Grades 4–6)
Teen Worship (Grades 7–12)

East Hall
Rooms 10–12
Rooms 13–14
Rooms 15–16
Ballroom B

8:30 Men's Chorale Rehearsal

East Hall

8:30—10:00 Exhibit Area Open

Ballrooms C–D

9:00—10:00 Board of Retirement Information Meeting

Rooms 24–25

9:00—10:00 Children's Activities
Tweener Activities

Rooms 13–14
Rooms 15–16

9:00—10:30 Youth Worker Reception

Room 7

9:00—11:00 Youth Activities

Ballroom B

9:00—11:00 Truth & Peace Alumni Reunion

Room 18

10:00 Exhibit Area Closed

Tuesday Morning / July 22

8:00—10:00 p.m. Registration Continues

Registration Level

8:30—10:30 Foreign/Home Missions Rally

Ballroom A

8:30—10:50 WNAC Convention

East Hall

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

67th Annual Session • July 20–24, 2003
Tampa Convention Center

8:30–12:00 noon **NYC Competitive Activities**
Music and Arts Section 8
Music and Arts Section 9
Music and Arts Section 10
Bible Tic Tac Toe
Bible Memorization
Ballroom B
Rooms 20–21
Rooms 22–23
Rooms 13–14
Rooms 15–16

9:00–12:00 noon TruthQuest
Playoff Rounds
Room 19

10:00–12:00 noon **NYC Seminars**
NYC Youth Seminars
NYC Children's Seminars
Sunday School Workshop
Room 9
Room 7
Room 5

10:00–10:00 p.m. Exhibit Area Open
Ballrooms C–D

11:00 WNAC Missionary Service
East Hall

11:00–12:30 p.m. Theological Trends Seminar
Ballroom A

12:00 Hillsdale College Luncheon
Marriott Waterside
Ballroom

Tuesday Afternoon / July 22

12:30–2:30 WNAC Fellowship Luncheon
Wyndham Harbour Island
Ballroom

1:00–4:00 **NYC Seminars**
NYC Youth Seminars
NYC Children's Seminars
Sunday School Workshop
Room 9
Room 7
Room 5

1:00–4:30 **NYC Competitive Activities**
Music and Arts Section 11
Music and Arts Section 12
Music and Arts Section 13
Music and Arts Section 14
Bible Memorization
Ballroom B
Ballroom A
Rooms 20–21
Rooms 22–23
Rooms 15–16

1:30–3:00 Music Commission Seminar
Room 24

3:00–4:30 Sunday School Workshop
Rooms 20–21

4:00 Music Rehearsal
East Hall

5:15 Men's Chorale Rehearsal
East Hall

6:00 Convention Choir Rehearsal
East Hall

Tuesday Evening / July 22

7:00–8:30 **Convention Assembly**
Preschool Worship (Ages 3–6)
Children's Worship (Grades 1–3)
Tweeners Worship (Grades 4–6)
Teen Worship (Grades 7–12)
East Hall
Rooms 10–12
Rooms 13–14
Rooms 15–16
Ballroom B

8:30 Convention Choir Rehearsal
East Hall

8:30–10:00 Exhibit Area Open
Ballrooms C–D

9:00 **NYC Activities**
Judges Post-Competition Meeting
Children's Activities
Tweeners Activities
Room 5
Rooms 13–14
Rooms 15–16

9:00–11:00 Youth Banquet
Wyndham Harbour Island
Ballroom

10:00 Exhibit Area Closed

Wednesday Morning / July 23

7:00–8:30 Home Missions Board Breakfast
Marriott Waterside
Bayshore Boardroom

7:30–8:30 State Leaders Breakfast
Room 5

8:00–11:00 NYC Competitive Finals
Ballroom B

8:00–10:00 p.m. Registration Continues
Registration Level

9:00–11:45 **Convention Business Session**
East Hall

10:00–12:00 noon **NYC Seminars**
NYC Youth Seminars
Sunday School Workshop
Sunday School Workshop
Room 9
Room 7
Room 5

10:00–10:00 p.m. Exhibit Area Open
Ballrooms C–D

Wednesday Afternoon / July 23

12:00–1:15 Free Will Baptist Bible College Luncheon
Rooms 13–16

1:00–4:00 **NYC Seminars**
NYC Youth Seminars
NYC Children's Seminars
NYC Worker Seminars
Sunday School Workshop
Room 9
Room 7
Room 6
Room 5

1:30–3:00 Music Commission Seminar
Room 24

1:30–4:00 **Convention Business Session Reconvenes**
East Hall

3:00–5:00 Truth & Peace Reception
Room 18

4:00 Music Rehearsal
East Hall

5:00 Foreign Missions Appreciation Dinner
Marriott Waterside
Meeting Room #11

5:30 Convention Choir Rehearsal
East Hall

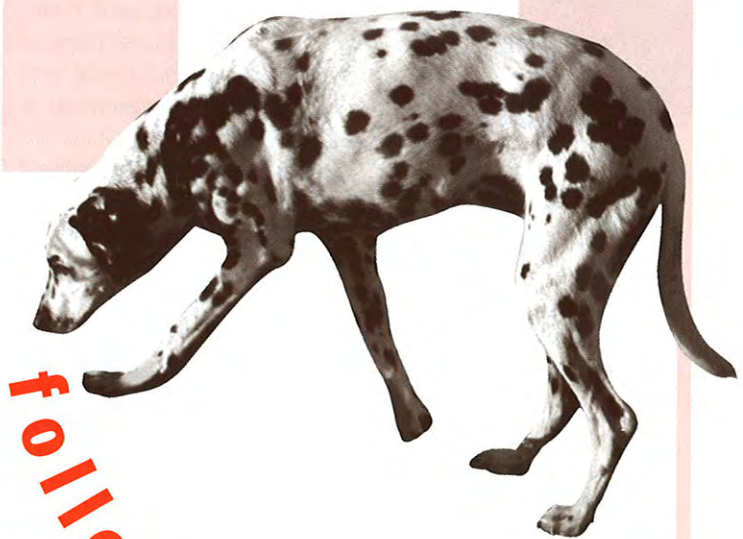
Wednesday Evening / July 23

7:00–9:00 **Convention Assembly**
Preschool Worship (Ages 3–6)
East Hall
Rooms 10–12

8:30–10:00 Exhibit Area Open
Ballrooms C–D

8:50-9:00	Children's Choir Presentation	East Hall	9:00	Concluding Business Session	East Hall
9:00	NYC Awards Ceremony	East Hall	9:00-12:30 p.m.	Exhibit Area Open	Ballrooms C-D
10:00	Exhibit Area Closed		9:15	Registration Closes	
Thursday Morning / July 24			11:45	Adjournment	
7:00-8:00	Presidents' Breakfast	Marriott Waterside Bayshore Boardroom			
7:30-9:00	Sunday School Board Breakfast	Marriott Waterside Greco Boardroom			
8:00-9:15	Registration Continues	Registration Level			

FREE WILL BAPTIST NATIONAL CONVENTION



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
follow your
nose to our
convention



Father's Day

For many fathers, this is the day we expect to get some token of appreciation from our children for being "The World's Greatest Dad." I still have these things from when my sons were young and innocent. Now that they are grown

and driving, dating and basically don't have a need for me anymore, I appreciate the fact that they will still go out to eat with me on that day. I even like it if they punch me in the shoulder as a sign of affection.

I don't have that opportunity anymore. Since my father passed away three years ago, I haven't had the opportunity to tell him or show him that I care. Now don't think I'm trying to put a guilt trip on anybody; I'm just letting you know.

It seems that there are certain holidays or birthdays when we get nostalgic and start reminiscing about days gone by. We think about what might have been, what we could have or should have done differently. We think about all the missed opportunities. Why? Is it because we don't

take advantage of the opportunities God gives us? Could be!

Many places throughout the scriptures, God's Word tells us to honor our fathers. As we observe Father's Day this year, let me encourage you to call or go see your father on this day. If you are like me, take time to remember your father.

But let me encourage you to honor your Heavenly Father also. The scriptures tell us He will always be there for us, will take care of us and meet our needs and that He loves us.

How can we honor our Heavenly Father? By being in His house on this day. By telling someone else about Him. Maybe you can find an older gentleman who might not have anyone to take him out and honor him. Most of all, remember who deserves all the honor. ■



Master's Men
Free Will Baptist
Men's Ministry

Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus



Master's Men Father's Day Offering

JUNE 15

Help support the
Master's Men Department
by receiving a love offering!

There is still time to order the Father's Day wallet calendars to give your fathers. Call toll-free 877•767•8039 or email masters@nafwb.org



What a crowd! What a retreat!

WNAC National Retreat March 27-29

Over 800 women from 18 states and three foreign countries lifted their eyes and:

- Gave an \$8,000+ offering to attending missionaries serving under national FWB Foreign and Home Missions Boards.
- Waved flags, cheered and prayed for the nation during a special patriotic service.
- Listened to the testimony and timely Bible teaching of Ronda Sturgill, FWB chaplain's wife.
- Rejoiced as two women made decisions for salvation.
- Wept as Oklahoma women portrayed missionaries Laura Belle Barnard, Marie Hanna and Darlene Deibler Rose.
- Laughed as Missouri women and WNAC personnel entertained with Hillbilly flair.
- Worshiped with soloist Ronda Freeman and musicians Debbie Burden and Marian Kern.
- Responded with an overwhelming "yes" to a future WNAC retreat in Branson.

Women commented:

"We thought it was the best! The Chateau was beautiful, the music by Ronda Freeman was very touching, and the Coon sisters were hilarious. We were so impressed by Ronda Sturgill. She really has an amazing testimony of how God cares and provides for his children.

—Shelia Rooker, Lawton, OK

"It was such a blessing to me. I desperately needed it. My hopes and drives were renewed, and my spiritual vision returned with greater clarity than ever before. Each service deeply moved me.

— Susan Henderson, Purdy, MO

"The [retreat] was a blessing, and many bonds were strengthened. Thanks!"

— Ruby Scannell, Haskell, OK



**WOMEN
NATIONALLY
ACTIVE FOR
CHRIST**

Upcoming Events

- WNAC National Convention, July 21-22, Tampa, FL
- National Marriage Enrichment Conference, September 19-21, Pigeon Forge, TN
- WNAC National Retreat, October 28-30, 2004, Ridgecrest, NC

Free Will Baptist Ministry Focus



Photos: (Left) Missionaries pray with others. (Center, top to bottom) Speaker Ronda Sturgill enjoys soloist Ronda Freeman. Tamatha Olgilvie relives Laura Belle Barnard's visit to a Hindu shrine. The farmer (WNAC President Debe Taylor) and his daughter (Marjorie Workman) lend laughter during fun time.



Randy Sawyer

Surviving the Pain of Change

The word change strikes ter-

ror in the heart of every pastor, because even the most minuscule alteration in scheduling, programming, methodology or philosophy brings catastrophic reactions from a local congregation. The moment any attempt is made to modify some long-standing procedure or policy the accusations begin to fly. Anyone who dares to lead the *charge of change* could face challenges to his competency, his character or even his Christianity.

That's right, a person might even be de-christianized by his peers for the mere suggestion that something could be done a different way. Consequently, the leadership goes along to get along, while the church ministry is gradually locked in time warp, with the status quo providing the warmth and boredom necessary to rock everyone sound to sleep.

Change Is Painful

The truth is, change is painful. It forces us to stretch ourselves, to move out of the comfortable into the unknown, and to face the possibility of failure. Worst of all, it makes us vulnerable to the inevitable cries of the naysayers if we turn out to be wrong. And believe me some folks want you to fail just so they can tell you about it. So why bother?

Change Is Necessary

Why indeed? Because of the simple fact that if *we always do what we've always done, we'll always get what we've always gotten*. You've heard that before. I'm not the first to say it. But it's obvious and self-evident. What's more, most of our churches don't need to *keep getting what they're getting*. We're not winning souls, we're not growing disciples, we're not sending missionaries, and we're not impacting our surroundings. We're just not! So why would we want to *keep getting what we're getting*?

Forgive me if this sounds a little critical, but it's pretty clear that something needs to change in our churches and in our denomination. Now I would agree wholeheartedly that a big part of the answer to our present impasse is reformation and revival. Nothing short of a sweeping move of God is needed, and that within itself would transform our lives and ministries.

But that's not the issue I'm addressing here. I did that, at least partially, last month in an article about spiritual growth and discipline. What I'm talking about here is more about methods modification than spiritual transformation. We all agree on the later, but not always on the former.

Change Is Inevitable

I would argue that methods do change. Even a simple glance at Church

history reveals that programs and packaging are not constant. What works in one age may not work in another, and what produces results in one locale may not in the next.

Sometimes adjustments are necessitated by changes in community surroundings. Many inner city churches have died away because they refused to adjust their ministry after the mass exodus to suburbia. Many suburban churches, on the other hand, have missed great opportunities by failing to account for the needs of those moving in around them.

I know of one church that is persistent in its refusal to develop a Hispanic work, though they're now surrounded by thousands of Latin-Americans. And I know of yet another that has dwindled to nearly nothing because their original congregation was comprised of emigrants from southern rural areas, but they have continually failed to adjust in order to attract the emerging indigenous population.

Sometimes the ministry modifications occur because of advancements in the culture at large. Just think of the opportunities that resulted from the development of the printing press. And all our churches have benefitted immensely from advances in heating and cooling, sound amplification, computer technology, transportation, and more recently, video enhancement and projection.

We might, and with good reason, continue to celebrate the *old time religion*, and periodically host a *Camp Meetin'* in order to recapture the *good ole days*, but no one really wants to go backwards to the days of outhouses and the horse and buggy. Just let some well-meaning congregation try to build a work without certain expected conveniences, and see how many folks they attract.

Sometimes changes result from the development of methods and materials

Directory Update

California

Rick Scroggins to Princeton Church, Ontario from Grace Chapel Church, Chelsea, OK

Illinois

David Burgess to Pleasant View Church, Walnut Hill from Oak Valley Church, Salem

Mississippi

Jimmy McAnnally to Jones Chapel Church, Booneville

Missouri

Darin Alvis to Copper Mines Church, Fredericktown from Mt. Pisgah Church, Cabool

Joe Wilson to First Church, Lebanon from Donelson Church, Nashville, TN, as minister of adults

Other Personnel

Brad Williams to Cofer's Chapel Church, Nashville, TN, as minister of music ■

THE TOGETHER WAY

March 2003

that offer a fresher approach to the church's age-old mission. There is a veritable plethora of well-written, well-packaged and appealing educational material available today. Church leaders need not be personally innovative to energize their ministry with fresh material; they just have to stay informed.

Change Is Resisted

So what's wrong? Why are so many churches still locked in the past? Because over time the method takes on the sanctity of the message, with the methodology considered an essential of the theology. Let's face it; you know this has happened time and time again.

What was originally someone's attempt at offering the church a fresh approach to ministry eventually becomes the litmus test of orthodoxy. Gradually, the method becomes the dividing line, with groups and even denominations developing around an approach or style. Then when another creative soul comes along with an attempt at offering the church something fresh and new and alive, the adherents of the old school are quick in their condemnation.

Each generation must minister in its day, and must be freed from the time warp that eventually kills any work. The innovations of today will be the old-dated methods of tomorrow. And Christian leaders of tomorrow will devise new ways of confronting the challenges they face. That's the way it has always been. That's the way it will always be. And if any church is to truly impact its surroundings, that's the way it will have to be today. Change may be painful, but a failed ministry is more painful. So let's keep on growing and stretching for the glory of God! ■

(Next month we will consider the steps to surviving the pain of change.)

Receipts:

State	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
Alabama	\$ 383.57	\$.00	\$ 383.57	\$ 1,375.92	\$ 510.28	\$ 1,886.20
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	103.50	103.50
Arkansas	7,060.56	8,735.88	15,796.44	28,572.34	52,096.44	80,668.78
California	.00	1,071.81	1,071.81	.00	3,526.21	3,526.21
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	125.96	4,536.00	4,661.96	125.96	4,536.00	4,661.96
Georgia	33,589.65	1,303.20	34,892.85	110,274.01	5,066.00	115,340.01
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	14,563.47	1,637.19	16,200.66	38,842.07	5,823.48	44,665.55
Indiana	.00	48.00	48.00	5,476.49	831.37	6,307.86
Iowa	.00	.00	.00	.00	65.00	65.00
Kansas	.00	226.84	226.84	.00	226.84	226.84
Kentucky	525.00	1,924.86	2,449.86	875.00	4,284.39	5,159.39
Louisiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Michigan	17,846.28	1,032.02	18,878.30	70,881.89	7,646.68	78,528.57
Mississippi	6,188.29	341.98	6,530.27	29,756.85	1,799.13	31,555.98
Missouri	33,458.83	14,555.09	48,013.92	146,649.14	50,944.28	197,593.42
Montana	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Mexico	457.88	23.94	481.82	914.32	47.16	961.48
North Carolina	360.64	2,386.18	2,746.82	4,585.11	8,331.15	12,916.26
Ohio	9,958.70	1,976.44	11,935.14	56,641.50	11,612.03	68,253.53
Oklahoma	41,934.27	10,333.97	52,268.24	215,108.57	33,274.47	248,383.04
South Carolina	24,982.18	.00	24,982.18	103,300.76	100.31	103,401.07
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	8,013.86	1,307.31	9,321.17	28,660.91	3,468.30	32,129.21
Texas	.00	.00	.00	25,489.46	734.07	26,223.53
Virginia	97.73	91.63	189.36	669.58	102.83	772.41
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	4,098.68	290.10	4,388.78	5,258.68	488.79	5,747.47
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	523.69	9.28	532.97	1,832.67	36.05	1,868.72
Northwest Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Northeast Association	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(.01)	(.01)	.00	.03	.03
Totals	\$204,169.24	\$51,831.71	\$256,000.95	\$875,291.23	\$195,654.79	\$1,070,946.02

Disbursements:

Executive Office	\$ 1,316.07	\$23,324.29	\$ 24,640.36	\$ 5,045.61	\$88,044.67	\$ 93,090.28
Foreign Missions	120,481.43	6,556.69	127,038.12	496,769.32	24,750.31	521,519.63
FWBBC	18,776.05	6,556.69	25,332.74	71,328.90	24,750.31	96,079.21
Home Missions	56,698.08	5,131.33	61,829.41	269,504.09	19,369.81	288,873.90
Retirement & Insurance	252.21	3,991.05	4,243.26	1,160.86	15,065.43	16,226.29
Master's Men	144.20	3,991.05	4,135.25	2,406.19	15,065.43	17,471.62
Commission for Theo. Integrity	18.78	142.54	161.32	161.10	538.04	699.14
FWB Foundation	147.24	1,710.45	1,857.69	662.52	6,456.67	7,119.19
Historical Commission	18.78	142.54	161.32	161.10	538.04	699.14
Music Commission	18.78	142.54	161.32	84.29	538.04	622.33
Media Commission	113.78	142.54	256.32	279.29	538.04	817.33
Hillsdale FWB College	1,851.44	.00	1,851.44	6,560.59	.00	6,560.59
Other	4,332.40	.00	4,332.40	21,167.37	.00	21,167.37
Totals	\$204,169.24	\$51,831.71	\$256,000.95	\$875,291.23	\$195,654.79	\$1,070,946.02



Garnett Reid

A Novel Mystery (Ephesians 3)

[Note: be sure to read reflectively Ephesians 3 before you begin this study.]

I love a good mystery. Give

me a page-turning, plot-twisting “whodunit” and I’m hooked. I even think that if I had two dogs, I’d name them Hercule and Sherlock!

The most significant of all “mysteries” confronts the reader of Ephesians in chapter three. Here Paul closes the first half of the letter by reminding his audience of key themes introduced earlier:

- the place of Gentiles in Christ’s body (1:12–13; 2:11–22; 3:6)
- an explanation of that “body” (1:22–23; 3:6)
- details of God’s purpose and plan (1:5, 9, 11; 3:2, 11)
- a petition for “fullness” (1:15–22; 3:14–21)
- a reminder of the role of spiritual powers and rulers (1:20–21; 3:10).

These connectors also include a more detailed explanation of the “mystery” Paul has mentioned (1:9; 3:1–6). He begins this third chapter by revealing more about this mystery (vv. 1–6), then explains his role in proclaiming the truth behind it (vv. 7–13). Paul closes with a profound intercessory prayer on behalf of those who receive this truth (vv. 14–21).

Revealing a Mystery (3:1–6)

Paul introduces his prayer in verse 1, then injects a lengthy “aside” devoted to the gospel mystery and to his ministry. He reminds his Gentile readers that his stewardship (Gk. *oikonomia*) role in the gospel flows solely from God’s grace. It is a gift from Him to them (v. 2).

More specifically, Paul’s commission is to share the “mystery of Christ” God has revealed to him. This mystery, also discussed in Colossians 1:24–29, entails a great truth once hidden but now revealed by God’s Spirit to the apostles and prophets. In verse 6, Paul discloses the mystery: that the Gentiles are: (1) fellow heirs with believing Jews; (2) mem-

bers with the Jews in the same body; and (3) partakers of God’s saving promises.

While the Old Testament celebrates the inclusion of the nations into God’s redemptive plan, what was not clear then is the truth Paul now announces: Jew and Gentile stand equally justified through Christ in His church.

Explaining a Ministry (3:7–13)

Once more Paul points to the grace and power of God working in his life as the reason for his “servant” (Gk. *diakonos*) position in God’s plan (v. 7). He certainly doesn’t merit such a role. He is the “least of all saints” (literally, “less than the least”), according to verse 8, yet he gladly embraces the privilege of preaching the “unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Paul’s task, he asserts, is revealing the mystery of Christ—shining the light for all to see God’s “manifold wisdom” in His eternal plan of redemption. The church even makes known the truth behind this mystery to the “principalities and powers” in heavenly realms.

No wonder Paul declares the bold confidence and access his faith provides in Christ (v. 12); nor should his willingness to suffer for the gospel surprise us. His “tribulations” are for their glory—and for ours! “So don’t give up,” Paul exhorts.

Offering a Prayer (3:14–21)

The chapter closes with one of the greatest intercessory prayers in the Bible. Paul continues as he began in verse 1: “for this reason.” He begins by acknowledging God as Creator and Father (v. 15), appropriate roles in this setting for intercession. The Lord is able and willing to fulfill these petitions.

Four appeals then form the matrix of the prayer. First, Paul asks God to give his

readers strength in their inner being. Such a request is in keeping with the glorious riches at the Lord’s disposal (v. 16).

Paul then prays that Christ would “be at home” in their hearts as they come to trust Him more (v. 17). His third petition probes the vastness of God’s great heart: that they may comprehend all the dimensions of Christ’s love (vv. 18–19a), a love that goes beyond all that we could possibly know. Like a growing marriage relationship, time and intimacy deepen one’s knowledge of God even though we know Him when the relationship starts.

The ultimate result is Paul’s fourth request: “that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (v. 19). Just when we think we have “maxed out” in God’s love, there’s always more—more to know, more to love, more of Him.

A memorable doxology closes the prayer (vv. 20–21). God’s power works far beyond our comprehension, yet works within us. His glory shines forever, displayed singularly through Christ and His church.

Applying the Lessons

Each of the three parts of this chapter offers instruction for us. First, the gospel must be real to us. We must know it by experience in our faith and in our lives. Its reality must take preeminence, not just prominence, in what we love and how we live.

Second, we have a part—a “service”—in God’s great plan of making known the gospel. Find where you fit and be faithful.

Third, Paul’s prayer reflects our need: power in the inner person, Christ’s home in our hearts, growth in His love, and the awareness that He’s all we need.

Then the mystery becomes an adventure. ■

Followers in High Places

By Dean Jones, Director

A few years ago I had the opportunity to visit the Pentagon. In its pre-9/11 days, while being the largest office building in the world, the Pentagon was relatively user-friendly, all the while maintaining tight security procedures. During this particular meeting, I was part of a group of denominational and para-church youth organizations.

After joining over 100 military officers for a prayer breakfast, we were ushered into a distinguished conference room. We later found out the room was located across the hall from the situation room used by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the event of a military emergency. After we were seated, four men and a lady marched in and took their places at the head of the room.

Sitting before us were five of the highest ranking military leaders in the United States military program. They proceeded to share personal testimonies of how their walk with Christ influenced their daily decisions. I sat spellbound, amazed at what I was hearing. God certainly has followers in high places.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines leadership as "one who influences." The leadership displayed that day in the Pentagon conference room reminds me of other influencers. Back in 1984, the vision of a student leadership training program for Free Will Baptists became a reality. Truth and Peace was born, and now some 20 years later I sit spellbound and amazed at what I see. God continues His plan of placing His people in places of influence.

Many times we discount the influence a young person can have, but in reality they are involved in more social circles than most adults. They have the opportunity to influence fellow sports team members, music teachers, guidance counselors, employers, neighbors, friends and even parents. Part of the training that Truth and Peace has provided over the past 20 years focuses on that fact—influence *your* world.

Since 1984 the staff of the Truth and Peace Student Leadership Conference has had the privilege of working with over 1,200 students from across the country and around the globe. Many of those students are now pastors, missionaries, Bible college presidents, national Free Will Baptist board members, business owners, soldiers, teachers, mothers, fathers, and most importantly—influencers. They learned at an early age the value of influencing their world.

Join me in celebrating 20 years of quality leadership training for our students. Where would we be without it? I don't really want to know, but I do know God has followers in high places. ■

Requests for information regarding the 2004 Truth & Peace Student Leadership Conference can be sent to youth@randall-house.com or by calling 1-800-877-7030.



Pentagon after 9/11



Thomas Marberry

The Message of Isaiah

By Barry G. Webb (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996, 252 pp., paperback, \$12.95).

The author of this interesting commentary serves as head of the Old Testament department at Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia. This work demonstrates both the author's love for and commitment to the Old Testament as the Word of God.

Isaiah has been an area of much controversy in Old Testament studies for the past 150 years. Much of this controversy focuses on the issues of date and authorship. Liberal protestant scholars generally argue that Isaiah wrote only a portion of the book that bears his name. They believe that the book is a collection of prophecies written by different prophets at different times. In their view, the book did not come into its final form until after the Babylonian Exile.

Conservative scholars attribute most if not all the contents of the book to the prophet himself. They may recognize that a certain amount of editorial work was done by Isaiah's disciples after his death, but the book by and large is the work of Isaiah.

Webb casts his lot with the conservative position. He recognizes that there is some evidence of later editorial activity (passages which speak of Isaiah in the third person, for example). He suggests that this editorial work was done by Isaiah's disciples within, at most, 90 years after his death. In his view, "The whole book of Isaiah, in substantially its present form, is pre-exilic."

Like other conservative scholars, Webb recognizes the validity of predictive prophecy. He writes, "In chapters 40-66, Isaiah is addressing a future situation which is clear to him in outline

only." He is writing about truths that God has revealed to him.

Isaiah is a book of great theological significance. Webb suggests that it is the *Romans* of the Old Testament. One indication of its importance is the fact that it is quoted at least 66 times by New Testament writers; only Psalms is quoted more often. These quotations are found in all sections of the New Testament from Matthew to I Peter.

Webb also notes the christological nature of this book. He writes, "By far the greatest importance of this book, however, lies in the witness it bears to Jesus Christ." In the synagogue near the beginning of His public ministry, Jesus defined the servant nature of His ministry by reading from the familiar words of Isaiah 61:1-2.

The author's interpretation of 7:14 illustrates the christological nature of his analysis. According to Webb, "It is certain that verse 14 finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ..." It probably also had an immediate fulfillment in the birth of a child in Isaiah's own day, but Matthew was certainly correct when he saw the "ultimate fulfillment of the Immanuel saying in Jesus Christ."

Webb divides the book into seven natural divisions. These divisions emphasize the truth that the Lord is creator and universally rules. They also emphasize the movement from the present earth to the new heaven and the new earth. He finds chapters 6 and 40 to be of special significance because in each of these chapters Isaiah is summoned into the presence of God to receive "a specific commission." In chapter 6 Isaiah is commissioned to a

ministry of judgment; in chapter 40 he is commissioned to a ministry of comfort.

Isaiah presents the various instruments that God uses to bring His rebellious people back to himself. "He first takes up Assyria as a rod to chastise them in their land. Then he uses Babylon to take them out of it, and finally, when they are broken by suffering, he summons Cyrus of Persia to set them free and give them the chance to go home and start again."

This commentary is a welcome addition to the already crowded field of commentaries on Isaiah. As a good Old Testament scholar should, Webb recognizes the historical and theological background of this book. He recognizes that the book cannot be correctly interpreted apart from its historical context.

He also recognizes, however, that Isaiah is part of the larger canon of scripture and should not be interpreted in isolation from other biblical books, including the New Testament. The great theological themes of Isaiah are not unique to him; they are found throughout the Bible. This author helps us to see the eternal value of this great Old Testament book. ■



Shirley Turner

...With a Little Help from My Friends

There's no doubt men are cut

from different cloth than women. Men talk ideas, women talk details. How I hate to miss a district meeting, largely because that means I will miss all the details. My husband can tell in three sentences what was said and done there. As for me, I can talk the afternoon away about all the subjects covered, the sights noticed, the sounds enjoyed, the tastes savored, the atmosphere absorbed.

It may be because of this difference that one of the most valuable possessions a pastor's wife can have is a few close friends.

Mobility Challenge

The mobility of the pastor's family explains part of the need. How many pastors' wives get to live near their mothers, their sisters? Who ever thought in those days of planning a marriage to this wonderful young preacher from a thousand miles away, that someday there would be a great sense of loss in not being near family members?

How is that void to be filled? It is wonderful that our God is always there for us, yet it is He who made us with a longing to talk to someone with skin on, as the little boy said. Who can be surrogate sisters for the pastor's wife?

Surrogate Sisters

One possibility is for her to make close friends with women of the church. But can she truly be open and honest about her life to them? Can she say, "I'm so angry I could bite a nail in two! My husband just . . . [fill in the blank]!"

Absolutely not! If he is ever less than perfect, she has to just swallow that thought as she smiles and chats among church families as though there has

never been such a thing as a wall of silence inside the parsonage.

With whom does she share the details of problems with the children? Now there's a challenge. Somehow, children never learn the art of hypocrisy. We teach our children to be transparent and genuine, until they begin having ideas of their own that don't match ours. When that transparency shows unacceptable attitudes, all of a sudden being hypocritical doesn't seem so bad. Matter of fact, there have been times I was downright grateful for it.

The pastor's wife might make close friends in the neighborhood, unconnected to the church. That might work if she weren't interested in winning them to Christ and her church. But having that overarching desire to win anyone she can, each neighbor has to be treated as a potential and eventual member of her church. How scary might it be to see that neighbor become a regular part of your church with her memory bank full of stories that might not reflect well on the pastor's family.

Perfect Solution

I think I've found the perfect solution to a pastor's wife's need for intimate friendship. It is drawing close to other women in ministry, women who understand the difficulties that can arise in a pastor's home or situations that would not be understood by wives of laymen, or neighborhood women. For me, the perfect solution is a few Free Will Baptist Bible College friends who reconnected in the last few years and have become just what my pastor's wife heart needed. They understand me and they share details!

With the advent of computers, it is possible to keep in touch far beyond anything we could have hoped for in

college days. Do you have a prayer request too personal to share at prayer meeting? You can quickly send that request to those special friends who will lift your name to God.

Are you sad? Angry? Worried? Depressed? An electronic hug is just minutes away. Of course, in time, the electronic hugs are not enough and eventually require a living, breathing get-together.

Chosen Sisters

Judy Bryan, Rita Wenning, Sue Wilcox and Dari Goodfellow have become that support system we call *Chosen Sisters*. We try to get together once or twice a year. I don't know how to express what their friendship has meant to me.

To feel loved and understood, to be accepted even when some attitude is unacceptable, to rejoice at their good fortune and know they are happy for mine, to feel heaviness over their losses, to realize they hurt when I grieve—this is true friendship.

How blessed is the pastor whose wife has that kind of friends. What a relief it must be to the pastor when he discovers that he doesn't have to meet all her emotional needs himself. It gives me courage and confidence to face life's untrod path, assured I can always reach out for . . . a little help from my friends! ■

About the Writer: Shirley Turner is married to Reverend David Turner who pastored in Illinois for over 30 years. He was pastoring Tallula Free Will Baptist Church when this article was written. The Turners have relocated to Winters, California. They have raised three children and three foster children, most of whom live on the West Coast.

Helping Churches Equip Their Men To Be....

MEN OF PRIORITY

A multitude of demands and pleasures compete for a man's time. Men, however, who bring glory to God understand that their first priority must be their relationship to Jesus Christ.



MEN OF PURITY

The Christian is constantly pressured to conform to the world. Being a man of purity in our culture is not an easy task. Master's Men through its newsletter, retreats and study resources will continue to proclaim the biblical truths that will enable our men to live as pure men.

MEN OF PRAYER

Men stand best when they stand on their knees. The Master's Men Ministry desires to equip our men to become faithful men of prayer. The primary way this will be accomplished is through a Master's Men program called, "BURDEN BEARERS."

MEN OF PURPOSE

The Master's Men department exists to accomplish the following five stated purposes.

Fellowship Discipleship
Stewardship Soul-Winning
Edification

MEN OF PASSION

Men can be very passionate about their favorite sports team, a hobby and even their work. Sadly, some men have little enthusiasm about being a husband or father. Satan delights in dividing husbands from their wives and fathers from their children. Master's Men will teach our men to be passionately committed to their families. Every man has biblical responsibilities both to his wife and his children. Master's Men will encourage our men to fulfill those obligations and help our churches strengthen their families.



Master's Men

The Free Will Baptist Men's Ministry

**Remember Master's Men
Father's Day Offering
June 15, 2003**