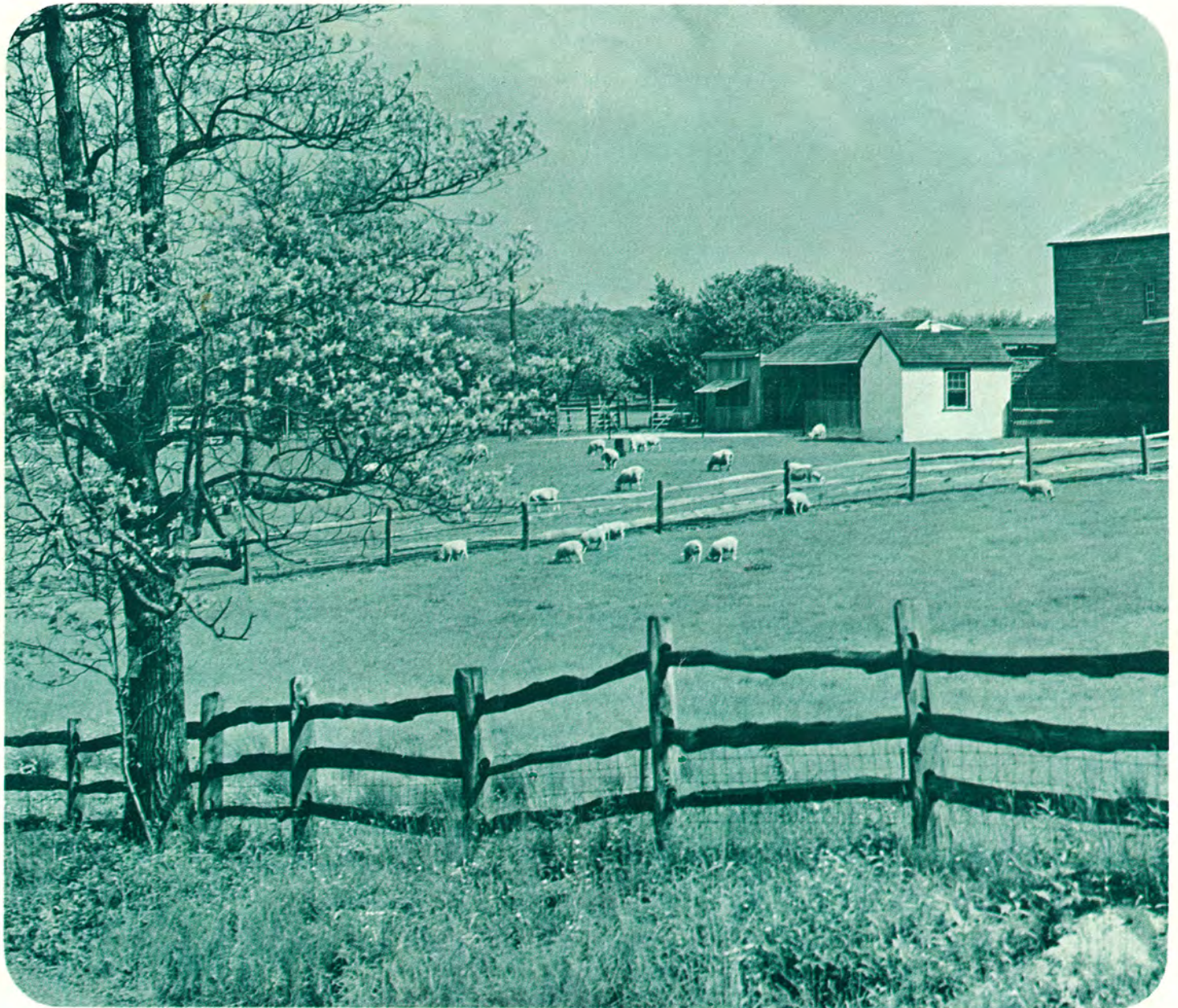


CONTACT

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MARCH 1966

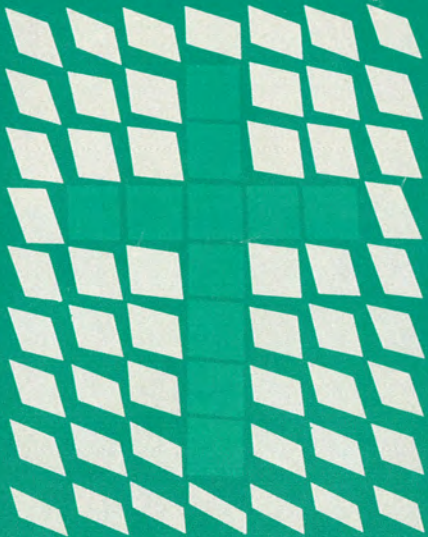


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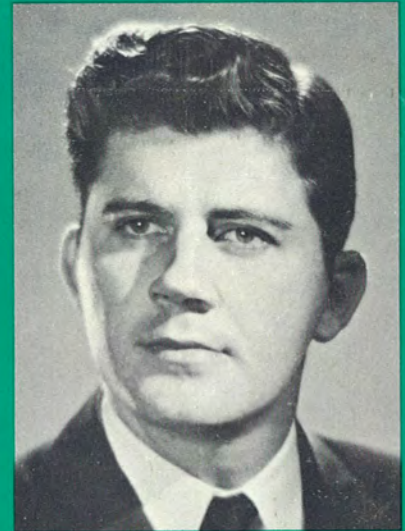
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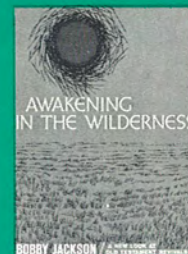
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Volume 13, Number 5

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
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PUBLICATION DATA

Contact is published monthly by the National Association of Free Will Baptists under the direction of the Executive Committee of the General Board.

All sermons and articles represent the personal views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or position of the National Association of Free Will Baptists or its constituent members. While the editors are responsible for the contents of the magazine, it does not follow that every viewpoint represents those of the editors.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single subscriptions, \$2.00 per year. Family subscriptions, \$1.72 per year. Bundle Plan subscription, 15 cents per copy. Single copy, 20 cents. Address all correspondence and subscriptions to Billy A. Melvin, Editor, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Entered as second-class matter at Nashville, Tenn.

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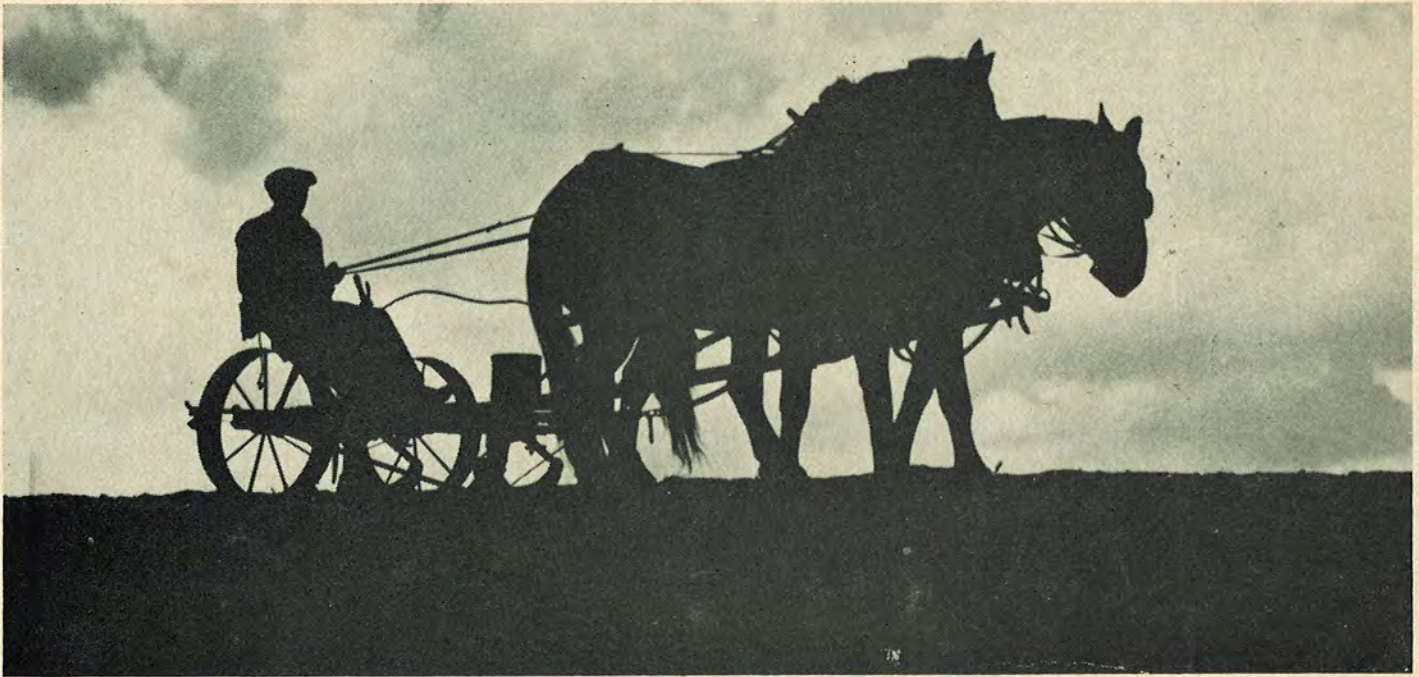
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ABOUT THE COVER

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).



God In The Bayou Country

by Jack L. Williams

FOURTEEN ACRES OF cotton stood simmering beneath the hot June sun in the Delta region of north Louisiana. The field was laid out in an almost rectangular shape. To the east and to the west small thickets of underbrush, saw-briars, and scrubby trees protruded to border the field. Toward the south was a rusty barbed-wire fence, beyond which was a pasture filled more with bitter-weeds than with grass. The fence and the bitter-weeds belonged to Mr. Fox. A rural West Carroll Parish road formed the northern perimeter of the field. The knee high cotton stalks wavered slightly as a breeze worked its way from row to row. A straying meadow lark flew occasionally over the steaming field. About a quarter of a mile away, a neighbor on a John Deere tractor was busy plowing his own crop. The steady popping sound of the tractor's engine was the only disturbance noticeable.

On the turn row of the cotton patch, Nathan Boudreaux was leaning on the handle of his hoe gazing out across the green sea of cotton stalks. The humid atmosphere was causing him to sweat profusely; Nathan's blue-plaid shirt was soaked. Tilting up his straw hat, the agile Cajun almost smiled as the weak breeze cooled his perspiring head. Replacing his hat, Nathan dug into the back pocket of his denim britches searching for his hand-

kerchief. He partly wiped the salty water from his brow and face and squinted his eyes as the sweat burned into them. The soft clods of dirt which had felt so cool at six o'clock that morning had become hard and hot as the mid-summer sun baked them. His shoeless feet had begun to ache every time they scraped against the black gumbo soil. Nathan glanced down at his shadow. He stood perfectly still and slowly stretched forward with his right foot. Time for lunch, for he could touch the head of his shadow without bending backward. He shouldered his hoe and struck out for home.

Didn't Want To Die

As he walked he thought, "But I don't want to die. I don't want to be put in an old coffin. I want to live a long, long time and never die."

All morning long Nathan Boudreaux had been thinking about how horrible it would be to die. Every time he breathed, he was almost sorry for having done it. That meant one more breath from his life and one breath nearer to dying for him. It all gave him a helpless and hopeless feeling. There was nothing to do except to avoid dying as long as he could, and then what? Nathan was scared. He had never had to think about dying before now. Why did he have to think

of it now? It certainly was not a pleasant subject.

"Is this all there is to living?" moaned the eleven year old Cajun to himself. "I don't want to die and be put in a dark hole. I don't want to! I don't want to!"

Nathan bit back tears of confusion and despair. He looked around and saw the tall cypress tree down at the foot of the hill by the mailbox. He got mad at it. No, he envied it, for that tree would live longer than he would. Somehow everything looked different today, almost as if he were viewing it for the first time. The trees were prettier; the birds flew more gracefully; even the saw-briars which got between his bare toes did not seem so bad this day. It simply was not fair; life was so short and so meaningless. Nathan could figure out a good life for himself in his thoughts, but when he came to the part where he was supposed to die, his mind hit a black, blank wall. The lad watched carefully for snakes on the way to dinner. He certainly did not want to get snake bitten and die. He got a better grip on his hoe handle.

Nathan slipped into the back door of the house and got a dishpan of water in which to wash up for dinner. No one else in the family was even vaguely aware of his state of mind. Nathan just sat back and soaked up the fellowship with the family, really enjoying it for the

first time in a while. He was nearly like a condemned man seeing his folks for the last time; he wanted to forget nothing, for it might be the last opportunity for him. Everyone was the same as usual; the same things as usual happened. Nathan's dad was the last one at the table. The radio was turned on, and the eating began without asking a blessing on the meal. Soon after eating had begun, Paul Harvey news came on. Today, Nathan even noticed that the news program was sponsored by the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Monroe and Tallulah. The conversation at the table drifted from cotton crops to potatoes to war, but never to the subject of death.

The months of June and July passed away, but the uncomfortable feeling of insecurity and doubt which possessed Nathan's mind did not. It was a deep, abiding conviction which refused to leave. August came, and with it brought the annual revival at the Sardis Free Will Baptist Church located about a half a mile from the Boudreaux home. Nathan never thought much about it, until it dawned on him that the church meeting would be a good place to go and see people. He made plans to attend, and soon found himself and his red and white bicycle at the church. Approximately a hundred people were present milling about the building. Services were started with singing and fervent, heartbroken praying.

The singing was nothing extraordinary. Then Reverend J. E. White rose up to preach. As he preached, Nathan was pricked in heart. A feeling of guilt and condemnation crept over his being. The minister preached hard, straight, and with a compassionate appeal. He flayed sin on every side, spoke honestly, and had Nathan seeing himself as a Christ-hater. Nathan saw that his problem for the past few months had not been a fear of death problem, but a sin problem. He was deeply and strangely stirred in soul by the message. Now the song leader is announcing the invitational hymn. The congregation sings softly, and Reverend White earnestly pleads with lost souls to come to Jesus and be saved.

Wanted To Go Forward

The second row from the back of the church was where Nathan was standing. He really wanted to go forward like the preacher said. All his fears stood staring him in the face; he saw himself as a small insignificant victim of the outpoured wrath of God. As far as he could tell, everyone in the church was a Christian except him, and they all knew it. He was sure those nearby could hear his heart pounding. The moisture left his mouth. There he stood absorbing verse after verse of "Softly and Tenderly." Oh, how

he longed to run down the aisle and drop his heavy burden of sin and fear. The soft, luring words of the invitation were holding sway over his mind.

"Sing one verse, and I'll go," said Nathan silently. In answer came the melodious words, "—calling for you and for me—why should you linger when Jesus is waiting—death beds are calling—"

Nathan's fingers pressed hard against the wooden bench in front of him. "Please sing just one more verse, and I'll go," vowed the boy. "Just this last time sing, and I'll step out."

The eleven year old farmer's son stepped out in the aisle of the church. Brother White, the evangelist, had just pronounced the dismissal prayer. Nathan lingered outside the church. The happy group of people never noticed the silent plea in his eyes for someone to speak to him about his soul. The boy felt secure as long as he stayed in the crowd. The preacher started home; revival services were over for tonight. Pushing up the kick-stand on his bicycle, Nathan pedaled for home. As the darkness of the summer night closed in around him, all his fears and worries began anew. Rounding a curve, he passed the deacon's house and saw the light streaming from the front window. He would be glad to swap his bicycle for the inner comfort which the deacon's family had. The boy felt compelled to turn in quickly and beg the man to tell him how to escape Hell. As he slowed down, two blue-tick hounds howled at him from the yard; he decided to stop by some other time.

By coincidence, Nathan found himself alone with his mother the next afternoon. Not being experienced in expressing his own feelings, he just let the words fall out.

"Mother, I almost joined the church last night," offered the boy nervously. He was too unaccustomed to the church language to say that he wanted to be saved.

His mother glanced at him and said in a very embarrassed voice, "You're only eleven years old; why don't you wait until you are about fifteen, and you'll know more what you want. If you still want to join the church then, you can make up your own mind."

Both mother and son had stumbled over their words in communicating with each other, yet neither misunderstood the other. Nathan's mother was afraid that he would be dragged into the church by the preacher and the emotional pressure. The boy caught her words and weighed them carefully. Even knowing that his mother disapproved of his thinking of joining the church, the boy still could not dismiss the haunting reality that he was lost even if he was only eleven years old.

The self-conscious topic of conversation was dropped. Neither party was willing or prepared to discuss the situation with the other. A heavy silence formed a gap between the mother and her son. Religion was not a thing to be talked about with freedom and relaxation.

Night after night, Nathan returned to Sardis Free Will Baptist Church actually hoping that somebody or some power would force him down to the altar to be saved. The agony endured by the young sinner was mentally and spiritually taking its toll. No longer was Nathan just uncomfortable, he was now miserable. There was no peace for him; the only place where he felt safe was the church. He thought that as long as he was inside the building, he would not die without having a chance to repent. He craved the hope of being saved, yet he, somehow could not seem to take that first step. Heartbroken, Nathan returned home on Saturday night; the revival was closed. He was still lost. Death still stared him in the face; sin was always riding on his back.

"If I had gone to the altar last night, it would have been all over now," sobbed Nathan to himself as he neared home. "I wonder what it's going to be like when I get saved? What's going to happen to me when I go to the altar? I don't want to cry in church; I wonder if I'll cry? Why didn't I go? I could almost reach out and touch my salvation."

He stopped his bicycle. For the first time in his life, Nathan tried to pray, "God, if you will let me live until the revival next year, I promise you that I will get saved. I promise you."

It was not a pretty prayer, but that boy believed that God heard his petition. There under the dark Louisiana sky, Nathan Boudreaux made his first vow to the God whom he wished so much to serve and yet who was so far away, separated from the boy by a multitude of sins.

Would Keep His Vow

The clanking of the bicycle chain seemed practically irreverent to Nathan as he slowly left his first altar of prayer. He would keep his vow to God, but what if he died before next year's revival? No, he wouldn't even think about it. He just could not die; he refused to die. Home went the lad hoping to be able to satisfy his conscience for another year until the fall revival came around, but there was no peace, for his soul was like that troubled sea he had heard preached about whose waters cast up mire and dirt. He could not understand why he was the only boy in the community who was feeling guilty over sin. His family certainly were not religious folks. Why was God picking on him anyway?

(Continued on page 19)



Round-Up of **World-Wide**

RELIGIOUS NEWS REPORTS

Annual Convention Slated

WASHINGTON, D. C. (MNS)—Rev. Gilbert Kirby of London, England will present three major messages at the 21st Annual Convention of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association slated for April 19-21, 1966 at Denver, Colorado, according to Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, EFMA's executive secretary.

Mr. Kirby is general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain and international secretary of the World Evangelical Fellowship.

His messages to the convention will be a series: Biblical Christian Unity, The Bible and Social Revolution, and Spiritual Unity in Action.

The convention program will also feature two panel discussions, one an evaluation of the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission which will have just concluded, and the other an evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of "short term" personnel to augment missionary personnel on the field.

EFMA's convention will be held in conjunction with the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals, which is expected to attract a thousand delegates. The overall convention will provide outstanding Bible preaching and many important studies sponsored by the various commissions and affiliates.

Pamphlet Available

WASHINGTON, D. C. (MNS)—The popular booklet "What is a Missionary Call?" has been reprinted and is now available. Order from EFMA, 1405 G Street, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20005.

Author of the booklet which was widely distributed and reprinted by popular demand is Rev. Norman L. Cummings, home director of Overseas Crusades, Inc., and president of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association.

Mission Changes Name

VANCOUVER, CANADA (MNS)—The Marine Medical Mission has changed its name to North America Indian Mission. An interdenominational agency organized in 1949 to send missionaries by boat to Indian villages along the coast and rivers, the mission now has resident missionaries in seven "fields" of the Pacific Northwest of the United States and Canada. More than 14 Indian reservations are being reached.

Announcement of the name change was made by the mission's general director, William W. Lottis, who said the reason was "to more accurately reflect our basic missionary aim."

Catholic Workers To Latin America

DENVER, COLO. (MNS)—"Summer vacation this year will find hundreds of American college students working in parts of Latin America and the United States as voluntary mission helpers," reports *The Register* (January 23, 1966).

The report states that their activities will include work on construction sites, census taking, teaching, home visiting and nursing, food and clothing distribution, instruction of Christian doctrine, and speech therapy.

'Rebel' Priest Becomes 'Rebel'

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA (MNS)—Camillo Torres, formerly a Roman Catholic priest here has been dismissed by the hierarchy. Torres and another young priest, Martin Amaya, ran into difficulties some months ago when they began making public statements calling for radical reforms in the Catholic Church.

Newspapers now report that Torres has left the capital to join anti-government guerrilla forces in southern Colombia.

Scofield Bible In Spanish

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA (MNS)—The well-known "Scofield" Bible is to be published in Spanish, according to an announcement by the Central American Mission here. The translation of Dr. C. I. Scofield's notes has been completed and it is anticipated the Bible will be on sale sometime during 1966.

Missionary Radio Output Increasing

WHEATON, ILL. (MNS)—"It is astounding to note that the combined total of missionary broadcasts each week actually exceeds the weekly output of Communist propaganda in time, if not in power. And the recent expansion of two outstanding Christian stations can do much to close the power gap," writes Robert E. Burt in *United Evangelical Action's* communications issue.

Missionary broadcasting employs more than 80 transmitters to send out 4,500 hours of programming each week. Every month an average of 50,000 letters are received from these broadcasts.

Special Ministry To Tourists

LAS PALMAS, CANARY ISLANDS (MNS)—Several Baptist pastors from Sweden are serving in turn, one each month, among the thousands of Scandinavian tourists who visit the Canary Islands throughout the winter tourist season.

In addition to regular worship services, which are advertised in official travel offices and Scandinavian consulates, ministries include personal counseling.

The Church Under Communism

WASHINGTON, D. C. (MNS)—"It is almost impossible to give exact statistical data on the number of believers, churches, or clergy of various denominations in the USSR," says *The Church and State Under Communism*, a study prepared by the Law Library of the Library of Congress which was released here recently.

"For recent statistical studies reference may be made to the work done by the Jewish Minorities Research Group," the report continues, "According to these data, for the 40 million members of the Russian Orthodox Church there are some 20,000 churches and 35,000 priests; 1 place of worship for every 2,000 believers and 1 priest for every 1,100 believers. For 3 million Baptists there are roughly 6,000 parishes and pastors; 1 place of worship and 1 minister for every 500 believers. For 1 million Jews there are 60 or 70 synagogues and rabbis. This amounts to 1 synagogue and 1 rabbi for every 15,000 or 16,000 Jews."



A GOOD INVESTMENT

■ Almost five years ago the National Association of Free Will Baptists was asked to grant approval for the construction of a new National Office Building. After due study and investigation, approval was granted and in May 1965 six departments of the National Association moved into the new building constructed at 1134 Murfreesboro Road in Nashville.

It is always hard to predict just what will be the result when such an effort is launched, but we can now better evaluate our position, since we have been in the building for almost a year. We have found the building satisfactory for our needs and an asset to our ministry, since the work continues to grow and expand. Projections for the operation of the building have proven to be adequate. Departments enjoy new office space for the low rental fee of 30¢ per square foot. This includes a receptionist, mail pick up and delivery, utilities (air condition included), daily janitorial service and in twenty years (based on present payments) the building will be debt free.

At this time we have received about \$27,000 from individuals and churches for this project. Now we face the task of raising \$28,000 by September 22, 1966. This amount is needed to pay for two acres of land adjacent to our present property and a note on the building not covered in the permanent loan. It is our judgement that the building has already proven to be a worthwhile investment. That is why we ask you to share generously with us that these financial obligations might be met. Write us today and indicate that your gift is for the new National Office Building.

IFMA-EFMA Congress Committee meets with Wheaton College representative to discuss campus facilities to accommodate an anticipated 1,000 delegates from around the world. (Left to right) Mr. Thomas M. Burton, Ass't Bus. Mgr. Wheaton College; Rev. Norman Cummings, Overseas Crusades, Inc.; Rev. Wage Coggins, Ass't Exec. Sec. EFMA; Rev. Louis L. King, C&MA (Co-chairman of Congress); Dr. Vernon Mortenson, TEAM (Co-chairman of Congress); Rev. Vergil Gerber, Coordinator; Rev. Gordon Beacham, North Africa Mission; Rev. E. L. Frizen, Jr. Exec. Sec. IFMA; Dr. Milton Baker, CBFMS.



1. *What easily recognizable economic, social and political developments point to a crisis in missions—and why?*

KING: The encroachment of Communism has brought about a crisis in missions. China, North Korea, North Viet Nam, and Cuba have been shut off from the missionary enterprise. Communist interference in Indonesia, Congo, and other African nations has caused enormous disruptions to missionary activity. Since 1940, Communist influence has grown from 8 percent of the world's population to 40 percent today.

MORTENSON: The emergences of African and eastern nations to political independence and influence and the social betterment of the people of many of these nations are having a profound effect upon missions, particularly on the attitude of the governments in these countries and, to a certain extent, on the attitude of the supporting countries. If missionary work is considered a ministry of helpfulness through education, medical work, and social uplift, the situation is vastly different from that of the Scriptural light, the justification for missions is greater than ever with multitudes, swelled by a population explosion, who know little of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

FRIZEN: One of the real problems facing us is that the growth of the church is not keeping pace with the population explosion except in some areas of Latin America.

CHAVAN: Resurgence of Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism. Restless crowds and revolts, especially among students. Juvenile delinquency on the increase. Break-down in the home because of need for both parents to work, and desire for material things. Rapid growth of communism, especially in South Asia. Unstable governments and civil wars. We need

to consider and re-examine our policy. The Church cannot stay aloof.

DAVIS: The impact of western civilization, industrialization and the great improvement and ease of travel both internally and externally in the countries of Africa have pushed back or eliminated the frontiers. The breaking down of tribal groups as millions have moved from rural Africa to the cities in the almost continent-wide acquisition of the right of self-determination and government, have all served to bring the strategy and service of missions and missionaries into critical focus. The prestige that missions enjoyed in decades and generations past because of superior education and social opportunity is no longer a gift but must be earned.

FENTON: In Latin America, the economic, social, and political unrest and instability are elements which keep us working in a constant atmosphere of crisis and urgency. The governmental situation in Latin America is so chaotic as to be almost unpredictable.

SHEPHERD: Probably the accelerated rate of population increase over against the mere holding action of the church in missionary outreach is the most evident and disturbing crisis. Another situation which is not unrelated is the social mobility involved in urban centralization due to technical and industrial expansion. There is also the new nationalism which is easy prey for communist ideologies which seem to be effectively and attractively transmitted. As important as the problem of the economic imbalance and supply and demand and distribution of land and wealth is, the information relating to the problem and its evils which is now available to all. This elicits the aspirations, which are legitimate in themselves, but which can easily be corrupted and inflamed in revolution. These are not just crisis points to excite hasty missionary advance, but structures

and situations which are present in our world which must be considered in the conduct of missions.

TENNEY: The inflationary tendency of domestic economics, which ultimately will create a shortage of funds, will point to a crisis in the support of missions. Socially, race riots in the United States give a bad image to America missionaries abroad, and add suspicion to the already prevalent resistance to the Gospel.

2. *What specific trends in missions today create the most concern in evaluating the future of mission activity?*

KING: First and foremost, the ecumenical movement creates in evangelicals the most concern for the future of mission activity. They have thrown the Christian world off course as far as missions are concerned by injecting new definitions and unwarranted interpretations of Scripture into the overall mission of the Church. These new definitions tend to foster religious syncretism, acceptance of the doctrine of Universalism, and the substitution of inter-church aid for evangelism.

MORTENSON: The decline in recruits for missionary service, which possibly arises from an over dependence upon special impersonal means such as radio and literature.

FRIZEN: Mission trends which create concern in regard to the future of mission activity appear to me as follows: *the almost universal trend toward narrow specialization in training of missionary candidates with the seeming lack of candidates willing to be used in the most needed specialty on the mission field, that of evangelistic teaching and church planting, *the apparent paucity of candidates, which raises questions regarding the reality of the missionary commitment of evangelical parents, churches and schools. I am also concerned with a trend

Free Will Baptist Missions will be represented at the Congress by Reford Wilson, Jerry Ballard and Rufus Coffey. Pray for the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The Church's Worldwide Mission

CONGRESS TO BE HELD AT WHEATON COLLEGE APRIL 9-16, 1966

which seems widespread among college students raising serious questions as to the lost estate of those outside of Christ, especially those who have never heard the gospel.

DAVIS: The blurring of basic goals and biblical emphases in ecumenical circles is causing great concern in contemporary Africa. The increasing use of mass media to reach multitudes must not cause us to overlook the essential value of the distinctive Christian personal experience which often demands personal contact.

FENTON: Certainly the current wave of neo-universalism, which threatens to capture many of the historic denominations and their missionary agencies, is a cause for real concern to any evangelical, as are also the mounting pressures of the ecumenical movement in various parts of the world. I am disturbed by the seeming inability of a number of evangelical agencies to work out a program of genuine partnership with the national church in their areas of the world.

SHEPHERD: On the one hand there is a carelessly optimistic obsession for organized union. On the other there is a danger that a suspicious bristling exclusiveness will persist. One of the most hopeful trends is toward more nearly adequate missionary training, conducted under cooperative auspices, with much more genuine understanding of and appreciation for the leadership of the receiving church which the missionary is to serve.

3. *Which new techniques, or revival of old techniques, show the most promise of helping missions reach the goal of world evangelization—and why?*

KING: Radio, literature, television are helping immensely in reaching the goal of world evangelism, but the most significant advance is the ever-enlarging

sphere of lay participation in witnessing and in church planting.

MORTENSON: In the past decade there has been some return to the realization that evangelism is essential to the work of missions, and church planting is absolutely essential if mission work is to be established.

FRIZEN: Modern techniques such as radio, TV, gospel recordings, missionary aviation and various literature programs are also very effective and may be integrated into a total evangelistic and church growth strategy. A revival of interest in the study of the principles of church growth holds promise of helping churches and missions fulfill their responsibilities of world evangelization.

CHAVAN: To reach the goal of world evangelization we have to return to the pattern of the church growth in the New Testament. "Evangelism-in-Depth" is basically the Scriptural concept of every believer as an effective witness.

FENTON: It would certainly seem to us that in a most unusual way God has raised up Evangelism-in-Depth in our time to help accelerate the program of world evangelization. In many parts of Latin America we have seen this program used very effectively.

SHEPHERD: The obsession with techniques is the greatest present threat to missions. If all of the marvelous means of communication and service can be brought into close relationship to the life of the church in those areas in which we conduct our missions there is vital hope for advance and expansion. If such efforts are just expensive extensions of our ecclesiastical overseas enterprise they will be severely limited and even offensive in the new world of missions.

4. *How can the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission help bring the goal of world evangelization closer?*

KING: If the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission succeeds in bringing the biblical mission of the Church into true focus again, it is conceivable we shall see a resurgence of spiritual energy and renewed activity in evangelism that will eventuate in great accessions of people to the Church of Christ.

MORTENSON: It can re-emphasize that God's purpose in this age of grace is to bring the church into being as a force for the evangelization of any given area.

FRIZEN: It will produce answers to some of the questions which face Christians in our day causing so many diverse pressures, such as modern scholarship, scientific advance, materialism and affluent suburban complacency in some parts of the world, as contrasted with the physical and spiritual needs of the majority of the world's population.

CHAVAN: It should initiate the ways of cooperation and spiritual unity that we may all work together for world evangelization.

SHEPHERD: The Congress can contribute toward the fulfillment of the church's mission in our day by carefully but at the same time boldly and creatively looking with astringent honesty at the expense and ineffectiveness and needless duplication of much of its present effort. It must also take seriously the deep theological implications of the doctrines it professes, especially about the nature of the church and the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

TENNEY: The Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission can disseminate wider information concerning what missions are actually doing so that the home church will understand them better. It can serve to unite the various societies that are working in widely different fields so that they keep a common objective in view. ■ ■

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

by *Louis H. Moulton*



Your questions for use in this column are invited. All questions not answered in the column will be answered personally. Send your questions to Rev. Louis H. Moulton, 8 Richmond Drive, Savannah, Georgia.

In visiting our churches I have noted the use of pictures and the crucifix in the sanctuary. Do you not feel our churches would do well refrain from the use of such items?

Yes. I have on several occasions called attention to these things to a pastor or a congregation. Usually I have found that these pictures and crucifixes are present either because of ignorance or because someone gave them to the church and to avoid giving offense they hang them in a conspicuous place. Yet, to those of us who know to what extent these pictures and the crucifix play in the religious life of the Roman Catholic Church, they are an offense. The crucifix (a cross with a body thereon) represents to us idolatry, superstition, ignorance, false worship, etc. We do not worship a dead Christ upon a cross but a risen, living Saviour. The cross itself (not a crucifix) is to us a symbol of shame, but also a symbol of victory.

Most churches expect the pastor to use his own car in church work and visitation. This is an expensive item for any pastor. Is it expecting too much for the church to share in part or wholly in this expense?

Common sense says a church should. More and more congregations are adopting a regular car allowance and expense for the pastor and including it in the church budget. Any secular employment which calls for use of one's own car provides regular car expense and mileage. Should churches which expect any dedicated minister to go or come at any hour of the day or night as well as doing regular visitation do less? Thinking people who love their pastor and are concerned about his physical and financial welfare would gladly want to provide his automobile expense.

I've been reading about efforts to canonize or raise to "sainthood" one of Popes who died not too long ago. Then I hear references made to Saint Paul, Saint Luke, Saint John, etc. Is death required before one becomes a Saint?

The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:2, "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints . . ." A saint is a sanctified one, saved and set apart for God. These are not sinless persons, but sanctified. A look at 1 Corinthians 3:10-13 would reveal that the Corinthian "saints" were far from sinless. Throughout the New Testament it is set forth that Christians are saints. They become saints instantaneously at the new birth. We do not become saints by acting in a saintly way, but we are called upon to live "as becometh saints" (Romans 16:2).

IN THE VINEYARD

■ **Samuel Johnson**, Director of Church Training Service will be in Eatonton, Georgia for the meeting of the Christian Camp Association, March 1-3.

■ Director of Teacher Training for Sunday School Department, **Harrold Harrison**, will be conducting Sunday School Institutes at McEwen, Tennessee, February 28-March 4; Newport News, Virginia March 7-11; Norfolk, Virginia March 13-18; Forth Worth, Texas, March 21-25 and Greenville, North Carolina, March 28-April 1.

■ Evangelist **Jack Paramore**, Campaign Director of Free Will Baptist Bible College Development Program, will be in revival meeting at Rocky Pass Church, Nebo, North Carolina, through March 6; College promotion work March 7-12; Revival meeting at Marion, North Carolina, March 13-20; Revival meeting at Columbus, Mississippi, March 21-27, and Revival meeting at East Nashville Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, March 28-April 3.

■ **Jerry Ballard**, Director of Publications for Foreign Missions will be in Brazil, South America, March 1-14. Mr. Ballard will be in Winona Lake, Indiana to finish production of a film March 14-15. He will be in Nashville, Tennessee for the Annual Foreign Mission Board Meeting, March 21-24.

■ Field Secretary for National Home Missions and Church Extension, **Mark Vandivort**, will be on itinerary in Nebraska, Colorado, and Idaho, March 20-31.

■ **Rufus Coffey**, Director of Conference Ministries for Foreign Missions, will be in Idaho March 3-4; Colorado and Kansas for missionary conferences March 7-11; missionary conference in Cookeville, Tennessee March 17-20 and revival services in Raleigh, North Carolina, March 28-April 3.

■ Executive Secretary, **Billy A. Melvin** will be in Denver, Colorado for a meeting of the NAE Executive Committee, March 4-6. He will be in Nashville, Tennessee for the Promotional Secretaries Meeting March 31-April 1.

1966 COOPERATIVE RECEIPTS

January, 1966

COOPERATIVE GIFTS FROM THE CHURCHES . . .

	January 1966	Year to Date	Total to Jan., 1965	Designated Jan. 1966
Alabama	\$ 361.62	\$ 361.62	\$ 61.90	
Arizona			52.57	
Arkansas	447.55	447.55		
California	788.57	788.57	614.61	
Florida	354.56	354.56	38.01	
Georgia	245.96	245.96	138.61	
Idaho	31.65	31.65		
Illinois	773.96	773.96	520.95	
Indiana			66.00	
Kansas	450.00	450.00	161.69	
Mississippi			42.00	
New Hampshire	11.52	11.52	19.19	
New Mexico	35.46	35.46		
North Carolina	132.00	132.00	73.37	
Ohio	310.20	310.20	165.68	
Oklahoma	1,491.07	1,491.07	1,211.71	
Tennessee	273.49	273.49	532.37	
Texas	221.11	221.11	210.23	
Virginia	223.27	223.27	316.00	

. . . MAKE POSSIBLE A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

	Cooperative Receipts		Designated		Total Receipts to Date
	January 1966	Year to Date	January 1966	Year to Date	
Foreign Missions	\$1,784.07	\$1,784.07			\$1,784.07
F. W. B. Bible College	1,291.92	1,291.92			1,291.92
Executive Department	1,230.40	1,230.40			1,230.40
Home Missions	984.32	984.32			984.32
Church Training Service	615.20	615.20			615.20
Superannuation Board	184.56	184.56			184.56
Stewardship Commission	61.52	61.52			61.52

GEMS

FROM THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

by ROBERT PICIRILLI

THESE ARE two very different Greek words that are often translated "thief" in the English New Testament. It would have been better if the translators had made a clear distinction between them in English.

The first of these two words is *kleptas* (from which we get our word *kleptomaniac*), which occurs some 16 times in the New Testament, and is translated "thief" every time. This translation is, indeed, a fitting one, since the *kleptas* refers to a man who does his dirty work under cover. When possible, he hides his deed and his identity.

Note how fitting this word is for its uses in the New Testament. In Jesus' teaching about not laying up treasures on earth, he instructs us to lay up treasures where "thieves" do not break through and steal (Mt. 6:19, 20; Lk. 12:33), a clear picture of the "housebreaker" or "safecracker" who works secretly at night. The same picture is involved when Jesus refers to the man who, if he had known at what hour of the night the "thief" would come, would have set a watch (Mt. 24:43; Lk. 12:39). This is also the picture in view when Jesus refers to thieves who threaten the sheepfold (John 10:1, 8, 10).

This picture of the nighttime "housebreaker" provides the background, then, for those five New Testament references to the coming of Christ "as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:2, 4; II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; 16:15), which is exactly the point of Jesus' reference in the verses just cited above, Mt. 24:43 and Lk. 12:39. Obviously, then, Jesus' return will have an element of hiddenness and surprise comparable to that of a "thief" who catches the household completely off guard. (Note, however, that His coming does not have to catch the Christian off guard: I Thess. 5:4.)

It remains to note one final and eminently fitting use of the word *kleptes* in John 12:6. There Judas is grumbling about the "waste" of precious ointment by Mary of Bethany, but we are given the explanation that he did not really care about the poor, saying what he said because "he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." It is clear, then, that Judas was secretly "embezzling" from the common treasury of Jesus and the disciples, and he was probably so successful at it that Jesus alone was aware at the time. ■■



First Free Will Baptist Church—Albany, Georgia

Glancing Around The States

New Sanctuary Dedicated By First Church In Albany, Georgia

ALBANY, GA.—Dedication services and open house were observed at the new First Free Will Baptist Church here recently. Rev. Roger C. Reeds, director of the denomination's Sunday School Department was the dedication speaker.

The building encloses 5,200 square feet of floor space which includes an auditorium which seats 475, choir loft, baptistry, two classrooms, pastor's office, rest rooms and mechanical space. The pews and worship furniture are made of golden Appalachian oak and are stained walnut with white trim.

Rev. George C. Lee has been pastoring here for four years. During that time the church membership has more than doubled and now stands at slightly more than 350.

Missionary Willey Visits Panama

PANAMA CITY—Veteran Missionary Thomas Willey, Sr., arrived here January 21 for six to eight weeks during which he will assist missionaries and work with Christians at Jennene who are without

regular witness due to furlough of Tom Willey, Jr.

Mr. Willey, who underwent surgery in early October, has made a remarkable recovery and is in Panama with approval of doctors and the board.

Missionaries To Enter France

NASHVILLE, TENN.—Free Will Baptists will extend denominational witness to Europe, according to action by the Board of Foreign Missions of the National Association of Free Will Baptists in special called session January 4-5.

At the same time, the Rev. and Mrs. Daniel J. Merkh were approved for service in France, the first European country to be entered by Free Will Baptist missionaries.

The Merkhs previously served a five-year term in Ivory Coast, West Africa, during which most of present mission buildings were constructed. For the past two years Mr. Merkh has pastored the Florence, South Carolina church.

Concentration in France will be on small towns and rural work. The Merkhs are expected to be on the field by fall of this year.

Europe has been under study by the board for several months. It is hoped that additional couples may be sent shortly.

Bible Conference Planned

NASHVILLE, TENN.—People from all corners of the denomination will meet on the campus of Free Will Baptist Bible College here April 3-7 for the 23rd annual Bible Conference. Among the featured speakers will be the Rev. Patrick Henry, Alabama evangelist, and the Rev. Eugene Waddell, a Nashville pastor.

With over 30 years' experience, the Rev. Patrick Henry is just returning to the field of evangelism after spending four years in a North Carolina pastorate. He was ordained into the Baptist ministry in Mobile County, Alabama, and holds degrees from Bob Jones University and Grace Theological Seminary.

Also addressing the conference will be the Rev. Eugene Waddell, pastor of Cofers Chapel Free Will Baptist Church located in Nashville. Mr. Waddell is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College and has held pastorates in South Carolina and Virginia. He is now serving as a member of the Foreign Missions Board.

March To Sunday School

WHEATON, ILL.—MARCH TO SUNDAY SCHOOL IN MARCH, the National Sunday School Association's annual Sunday School enlargement cam-



Pictured above is Rev. S. M. Aragon of Grants, New Mexico, presenting a citation for faithful service to Rev. Delbert Davis. Rev. Davis, now in his late 80's is retired and living in La Mesa, New Mexico. Looking on is Mrs. Davis and Rev. R. R. Meade, pastor in El Paso, Texas.

paigned has attracted the interest of thousands of church and Sunday school workers across America. Many churches have registered their Sunday school in this campaign which will attract approximately 1,000 Sunday schools.

This is a month-long drive with each registered participating Sunday school turning in an official report at the end of the campaign to the NSSA office. This report will show total attendance during the month of March as well as numbers of visits made, number staying for church and number of Bible brought.

NSSA will award the pastor and Sunday school superintendent of the National Grand Award winning church a free all-expense paid trip to the 1966 National Sunday School Convention to be held in Boston, Massachusetts, September 21, 22, 23.

In addition to the National Grand Award, one award will be given in each of the five divisions, the Sunday school enrolment of a church determining the division in which it participates.

New Work Started

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.—The first service of the new mission here was held recently with nine in Sunday school and 14 in the evening worship service. The new work is under the direction of Rev. Elmer O. Turnbough who holds the position of State Home Missionary for Illinois Free Will Baptist. Interested Free Will Baptists can contact Mr. Turnbough at 1200 North 16th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

Church Near University

KNOXVILLE, TENN.—All Free Will

Baptist students attending the University of Tennessee here are encouraged to attend church services at the Faith Free Will Baptist Church located at 4531 Bruhin Road. Rev. Wayne Smith, pastor, says that transportation will be furnished upon request.

A Successful College Day

NASHVILLE, TENN.—A highly successful College Day was held at Grace Free Will Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina, December 26, 1965, when \$1,200 was raised for the Free Will Baptist Bible College Development Program. Special speaker for the day was Evangelist Jack Paramore, Campaign Director. It is especially remarkable that such a large offering was given on the Sunday immediately following Christmas, testimony of the interest of the congregation in the ministry of Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Grace Church is pastored by Reverend Chester Phillips, under whose leadership the church is enjoying excellent growth and maturity. Especially is this noticeable in the increase in giving by the congregation to local causes and denominational enterprises.

In sponsoring their College Day, the suggested approach published in the September issue of CONTACT was followed. Giving was spontaneous and cheerful, with no pressure applied.



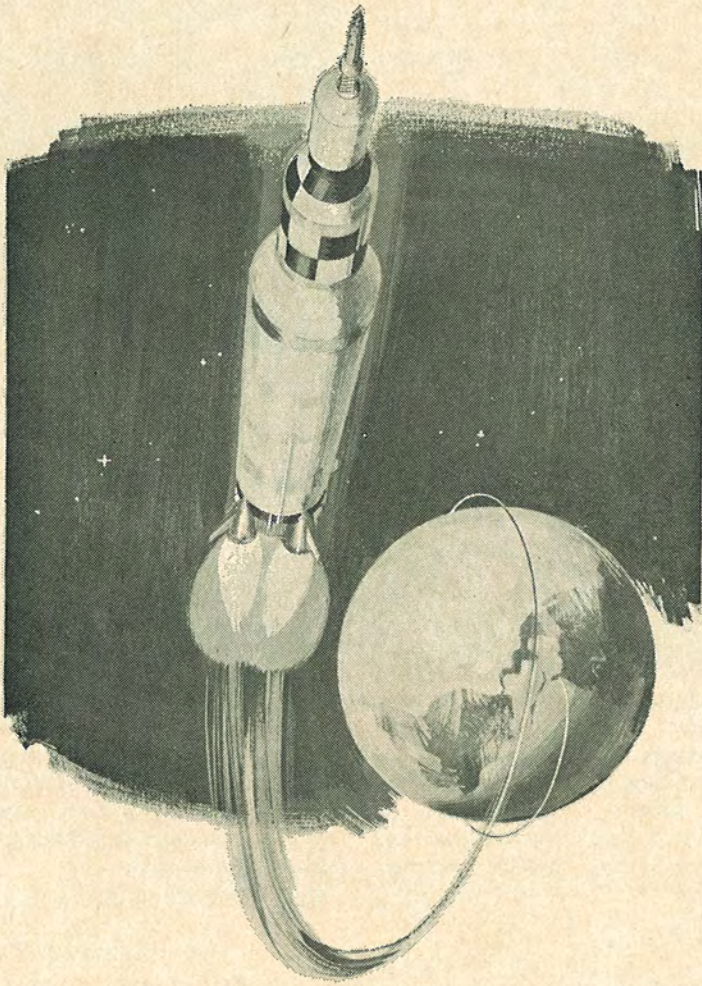
Rev. H. Z. Cox, pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, (right) is shown receiving a plaque which designates him as "Texas Minister of the Year." The Award is presented by Rev. Clarence Hearron, moderator of the Texas State Association.

Churches are encouraged to follow this approach whenever it is feasible.

Campaign Director Jack Paramore reports that response to the current Free Will Baptist Bible College Development Program has been exceptionally good with several thousands of dollars having already been raised. Your prayer support for this campaign to raise \$3,000,000 is earnestly requested.

The Master's Men of the Farmington (Missouri) Free Will Baptist Church sponsored a "Lights for Missions" project the five weeks before Christmas. Each five dollar gift turned on a light. The goal of \$500 was exceeded by \$156.50. The money was designated to the clinic operated by Dr. Miley in Africa. Pictured (l. to r.) are Morris Greenhaw, Bob King (pastor), Alvie Denton, Firman Skaggs, Bill Hughes, Finis Simpson, Carl Pinkston, P. J. Clay, M. L. Francis, Bill Baron, Hillard Gray and Cleo Skaggs.





FAITHFULNESS IN THE SPACE AGE

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY has introduced so many changes to our world that one is left astonished as he reflects upon them. There are people living in our own nation today who can still remember vividly the "horse and buggy age." These people have seen the United States pass from a nation with its citizens walking along dirt roads to a time when one of our number has taken a walk in outer space!

Since the last days of World War II, these innovations and incredible events leave us at times as speechless as the man without the wedding garment (Matthew 22:12). Our world and country have witnessed occurrences which for years were declared unattainable and impossible. The security of American society has been made precarious because of these grotesque changes in the world order of life.

When atomic bombs destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in August, 1945, a power so formidable had not been unleashed since the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24). The United States enjoyed an atomic monopoly until the Soviet Union developed the A-bomb in 1949. America was able to regain a nuclear superiority in 1950 with the perfection of the hydrogen bomb. To the consternation of the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. had the H-bomb by 1953. From 1955 on the world has been faced with a nuclear stalemate with the United States and Russia, each with the power potential of annihilating one another's civilian society.

The last years of the 1950's saw America enter a new and different contest with Russia. On October 4, 1957, the Soviets sent Soutnik I blazing into outer space. Sputnik II entered the celestial sphere a month later on November 3. Now, the two giants of the world were locked in a struggle to see which power could acquire the greatest control, not of the world, but of the universe!

Episodes yet unattested awaited the sixties. John F. Kennedy became the first Roman Catholic to ascend to the Presi-

by Richard H. Sample

gency of the U.S. The Russians sent the first human being into outer space, and the U.S. was soon to follow with a similar feat. In October 1962, the Cuban missile crisis brought the communist nuclear challenge to the very doorstep of America. Nevertheless, it took the weekend of November 22-25, 1963, to leave us thunderstruck. Through the eye of television, the world watched President Kennedy assassinated and Lee Harvey Oswald, his accused assassin, murdered. It was now plain to Bible believers that the process of television could possibly be used in the future fulfillment of Revelation 11:9.

The next year, our seemingly implacable foe, Red China, developed the A-bomb. In 1965, bizarre events awaited the world. A Russian walked in space early in the year. In June, Major Ed White made a similar trek. Los Angeles was confronted with an overt racial war in August.

This brief resumé of startling changes in the twentieth century is by no means complete; yet, it can give us an idea of the transformation the world order has undergone in the lifetime of many of us. In the midst of these world-shaking incidents, the religious life of America has also undergone a drastic change. Those in Christian service have a different world to face today than Christians faced fifty years ago or in the pre-World War II era.

The nuclear age also has brought vast changes in the attitude toward Christianity. Three quarters of a century ago, respectable people had to go to church if they had a social life. With the advent of modern technology, leisure, and recreation, a person now can have all of the respectable (in the eye of modern society) social life he wants and never look at a church. Once a person was counted a social outcast if he were not a faithful church goer. This standard is no longer applied by society. To be able to transcend this indifference to church attendance presents a momentous challenge and opportunity to every Christian. But alas, many professed Christian

church members find this trek away from the church a very easy path to follow. Reader, are you able to extricate yourself from this downward pull of the world and shine more brightly than your forefathers?

Although it takes the best dedication anyone has ever given to God to live a successful Christian life today, present-day Christians have the greatest opportunity history has ever afforded humanity to live for Christ. If the world is spiritually darker in 1966 than ever before it means that the saintly light mentioned in Matthew 5:16 can shine more brightly than human annals have ever witnessed. A light always exerts its greatest illumination when in the darkest surrounding!

Many Christians believe that the greatest opportunities for Christian life and service have expired with the past. They say that earlier days were better; that these "golden ages" of the Church were more conducive to evangelism and purity of life than the callousness of the space age. Such people fail to understand King Solomon's enjoiner in Ecclesiastes 7:10, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this."

Matthew Henry's illustrious comments on this scripture are exceptionally apropos. He believed that God did not cast one generation into an "iron age" with all the "golden ages" buried in the sands of time. Those "golden ages" had their problems too. When a person is dissatisfied with his own hour, he expresses "an aptness to pick quarrels with God himself!" One inference from Ecclesiastes 7:10 is that great opportunities do not decrease with the march of time. If anything, they are augmented.

Some of us who try to win people to the saving grace of Jesus Christ have found them stubbornly unwilling. Many contemporary ministers pray, preach, and witness themselves to exhaustion, and seemingly no one is moved. Some of these dear preachers are declared failures by inconsiderate critics. They say, "You are

not as spiritual as your forefathers. When they preached, people were really moved."

Herein lies our great opportunity. The Bible tells us that with the progress of history, men will become more wicked (2 Timothy 3:13). This scripture is fulfilled before our eyes as time approaches the consummation of the ages. Sinners are becoming more sinful. That means there will be fewer people who are willing to heed Christ's call when He says to them, "Come, follow me." Can we perseveringly preach to such a world? Are we able to faithfully stay with the task that the God of the universe has committed to our trust, even when the results are more meager than Noah experienced (2 Peter 2:5)? Is the determination of Ezekiel in our hearts that we will proclaim the gospel to people "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear" (Ezekiel 2:5)? The present day preacher who "endures unto the end" may have to exert a faithfulness to his calling such as no other generation of preachers ever faced. The same test of faithfulness applies to every Christian who would follow Jesus.

This world has changed in this century and the attitude of men toward Christianity along with it. It takes an exceedingly faithful individual to live a dedicated Christian life in an age so obtuse to the standards of Christ. It takes a faithful minister to preach the Word of God to a society which yields but little fruit. Nevertheless, opportunity did not decrease with yesteryear. Present day opportunities, to radiate the dark universe with a glowing testimony for the Son of God, are better than ever before. Faithful service is what He has demanded of His followers in every age. He says to all, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). ■■

MR. SAMPLE is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College and is presently furthering his education at the University of Michigan.



Roger Reeds, Director of the Sunday School department, brings instruction for Sunday School development in an area workshop. This personal contact helps to relate the production of literature to the local church situation.

What is happening in the literature field?

What has been the response to the new youth program?

What is ahead?

Sunday School Answers

■ *CONTACT: What growth has taken place in Sunday school literature during the past year?*

REEDS: Our two best sellers are the Adult and Junior quarterlies. Sales for the Adult quarterly are near the 60,000 level while the Junior quarterly has just climbed over the 20,000 mark. Each quarter the Sunday school department sells approximately 182,000 pieces of material that is produced by them. In addition some 20,000 pieces of material produced by other publishers are sold.

CONTACT: What has been the response of our people to the curriculum development?

REEDS: Most letters received have been highly complimentary. Such phrases as "best ever;" "well done;" "we like it" were common.

Further indication of the acceptance of this new curriculum is the fact that most of the materials involved were a complete sell out. This was in spite of the fact that we increased our quantities from our printer in anticipation of a good response.

Evidently this change has been long awaited by Free Will Baptists. Many are asking when we will be changing the other levels. We are projecting a change on the Intermediate and Senior High levels for the first quarter of 1967. The Young Adult and Adult levels will be changed as soon as feasible.

CONTACT: What are the future plans for curriculum development?

REEDS: There were no new publications during 1965, but work continued

through the year on the development of our Free Will Baptist curriculum for the Preschool, Primary, and Junior levels. This material was made available to Free Will Baptists for the first quarter of 1966.

Included in the new curriculum are some additional publications. We have separated *The Children's Teacher* into three divisions and it is now published as *The Preschool Teacher*, *The Primary Teacher*, and *The Junior Teacher*. Materials in each of these publications have been expanded to provide total hour teaching.

In addition to our Teachers' Guides, we are providing our own flannelgraph for the first time in history of Free Will Baptists. These are published in a visual packet that contains both teaching pictures and flannelgraph lessons. This provides the children with a variety in the visual presentation. It is published under the name of *Show 'N Tell*.

Projection for the Adult Curriculum involves a seven year cycle. A through coverage of the Bible will be given in the form of Bible survey. Included in the cycle will be a quarter set aside for the study of Free Will Baptist doctrines and other timely lessons. Having our own curriculum will help us preserve our Free Will Baptist heritage.

CONTACT: Approximately how many churches do you ship to quarterly?

REEDS: We are now serving approximately 2,000 churches. We are uncertain as to our potential, but feel it is probably around 3,500 churches.

One point of interest is that Free Will Baptists are organizing new churches at

the rapid pace of more than one a week. It is our policy to give one quarter of free literature to each new church that is organized. In 1965, 62 new churches were sent free literature.

CONTACT: What has been the financial increase in business over the last two years?

REEDS: In 1963, sales totaled \$143,-516.62. In 1964, sales totaled \$178,-392.01. In 1965 we climbed to a total of \$208,493.54. For the past several years the Sunday school department has operated exclusively on the sale of its literature.

CONTACT: What other services are offered by the Sunday School department?

REEDS: In addition to the literature ministry, the Sunday School department offers an extensive ministry in teacher training and Sunday school promotion. This area of service is directed by Reverend Harrold Harrison.

A free lending library of filmstrips has been developed and is available to Free Will Baptists on a loan basis. Most of the filmstrips deal with Teacher Training.

The Sunday School department also offers a complete line of filmstrip projectors as well as screens. I feel that the field of audio-visual aids has long been neglected in our denomination.

Beginning in 1966 the Sunday School department will also offer Vacation Bible School supplies for the first time in several years. Previously these supplies were shipped by Randall Book Store.

■ **CONTACT:** *What has been the response to the new CTS program?*

JOHNSON: The response to the new program under the Church Training Service has been very favorable. I recognize that in many churches the patterns have not changed much, but there are those who are responding to the challenge for an improved training ministry.

It appears that there are many more churches with a fully graded program in the training hour than was true under our old system. As we have provided more services in regards to literature and organizational guidelines, we have realized a more progressive approach by individual churches.

There has been an excellent response thus far to the achievement program for each of the different age groups. Award items such as achievement certificates and lapel pins were introduced last fall and a significant number have been awarded by local CTS groups.

Response to the competitive program for each of the three youth groups—Adventurers, Heralds, and Crusaders—has been outstanding. Request for information and materials about the various contests have come from all parts of the denomination. Several states and districts have purchased the full set of awards provided for winners of the contests.

Interest on the part of some of our young people seems to be on the increase. We have heard of many wonderful youth meetings. There has also come news of the accomplishments of some worthwhile projects.

We are encouraged by the response, but we also recognize that the job has only begun. There are many who have not responded and these we must reach while we seek for a greater response from those who have already begun.

CONTACT: *Approximately how many churches are participating?*

JOHNSON: In order to answer this question fully we would have to define what is meant by participating. The amount and kind of participation varies from church to church.

There are several factors which contribute to this such as the size of the church, the location, and the leadership. Rather than try to fully answer this question without the aid of reliable research data, we shall simply state that there are approximately one thousand churches who purchase literature and other supplies each quarter. Several churches have begun using CTS materials since January of last year.

CONTACT: *What has been the growth in distribution of CTS materials?*

JOHNSON: There has been considerable

growth in the amount of literature distributed through CTS as compared to Free Will Baptist League. This growth has taken place at every age level. The statistical comparisons given below are for the last quarter of the old program and one year later under CTS. The range in increase of distribution is from seven-teen to sixty-six percent. The highest percentage of increase has been in the children's materials and in leader's guides. The over-all average increase for the period was twenty percent. The total sales volume which includes all items distributed by CTS is up forty-seven percent for the same period.

CONTACT: *Can you discuss any future plans or projects in the youth department?*

JOHNSON: There are several plans already taking shape for introduction in 1966. The Adventurer program was considerably revised and upgraded in 1965. It is still moving forward in its development. The guide books for the third trail in the Adventurer rank work will be printed this spring in time for display at the national meeting. Additional work is being done on the three-year cycle of program materials which appear in the quarterly magazine, *The Junior Adventurer*.

Basic manuscripts have been prepared for a full revision of the Heralds and Crusaders. This upgrading is especially

directed toward the achievement program. Work is also being done for these two groups toward establishing a basic three-year cycle.

Project Life is a new element to be introduced into the Crusader program. This part of the program will add depth and reality to the missionary emphasis. More information on this will be available soon.

Two new departments are under consideration to provide an even better grading of the different age groups. One will be added in the children's area and the other is to be for college age or young adults. Response from CTS leaders have indicated that there is a definite need for these two additional departments.

A new record system for the Church Training Service is also due for introduction this fall. It will go into effect on the first Sunday of October.

CONTACT: *What evidence have you seen of the effectiveness of the new youth program?*

JOHNSON: Frankly it is too early to measure the effectiveness to any appreciative degree. The response is varied in intensity from one place to another. There seemed to be a high degree of interest last year at the National Youth Rally. We should be able to get a better idea of the effectiveness of some of our emphasis at this year's rally in Little Rock, Arkansas.

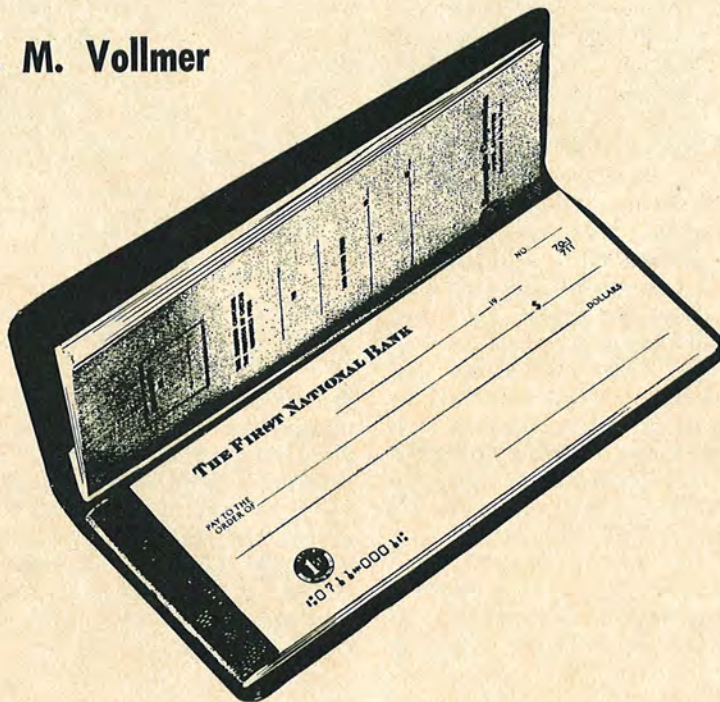
Church Training Service Answers

Samuel Johnson, Director of the Church Training Service department, meets with the Oklahoma State CTS board to share ideas and explain all the literature now available for the Sunday evening training hour and the youth activities.



Is Your House In Order?

by A. M. Vollmer



IN THOSE DAYS was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the Son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live" (2 Kings 20:1).

Few men receive such notification of their impending departure from this earthly life. As a rule death comes suddenly, unexpectedly, or with little warning. That its coming faces every man, is declared in the Scriptures: "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Hebrews 9:27).

Isaiah's piercing message, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die" is full of meaning. Among other things, it brings into sharp focus an important, but too often neglected phase of Christian stewardship; that is, the responsibility of every Christian while he is alive and able, to make proper preparations for the USE of his possessions AFTER his death.

There are two spheres of stewardship of possessions; stewardship in life, and stewardship after death.

The faithful Christian steward acknowledges God's ownership of all things and that his responsibility to God

is total and complete. He recognizes that he is a trustee or steward of ALL that he is and possesses. Too many Christians have the mistaken impression that they have or will have achieved the ideal in Christian giving if they tithe. This view implies that they are not accountable for what they do with the remainder of their money and other possessions.

Tithing is the floor, not the ceiling, of Christian giving. A Christian steward is under direction to manage and dispose of ALL his possessions in a manner acceptable to his Master. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2).

A Christian's Will may determine that a man's life need not end the day his name appears in the obituary column. Death need not destroy his witness for God.

Polls consistently show that only about one in every five adults has a Will. Accordingly, thousands of people die without a Will every year. Like a broken phonograph record, the same story is repeated over and over. Unnecessary dissipation of estate assets. Undue delay. Needless hardships and headaches for

loved ones. The Lord's work suffers heavy losses annually because of a lack of sufficient concern on the part of the great numbers of His stewards who die without Wills.

One is not the steward he ought to be until he spells out how his money is to be used after death.

For a Christian, a Will can be the climax of a life of Christian stewardship and commitment. It can be a living memorial to his faith in Christ. Through his Will he can provide for his loved ones, for Christian institutions and for the cause of Christian missions the world over.

One of the most important documents a man ever signs is his Will. I can tell better what a man had in his heart by reading his Will than I can by reading his obituary. His obituary tells the world what his friends thought of him; his Will reveals what he had in his heart. "For as (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). "Out of (the heart) are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

The Christian sees a Christian Will as a way of depositing deathless dollars in the vault of eternity. He senses that the Christian owes—but does not own—what he possesses.

Princess Eugenia of Sweden once sold some rare diamonds to purchase a home for incurables. After leading one of its inmates to Christ she said, "I saw the glitter of my diamonds in her tears of repentance."

As a child I used to watch the lamp-lighter come down the street. Our street lamps were oil lamps. He would light the lamp in front of our house, then make his way back and forth down the street. In the deepening twilight, I would lose sight of him, but I always knew where he was going by the avenue of light he left behind him.

Here is a parable of life.

We make our way down the avenue of life, first on one side, then on the other side of the street. Sometimes we run, again we walk. Occasionally we stop and rest. But evening comes and twilight wraps its purple mantle around our shoulders. Then it is dark. But our friends, our loved ones, have an unmistakable indication of where we are going by the light we leave behind.

The wise use of money in life, and in death, is but one of the many ways of letting our lights shine.

Christians are stewards of the material possessions of life, and by the faithful disposition of these possessions in their Will may preach the glorious gospel of Christ. ■■

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Several weeks later, Nathan was coming back from a neighbor's house. He cut through the narrow strip of trees and came as he always did when he was in a hurry. For a few nights now, no bad thoughts about dying had crossed his mind, and he was beginning to relax somewhat. A ditch of water about four feet wide had to be crossed before he reached the pasture fence. He tried whistling as he started through the den of trees and brush, but that sounded rather bad, so he quit. Every time he passed this way, he somehow thought of dying as the sunlight was denied entrance into the thick foliage and the cool darkness ruled supreme. Quickening his pace, he was about to leap the ditch of water. A startled, frightened gasp escaped his lips! There on the opposite bank right where he would have landed was a coiled rattlesnake!

Wheeling and running as fast as he could, Nathan broke into a cold sweat. Back up the hill he scampered and down the freshly plowed corn rows to the gravel road leading home. He bounded to the middle of the road, picked up a handful of the biggest rocks he could find, and tore out for home. He strictly traveled the middle of the road every step of the way. Even though he was barefooted, he hardly noticed the rocks in the road. A fresh and daily reminder that he was not right with God had been witnessed.

Breathing heavily Nathan thought, "Only four more feet between me and that rattlesnake. If I hadn't looked up and seen him, I'd be dead now. I'd be in Hell. Oh, God, let me live until the next revival."

"I ain't never going through there no more," he promised himself. "I usually don't even look when I jump. If I hadn't looked this time, I'd be in eternity."

"What am I going to do if the Lord comes back before the revival next year?" questioned the boy to himself. "The preacher said he could. What would I tell Him about why I am not a Christian? I wish I had just one more verse of an invitational song now; I'd get saved right now."

Nathan sighted his home on the hill nearby. Those white walls and red roof never looked better. Trembling like he had a cold chill, he jumped inside and sat down. He sat motionless and watched "Rawhide" on channel 8 television station. This somewhat eased his nervous state, and he was so grateful.

There is a balm in time which has a way of dulling the senses to unpleasant

memories. After the snake incident, Nathan walked carefully for a couple of weeks. A need for God was constantly felt in his heart, but being out from under the sound of the preacher's voice gave him confidence that he could enjoy life for another year until the revival time arrived. A month slipped into history. September brought school with all its activities to occupy the mind. December blew in and delivered a cold, wet Christmas. The damp winds died down, and spring crept from its winter abode. There was not an idle moment and no possible opportunity to attend church. School turned out in May; Nathan was compelled to think on his own life again. He was twelve now. Yes, he definitely would get saved this summer. Nathan hoed cotton during June and July, and while he hoed, he planned out just what he would do when he got saved. He figured out where he would be setting and what he would say. He was ready.

Chance Of A Lifetime

The chance of a lifetime bounced into view. A week in historic New Orleans tugged at Nathan. His Aunt and Uncle said he could come. He was in such an excited state that he could hardly wait. Look out New Orleans; make way for Nathan Boudreaux! 1105 Donna Avenue right off the Airline Highway had another boy for a visitor. He drank in the unusual scenery. Climbing the stiff wire fence, he planted his feet on the banks of a small canal behind the house. It had sort of a rank smell to it. He never did decide what to call those twelve feet high weeds; the thought of having a batch of those things in a cotton patch was exasperating to say the least. A fast trip to Canal Street proved to be very fascinating. That one street was as wide as a football field. Everybody was in a hurry; nobody had time to wait on anybody. Nathan had never seen so many people in all his life. Wearied by fast talking Frenchmen and maniacs behind every automobile steering wheel, the north Louisiana lad welcomed his bed.

Nathan splashed in the bathtub a short season and quietly spoke a tired "good-night" to all. His joints felt like they needed a well oiling as he eased between the clean sheets. As he lay there awaiting the sandman, thoughts of the day fluttered lazily through his mind. Nathan snickered as he nochalantly recalled the look on that old Frenchman's face as the boy decided not to buy a hat at all after trying on about everything in the store.

With eyes half closed, the days events sauntered drowsily by. Suddenly, Nathan stiffened in the bed and was full awake.

"Oh no," the stifled cry arose.

Torments untold were unleashed in the boy's soul. The pang of absolute abandonment pierced mercilessly through him. Shock tore away the healing balm of time. The naked truth stood in horrifying reality and pointed an accusing finger at him.

"I forgot; this is the week of the revival at Sardis," weakly Nathan told himself. "I lied to God. He will kill me for lying; I know he will. What have I done? Why didn't I think before I left home? Now I'll never be saved. I'll die and go to Hell!"

Shuddering in the summer heat, he died many deaths paying for his mistake. Immediately sensing that God would hear if he called, the prodigal son began pleading with his maker.

"God, you know I didn't do it on purpose. You won't kill me tonight, will you? Just let me get back to that church, and I'll get saved."

Fatigue found no home in Nathan that night. He was afraid to close his eyes and go to sleep. He was sure if did sleep that he would wake up and feel the crackling fires of Hell. From ten o'clock until the wee hours of the morning, he lay rigidly on his bed desiring sleep but afraid for it to come. Nathan thought about Brother White and the sermons he had preached last summer. Excerpts from the messages rained guilt on him and showered his conscience with fear.

"God said that His Spirit would not always strive with man—If you don't get saved tonight, you may never have another chance—I hope Jesus comes back before the revival next year—."

At every turn his frail bark was buffeted by winds of doubt and misery. He had played the fool. Nobody was near enough to him now to show him how to be saved. God had allowed him to walk into a trap and miss the revival. The Devil was after him. He wanted to drag Nathan to the lake of fire and throw him in it. Why didn't God send somebody to tell him how to be saved? For all its splendor and glory, old New Orleans was the gate of Hell as far the young renegade from God's grace was concerned. ■■

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WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT CHRIST

by
Bob Francis

NOW WHEN THE centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54).

"There is a bronze tablet in the capitol at Washington on which the articles of the constitution are written. Suddenly as one studies the letters, the face of the first President of the United States looms forth, filling the entire tablet. You no longer see the letter of the law, you see the face of Washington. Thus it is with the Scriptures. The Bible is a sealed book to those who know not Jesus the Lord. They see nothing but the letter: Wars, laws, exploits, songs, poems, tragedies, victories and what not. But suddenly, as faith draws aside the veil, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ floods the pages of Holy Writ" (High Peaks in Redemption by F. J. Huegel).

I am glad that I have been led by Holy Scripture to the conviction of the centurion and the soldiers when they affirmed, "Truly this was the Son of God." You see, the matter of what we believe about Christ is important. His

disciples believed that He was the Son of God, yet at the time of His death, they dared not to confess it. The Jews, now that He was dying on the cross, were convinced that He was not the Son of God. And yet, this centurion and the soldiers make a voluntary confession of the Christian faith, "Truly this was the Son of God."

What do we believe about Christ? I do not know all that you believe about Christ, but I do know some things that we should believe about Him.

The Pre-Existent Christ

We should believe the truth concerning the pre-existent Christ. Christ's birth into this world was not His beginning, but only His incarnation. He who existed before Abraham, came into the world as a babe. He came down from heaven, where He had been with the Father. All else that I shall say will have little value, if it is not drawn, as it were, on the background of the great Scriptural affirmations regarding the pre-existent Christ.

John declares in John 1:1, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." Jesus is His own commentary on this

when He says in John 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am." John also declares, "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Paul declares in Colossians 1:16-17, "For by Him (Christ) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him: *And he is before all things*, and by Him all things consist." Paul also says in Philipians 2:5-6, "Let this mind be in you, (or have this mind in you) which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, (or existing in the form of God)." We must never lose sight of the fact that the very human Jesus of the Gospels, according to the Scripture, was in the beginning with God, and was Himself God.

We should believe the incarnation was through the method of the virgin birth. Paul has said, "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son made of a woman." He also said, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh . . ." (I Timothy 3:16). If this were the Son of God whose birth we read about in the Gospels, then the strange things which accompany His birth, is just what one might expect. If His coming were not of a virgin, we might well doubt that the birth of Jesus was the incarnation of Him who was in the beginning. The method of the incarnation was the virgin birth. We must not lose sight of the fact that there was something supernatural surrounding the birth of Christ.

The Gospels declare the virgin birth. Only two of the Gospels give an account of the birth of Jesus, and both teach the doctrine of the virgin birth. Matthew has said in 1:18, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused (or had been betrothed) to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Joseph was astonished at this discovery and had a mind to put her away, but the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, "Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." God broke through the chain of human generation and brought into the world a supernatural being.

Diety of Christ

We should believe in the diety of Christ. Jesus was conscious of being God incarnate and represented Himself

A Call To Prayer

Free Will Baptist Bible College is currently engaged in a development program that ultimately will exceed \$3,000,000 in total cost. All of us are aware that this is a tremendous task.

In the outset of the development program, plans are being made to challenge the laymen of our denomination to raise the first \$1,000,000. The Laymen's Campaign, as it has been named, will seek to enlist 1,000 laymen to give \$1,000 each. Other plans to raise the additional money will be announced later.

Many of you cannot give that large a gift and will want to help by contributing a lesser amount. *But all of us can pray.* Success will come only as God's people pray.

Help Us Pray For

Free Will Baptist Bible College Development Program

Pray For:

Total Cost to exceed \$3,000,000

Laymen's campaign to raise \$1,000,000

1,000 laymen to give \$1,000 each.

Praise God For:

\$20,000 given to date

26 laymen who have voluntarily committed themselves to give \$1,000 each.

The PASTOR and the SUNDAY SCHOOL

by Harold W. Erickson

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL is not the pastor's school nor is it the superintendent's school. It is God's school—and God's best tool for winning the children; youth and adults to Himself. As soon as any pastor thinks he owns the Sunday School he is crippled for usefulness.

It is a grave error to consider the Sunday School and the church as two separate and independent organizations where the pastor leads one, and the superintendent the other. It is not—"the Sunday School and the church," but "the Sunday School in the church."

The Pastor's Concept of the Sunday School

—Must first include a sympathetic understanding of the teaching responsibility placed by Christ on His church.

—Must recognize for responsibility of the whole church for the operation of the School.

—Must properly evaluate the School in relation to his own ministry. He can take three attitudes toward the Sunday School: he can ignore, or at best tolerate the School; he can place major emphasis on his own pulpit ministry and plead lack of time and energy for the Sunday School or he can recognize the Sunday School as one of the major efforts of the church, along with evangelism, missions, stewardship, and therefore worthy of his personal support.

—Must recognize the Sunday School as the greatest means to the growth of the church. It is the pastor's greatest evangelistic opportunity and the only available field always ready for reaping. It is a unifying force with no prejudice against it and does not discriminate against nationality, race or creed. All may come!

—It is the surest recruiting agency for church growth and missionary volunteers. It is the pastor's greatest opportunity to learn to know his young people.

The Pastor's Leadership of the Sunday School

—He must transmit the Sunday School vision to the entire church. He can do this by enthusiastic promotion through sermons on the Sunday School, by watchful attention to the entire operation of the Sunday School without being officious and by leading the church in building proper equipment and facilities.

—He must be a master on Sunday School work, history, administration, grading, pedagogy and so forth. Only thus will he gain respect of teachers and leaders of the Sunday School.

—He must work well with his Sunday School leaders and teaching staff. As overseer of the entire church he is of course the spiritual head of every department of the church. Therefore, he must be available for consultation, for Sunday School staff meetings and for teaching if need arises.

—He must recognize that the pastor and the superintendent are a team. The pastor is the commander-in-chief; the superintendent is major-general. The superintendent is the executive officer and is responsible to the pastor and the church. He works with the pastor as a department manager works with the president of a company.

The Pastor's Reward Through the Sunday School

—The Sunday School will give him the greatest number of converts, missionary volunteers and members for the church.

—The Sunday School will rejoice his heart because through it he will know his young people and be helped to understand their needs.

—The Sunday School will give the pastor his greatest open door to the hearts and homes of his community.

—The Sunday School will give him the greatest opportunity to initiate plans, campaigns and special efforts to extend his influence for good.

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58, "Before I came into the world, I and my Father are one." Philippians 2:6-8 shows that Christ was God manifested in the flesh. Christ was completely human. He had a physical body. He grew as others grew, and was capable of hunger and thirst and weariness. He experienced the thoughts and emotions common to men. He took pleasure in friendship, was grieved over injustice and oppression and was tempted like others, except He did not sin. However, He was not just a perfect man, a prophet, or a great teacher—He was God. He claimed to be the Messiah. The Samaritan woman said, "I know that Messiah cometh (he who is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee, am he" (John 4:25-26). On another occasion Jesus said, "For if ye believed in me, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me" (John 5:26). These are definite statements of the deity of Christ. He claimed to be the Son of God. In John 10:30 He said, "I and my Father are one."

One should believe that Christ was crucified as an atonement for the whole world. The great highways of Biblical truth all lead to the cross. The subject of the Scriptures is to Christ and His atoning death for sinners. If the cross does not cause us to remove our shoes from off our feet, if this does not break our pride, if our hearts will not be changed, if our lives will not be transformed, if we do not search for its fragrance and in our hearts search for its deepest meaning, then you get through, lose all.

Christ's death was necessary because it was not my intention to deal with the question, but Paul has said, "Christ died for us and came short of the law" (Romans 3:23). Sin is not forgiven without a sacrifice. Christ's death provides the satisfaction for his sinners. The penalty for sin is death. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

The death of Jesus for all mankind is not limited only to a chosen group of people. It was for the whole world. It was the propitiation for our sins only, but also for the whole world" (I John 2:2). Christ is the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Christ gave himself a ransom for all men in due time" (I

Timothy 2:6). It was not for the sins of a few individuals, or an elect race, but of the world. It was for each individual man.

General Booth of the Salvation Army once said, "Friends, Jesus shed His precious blood to pay the price of salvation, and bought from God enough salvation to go around." It was for the sinful, unjust and ungodly. Sinners of all sorts, degrees and conditions may share in the redemptive work of Christ.

In the March 13, 1961, issue of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, Wayne E. Ward in his sermon "The Gospel of Jesus Christ" gives this illustration: "In one of the great Southern cities, an all-Negro cast of players once enacted its own version of 'Green Pastures'. To some Christians sitting there, the careless language and the unorthodox portrayals, such as 'de Lawd' with the long black 'seegar' puffing smoke rings around his head, bordered on the sacrilegious. But near the last scene of the play, a bolt of heavenly light broke through. The Lord was sitting on his great white throne, high and lifted up. Before Him marched a blustering angel, up and down the golden balcony of heaven; in his hands was a silver trumpet with a golden bell! Now and then, impatient Gabriel would lean far out over the golden balustrade pleading 'Lawd, let me blow this here trumpet! Look at them poor, mizzable sinners, a-fightin', an a-killin'—Lawd, they's in an awful shape. Let me blow one toot on this horn and wind up the whole shebang." But the Lord protested, "Hold on Gabriel: de Lawd am thinkin'. Do you reckon all that suffering down there might jus' mean de Lawd himself gotta get down there an' suffer too?" In shocked disbelief Gabriel remonstrates, "Lawd, you suffer? Why, Lawd, you ain't no mizzable sinner; you is the King of the whole creation."

And then it happened! Blinding streaks of lightning flashed and thunder rolled across the scene. Slowly darkness fell over the shuddering earth. Far in the distance "the shadow of a cross arose upon a lonely hill." Above the muffled roaring of a crowd and the whistling of the wind came one piercing woman's cry: "Oh, Lawdy, look at 'em! Look at 'em! Look at 'em nail him to dat cross!" Back to the center of the scene came one light to play upon the throne. Gone was the golden crown and in its place—a crown of thorns! Down the agonized face came the livid streams of his own blood. His lips moved: "Yes, Gabriel, that's just what it means. It means de Lawd himself gona suffer most of all!"

We should believe in the bodily resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the theological fads of

the day is to deny the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Still, it must be conceded, our modern doubters are in good company. One declared, that except he were granted all the proof which a bodily contact with Christ could afford, he would not believe. Thomas got what he demanded. It brought him to his knees with the cry; "My Lord and my God." There are facts in connection with the resurrection of Jesus, so tangible, so real, that like Thomas we must cry out "My Lord and my God." The resurrection of Christ is fundamental to Christianity. Paul says, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:17).

Christ Died

Christ actually died. Jesus did not merely swoon. From John 19:33-37 we learn when the soldiers pierced the side of Christ, "there came forth blood and water." No man could live with such vital organs pierced. Joseph of Arimathea asked permission to bury the body of Jesus because he knew Christ had been pronounced dead. The soldiers pronounced Him dead. "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs" (John 19:33). Jesus testifies to the fact that he was dead. He said in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead."

The resurrection of Jesus Christ assures the believer in Christ Jesus of His acceptance with God. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). So long as Christ lay in the grave there was no assurance that His redemptive work had been acceptable to God. The fact that Jesus was raised from the dead was evidence that the Father was satisfied with the sacrifice Christ had made for the sins of men. Believing sinners may now rest satisfied that in Him they are justified.

The believer in Christ Jesus is assured of an interceding High Priest in Heaven. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who is also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:24). You see, we need Christ, not only to deliver us from bondage, but also to plead for us and intercede for us because of the fact that we commit sins. I believe, that in my own life, there is still a need of daily forgiveness and I am assured of this forgiveness because I have a risen Saviour who is a High Priest and can be touched with the feelings of my infirmities and intercedes for me.

The believer in Christ Jesus is assured of His own resurrection and immortality. "For if we believe that Jesus died and

(Continued on Page 24)

AND THEY SAID *one to another, did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures*" (Luke 24:32)?

The warmth of Christ is felt in the hearts of these Emmaus disciples as Christ opens the scriptures concerning himself. This is one heartburn that every Christian ought to have. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit fire. The fired-up disciples burned with zeal, determination and boldness, as many were added to the Church.

Free Will Baptists have been blessed of God within the past twenty years. As a denomination, we have advanced in missions, education and individual churches have grown spiritually and materially. We must thank God for the privilege of having a small part in building the Church of Christ.

Though our advance has been good, it is insufficient. Masses of people remain unreached with the Gospel. Christianity is losing ground in the great population explosion. Our prayer is that the fire within our hearts might burn as never before to light a pathway for the darkened, estranged world to find its way to God. Why must cults advance faster than those whose Lord has all power in heaven and earth? Why do other Christian churches and groups advance faster? The fire has gone out of many hearts. The warmth of His presence is not felt in our souls or in many of our churches.

When I was a boy in Kentucky, we lived in a house which had an open fire place in each room. These open grates used coal for fuel. At night the fires were banked by piling ashes on the fire. The fire would keep all night. In the morning, a new fire was started very easily by shaking down the grate and adding new coals.

The room during the night did not stay warm, but the banked fire did keep down the chill. However, some mornings when we would wake up and poke our heads from beneath the covers, we knew the fire had gone out. No amount of new coals or shaking down the grate would cause it to start again.

The dilemma of some Free Will Baptist Churches could be likened unto the fire in the grate. No matter how much we stir with revival efforts, no fire is ever started. We pray, we work, but there is no fire. The fire has gone out of the individual hearts, so the churches are chilled and cold. We have tried to rekindle when a new fire may be needed.

So today, we have churches which, like the Dead Sea, have no real life growing in them. Many have become dead, killed by the letter of the law. What a waste!

The Fire Has Gone Out

by
John Ham

Moral? Yes. Fundamental? Yes. Orthodox? Yes. But dead! Is there anything deader than a dead fundamentalist who has not given up the ghost? The letter killeth, but the Spirit gives life. The great truths of the Bible must be more than mere facts. They must be the fuel which burns in the heart and soul of the believer. Men of by-gone days were burned at the stake, but God only asks us to burn with enthusiasm and glow with the Gospel of Christ. Many learn the truths of God as though they were words from a history book or a world almanac.

We pride ourselves on our fundamentalism and our staunch stand on the moral issues of life. We are the old-fashioned Christians, we say. The doctrinal truths of Free Will Baptists are essential for believers. However, isn't love a fundamental truth of the Scriptures? Isn't soul winning orthodox? You can't get any more orthodox than the Apostles. Instead of love and soul winning, we become "mote pickers," with a "holier-than-thou" attitude, but our vines are withered and fruitless. Whenever we discuss the fast growth of other churches and denominations, we play the old record, "We have higher standards." This just is not true every time. There are good fundamental groups who are growing steadily.

Many of our churches are filled with good, moral people who are faithful to God, but who have no fire in their hearts. What else can be the reason why thousands of Free Will Baptists have never led a soul to Christ? We had rather fight than witness.

How sad to attend prayer meeting week after week and hear no plea for the lost. Some church members are so cold they do not bother with prayer meeting. Some who come, however, never make a request for the unsaved. Imagine, one or even two years without making a prayer request for a lost relative or neighbor. To see such coldness should break our hearts.

How strong do we believe something when we do not exercise it? God is love. God so loved the world He gave His

only begotten Son. Apathy has replaced concern. James said, "Faith without works is dead." Does not love begot concern for others? Can we love our relatives, believe in hell and not pray for them? Love for the world moved God into action and sacrifice.

Jesus always expressed concern for the lost, regardless of their sin. According to His own words, "He came into the world, to seek and to save that which was lost." When the fact of hell and eternal punishment does not bring a sense of urgency to the church, the fire is out. When the great love of God to us personally does not make us humble, the fire is out. What kind of pride is it that boasts its goodness and its morality when it cost the Son of God His life because of our vileness?

Let us not compromise the good fundamental truth of the Scriptures. Rather, let these truths become real fire in our souls that will burn for Christ. Let us, however, add to these truths love, concern and enthusiasm for our community and world evangelism.

It was my pleasure to once meet a farm hand whose name I will not use. The farm hand worked very hard during the spring and summer for room and board and maybe a new pair of overalls. He was very strong physically, but without much formal education. People used to poke fun at him and play pranks on him. The farm hand took it well. In the cold winter months he was out in the snow, cold, jobless and homeless. One day while barefooted, no shirt and wearing a dirty pair of bib overalls, he walked the aisle for Christ. The fire that burned in every believer at the experience of a new birth burned in his heart. He told a friend that night and immediately the following Sunday his friend attended church and made his profession of faith in Christ. He did not know any other way but he won his friend to Christ. However, he was very wise, for the Scripture says, "He that winneth souls is wise."

Doctrines are important to us as believers, but they must not become cold and lifeless. Let us stir up the fire and determine that because God loves the world, we are going to see that the world hears about it, starting with our communities. ■■

JOHN HAM is pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church in Manchester, Tennessee.



Do You Want To Quit Smoking?

by
Hazel A. Hartman

rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thessalonians 4:14). II Corinthians 4:14 "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus and shall present us with you" (II Corinthians 4:14). "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). Need I say more.

Ascension of Christ

We should believe in the ascension of Jesus Christ. The ascension was necessary to complete the redemptive work of Christ. In a sense He had not yet presented the blood of atonement in the presence of the Father; and He had not yet been given His place at the right hand of the Father. When we speak of the ascension of Christ, we refer to that event in the life of our risen Lord in which He departed visibly from his disciples into heaven.

What was the purpose of the ascension? He entered Heaven as a forerunner. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus" (Hebrews 6:20). "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). A forerunner is one that is sent before. Where Christ goes, His people may go also. "That where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). He is now appearing before God in our behalf. "For Christ is not entered into the Holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24). He is there to act as High Priest in our behalf. He is our intercessor and our mediator. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is past into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession, For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 14:14-16).

We should believe in the second coming of Christ. The question of Christ coming again has taken on tremendous meaning in the last years due to the shaping of circumstances in the life of the world. The distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, millions becoming lovers of self, covetous, blasphemous, boastful, proud, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, trucebreakers, false accusers, despisers of them that are good, lovers of

pleasures more than lovers of God. Wars and rumors of wars, nation rising up against nation, all of this is so characteristic of our time, and is the most significant sign of the end of the age. "Therefore, be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of God cometh."

It is important for us to believe that Christ is coming a second time. Jesus bore constant testimony to His coming again and the apostles faithfully proclaimed this truth. "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (John 14:3). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (I Thessalonians 4:16).

The Christian is told to look forward to Christ's second coming as his great hope. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). The one great event, towards which the Christian is to look and for which he is to ardently long, is the second coming of Christ.

The second coming of Christ should be the great incentive to consistent Christian living. "And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (I John 2:22). The test which the Christian should apply to all questions of practice is: Would I like to have Christ find me doing this when He comes?

The second coming of Christ should be of the greatest comfort to believers. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words*" (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

These things we believe about Christ. "Truly this was the Son of God." ■■



BOB FRANCIS is pastor of the Free Will Baptist Church in Grubbs, Arkansas.

ONE YEAR AGO I had a sincere desire to stop smoking cigarettes. I tried self-treatment, but not one day would pass without the desire for a cigarette returning. I came to realize that I had a serious personal problem and pride kept me from telling anyone of my desire to get rid of the evil habit.

I had such a determination to stop smoking that subconsciously, all day and into the night and especially in the wee hours of the morning, these Bible verses came to me over and over again: "Ye have not because ye ask not" (James 4:2); " whatsoever you desire when you pray" (Mark 11:24).

I began a search for a church where God's presence could be felt. The Holy Spirit of God led me to an old fashioned altar of prayer and I petitioned and pleaded for His help. I did not realize the miracle taking place as I knelt in prayer, but the desire and all future temptation disappeared during those precious minutes in my life. I promised God to surrender my whole life to His service. I even told Him I would give my cigarette money to the church, but He led me to give a tithe of all my income.

Soon I discovered old associations brought recurring desires for cigarettes, but God helped me understand the source of this craving and drew me away from these people, places and empty leisure times. Now the thought never enters my mind to smoke. Each time I notice someone else smoking I prayerfully say, "Thank You, God, for saving my soul from sin. Please help this person to find *Your* magic formula."

The medical profession admits they have nothing to offer as a cure to overcome the tobacco habit. I have, with many others, found that Almighty God will rid, erase, and cleanse evil habits beyond human imagination or expectation. After you have tried all cures available without success, try God's way—penitent prayer.

A Bible verse giving me strength today is Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." ■■

MRS. HARTMAN resides in Kansas City, Missouri.

INSPIRATION . . .

A Starling Which Talked

A lawyer had a caged starling in his office. The starling had learned to answer when he was called. One morning a boy named Charlie entered the office. The lawyer went out for a few minutes, and when he returned the cage was empty.

"Where is the bird," he asked the boy. The boy answered that he didn't know. "Sonny, that bird was in the cage when I went out. Where has it gone?"

Charlie repeated that he did not know anything about the bird; that probably the door of the cage was open and the bird had flown away. At that the lawyer called out, "Starling, where are you?"

"Here I am," answered the starling, and the voice came from the boy's pocket.

Imagine Charlie's situation. He had stolen the bird and hidden it in what he thought was a safe place. To hide his guilt he had lied twice; then the voice came from his pocket to betray him. There was no way he could deny that testimony. Not a word could he say. The bird was a living witness of his guilt, of his theft and of his lie.

That is what will happen when a world of guilty sinners who have tried to hide from God are hauled before the last high judgment bar. Every mouth will be stopped and all will be found guilty before God.

—Norman Lewis
The Sword of the Lord

Your Tones

It is not so much what you say,
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use
As the tones you use to convey it.
For words come from the mind,
And grow by study and art;
But tones leap forth from the inner self
And reveal the state of the heart.

—The Christian Witness

An Empty Life

In March, 1940 a girl went to the Eddie Martin Airport near Santa Ana, California, and engaged a pilot to take her for a flight to the beach district. She insisted upon using an open plane and riding in the rear cockpit. When nearing Newport Beach, the pilot said, he felt the plane lurch and glanced back to see the girl leap over the side to her death. In the girl's automobile was found a note, which read: "Forgive me. I just couldn't bear it any longer. It takes courage to die, but it is cowardly to live an empty, ill life." Behind these words there must have been the agony of a disillusioned life. We may call the poor girl foolish, but that is empty censure now. What was needed was someone's kind and friendly help while she lived. She would never have found life "empty" had some Christian filled her heart with the love of Christ.

—Watchman-Examiner

Prayer Meeting For Hoboes

I found five men sitting around a fire under the elevated tracks evidently having breakfast. After passing them I felt I should go back to speak to them. Approaching them I said, "I see you are making your own breakfast. Have you had enough to eat?" "We've got bread and coffee." "Here is fifty cents. Send a fellow over to the store for more food." They looked at me searchingly and asked, "Are you from Moody's?" "My office is there," I replied. "Do you know what we were talking about just before you came? We were saying that when we were in Sunday school we were told we had to be born again. But we didn't accept it; that's why we are in this terrible condition today. Say, brother, will you pray that we will be converted?" So there around that open fire under the tracks, we wept and prayed with those five men. As we went our way we wondered how many men about us were hungry for the word of salvation. Are we forgetting our Gospel mission?

—Ernest Wadsworth in Moody Monthly

The Janitor's Guest

Years ago a Missouri country congregation listened to a sermon by a young preacher who had walked twenty miles to deliver it. Tired, hungry, this youth faltered, floundered, and failed. The people were disgusted; they did not know he had walked the weary miles. When the service was over nobody offered him food or shelter, but as he started down the long road with a breaking heart, the colored janitor asked him to share his humble meal in a nearby shanty. Years passed. The young exhorter became Bishop Marvin of world-wide reputation, and after a full generation he once more stood in that spot to dedicate a great country church. The whole community was assembled; it was a tremendous event in their lives. When the service was ended, many crowded about offering lavish hospitality, but the Bishop waved them all aside, and called the old colored janitor saying, "When I was here years ago I was none too good for you, and I am none too good for you today."

—Christian Life and Faith

An Infidel's Final Assurance

Sir Francis Newport, the head of an English infidel club, said to those gathered around his dying bed, "You need not tell me there is no God for I know there is one, and that I am in His angry presence! You need not tell me there is no hell, for I already feel my soul slipping into its fires! Wretches, cease your idle talk about there being hope for me! I know I am lost forever."

—Sunday School Times



**UNDER THE
LORDSHIP OF CHRIST**

personally...

IT IS EASY today to decry the plight of the modern day church. Whenever this is done, it is usually on the basis that the early church was a militant, victorious church. How often we hear sermons urging that we get back to the pattern of the early church which is pictured as a consecrated group of Christians moving out in unbroken lines to attack a pagan society. We are exhorted to move out in like manner to suffer the persecutions of a sinful and degenerate civilization.

But is this a true picture of the early church? Hardly. It is a rather overdrawn view in light of what the New Testament has to say. The New Testament reveals that the early church had plenty of problems and pretty much the same ones we have today. As stated by Ray C. Stedman, "there were divisions and factions. There were heresies and false teachers with some churches more given over to error than they were the truth. There were emotional extremists and unbending traditionalists. There were liberals and conservatives, cultists and hypocrites. There were churches where nothing much was happening and others which were like a prairie fire out of control. Some led a rather peaceful existence; others were being ground under the iron heel of ruthless persecution."

Now the point here is not to justify the modern day church as being like the early church. It is rather to establish the fact that as far as the individual church is concerned, it can be weak or strong, just as churches in every age have been weak or strong, to the degree that the church submits itself to that which makes it strong. I am of the opinion that a local church will be weak or strong depending upon its submission to the Lordship of Christ. Christ, through the Holy Spirit, must be permitted to exercise His right to rule within the local church.

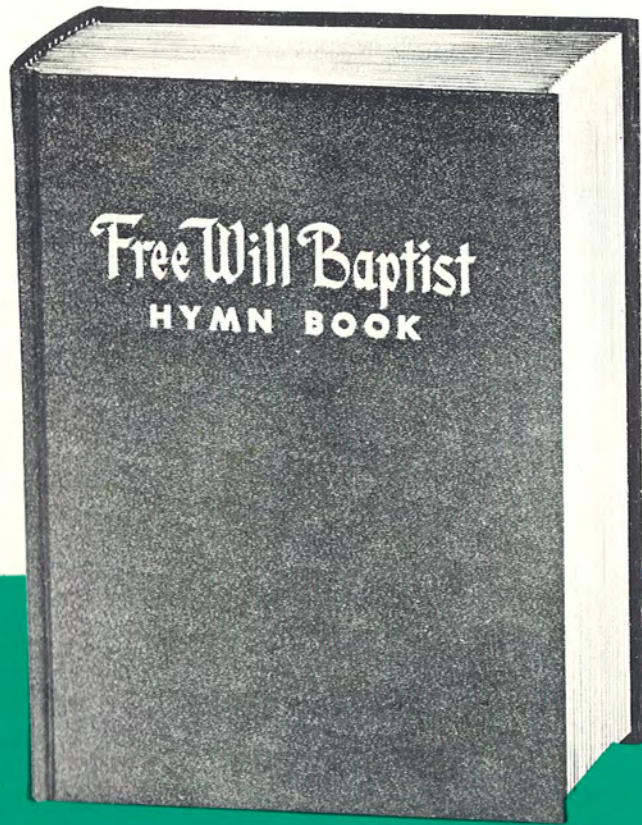
Now the hard question for us is this. Does Christ, through the Holy Spirit, rule our local church? I am not so sure but what if the Holy Spirit withdrew from some churches, (if He hasn't already) He would never be missed. The church is run by the pastor, deacons, a certain individual or family, or just runs itself. We have grown quite use to the practice of making decisions, formulating plans, raising money and holding services with only an academic recognition of Christ's place in all of this, if any recognition is given at all. As a result, the sharp edge has been taken from our witness and worship and all that relates to the church has become a burden instead of a blessing.

Is it yet possible for the church to capture the thrill and excitement of following the Living Christ? Indeed. The same Lord who was available to the first century church is available to the twentieth century church. We need but look to Him. The way back is through prayer. Here is our great need. While we rush to and fro in our many church activities, we fail to give a proper place to prayer. In some churches it appears that prayer is a waste of time. Little time is devoted to sincere, earnest prayer while we try to run our churches on human effort—high pressured campaigns, organizational skill, entertainment, gimmicks, money—and when it is all over, we are dry in our souls and painfully aware that God is not present and not at work.

Let us stir ourselves, therefore, to the importance of prayer. Let us go beyond a mere perfunctory practice of prayer. Let us give place to more prayer in our mid-week services and worship services. Let us learn that few things in the church are more important than prayer and that time spent in prayer is never wasted.

When we do this, God will not fail us. We can move from victory to victory under the Lordship of Christ. When Christ is leading, the full thrill of Christian blessing and experience will be in the church and upon our souls.

The Spirit of God is moving in the church today. He seeks to exalt and make known the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who know the rule of Christ, through the Spirit, will be a part of His ministry and make an impact upon the world. May God keep us under the Lordship of Christ.



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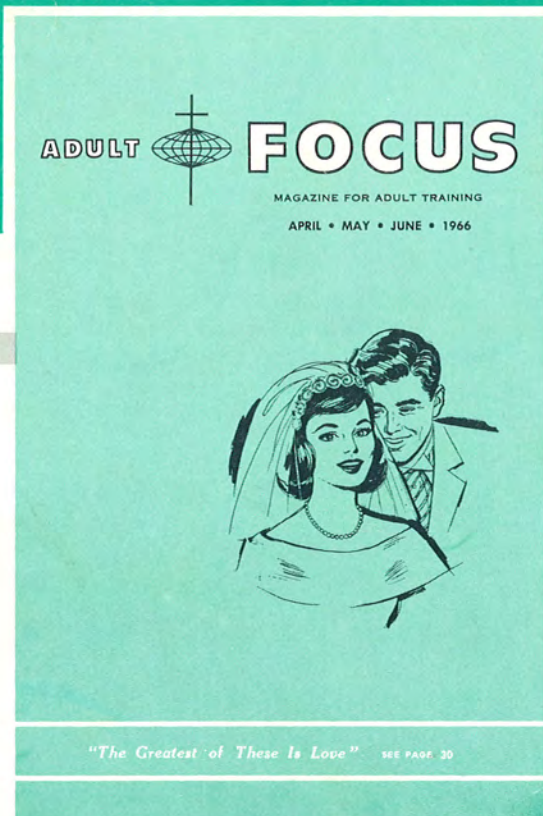
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