

CONTACT

OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

JUNE 1968



32nd Annual Convention

National Association of
Free Will Baptists

July 15-18, 1968



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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
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MATURITY IS A MUST

A STUNTED, emaciated, underdeveloped child arouses great pity. When disease, improper care or some bodily malfunction hinders physical growth it distresses us. Yet there is something even more pathetic. It is an anemic, dwarfed, immature child of God. In the pew and the pulpit we find so many who have not fully developed spiritually. This lack of Christian growth is a cause for concern.

Churches are filled with babies wrapped in swaddling clothes instead of giants clothed with the whole armor of God. Content to feed on the bottle and satisfied with pabulum, these babes would probably take the colic if their diet was changed. But can we afford to allow this tragic condition to continue?

While we lament a sick, secular society, there is a need to grieve over the sick toddlers in the church. Compassion moves us to help those who have physical deficiencies. Likewise, more attention ought to be given to developing the spiritually retarded saints.

False concepts of Christian maturity prevail. Some think of it as perfection. Others may consider it regular Bible reading, prayer, church attendance and performing some good deeds. Then, some have the notion that maturity is some ecstatic experience.

Maturity is more than being doctrinally sound. It is more than the dedication of life. It is growing in the likeness of Christ. It is striving for obedience to all of God's revealed will. It is not only discerning the right, it is the determination to do right whatever the cost. While there is no compromise of conviction there will be a constructive attitude and loving spirit. Serving the Lord with all humility, a mature Christian will die to selfish ambition.

A mature Christian is characterized by consistency, integrity, patience and self-control. Such a person is a responsible Christian. He is able to calmly stand alone in the times of testing. Regardless of circumstances, confident trust in God is maintained.

Paul summed up the meaning of maturity in II Corinthians 13:11, where he related his experience of becoming a man by putting away childish things. This, of course, is not achieved by a momentary decision. It is a progressive climb up the rocky hill of life. It takes time. But age and experience do not bring it about alone. Spiritual maturity is cultivated and nurtured by effort, prayer, grace and the Holy Spirit. Constant reminding, prodding and exhorting are needed.

This problem is not new or peculiar to us. The church at Corinth was filled with spiritual infants. The church at Ephesus had the same difficulty (Eph. 4:14, 15). Paul exhorts this church to "grow up". The last recorded words of Peter admonish us to "grow in grace". This same counsel applies to us today. To become a virile church, more maturity must be attained.



Rufus Coffey discusses with Mark Vandivort the new feature "Problem Post" which Mr. Vandivort will begin next month in CONTACT.

RUFUS COFFEY *editor*
JUNE R. CRITCHER *assistant editor*
JANE YOUNG *circulation*

C O N T A C T

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June 1968

Volume XV Number 8

ARTICLES

- 7 Tombstones Tell A Tale / *Mark Vandivort*
- 8 Evangelism As I See It Today / *Bobby Jackson*
- 10 Modern Pharisees / *Leroy Forlines*
- 14 The Common Filler Clay / *Jo Ann Hurst*
- 15 NAE Convention Report / *Harvey Warner*

FEATURES

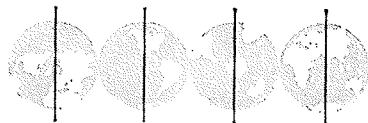
- 3 Maturity Is A Must / *Rufus Coffey*
- 5 Religious News
- 12 Glancing Around The States
- 16 Woman to Woman / *Cleo Pursell*
- 17 Gems from the Greek New Testament / *Robert Picirilli*
- 18 Co-operative Report

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religious news

Conscientious Objectors Forms Circulated

WASHINGTON, D. C. (MNS)—Most Internal Revenue offices have available the forms which a clergyman must use if he wishes to seek exclusion from Social Security coverage. The application for exemption is Form 4361 and provides guidance for those who, because of religious principle or conscience, are opposed to "public insurance."

Those considering exclusion on religious principle should note that the grounds must be religious and that the objection must be to all forms of "public insurance" which pay retiral, health or other benefits. Exclusion is not possible on political or practical grounds. The clergyman may not seek exclusion because he already has a suitable retiral plan.

A decision to be excluded is irrevocable and cuts the minister off from all government health and retiral programs of the future.

Formerly, clergymen were excluded from Social Security coverage unless they signed a waiver, and voluntarily entered the program. Under the new law, it is compulsory for *all* ministers to participate unless they choose to exclude themselves on the grounds mentioned above.

Debate on Liquor

DALLAS (EP)—The traditional rule against consumption of alcoholic beverages by members of the Methodist Church was fuel for a debate at the April 21 convention of the denomination here.

Louis Cassels, religion editor of United Press International, says it has long been an open secret that these rules are winked at by a large proportion of

Methodist laity and a not-inconsiderable number of clergy.

A survey of drinking patterns among Methodists five years ago showed that 61 per cent of them above the age of 15 use alcohol. That's only two percentage points under the figure for Protestants in general. Other surveys, says Cassels, have indicated the number of drinking Methodists may run as high as 70 per cent.

The policy of insisting on total abstinence is "producing hypocrisy and a loss of integrity in the corporate life of the church and in the lives of many ministers and laymen," according to members of the Methodist Board of Christian Social Concerns which met last October. The Board recommended that the denomination scrap the ministerial pledge of total abstinence and delete the section of the Methodist "discipline" which permits trial and expulsion of a drinker. The Board also recommended the revising of the church's official statement on alcohol to stress practical reasons for abstinence, while making it clear that each Christian is free to make his own "responsible decision" on the matter. The new statement, however, explicitly reaffirms the conviction that "the choice to abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages is a sound and wise witness of God's liberating and redeeming love for mankind."

Quarter of Membership as Missionaries

BLOOMINGSTON, MINN. (EP)—An independent Bloomington congregation which has one-fourth of its adult membership serving in foreign fields is observing its 25th anniversary.

During the quarter century, Bethany

Missionary Church has outgrown two buildings and increased its membership from 16 to 350 adult members. About 20 years ago, the congregation, then with fewer than a score of members, began praying for 100 missionaries and money enough to send and support them abroad.

Currently, the congregation has 119 missionaries overseas—76 of them members of Bethany. As a result of the prayer for missionaries, the congregation started the Bethany Fellowship Missionary Training Center.

Allegiance Asked

FRANKLIN SPRINGS, GA. (EP)—In the wake of news that the Rev. Oral Roberts has left the Pentecostal Holiness Church to become a Methodist, denominational leaders have expressed belief that the members "will continue their loyalty to their denomination will not be affected by Mr. Roberts' obvious move into ecumenical circles."

Symposium on Human Reproduction

WASHINGTON, D. C. (EP)—A symposium on the control of human reproduction will scrutinize medical, theological and legal aspects of the problem when some 25 scholars meet in Portsmouth, N. H. Aug. 28-31.

Jointly sponsored by Christianity Today and the Christian Medical Society, the meeting will consider the problems of contraception, sterilization and therapeutic abortion with a multidisciplinary approach, "seeking to establish medical, moral and legal guidelines for clinical management." Participants will present discussion papers rooted in a Biblical ethic and which will be "of pragmatic value to the practicing physician and clergyman."

Can there be a bond of
Christian communion among Christians
apart from the
ecumenical band wagon
proposed by many religious leaders?

I HAD visited the graves of my great-grandparents before as a boy, but it had not occurred to me until I visited their graves recently that their names on the headstones were spelled differently.

As I looked at the two gravestones, I thought of the tremendous tragedy of splits, divisions, and wars. The two headstones did not represent a conflict between my great-grandfather, John, and my great-grandmother, Emma. Rather, the difference in spelling represented the tragedy of a disagreement within a family. According to family legend, it happened this way.

At the time my great-grandfather registered for the army the family name was spelled Vandevort. The family became divided over the Civil War issue, and those who took the side of the Union cause changed their name to Vandivort.

When Great-grandfather was buried, the government carved the original spelling on his headstone. When Great-grandmother was buried, the later spelling was carved on her headstone.

It is not uncommon for people with Dutch names to ask, "How did you come to have an 'i' in your Dutch name?" I am proud of my name and of my family. However, it is tragic that brothers would separate themselves over political issues. I can imagine the deep pain it must have caused. Perhaps there is room for family disagreement in politics but not division.

What about the family of brothers and sisters in Christ? Is there legitimate reason for division? There will not be division in heaven. There should not be division on earth.

I am not campaigning for the ecumenical band wagon that proposes one organic world church. I believe this to be the world apostate religious system foretold in prophecy. I don't believe any Free Will Baptist desires to be caught up in the world network of churches. However, I do believe there should be a

point of Christian communion with brothers and sisters in Christ wherever we find them.

I believe it is in the will of God for us Christians to group together as we do in our denominations. Within our denomination we can enjoy agreement on our form of worship, church government, and church doctrines.

It is important that we remember that one of the blessed privileges of being a Free Will Baptist is the liberty of independence within the local church. The local church has enjoyed being the highest governing body in the Free Will Baptist denomination.

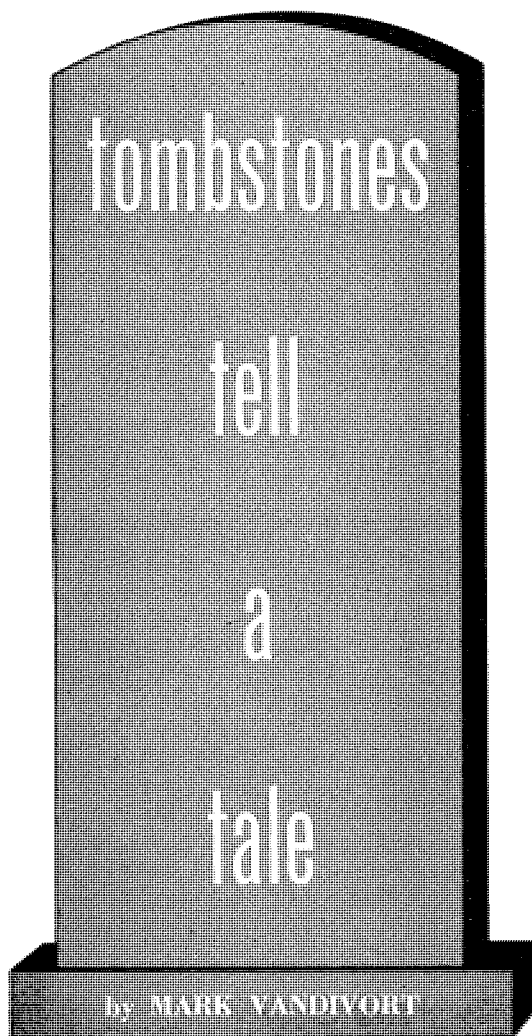
For thirty-three years as a national association we have enjoyed working together in a wonderful fellowship of churches with the Bible as our rule of faith and practice and the Free Will Baptist treatise as an expression of our interpretations and practices. Our treatise has afforded us with some room for independence of thought and practice while still working together as a fellowship of believers.

Any decisive spirit in our denomination would spell doom for our missionary programs, Christian education, mushrooming youth ministries, Sunday school development programs, and many other denominational functions. We have buildings built and programs started that can only be maintained with our denomination's unity and co-operation.

Anyone who has driven a team of mules, horses, or sleigh dogs knows the terrible confusion created when the animals fight in the harness. Everything comes to a halt, and much valuable time and energy are lost while the mess is being straightened out. Sometimes the harness has to be repaired before the project at hand can go on. Thinking in spiritual terms, I believe only carnal Christians stop pulling together and begin fighting in the harness (I Corinthians 3:1-11).

Free Will Baptists have always been aware of differences of opinions and practices on such points as the millenium, feet washing, and "Can a backslider be lost?" Yet, we have managed to work together.

My wife and I are from the same state. I was reared an amillenialist and hardly realized that there was another interpretation of eschatology until I began to meet Christians from other areas and affiliations. My wife was reared a premillenialist and was surprised to learn that there were Free Will Baptists who believed differently. Despite this difference, I believe our home state has





DELEGATES to the NATIONAL

Your church can have a voice in the business of the National Association this summer. Each delegate will secure a credential card at the registration table when he arrives. The delegate's registration fee is \$10.00.

enjoyed very successful co-operation and unity as brothers and sisters in Christ working together. This is characteristic of true Free Will Baptist spirit.

We have learned that we all believe we should be looking for our Lord to return at any moment. What we do for Him must be done before He returns. We all agree that there is no second chance to repent after death. From the moment of His appearance the future is in His hands.

Some Free Will Baptists believe that it is possible for a backslider to become so turned to sin and turned away from God that he would be lost if he died in that condition. However, if he should respond to the call of the Holy Spirit and return in repentance to the Father like the prodigal son, he could have his sins forgiven. It is possible that such a person could blaspheme the Holy Spirit and forfeit his opportunity to repent of sin, thus, he would become an apostate.

Other Free Will Baptists believe that a born again Christian will be in a saved condition until he becomes an apostate by making shipwreck of his faith. It would take at least two books to effectively define these two views of interpretation in our denomination. I believe two good books have been written, namely, *Life in the Son* by Robert Shank and *If Ye Continue* by Guy Duty. Booklets on the subject have been written by Leroy Forlines, Jack Paramore, Bobby Porter, Wade Jernigan, Jerry Dudley, and Robert Duncan.

Our Free Will Baptist *Treatise* states, "There are strong grounds to hope that the truly regenerate will persevere unto the end, and be saved, through the power of divine grace which is pledged for their support; but their future obedience and final salvation are neither determined nor certain, since through infirmity and

manifold temptations they are in danger of falling; and they ought, therefore, to watch and pray lest they make shipwreck of their faith and be lost." Perhaps the *Treatise* does not say as much as some of us would like for it to say. However, it is a brief, clear statement and I believe all Free Will Baptists can adhere to this statement of doctrine and be satisfied with it.

I am sure that all Free Will Baptists agree that if a person who had been born again met death with his life filled with sins, such as listed in Galatians 5:19-21, he would be lost eternally. Let's all preach the grave danger of yielding to sin and the importance of following close to Jesus Christ (John 10:27).

Some of our Free Will Baptists want a twin rather than a brother in Christ. Some want a brother who thinks, acts, jumps, and shouts just like he does or like the members of a closely knit cliché. I am not thinking of any particular area of our denomination or group of people when I make these statements. I believe that many of us are guilty of some of the same faults concerning issues within our ranks.

Perfect unity did not exist in the New Testament church, and it will not exist successfully during the twentieth century or any other century.

We Free Will Baptists have the wonderful privilege of slight differences of opinions. If we can't teach and persuade another brother to see eye to eye with us, let us not resort to legislating our convictions upon another. Rather, let us continue working and walking together with love and respect for one another as fellow Free Will Baptists.

We cannot change a Christian brother's convictions and heart attitude with the tool of legislation. Legislation can be used as a wedge to split apart and divide.

The more rules and regulations we vote on the local, state, and national level, the more we strip our individual churches of their local autonomy. We must remember that all a local church has to do is to vote to get out if the noose of legislation is being drawn.

I believe that we should carefully avoid issues that would divide us and hinder our potential for world-wide ministry. It takes much time to cure the pain of family divisions. I do not believe we have that much time before our Lord returns!

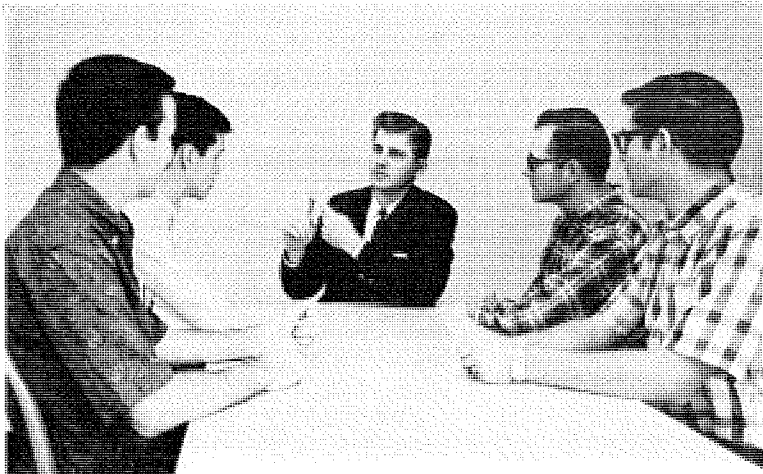
If we will make ourselves available to the Holy Spirit for prayer, soul-winning, and stewardship as we should, the little matters that cause worry and concern will disappear as the dew under the morning sun.

Dr. A. B. Simpson wrote, "We must stand right with all the Lord's people, and meet in sweetest, fullest fellowship if we would keep our fullest fellowship with Christ Himself. An altered attitude toward some fellow believer may bring us into the flood tides of the Holy Spirit. It seems impossible to have faith without love, or to have Christ alone without the fullness of fellowship with all His saints. The spirit of cherished animosity, lurking prejudice, sullen vindictiveness or cold disdain will as effectively obstruct our contact and intimacy with Heaven as a speck on the glass of a telescope." "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another . . ." (I John 1:7a).

Surely no one wants our denominational epitaph to read, "Division was the downfall of Free Will Baptists."

The author serves the Department of Home Missions and Church Extension as Assistant to the General Director. He leaves this department the first of August to begin a work in Columbia, Missouri, sponsored jointly by the Missouri Board of Home Missions and the National Home Missions Board.

EVANGELISM



AS I SEE IT TODAY

by Bobby Jackson

EVANGELISM is the work of preaching the good news of salvation to men. Looking at this work today, it easily takes three forms—(1) mass or co-operative evangelism, (2) local church evangelism, and (3) personal evangelism.

With these three areas of the work in mind, let us view some of the virtues and problems of evangelism today, as I see it.

Cooperative Evangelism

Impact on the community—A concerted effort by a group of sound, gospel-preaching churches will penetrate all areas of life in a community in a way that no one church could.

This will attract the attention of the irreligious and unconcerned. The man on the street becomes soul conscious.

The social, political, educational, even the religious life of an entire area may be influenced by such an evangelistic meeting.

Fellowship of Christians—A cooperative evangelistic meeting usually breaks down some of the sectarian barriers between sincere Christians and brings them together in sweeter fellowship. This is certainly needed.

Even among pastors and churches of the same denomination there is too much strife, jealousy, covetousness, and unholy competition. It is difficult to get over these barriers, and such a mass meeting

may help.

Reaching the unsaved—Probably the most difficult part of evangelism is getting the unsaved under the sound of the gospel. Sometimes it is easier to get the lost man to attend a mass meeting, on neutral ground, than to persuade him to attend a church service.

There are some sinners that no one man, nor one church, will ever reach. Several men, and churches, working together could reach them.

Problems of Cooperative Evangelism

All efforts at evangelizing have difficulties. This area is no exception. Note these:

Lack of cooperation—The greatest handicap to area-wide efforts of evangelism is getting cooperation. Some pastors would rather a sinner die and go to hell than to be saved and join another church.

I once thought medical doctors were the most jealous of professional men. But preachers have them beat.

There are many areas that Free Will Baptists have sufficient churches to fill a city auditorium in an evangelistic meeting, if you could get them together. But try it.

Most of the congregations are splits, and divisions of splits. Each pastor is pushing his own little red wagon, rocking

his own baby. He has neither the time nor the interest to spend on any effort outside his church.

Yet, this problem itself is one reason such an effort is so desperately needed.

Need of finances—It is evident that mass evangelism is now big business. With the leading big-time evangelistic associations it calls for multi-million dollar annual budgets.

To support an evangelistic party costs money. Qualified musicians and organizational men are not easy to come by. They are impossible to acquire without finances.

Publicity is expensive. In one mass campaign \$80,000 was spent in newspaper advertisement alone. This not only buys ads inside, but front page, favorable news coverage.

With enough money, brilliant journalists and public relations men can create a public image for any man. They can make his name a household word.

This is impossible without money, big money. This problem has practically destroyed small-time mass evangelism.

In fact, these two problems—cooperation and finances—could even destroy big-time evangelism. These two handicaps are so great that in an effort to overcome them a man may compromise his methods and his message.

In order to get the greatest coopera-

tion, a man holds meetings only under the sponsorship and control of local councils of churches, mostly liberals.

In order to get the publicity and finances, he trims his message to generalities and avoids specific sins. Thus, for the secular and liberal religious world, he takes the sting out of his message and gains favorable publicity from the news media. Plus, he puts himself in line for large sums of needed financing.

It is impossible to buy television time, radio time, newspaper space, and get inside news coverage from the media without big money. This is almost an insurmountable problem.

Difficulty of follow-up—It is difficult enough, under the best circumstances, to bring new converts to maturity. In mass evangelism the problem is probably greatest. The converts have no attachment to a local church, nor pastor.

This proper relationship to a local congregation must be established. Then, the teaching and training process must be employed to produce necessary spiritual growth.

Now let us turn our attention to the second area.

Local Church Evangelism

The evangelistic effort sponsored by, and in conjunction with, a local church is certainly the most common area of this work. Practically all of us are familiar with "revival meetings."

There are some definite advantages in such services.

Base of operation—In the first place, a well organized, established church in a community gives a base of operation from which to work. This opens doors and opportunities that would be closed without the church's influence.

Supply of workers and prospects—If the church is evangelistic in its local ministry, there will be a supply of personal workers already trained. These help in visiting, witnessing, inviting, and working with the unsaved.

Also, a good church will have prospects—unsaved folks, related in one way or another to the church and its people. These are potentials for Jesus.

Easier follow-up—This most important matter of keeping the converts is simplified when they are brought to Jesus through the ministry centered around a local church.

If a man is saved in a church, has friends or relatives in that church, gets acquainted with the pastor of the church, the odds are he will unite with that local church. Then if the pastor baptizes the man, visits him, trains him, and brings him into the fellowship of other believers,

chances are that he will grow in the Lord, follow on to serve Jesus, and live a successful Christian life.

However, this area also has its problems.

Problems of Local Church Evangelism

The big problem in local church evangelism is that the ministry is completely dependent upon that one local church. No more people will be touched by the meeting than those influenced by that particular congregation.

Limited outreach—The result is a very limited outreach. After conducting over four hundred series of local church meetings in the past twelve years, I have learned that the effectiveness, fruitfulness, and accomplishments of such meetings is always determined by the church itself.

An entire community is seldom touched by a local church meeting. The church is viewed as sectarian. And the meeting, as far as the community is concerned, is that church's meeting. This makes it difficult to get outsiders to attend and participate in the meetings.

Lack of preparation—Since, in a local church, there is no team of promoters employed by the evangelist to go ahead into the community and organize and publicize, the entire task is in the hands of the church.

Many times a lack of know-how, lack of personnel lead to a very poor job of preparation for the services. After all, the church has two such meetings every year. This is just "another" revival. They expect nothing unusual to happen and don't go out of the way to do any particular planning. And they're right—nothing happens out of the ordinary.

The previous two problems create the last.

Lost don't attend—The greatest difficulty I find in local church revivals is getting the unsaved into the services. There will usually be a few, but never many. One or two close friends, or relatives, of church folk will drop in. But the unsaved man on the street never shows up. This makes it impossible to see but very little fruit.

Finally, a look at the last area of evangelism.

Personal Evangelism

In reality, all evangelism is *personal*. The mass effort is effective only as it reaches individuals. The church evangelism bears fruit only in individuals. God doesn't save groups, crowds, numbers, or towns. God saves a man named Joe, a boy named Jimmy, a mother named Mary.

Some things that make person to per-

son preaching fruitful are:

More people reached—Someone suggested that if there were only one Christian, and he won another to Jesus in six months, then the two of them won one each during the next six months, and the chain reaction continued, in fifteen years every soul on earth would be evangelized.

We know this is impossible for all will not receive the message. But the truth remains: more people working at this ministry, personally, could reach many more with the gospel.

Most effective method—The personal preacher has opportunity to answer questions in the mind of the lost man. The approach can be much more direct.

Helps Christians—Nothing will encourage, revive, and strengthen a Christian more than having a part in the salvation of a lost soul. To experience the joy and blessing of bringing someone else to the Lord will build up the saint.

This area of the work also has hindrances.

Problems of Personal Evangelism

Here are just three of the problems:

Insincere decisions—When the unsaved fellow is hit cold with the message, with no time for the Holy Spirit to do the work of conviction, no time to weigh the matter, and pressure being brought to bear by a zealous Christian, he may go through the form of receiving Christ and not really get saved.

Then, I have met some, who work at personal evangelism, who are so concerned about numbers and decisions that they make it as easy as possible. They count as converts everyone that agrees, or raises a hand, or nods his head. Many of these are unsaved.

Difficulty of follow-up—If this work is done without a local church as a base to work from, it can be very hard to follow up the decision. You witness to a man. He makes a profession and goes his way. Your paths never cross again. To help him further in developing as a Christian is extremely difficult.

Lack of workers—The greatest problem in personal evangelism is getting people to do it. Out of every one hundred professing Christians, ninety-five never win one sinner.

This is the *number one problem* in every area of this ministry of evangelism. The preachers are still few.

Will you volunteer for this work? Will you enlist in this great task of evangelism?

The Lord wants YOU!

The writer is a full-time evangelist. In addition to his evangelistic ministry, Mr. Jackson has authored several books.

MODERN PHARISEES

by Leroy Forlines



WORSHIP has always taken some form of program of activity. While there may be some variation, at the same time it must take some outward form. One of the most subtle devices of Satan is to cause people to mistake outward conformity in religious devotion for the reality itself. In every period in the history of God's people there have been those who suffered this deception.

The people who lived under the Mosaic Law were especially susceptible to this error. There were those who thought that the outward performance of the sacrifices and ceremonies would suffice even though they manifest no real concern for ordering their daily lives according to God's law.

God made it clear through Samuel that those who had a disregard for the will of God could not expect the offering of sacrifices to secure for them a right relationship with God. After Saul's failure to carry out the will of God to utterly destroy the Amalekites and all they had (1 Samuel 15:3), Samuel appeared and said to Saul, "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than

sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Samuel 15:22).

The classic Old Testament utterance against the emptiness of mere outward observance of religious ceremonies is given by Micah. He said, "Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly before thy God" (Micah 6:6-8)?

Those who were involved in injustice, oppression, and gross immorality offered sacrifices and observed the feast days. It was the constant cry of the prophets that God would not bless those who showed no regard for His will in their daily lives. Outward performance of religious sacrifices was no cure for sin. Sacrifices were acceptable only when they came from sincere hearts backed up by lives which were dedicated to doing the will of God.

Between the time of Malachi's prophecy and the coming of Christ the religious sect known as the *Pharisees* arose. They rendered a very rigid obedience to the law. They were very careful to observe the rites and ceremonies, and unlike those whom the prophets spoke against they gave strict obedience to the law in their daily lives. They could not be charged with immorality and many of the sins which the prophets condemned. Yet, it was this group that received the strongest denunciation that fell from the lips of Jesus (Matthew 23:13-33).

The Pharisees could be counted upon to be faithful in the offering of sacrifices, observance of religious feasts, and other observances that had been laid down by religious leaders before their time. They were very careful to tithe. They carefully guarded their outward behavior.

With the passing of the Mosaic Law, the outward form of religious obedience changed. Our worship services are more simple, and many of the outward restrictions of daily living are no longer binding. But we have not been completely removed from the possibility of committing, in principle, the same errors that were committed when the Mosaic Law

*A meaningful
worship experience in our
church services should
produce a
change in the outward behavior
of an individual
in his everyday experiences*



was in force. It is no secret that there are those who have made a profession and who are somewhat regular in church attendance whose daily lives do not exemplify a sincere devotion to God. Those who are guilty of such show no evidence of having experienced the saving grace of God. God is no more pleased with this type of hypocrisy than He was the hypocrisy of those whom the prophets denounced for their empty formalism. It is important that we constantly cry out against the meaninglessness of mechanical attendance at church services. Our chief interest, however, in this presentation centers around those who would correspond, in principle, to the Pharisees of Jesus' day.

If a Pharisee were living today, he could be counted on for at least three things if he were a member of a Free Will Baptist church. (1) He would attend all the services with rigid regularity. He would attend Sunday School, Sunday morning worship service, Church Training Service, Sunday evening service, Wednesday evening service, and visitation. (2) He would tithe. (3) He would abide rigidly by the strictest set of standards for outward separation. He would avoid such things as smoking, dancing,

drinking, theater attendance, and mixed bathing. The Pharisees were never accused of failing to obey the outward requirements of the Mosaic Law.

Certainly, we would not expect to find a very high percentage of people in our churches who could be called a "Pharisee." Most people do not have that type of outward obedience that would make them a candidate for the name *Pharisee* even if they could qualify otherwise. The percentage of church members who are faithful in the three things mentioned above is so few that each one is considered to be a precious jewel. It is for this very reason that we who take our religion seriously run a danger of producing Phariseism in our membership.

The decline in regularity of church attendance, the high percentage of those who give only a token support to the church and its ministries, and the weakening of Christian standards naturally calls for preaching to bring about obedience in these areas. The high value that is placed on obedience in these areas makes it very easy for a person who conforms to consider himself not only to be a Christian, but also to be one of the very best. The shocking fact is that it is possible for a person to have made

a profession of faith and render the outward obedience described above and never have experienced salvation. Jesus made it quite clear that many of the Pharisees were not saved (Matthew 23: 13-15). Should we not learn a lesson from this?

Is it not possible for a person to make a profession of faith and not be saved? It is common knowledge that many people go to the altar and join the church without experiencing salvation. While it is true that most of these soon fade out of the picture, is it not possible that one could become regular in attendance? Is it not possible for such a person to become active in the church? Is it not possible for such a person to tithe? Is it not possible for him to observe the

(Continued on Page 15)



The author is a member of the faculty at Free Will Baptist Bible College.

glancing around the states

Breaks Record

POCAHONTAS, ARK.—The First Free Will Baptist Church here recently broke their C.T.S. attendance record. The total attendance was 104. Johnny Sago is General Director and Rev. Ernest M. Kennedy is pastor.

Successful Revival

FORT WALTON, FLA.—The Wright Free Will Baptist Church here reports a successful week-end revival with Evangelist Arnold Woodlief of Marianna, Florida. There were four first time decisions. Pastor Don Petis recommends Mr. Woodlief to any church.

New Church

WICHITA, KAN.—The General Free Will Baptist Church was recently established by the First Kansas Association. It is located at 6534 Ward Parkway. This church grew out of a mission work. Rev. Marvin M. Williams is pastor.

Strong Supporter Passes

MALONE, FLA.—Rev. Walter Eldridge, pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church here and moderator of the Salem Association, went to be with the Lord recently. Mr. Eldridge was the son of the late Rev. Joe Eldridge, who ministered in our denomination for 52 years. Rev. Walter Eldridge will long be remembered for his faithful service and dedication to our denomination. He was a loyal supporter of its ministries.

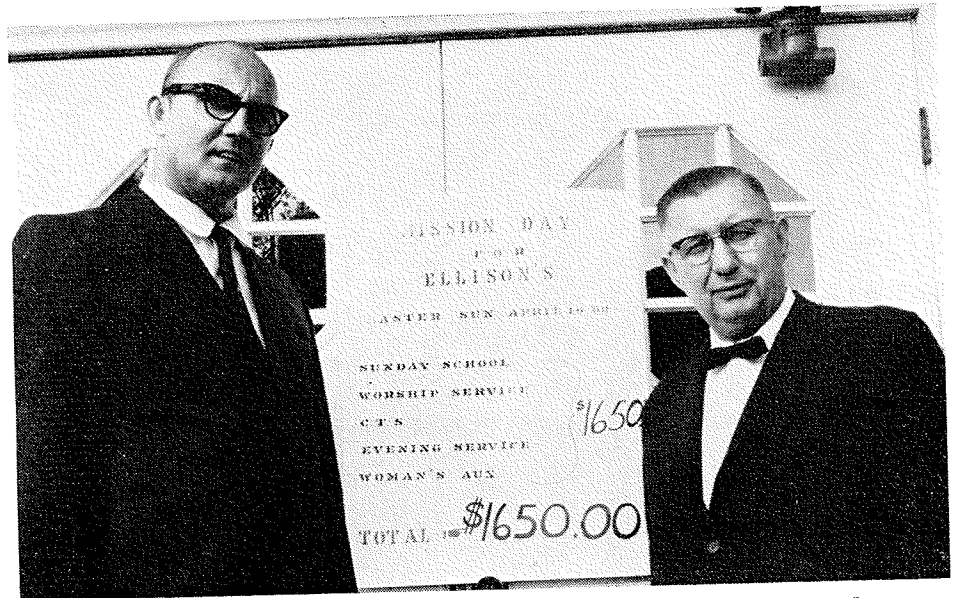
There were 23 ministers among the hundreds of friends who attended the funeral of this esteemed man of God.

Church Celebrates Birthday

WESTLAND, MICH.—The Community Free Will Baptist Church on Cherry Hill Road here recently celebrated its 10th birthday.

With one of the largest congregations in the area, Community Church has grown from seven charter members in 1958, to the largest Sunday school in Westland. More than 800 people attend classes each Sunday and the church is aiming to go over 1000 during its tenth year.

Under the direction of Rev. Robert C. Porter, the church is embarking on an ambitious new building program. Already completed is a \$100,000 educa-



Missionary Walter Ellison (l.) and Rev. Ralph Staten (r.) are shown by the poster showing the total money raised by the Wooddale Church, Knoxville, Tennessee in a campaign led by the Woman's Auxiliary of the church. The offering of \$1,650.00 made it possible for the Ellisons to return to Uruguay.

tional building, and under construction now is a 13-room Sunday school building to cost approximately \$42,000.

Plans are now on the drawing board for a new sanctuary that will seat 1500, and drawings have been completed for a gymnasium that will include 11,000 square feet with 19 Sunday school rooms, two offices and a kitchen. In overall plans, the Sunday school will be able to accommodate more than 3000.

Remodeling Program

BLAKELY, GA.—The first phase of a remodeling program was recently com-

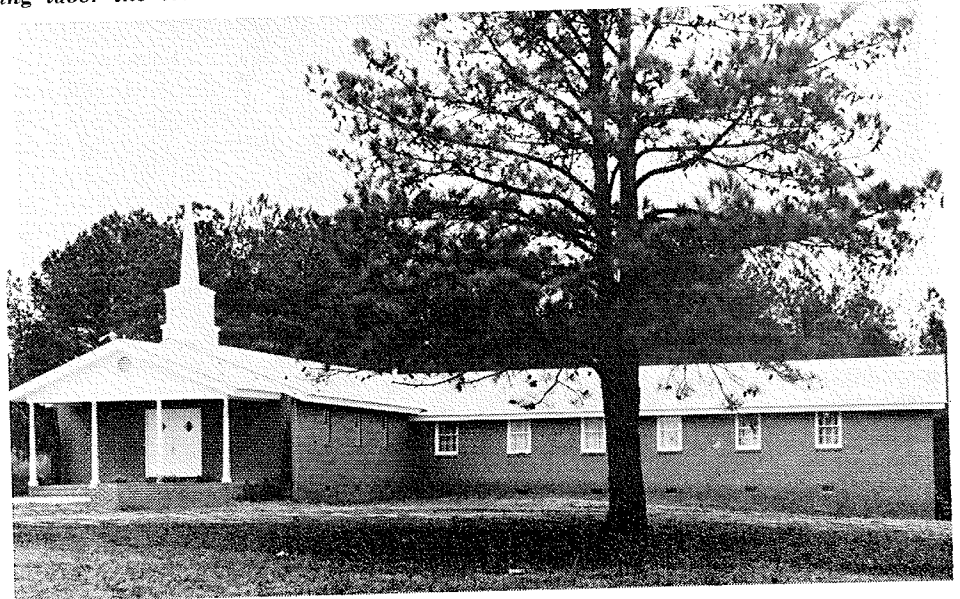
pleted by the First Free Will Baptist Church here. Attention has been centered on the sanctuary with the installation of new pews and wall to wall carpet.

The auditorium was painted oyster white, trimmed with oak paneling, and indirect lighting was installed. Other improvements included the addition of two classrooms and another baptistry. Total improvements to date have been estimated at \$12,000. The pastor is Rev. Milton Fields.

Price Change Announced

NASHVILLE, TENN.—Spiraling pro-

Shown below is the recently completed church building at Thomaston, Georgia. The building is completely centrally-heated and air conditioned. It houses a sanctuary, baptistry, study, nursery, rest rooms, kitchen, fellowship area, and classrooms. Estimated cost of the construction is approximately \$54,000.00. With members contributing labor the total cost was less than \$25,000. Rev. William Travis is the pastor.



CONTACT

duction costs have forced the Sunday School Department to increase the price of literature. Effective with the next quarter's order, all quarterlies through the Senior High level will be raised two cents per copy. The Adult quarterlies will cost an additional five cents per copy.

In announcing the first increase since 1962, Roger Reeds, General Director of the Sunday School Department, emphasizes that this additional income "would insure a continued sound financial policy and avoid curtailing the many services which the department offers."

Superannuation Sunday

NASHVILLE, TENN.—All Free Will Baptist Churches are asked to observe Superannuation Sunday on June 16. This is a time to pay honor and tribute to the ministers who have served their denomination faithfully. Special offerings should be sent to the Superannuation Board, P. O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.

Missions Giving Increased

ORONO, MAINE—Home missionary appointee Jim Nason has reported an increase in the monthly support for his work from the Free Will Baptist Church in Linneus, Maine. Rev. Herbert Bryan is the pastor of this congregation. The two mission works in Nova Scotia, under the direction of Missionary Mack Owens, have assumed additional amounts of the total monthly need of \$433.00 for the mission activity here.

OBC Missionary Conference

MOORE, OKLA.—The beautiful thirty-six acre campus of Oklahoma Bible College, strategically located on Interstate 35 south of Oklahoma City, was the scene of a very successful spring mission-

Dedication services for the new building of the Faith Free Will Baptist Church Morristown, Tennessee were recently conducted by Rev. Norman Perkins. The church is a Home Missions project of the Union Association of Free Will Baptists. Rev. Howard Munsey is the pastor.



(Top) Speakers for the annual Missionary Conference at Oklahoma Bible College, Lonnie Sparks, (l.) Earnie Deeds, (center) and Robert Shockey (r.), talk with Helen Smith, (l.) Shirley Martin (center), and Donna Faught (r.). (Center) Missionary Earnie Deeds has a display of Brazilian items arranged for viewing by students. Conference participant Mark Vandivort, Tulsa pastor Connie Cariker, are shown with students. Richard Terry, Jerry Banks, and Richard Rust.

(Bottom) The college quartet composed of Dale Smith (l. to r.) Charles Gann, David Parish, and Richard Rust provided special music during the conference.

readers respond

DEAR EDITOR:

CONTACT came today and it was a blessing to read it. You are doing a good job with it and God bless you in your work.

Ronald Creech
North Carolina

ary conference.

The theme was "Pray Ye Therefore The Lord of The Harvest, That He Will Send Forth Laborers Into His Harvest." During the three day conference, many students concentrated on learning from God His will for their lives. A full schedule of missionary messages, papers, culture studies, and idea exchange sessions filled the three-day conference program. Scores of area pastors attended the conference. Missionary speakers participating were Lonnie Sparks, Earnie Deeds, Bob Shockey and Mark Vandivort. Dr. J. D. O'Donnell, President of OBC, presented a very interesting expository message from First Thessalonians. Rev. Lonnie Sparks of Africa commented that "dedicated Free Will Baptist young people made him very optimistic concerning the future of our missionary ministry."

Mrs. Linda Smith, below, Circulation Manager of Contact and receptionist at the National Office Building for almost four years, bids us farewell this month. She will be moving with her husband, Bobby, to the campus of Bob Jones University. Linda will work in the Administrative offices and Bobby will be in the graduate school.



THE COMMON FILLER CLAY

by Jo Ann Hurst

(Written to her husband Joe on his birthday)

THE YOUNG MAN—ambitious, energetic and zealous—bowed himself low before his Lord.

"Oh, Master, Thou art the Good Potter and I shall be Thy clay; yielding to Thy slightest touch I shall forever be. Here am I, O Potter. Make of me the vessel of Thy choosing."

He yielded and waited.

"A missionary to foreign lands!" thought he. "O, Good Potter, make of me a vessel that can serve those strangers in a far country, if it pleases Thee." The Potter looked over him and selected other of the young man's friends. "So be it," said the young man, and he waited longer. When word came from the far countries that the needs there were great, the young man shared his meager store.

"An educator of Christians?" The young man felt his unworthiness and inabilities. Still, he had promised to yield to the Potter's hand, and he would pay his vows. But the Potter shook His head and reached for others. And when they needed new classrooms to teach the Word and space to house the learners, the young man gave of himself and helped where he could.

The young man was ever working. Always he sought the Potter's direction and approval and always he made himself available for whatever type vessel the Potter should choose to make of him. Now and again he felt the Potter's hand taking a portion from him, but the touch was gentle and he hardly noticed.

Time moved ever onward and the man, in the middle years of life, looked about at the beautiful vessels the Potter had made of his friends. How magnificent they were! Never a pang of envy seized the man—only gladness that his friends had become such useful vessels. He rejoiced in their endeavors.

The time came when the man felt his own failures deeply, and he prayed before his Lord: "O, Master, how ashamed am I that I have been unworthy. I am Thy rejected clay because my properties and abilities are inferior. I pray, Thee, forgive!" And the good Potter said, "Come here."

The Potter lifted the man's eyes that he might see the many, many vessels that the Potter had been making through the years. The man happily recognized a great number of his friends.

"Do you remember this?" asked the Potter as He pointed to a beautiful vase. "I shall

never forget it," said the Man. "It was made by a wonderful and a very popular friend of mine." "True", said the Potter, "but it became split and broken from internal confusion. I used you to stand in the crevices and hold those broken pieces together until they could mend. See, there is not even a scar to be seen."

"And this one," continued the Potter as He lifted a vessel with a handle on either side. "Oh, yes!" exclaimed the man, "Fashioned by a former classmate whom I admire." "Right, again", said the Potter. "But the load was too great when he was the only handle on the vase. He did his best, but the weight of it was about to wrench it from his grasp. Then I used you to fashion a like handle and you shared the burdens of the great man. Your strength gave him a new hold, and together you preserved this useful vessel even to this hour."

Fondly, the Potter lifted a roly-poly pitcher and held it gingerly. "I know that one," said the man. "A very gifted friend of mine made it." "Ah," smiled the Potter, "but it was tilted and could not keep itself upright. All the contents kept spilling out. Then I took you and made of you this firm and level base. See, all these years this vessel has stood upon your foundation, and many are the good works that have come forth."

"Just look at all of these," continued the Potter as he motioned to numerous smaller vessels. "All of these exist because I could count on you. Never dried out—always moist and pliable—and yielded for any task I bade you do."

"Not once," the Potter stated, "not once did you balk or fail to hold firmly in the difficult places. Always the mender, the healer, the peacemaker—you were my mending clay."

"But you have not understood my ways. You yielded yourself that I might make of you a GREAT something—but it pleased me more to make of you many little somethings. But you were never rejected, my friend."

The old man was weary and well-spent. He closed his eyes to take his rest. Fame and applause had never come to him, but contentment was in his face. He knew a secret: The Great Potter had not despised his lowly efforts after all. He had even whispered of His pride in him—*His Common Filler Clay*.

The Joe Hursts are presently ministering in Washington, D. C.

DELEGATES REPRESENTING SOME 40 CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANT BODIES EXPRESS CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF MEN'S SOULS

THE National Association of Evangelicals met in Philadelphia, Pa. for its 26th annual convention, April 23-25, 1968. Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, general director for the organization, set the tone for the meetings and expressed the basic commitments from which the association moves, when he said:

"The witnessing church in a secular world can be a dynamic force for God only as it adjusts itself to changing conditions. In some ways and at some times the church has shown itself vigorously alive to new opportunities and to continuing responsibilities. . . . We dare not engage ourselves exclusively in rear-guard action to preserve the basically biblical commitments which have characterized our nation, important as this function is. We in the church of Jesus Christ must find ways to communicate the Gospel to men where they are."

Reflecting this equal concern, delegates adopted position papers and resolutions stressing the Christian's "unique and indispensable" contribution, which is knowing "how to change men's hearts and how to make over society from within."

These delegates representing some 40 conservative Protestant bodies said they

believed the Christian church should have more to offer America in its present crisis than merely goods and services. They affirmed the need for accompanying social action "as we express our concern for the welfare of the soul."

"As evangelicals," a resolution stated, "we labor to win men, not merely to move them. We are called to accomplish our objectives, not by coercion, but by conversion." Entitled "The Crisis in the Nation," the resolution was only one of several adopted by the convention. Taking notice that both secular and religious agencies have launched "crash programs" to give racial and economic minorities "more power in the determination of their affairs and greater benefits from generally affluent society," the paper reminded that "whatever the immediate characteristics or dimensions of the latest . . . upheaval, the basic mission of the Church of Jesus Christ remains unchanged by them."

This does not mean that evangelicals are interested in the soul only, but "as followers of a compassionate Christ we would be compassionate also," the delegates affirmed. "It is not in clashes and confrontations that we manifest God to the world. It is rather in demonstrations of the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives."

A second resolution on "Law and Order" deplored the "theory" held by some "that the necessities of justice in some fashion stand above the requirements of law and order." It declared that "in numerous instances civil and religious leaders have shown themselves seemingly more concerned for the criminal than for the victims of his crime." It further places NAE "squarely behind those courts and law enforcement agencies that labor to enforce the law firmly and fairly at every level. Legislative bodies are called upon "to devise appropriate legislation to close constitutional loopholes and eliminate legal barriers to strong and effective law enforcement."

Turning attention to the growing problems of alcohol and drug use, the ministers and laymen pointed with concern to statistics showing that "drug (usage) affects nearly one-fourth of America's college and post-college people today. Alcoholics and problem drinkers comprise one-sixth of the population over 18 years of age."

Criticizing the federal government for its recent multi-million dollar study of the alcohol problem, which it said "encourages more and more people to drink at an earlier and earlier age", by neutralizing remaining public opposition to using beverage alcohol, the convention expressed condemnation of effort to relax the drug laws and commended "those who continue to consider it their duty to prosecute violators of existing laws, whether it be in regard to sale, possession or use of such drugs and alcohol."

Dr. David L. McKenna, president of Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Wash., called on evangelicals to "get into the game" on the issues of public morality. He urged them to accept their responsibility for the moral climate of the nation. "Evangelicals have the message for a nation in crisis," McKenna said, "but they have not yet shown the motive to follow the implications of that message into the public sphere."

Senator Mark O. Hatfield, (R., Ore.), in his address commented, "I feel at home with you evangelicals, and I join you in the belief that we live in a great day of opportunity for the Christian church to witness to a confused, secular world that Jesus Christ is sufficient for every problem." The Senator decried the daily reports on the kill ratio in Vietnam that gives us a wrong set of values. He said, "It is up to the church to set the values straight." Continuing this address, he asked, "When will we find out and confess that people are really looking for something more than a handout from the government? People are looking for inspiration and hope and leadership—something in which they can place their faith."

The association's executive director, Dr. Billy A. Melvin, stated the time has come when all needless competition between evangelicals must be eliminated. "The NAE has provided, in a number of ways, opportunities for evangelicals to express visibly their spiritual oneness to the world," said Dr. Melvin, and called for cooperation on a local level across America.

The 800 registrants and guests heard evangelical leaders from across the nation in more than 50 major addresses, workshops and luncheons. Cincinnati, Ohio was announced as the site for the group's convention in April, 1969.

1968 N.A.E. CONVENTION REPORT

woman to woman



by CLEO PURSELL

WNAC Convention

The Rev. G. Christian Weiss, Director of Missions and associate radio minister of *Back to the Bible Broadcast*, is the keynote speaker for the Woman's National Auxiliary Convention, July 16, Oklahoma City.

Convention theme is "A World in Hunger." Watchword, "Give Ye Theme to Eat" (Mark 6:37).

Mrs. Trula Cronk, missionary to India since 1948, is scheduled to speak at the WNAC Fellowship Dinner which will be held on Monday, July 15, at 5:00 p.m. Both events will be held in the Sheraton Hotel.

Please order your tickets early from WNAC, P. O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Enclose an addressed, stamped envelope with your check for \$2.75 per plate.

Dates to Remember in June

- CTS Month
- Vacation Bible School
- Superannuation Sunday
- Fathers' Day

Mother of the Bride

Every woman wants to give her daughter the "perfect wedding," but in the flurry of preparation it is easy to omit certain details of planning. If your daughter is planning a wedding soon and you are a bit confused as to the financial responsibilities of the bride's family, perhaps the following information will help you.

The bride and her family are responsible for the bride's wedding and going-away outfits, wedding announcements, engagement and wedding photographs, cost of church organist, janitor, bridesmaids' bouquets, transportation for bridal party from house to church and reception, bridesmaids' luncheon, rehearsal dinner, all reception costs, wedding ring for the groom if there is a double-ring ceremony, gifts for bride's attendants and accommodations for bride's attendants.

The groom is responsible for the marriage license, bride's engagement and wedding rings, bride's bouquet and going-away corsage, boutonnieres for men of wedding party, flowers for both mothers, gloves, ascots or ties for men of wedding party, gifts for ushers and best man, accommodations for ushers and best men, fee for clergyman, and the honeymoon.

The groom's family is responsible for their own traveling expenses and hotel bills, rehearsal dinner (if they wish to give it), wedding gift for the bride.

A Groom's Mother Prays

"Help me in my new role.
Unravel any strings of possessiveness
that may interfere in this new holy
union.
May I love her as my own.
Help me not to meddle, but to do my
influencing through my prayers.
May they allow you to work out your
plan for their lives.
Make them a blessing,
salt in their environment
and lights showing forth the love
of Christ.
A new home.
Smile upon it with your benediction.
That will be sufficient.

Amen.

... Mrs. Hans Stensland

June Meetings

To publicize women's or young peoples' meetings this month, the lettering on posters could be interestingly made up of tiny flowers. Or paint or paste pictures of flowers (from seed catalogs or magazines) on your poster. A spray of cologne on your poster will add to its appeal.

Menu for refreshments: Strawberries are at their best now, so why not have strawberry shortcakes, pie, or ice cream? You might keep some cake or other des-

sert on hand for a guest who may be allergic to strawberries.

Other suggestions are: melon balls or sherbet balls in melon cups; flower-shaped sandwiches with radish roses, carrot sticks, and sweet pickles or gherkins; plain angel food cake with real roses arranged in a small bowl in the center and served with ice cream; "flower" salads on lettuce leaves with blossoms made from pineapple slices, centers from candied cherries, a stalk from celery, and leaves from pickle strips—all on a bed of cottage cheese.

Your beverage will depend on the dessert and the hour: hot or iced coffee, hot or iced tea, lemonade or limeade.

A Boy Needs a Father

The Korean War jolted American complacency with the news that for the first time in our history twenty-one G.I.s had elected to stay in enemy hands. Virginia Paisley investigated their background and found that out of the twenty-one, nineteen of them felt unwanted by their fathers or stepfathers. She further discovered that eleven of the twenty-one lost their fathers at an early age, either by divorce or by death. Obviously, these boys had personality defects which were caused, partially at least, from lack of an adequate father in their lives.

Louis P. Thorpe tells us that a father is important to a girl too. He represents the symbol of what men are like (masculinity). He is the representative head of the family—breadwinner and economic provider. He is the symbol of authority, to which she must submit or follow. He is the father-parent with whom she will one day share her motherhood and the lover-husband she will someday have.

GEM

The father, listening to his boy's prayers, suggested quietly: "Son, don't bother to give God instructions; just report for duty."

CONTACT

gems

FROM THE
GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

by ROBERT PICIRILLI

In Ephesians 4:9 we have a brief phrase that has often created considerable uncertainty about its meaning: "into the lower parts of the earth." The context of this verse concerns the victorious Christ who, after His resurrection, ascended into Heaven and gave gifts to the Church.

There are some who think that this phrase, which says that Christ had "descended first into the lower parts of the earth," teaches that He descended into the underworld between His death and resurrection. Some of these teach that Hades, before the death of Christ, contained two compartments, one for the righteous and the other for the wicked; and that Christ, at His death and ascension, went into the portion of Hades where the righteous were and delivered them into Heaven.

Perhaps that explanation is not necessary. Indeed, perhaps the phrase need not present any serious difficulty at all, if one will understand a certain grammatical point about the Greek construction used here. The words "of the earth" are a translation of the Greek genitive case (a point which does not necessarily need to be understood by the reader). In Greek, it is often true that a word in the genitive ("earth" in this particular phrase) may be *identical* with the word it modifies ("lower parts" in this verse). It seems to this writer that this is the case in the verse before us.

If this interpretation is correct, then all the phrase means is that Jesus, who ascended into Heaven, was the very one who first had descended into the "lower parts" which we call the earth. The reference would be, then, to His coming to earth as a man at the incarnation, and not to some mysterious descent into the underworld at His burial. The phrase would be referring to the *earth* itself as the "lower parts," and not to some lower parts inside the earth.

If one should question whether this would be a sensible interpretation, let him recall that Jesus, on one occasion,

MY BEST FOR MY CHILDREN

By V. Raymond Edman

Faith in the Savior is the greatest contribution any parent can make to his children.

Greater than fame and better than money, even more important than education, is giving to each child the gift of faith. That gift will be enlarged and strengthened as he goes onward; and all of life will be sweeter, stronger, and better for it.

How can I do my very best for my children?

The best method is to teach them by precept and practice. By seeing the Lord Jesus in you they will come to love Him, trust Him, and to obey Him.

Your *conduct* will be the most obvious factor to them. Actions always speak louder than words. In his love and admiration for his parents, the little child learns early whether he is loved or not. As he grows older his big eyes observe what is done; and he correlates his observations with the instruction given to him.

Intuitively the child understands practical Christianity in action. His response will first be imitation of what he sees and hears; but imitation can soon become a living reality. He will believe what we believe. He will walk and talk as we do. It will be easy for him to believe in the Savior for having seen Him in father and mother.

Christian *character* will be as apparent to our children, younger and older, as to others; perhaps more so. Before they learn to read the ABC's they read character. Intuitively they understand adults much better than we give them credit. Integrity, honesty, honor, unselfishness, courage in the face of great difficulties—such character traits are deeply impressed upon young plastic minds. The children will see Christ in our character, and will share the confidence that others have in us. They will be proud of mother and dad, and of the Savior.

Our *conversation* can show forth the Lord Jesus. Little folk have big ears as well as big eyes. They comprehend the intent as well as the content of our talk. They will make mental note of our appreciation and helpfulness for others; and contrariwise of unkind and unfair criticism. Our kindness and consideration for others in what we say and what we do can teach them of Him who went about doing good to all.

Consistency is a jewel; and nowhere does it sparkle more brightly than in the Christian home. At family altar we can teach children about Christ as we read the Bible; but even more impressive to them will be their seeing Christ in us. They will note what we say and do in Sunday School and church; and will compare that with our attitude and actions in the home. Consistency in our words and our works will be evidenced by the standards that we maintain in the Lord's house and on His day, and in the carefulness with which we do His work as laity or clergy. Your faith in the Savior will be conveyed to the children by your faithfulness to them and to the Lord, by your fatherly care and concern. To me it has always been challenging and encouraging to remember that in days dark and foreboding, Noah's sons followed their godly father even into the ark. That action must have seemed somewhat foolish to them, as it certainly was to the worldlings round about; but they had learned to trust God because they trusted their father.

The future of your children depends so largely upon their faith in Christ. Christian conduct, character, conversation, and consistency will pay big dividends in the life of every child.

A family altar with its open Bible and bended knees for the whole family, the happy home, the attendance of all the family at Sunday School and church—all these make for a wholesome outlook on life by the children and the establishment of standards that will go with them throughout life. Correction that is constructive, cooperation that is cheerful, harmony that is helpful, such are the memories the children will carry with them when they leave our homes and go into their place of service and usefulness.

—By permission from LINK

GEMS—CONTINUED

spoke almost identical words. In John 3:13 He says: "No man hath ascended

up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven."

outward standards of Christian conduct? If the answer to these questions is yes, it is possible for a person to obey the highest standards of outward obedience and still be unsaved.

Saved people are also in danger of being afflicted with Phariseism. Whenever a church places stress on outward obedience without giving constant emphasis to the inner realities, the tendency is to measure a person's spirituality by his outward acts. *The sad fact is that a person can measure up well and at the same time be spiritually weak.* A church made up of such people need not be surprised if revival does not come and the altar is barren.

Certainly, we cannot have salvation and at the same time show a disregard for outward obedience. We cannot expect to have a strong growing church unless the membership is faithful in church attendance, involved in the work of the church, supports the church financially, and abides by high standards of Christian conduct. However, if we want to avoid Phariseism these things must be the manifestation of the inner realities of the Christian life. Mere outward obedience is no more acceptable today than it was when it was denounced by Jesus and the prophets.

It is important that we recognize that the Christian life is not merely a matter of abiding by a list of do's and don't's regardless of how good that list may be. The Christian life is basically a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. A personal relationship begins with an inner attitude. The outward manifestation of the Christian life is the fruit of the inner life. An outward life that does not spring from an inward reality is as Jesus told the Pharisees "... like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matthew 23: 27).

We dare not go to the other extreme and say nothing about outward matters, but it is imperative that we give our main attention to those inner attitudes that produce the outward. A love for Jesus Christ must be the motivating factor in our church attendance. A deep concern for the spiritual needs of men must thrust us forth into the ministries of the church. A passion for holiness and a hunger and thirst after righteousness must underlie our standards for living.

cooperative giving

GIFTS FROM THE CHURCHES EFFECT A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

April, 1968

	April 1968	Year to Date	Total to April 1967	Year To Date Designated
Alabama	\$ 405.73	\$ 1,626.91	\$1,260.60	\$
Arizona	—	—	465.09	465.09
Arkansas	—	1,720.02	1,315.13	
California	—	1,755.36	2,369.58	
Florida	316.32	2,090.05	1,271.60	
Georgia	—	548.07	1,024.05	
Idaho	80.95	130.10	118.49	
Illinois	122.46	2,397.53	2,492.16	
Indiana	139.60	291.05	68.00	
Kansas	83.40	304.40	394.00	
Kentucky	—	479.64	125.00	
Louisiana	—	99.39	95.78	
Michigan	215.78	785.34	1,196.05	475.22
Missouri	2,262.05	7,715.30	6,959.99	
New Hampshire	—	—	178.15	
New Jersey	—	54.00	25.00	
New Mexico	—	254.26	134.70	
North Carolina	141.12	699.48	634.29	
Ohio	40.20	1,059.50	1,281.73	
Oklahoma	1,205.35	5,992.75	5,534.94	
Tennessee	333.36	1,549.03	2,131.60	576.77
Texas	137.89	464.68	755.61	
Virginia	750.15	2,401.94	2,160.06	
Washington & Oregon	120.93	336.47	149.10	
Wisconsin	10.00	50.00	—	

COOPERATIVE RECEIPTS

Executive Department	\$2,186.61	\$10,151.02	\$6,518.15	\$150.32
Foreign Missions	1,394.87	7,721.15	9,432.72	321.07
Free Will Baptist Bible College	1,206.98	6,672.04	6,862.66	237.98
Home Missions	826.32	4,601.83	5,256.39	209.17
Church Training Service	420.75	2,280.46	3,226.53	57.68
Superannuation Board	207.65	1,157.94	968.41	46.55
Master's Men	122.11	666.83	—	—
Free Will Baptist Children's Home	—	29.22	—	29.22

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