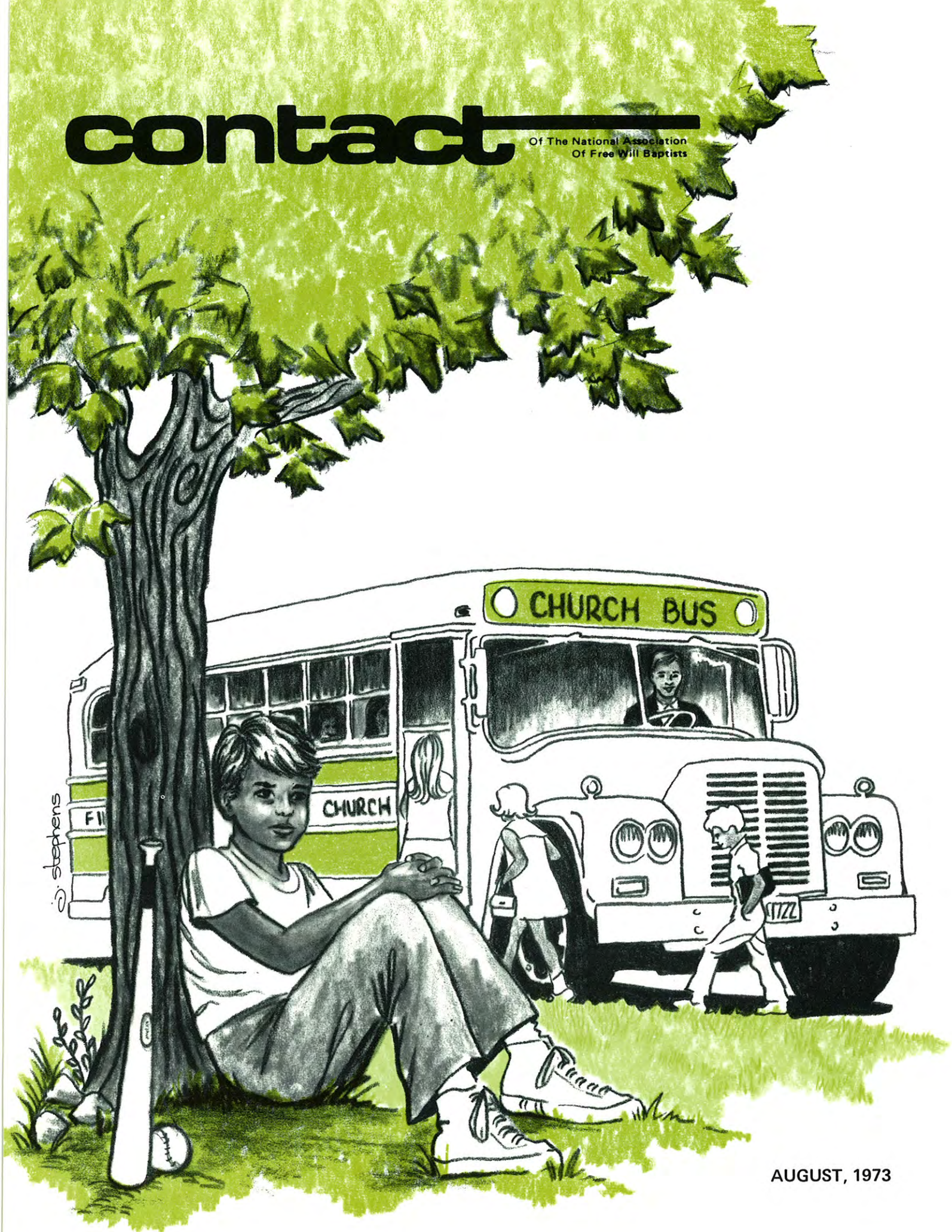


contact

Of The National Association
Of Free Will Baptists



AUGUST, 1973

THE BUS MINISTRY WANTS



YOU!

By Tom N. Blubaugh

Within the last few years the Free Will Baptist Denomination has experienced an unusual growth in converted souls, baptisms, attendance and membership. It is so unusual that *The Wall Street Journal* in a front page story January 11, 1973 cited us as one of the fastest growing denominations in America.

The Holy Spirit is working in our denomination for one reason — the fact that we preach the Gospel and do not deviate from the Word of God.

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). This verse simply says that by preaching God's Word men who believe are saved. But let's go one step further. Romans 10:13 declares that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Paul, however, in the next few verses poses an important question when he asks how a man can call on Jesus if he has never heard of Him (Romans 10:14, 15a). Since faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17), it is necessary that we have people *willing* to preach the Gospel. Paul is asking this question to establish an extremely important point. If we do not preach and teach the Gospel, we are not following the command to teach and baptize all nations (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Our Lord thinks highly of those who preach His Word, in fact, He says their feet are beautiful (Romans 10:15b). The above verses are the very foundation of our missions — both home and foreign.

One of the newest contributing factors to the increase of converted souls is a simple, but effective, program known as the *bus ministry*. Every Sunday morning hundreds of buses

bring thousands of individuals to our Free Will Baptist churches. As a result, hundreds are saved. In many cases, sinners are being led to Christ through this ministry even *before* they enter the door of the church. Dedicated Christians — adults and teenagers — are taking the Gospel into the highways and hedges (Luke 14:23). When Jesus commanded us to teach all nations, He certainly included America in the "all" of His command.

Can we then consider the bus ministry a missionary outreach? To answer this question we need to explore

ministry. Increased attendance and membership are only *results* of this outreach.

It is true that buses bring in children over adults by an extremely high percentage. It is not that we don't want to bring in adults, but rather that adults do not want to be brought in.

We all know how difficult it is to reach adults for the Lord, but children are more responsive. They also enjoy riding buses. They delight in the attention bus workers give them. They look forward to Sunday school. They literally love children's church. And

HERE'S A MISSIONARY PROGRAM ANYONE CAN JOIN!

two often misused words. The first word is *missionary*. Whenever we hear this word our minds shift, automatically, to a primitive, non-Christian country several thousand miles away. But let's take a closer look. *Webster's Dictionary* defines a missionary as "a person sent on a mission; specifically, a person sent out by his church to preach and teach." The second word is *preacher*. This word is defined as "one who proclaims, especially the Gospel." Yet the first person we think of when we hear this word is the pastor. Consequently, we rely on him to do all the church's visitation and soul-winning. This is certainly not the method God designed. Every born-again Christian who goes out and witnesses to another person is a missionary and a preacher — thus the reason the bus ministry is so successful.

Every member of a Sunday school bus team should look upon his own neighborhood, community or rural area as a mission field. His bus is a missionary station having as its mission reaching the lost with the Gospel and bringing them into the church to be rooted and grounded in the Word of God. This is the only reason for the bus

they come to Christ with a simple faith. There are no questions, fears or doubts. They come in perfect trust and the Lord is using them in the ministry.

After they accept Christ, many children witness to their moms, dads, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, friends and neighbors. In many instances, whole families have accepted Christ after a son or daughter has been saved through this ministry.

Out of these multitudes of children will come many pastors, evangelists, missionaries, teachers, superintendents, deacons, choir directors, gospel singers, writers, bus workers and lay workers. In a nation with a population of over 200,000,000 people, it is not difficult to see the need of a missionary outreach such as the bus ministry.

I am not trying to say that this ministry is more important than the home or foreign missions program. I am saying, however, that the bus ministry should be considered a third part of the missionary program and treated accordingly.

We Free Will Baptists who work in this ministry sincerely hope many others will consider this avenue of serving our Lord. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Blubaugh will be continuing his ministerial studies at Mid-America Nazarene College in Olathe, Kansas this fall. He and his family are active lay workers in the Victory Free Will Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri.

THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY

A bus director in a Southern church looks at the problems involved in maintaining an active bus ministry.

By Larry Gill

March 25, 1973 was not just an ordinary Sunday at Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. It was a day the entire church had worked and prayed for. Our bus workers had asked God to pour out a double portion of His Holy Spirit upon their bus routes and that many riders would be saved. As they prayed during their weekly bus workers meeting, they became convinced that God would do what He promised in His Word: "Ask and ye shall receive." They asked God to help them fill their buses and He did! For on that Sunday we had a total of 522 people come to our services and 259 of these rode in buses.

As I near my first anniversary as bus director of Woodbine Church, I look back and see many happy moments that I will never forget. While out knocking on doors I have had the privilege of praying with many elderly people who were unable to get out and attend church, but who deeply appreciated someone taking time to pray with them and for them. I have also met people who at first would have nothing to do with anyone out working for Jesus, but after telling them that Jesus *loves* them

and *cares* for them, their hearts melted and they were glad I had stopped by.

Of course, not all my experiences have been pleasant ones. Doors have been slammed in my face. I have endured foul language. Dogs have tried to take a bite out of my legs. But even these times have meant spiritual growth for those involved in our bus ministry. We have learned how to deal more effectively with people about giving their lives to Jesus Christ.

There are many problems in maintaining a bus ministry. As any bus director will tell you, hardly a day goes by without a problem cropping up somewhere. It may come in the form of a flat tire, or an engine may blow up. A church's bus ministry is accompanied by problems — sometimes costly ones.

One of the main problems a church faces is *personnel*. Every bus needs three adults or senior high teens: a driver, captain, and worker, or helper. These dedicated workers must be willing to leave home every Sunday morning at least an hour or an hour and a half before everyone else does. And many Sundays the bus workers do not sit down

for lunch until two o'clock. The bus ministry, then, sounds a clarion call for persons willing to make these sacrifices week after week after week.

A lot of people like to commend their bus workers and the great job they are doing, but when they are asked to chip in on some of the work they have nothing to do with it. So not everyone should be a bus worker. A bus worker needs to be the type of person who will go out every Saturday and knock doors when everyone else is out on a church picnic. He needs to be the sort of person who will work his route when the sun is shining as well as when it is pouring down rain.

To help eliminate this problem church leaders could possibly go on bus visitation each Saturday. This will not only encourage others to come, but I believe it will make better leaders out of those who have not been on visitation in years. I believe it will also help a lot of Sunday school teachers build larger classes by showing them the hundreds of boys and girls who are not attending Sunday school.

Another problem faced by those in the bus ministry is the *cost* of operating buses. Our church spends around \$25.00-\$30.00 weekly for gas for our five buses and one van. This does not include oil changes and grease jobs. Mechanical repairs never seem to end. Our church does not have new buses. Consequently, we must expect to replace parts as they go bad. This could be anything from a spark plug to a new engine. But I do not believe the cost should keep a church from starting a bus ministry, if one is needed in the community. When God initiates a bus ministry, He supplies the needed money to keep the buses running. Our church has taken the bus ministry on as a home missions project and we have people who contribute to it regularly. We also have two men in our church who have volunteered to spend their Saturdays fixing those things that are possible to

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repair in our parking lot garage. This has saved our church money that would have otherwise gone to a service station or garage.

A third problem that a church may encounter is that of *space* for the children once they are brought in. I know of a church in Billings, Montana that had to cut back on their bus routes until more space could be furnished. I think a lot of our pastors would like to face this problem, and they *can* by getting into the bus ministry themselves. I know of one church that solved their space problem temporarily by having Sunday school in their bus. They also had children's church in the bus. Most Free Will Baptist churches were not built in anticipation of large crowds, it seems. Thus when they do start a bus ministry they suddenly realize they need more space. I thank God that today a growing number of churches are being built not just for today but to accommodate the crowds they believe God will help bring in tomorrow.

A fourth problem that a church with a bus ministry must tackle is *discipline*. Most of the children brought to church in buses have never attended Sunday school or church. Thus, a church that wants to stay spic and span should not consider a bus ministry. I assure you that you will see dirty handprints on the walls. And the trips to the bathrooms might be shocking! Church services may be disrupted by a paper airplane flying from the back of the auditorium. Plenty of chewing gum will no doubt be left under the seats. But these kids are no different from our own who also had to be trained in church behavior. If believers in the church will take time to show bus children that they love them, these children will learn. Most bus children come from homes where their parents have never taken time to discipline them, let alone show them they love them.

You can plainly see there are many problems in the bus ministry. But I assure you that when the invitation is given at the end of a service and the parents of a bus child respond to the invitation to accept Christ, or when that young person who rides your bus comes forward to receive Christ, you forget the cost and all the problems. You shout with joy, "It's worth the cost!" That's one more person who has missed hell and one more person who will be in heaven. ▲

BUS STATISTICS						
NAME OF CHURCH	NUMBER OF BUSES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF RIDERS DURING MAY '73	CONVERSIONS DURING MAY '73	AVERAGE NUMBER RIDERS JANUARY-MAY '73	TOTAL CONVERSIONS JANUARY-MAY '73	BUS RIDERS ADDED TO CHURCH - 1973
First FWB Church Dothan, Alabama	5	162		152		
First FWB Church Tucson, Arizona	3	141	45			
First FWB Church Bakersfield, California	5	230	10	279	100	
Harmony FWB Church Fresno, California	4		30			
FWB Church, Concord, California	3	80	4	74	37	
Sherwood Forest FWB Church El Sobrante, California	3	128	10	134	65	30
First FWB Church Decatur, Illinois	4		14	127	50	
South Roxana Church South Roxana, Illinois	4	132		148		
Victory FWB Church Avondale, Missouri	3	66		84	69	35
Fellowship FWB Church Micro, North Carolina	2			50		
First Dayton FWB Church Dayton, Ohio	2	55				
First FWB Church Owasso, Oklahoma	5			146	91	26
Cofer's Chapel FWB Church Nashville, Tennessee	3	89	8	73	29	
Central FWB Church Johnson City, Tennessee	8	237	15	260	60	
Woodbine FWB Church Nashville, Tennessee	5	155	20	165		6
First FWB Church Florence, South Carolina	4	170	20	163	120	
Fairmount Park FWB Church Norfolk, Virginia	10	456		435		
Bethel FWB Church Hampton, Virginia	13	483				26
First FWB Church Newport News, Virginia	9			290	22	

VISIONS NS F BUBBLE GUM

Critical Analysis of The Modern "Giveaway Bus Promotion"

By Forrest L. Keener

Some weeks ago I picked up a church bulletin in which was a poem written by one of the ladies of that church. She was lauding the bus ministry of the church with a contemporary version of the poem "The Night Before Christmas." I believe it started "Twas the night before Sunday." In any event where the original poem read "Visions of sugar plums danced in their heads," her poem read, "Visions of bubble gum danced in their heads." My first thought was, "How cute!" But as I dwelt upon the truth within this poem and the shame within it, my spirit was moved and I have been determined ever since to speak out. "Visions of bubble gum" indeed! Have we reduced children's opinions of church-going to this?

Please do not imagine that I am critical of this lady's enthusiasm. I wish more people were excited about the activities of their church. I am critical of the cheap tactics of show

business, lotteries, etc. that are being implemented in the bus ministry today. I am extremely concerned that many churches have reduced the forgotten child's opinion of church attendance to "visions of bubble gum." It might be noted that most of these shenanigans I shall mention have been used to increase Sunday school attendance in general. I believe they have produced and shall increasingly produce bad effects in the minds of children and adults alike. I have no doubt that they grieve the Spirit of God. I fear that already many people unconsciously determine which church they will attend by seeing which one will give away the "biggest wad of bubble gum." And meanwhile, sound doctrine occupies second place, or no place at all. This is contrary to the instruction of I Timothy 4:15, 16: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." According to scripture, sound doctrine should be the acid test and guideline to all our actions. Regardless how noble or productive a method may seem, if that method or its user disregards doctrine, it is finally both

in spirit and in effect, *ungodly*. The common denominator that I seem to see in all fervent users of cheap tactics is that they rate doctrine after "results" and sometimes belittle doctrine altogether.

INVOLVED IN A BUS MINISTRY

The church I pastor has had an effective bus ministry for eight years. You need not therefore suppose that this article is a "sour grapes" thesis. We have won many to Christ through the bus ministry. For several years we had the largest bus ministry in our city. I believe in it, but I do see many evils and problems — some of which I should like to deal with. I will not deal with the unfaced and unanswered inconsistencies of no bus service on Sunday night and Wednesday night or the drawing of children from a neighborhood church of the same faith for one service per week instead of two or three. But I will confine my complaint to the gimmicks, prizes, contests, trickery, lotteries and blasphemous entertainments that accompany the modern bus ministry.

BUS PROMOTION TACTICS

The list is endless and would exhaust your imagination, but suffer me to name a few that I have read

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Keener is pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church in Lawton, Oklahoma. This article, which is reprinted with his permission, is available in tract form.

and heard of.

First, there is the *cheap gift tactic*. You simply bribe the children to come to God's house with candy, bubble gum, pennies, dimes, kite strings, kites, flags, paper hats, straw hats and onward and upward to "success." These things cost relatively little. Even the small church can afford this kind of promotion, for the nickels, dimes and quarters the children drop in the plate will help to pay the bill. Even though this is cheap, it will give you an edge over any other church who gives away nothing but the gospel. If the church is more prosperous, hamburgers or malts will "sweeten the pot" and increase the edge. You can easily undermine any neighborhood church who has no bus ministry, or who gives nothing away.

Secondly, there are those *enterprising masters of chance* who simply put a five dollar bill under some seat in the bus. The child who sits in this seat wins the five. Now this is not really gambling(?) because instead of putting a quarter into a five-dollar football pot the child only invest three hours of his time — going to this five-dollar church instead of that old two-dollar one down the street. This is a new kind of crap game where you just sit and the bus does the rolling.

Thirdly, there is the giving of the *larger prize for the contest winner*. It can be a Bible, a bicycle, a pony, a chicken that lays golden eggs, a rabbit that glows on Easter and quotes I Corinthians 15, a trip to Six Flags, or a ski trip to the slopes of Colorado. As far as I know, Las Vegas and Bourbon Street have not been included yet. This also is relatively easy to finance because instead of all the "enterprising converts" — I mean "contestants" — sharing in the loot, it's a winner take all type of lottery. Once again all the contestants invest is their time — unless you include the danger of flirting with spiritual things and thus the danger of a subverted soul.

Back to the finance problem now. Since the prize is larger, Junior can be counted on to call Aunt Across-town and Uncle Loafalot and cry until they leave their Sunday school and come over with their six children out of another Sunday

school. Though they may not ride the bus they can count for the contest. So where you only had 303 last week, this week you had 909. "Boy! That church surely is growing!" What undiscerning church member would not dig down and give a little more to finance such a noble cause as this. "Boy! Next time we'll give away a boat and a bikini and some skis and we'll have a thousand and can't we crow then?"

Fourthly, there is the *fun thing tactic*. This resource is boundless. Money is seldom the object here. You are limited only by your imagination

GIMMICKS

It seems that churches everywhere are doing things today

To try to bring their attendance up by giving things away.

They're running buses all over town in a way they think is dandy, Giving all the boys and girls that ride some bubble gum or candy.

And maybe they'll have a contest; Give the winner a free plane ride Or offer them a ten-speed bike that would make one swell with pride.

God does not use this kind of plan to save one from his sin, But uses visitation to bring the sinner in.

So if you're using this unscriptural plan, perhaps you had better stop, Or your rewards in heaven might be just a lollipop.

— Gene Sutton

and your modesty. I could never mention all these sacred endeavors, but to name a few there is the "Flood the Bus Sunday." Here the children reverence God's property and His servants by squirting the bus captain and the bus minister with water pistols. Of course this is done with water pistols furnished by church "mission money" (?) and it is done after church. During church it would get a little slick, but I'm sure the children can hardly wait until the invitation is over and the last broken-hearted sinner has been saved so they can get on with the feature of the day.

Then there is the "Egg Sunday." On this day the shining examples of youthful triumph get to throw eggs at the bus minister or captain. If they miss, he is standing against the bus, so all is not lost. I've heard also of one grand prize for success where the pastor's wife was honeyed and feathered. I've often wondered about what she wore for this glorious occasion and what the mode of honey application was. Was it immersion, pouring, sprinkling or rubbing?

Consider I Corinthians 11:17: "Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse." Verse 17 refers to those things which Paul is to criticize in verses 20-22. "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." There was revelling in the church in the stead of sacred things. Paul said because of this that their assembling was not beneficial to the participators and glorifying to God, but was the opposite — "not for the better, but for the worse." This, to say the least, would teach us that it is error to teach that you should "get them there" any way, and by any motive you can, so long as they hear the gospel after they come. It does make a difference *why* they come and with what *spirit* they assemble.

EFFECTS OF THIS GARBAGE

The sad victims of this hypocritical exploitation are the *children*. They have been neglected in the home spiritually, and many times told that church is of no importance. They need someone to come and tell them that Jesus Christ is their only hope and that in church they can learn about Him. They need to be told He is to have glory and reverence in the church and that their presence and conduct there may affect the destiny of their souls. Or will "visions of bubble gum" do just as well? Is it



Visions of Bubble Gum (continued)

the child these people are interested in, or just a larger number?

Let's examine our motives and the side effects of our methods. To illustrate what my heart longs to say, let me cite for you the account of four children from one family who started riding one of our buses to church three years ago. Within a few weeks, two of them had made professions of faith. Their level of learning ability was low and they were in desperate need of teaching. Then they were lured away by another church, which was giving away kites. Soon after this, the mother called and asked us to send our bus by once again. Cold as she was, she could see a great difference in what they were getting in the two churches. We started picking them up once again, but alas another church soon had another "shindig" and away they were hauled. Once again they returned, but another church with different flavors of bubble gum soon liberated them from a church with "Bible without baloney." These children were led away, not by difference in doctrine but with "visions of bubble gum." Now the children are disillusioned and the parents are disgusted, partly with their undecided children and partly by the proselyting churches. So they won't let them go anywhere "until we start going."

Another bad effect is *proselyting*. Preachers who never would practice it themselves allow it to be done on their bus ministry work, day after day. It seems that this unworthy practice goes hand in hand with the give-away competition, not in bus work alone but throughout the Sunday school.

Another side effect is the *irreverence* for God's house and His messenger. A child's motive in going to church should be a high one. I do not suggest that we should wait until we can generate high motives before we encourage the neglected child to come. We should however take care that in our witnessing zeal we do not contribute to the degeneration of those motives. If we do, we shall reduce the possibility (humanly speaking) of getting that child saved.

Anyone who can be brought to a knowledge of Christ by cheap, worldly, carnival-like tactics can be brought without those methods through patient witnessing and prayer.

"And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). When you "convert" a child (or an adult) by the process of cheap methods, you do not convert him to Christ, but to a *circus*, or at best to a *movement*. This type of convert will return to his "wallowing in the mire" as soon as the circus tent is taken away. Most of you can think of "great churches" that have split and splintered and splattered just because their entertainer went astray, or went away, or was called to another pulpit. If we by pure gospel convert them to Christ they will serve Him when the circus has left town.

Some will answer, "I'll do anything to win men to Christ." Shame on you! You have no such commission from God. We are told to preach the gospel everywhere: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). And we are promised that it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). If God had ordained give-away tactics they would be taught or at least implemented in the Bible.

I've heard and read such statements as "Christ motivated with earthly rewards." That simply is not so. Every such thesis I have read is either a deliberate or an ignorant perversion of the scripture. A classic example is Matthew 10:42: "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." It is said that here Jesus motivated with reward. That is Satanic perversion of scripture. He spoke of giving a cup of cold water, not in the name of reward, but in the name of a disciple.

Look back to verse 4, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." It was love, respect and acceptance of Jesus Christ that was to motivate this and *not material gain*.

Love for God is the only worthy or Godly motive, and service done for reward has no reward. Consider I Corinthians 3:12-15. Wrong foundation and carnality are condemned. I don't see how anyone can fail to see that these verses in I Corinthians 3 teach that wrong motives categorize apparently good work — as wood, hay and stubble.

Matthew 5:43 — 6:4 plainly teaches us of the danger of doing or leading men (or children) to do good works for the sake of earthly reward or notoriety. There are two main motives that are branded upon the hearts of children through this type of promotion: earthly reward and emulation. To get them to labor for earthly reward is to rob them of reward at the judgment seat. (See I Corinthians 3:13 and Galatians 5:19,20.) Emulation is clearly categorized as a "work of the flesh." The Bible plainly teaches that our motive for labor is to be love and that alone, but these cheap tactics distort and destroy this Godly motive.

I am furthermore persuaded that these tactics never actually increase the number of converts. I know that many powerful preachers using these tactics have great numbers of converts. I believe though that these men would have great numbers of converts without the cheap methods. I think also that if these men could compute the increase of number they "win" by these tactics they would know the number of false professions they will accumulate during their life.

Scripture declares that where there is no vision the people perish. I believe this with all my heart and I believe there is a constant need for continual increase in the vision of every Christian. I believe, though, just as strongly that where the vision is wrong the people perish. May God get our eyes off visions of bubble gum, balloon dancers, bicycles, and other sundry garbage and then give us a vision of the day when attendance to God's house is coupled with Godly fear and true visitation of the Holy Spirit. ▲

Is The Bus Ministry Home Missions?

by Roy Thomas

The bus ministry is being used by an increasing number of Free Will Baptist churches as a means of reaching people for Christ. New life has come to churches as new people sit in the pews.

However, the bus ministry is expensive. Buses must be purchased. Maintenance and operation are costly. If the ministry reaches souls for Christ it is worth it no matter what the cost. But the fact remains that the money must come from somewhere to make it possible. As the church budget is studied, eyes fall upon the amount given to home missions. Many times we conclude, "The bus ministry is actually home missions anyway. *We will take the money our church gives to home missions and finance our bus ministry!*"

As the bus ministry continues to be used, the question must be faced, "Are the bus ministry and home missions synonymous?" The Bible is the sole authority for the church. The blueprint by which each local church is to build is the Great Commission. The best passage defining specific places for the church to minister is Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Let's apply this verse to our churches today. Jerusalem was their city. Judea

was their state. (Israel is a country with three states, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.) Samaria was a *neighboring state*. (There are eleven states in the United States with no Free Will Baptist church.) The uttermost part of the earth means the *rest of the world*. The word "both" tells us that they were to be witnesses in their city, all their state, their country, and the rest of the world at the same time — a simultaneous effort.

Home missions is the starting of Free Will Baptist churches in North America where there are none. Notice how much of the Great Commission involves home missions. *Jerusalem* represents the cities where our local churches are. *All Judea* applies to the states where we have churches. (No state has churches in all of its counties.) *Samaria* represents the states of our country where we have no churches. *The uttermost part of the earth* includes the rest of North America and the foreign fields.

Does the bus ministry take the place of home missions? Jerusalem is included in the Great Commission. And since the

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Thomas, who for ten years served as a Church Extension worker with the National Home Missions Department, now serves Free Will Baptists as Associate Director of that department. He is a member of the Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

ministry is costly and at least in the beginning does not pay for itself, it is referred to by many as a missionary endeavor. The question is, "Does the bus ministry do the work of home missions?"

Home missions is the sending of missionaries to new cities and new states and building Free Will Baptist churches. The bus ministry concerns itself with going out into the community and bringing people into the local church. If a bus is run to another city, it picks up the people and brings them to the local church that operates the bus. Even though the bus ministry is a worthy endeavor and a tool for evangelism, it does *not* take the place of home missions.

We are responsible to evangelize our Jerusalem, but we cannot concentrate on Jerusalem and exclude the rest of the world. A few years ago a church that kept all its money at home and used it for its own local causes was labeled "non-progressive" and "back-woods."

Can a church support both the bus ministry and home missions? Certainly! Churches all over the country are supporting all outside causes and maintaining a bus ministry. If God expects a church to carry out the Great Commission (and He does) He will bless that church and meet its needs if it is obedient. If a church needs a bus ministry to reach its Jerusalem, God will supply the need and He will not use home mission money to do it. But God never has honored disobedience.

Many buses have been donated by concerned individuals simply because God laid it on their hearts. Others have made direct gifts to the bus ministry. Some churches receive an offering on prayer meeting night for their bus ministry. Others include it in the church budget. Some classes have adopted it as a project. Some churches have discovered that in their locality renting buses is less expensive than owning them.

Is the bus ministry home missions? The answer is simple. Is the bus ministry in the local church helping the McDaniels in Montana, the Barrons in Mexico, the McCoys in Puerto Rico, and others to build Free Will Baptist churches across North America? May God help us to see the whole world as Christ sees it and get involved in the task while there is still time and an open door. ▲

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Gay Shoulders / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Beverly Sloan / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Nate Ange / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Roy Dale Smith / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Bobby Hardeman / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Carl Ivens / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Billy and Joy McKinney / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Mike Cordell / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Fred Lanius / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

Phil Ange / Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville

VIRGINIA

Susan Martin / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Bennie Summerlin / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Ron Rupert / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Marion Martin / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Wayne Clark / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Paul Morgan / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Members of the 75 Club

ALABAMA ALA

Linda Barfield / First FWB Church, Dothan

Linda Speed / First FWB Church, Dothan



SOLVING THE SPACE PROBLEM — Don Pegram, pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church of Newport News, Virginia, greets some of the bus riders attending Junior Church services in one of several tents erected to alleviate the "good" problem of the lack of space for youth activities. The church is presently constructing additional facilities. Alan Sheens, a lay preacher originally from West Virginia, is Junior Church pastor.

Members of the 100 Club

CALIFORNIA

Richard and Jean Brown / Sherwood Forest FWB Church, El Sobrante

Mike Rigdon / First FWB Church, Bakersfield

Linda Ericson / First FWB Church, Bakersfield

Elmo Christy / First FWB Church, Bakersfield

Holly Christy / First FWB Church, Bakersfield

TENNESSEE

Jim Overstreet / Central FWB Church, Johnson City

VIRGINIA

Clayton Denney / Bethel FWB Church, Hampton

Members of the 150 Club

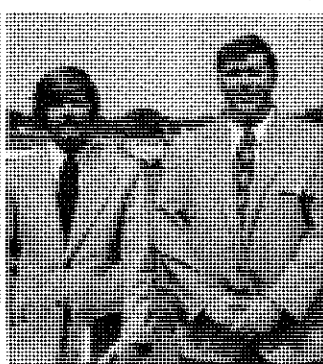
VIRGINIA

Tom Gaskell / Bethel FWB Church Hampton

(Tom is a record-setter in our denomination with 179 bus riders to his credit.)



THE BUS FAMILY — Bus workers of the First Free Will Baptist Church Decatur, Illinois gather with the riders on a recent Sunday in front of some of the church's vehicles. In the background is the church's recently completed two-storied educational unit.



RECORD SETTER — Tom Gaskell, right, Hampton, Virginia, holds a denominational record of 179 bus riders. At left is Clayton Denney, a fellow church worker, who is a member of the 100 Club.



THE FIRST OF THREE BUSES to be put in operation by the First Free Will Baptist Church of Dayton, Ohio sees regular Sunday action under the direction of Mark Leonard, captain, and G. T. Scanlon, driver.

VIRGINIA STATE MEETING ATTRACTS INCREASED ATTENDANCE

BRISTOL, VA. — With the largest attendance to any recent meeting of the Virginia State Association of Free Will Baptists present, delegates adopted resolutions opposing the abortion laws of Virginia and the impending legislation to legalize gambling in that state. The action came during the annual meeting June 15 at the Shiloh Church.

The Lee Association petitioned and was received into the membership of the state organization at this meeting. Delegates voted to convene with the Oak Grove Free Will Baptist Church at Big Stone Gap, Virginia, a member of the Lee Association, for the 1974 session.

Incumbant Moderator Ray Berry was re-elected to his post. Mr. Wilton Dale of Norfolk will continue to serve the state as promotional man.

FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCED

NASHVILLE, TENN. — Using the theme "Follow Me," the National Sunday School Department has announced the new fall campaign will begin October 7 and continue through October 28, 1973.

Designed to increase Sunday school attendance and develop believers, the campaign lends itself well to a continuing year long emphasis.

Sunday schools will be arranged in accordance with the following table for competitive purposes:

Division A — over 500 average
Division B — 400-500 average
Division C — 300-399 average
Division D — 200-299 average
Division E — 150-199 average
Division F — 100-149 average
Division G — 50-99 average
Division H — under 49 average

Sunday schools in each division that experience the greatest *percentage* of gain over the thirteen weeks' average attendance for April-May-June, 1973 will be declared winners and awarded plaques denoting first or second place.

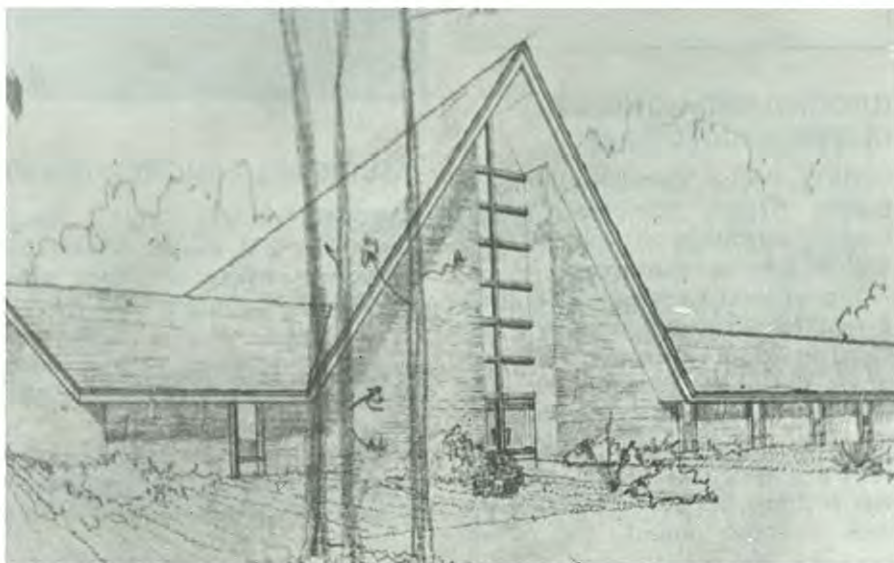
Campaign materials are available from the Sunday School Department.

Deadline for entry is October, 5, 1973.



FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront



Architectural Drawing

CONGREGATION TO GET NEW CHURCH PLANT, NEW NAME

CAROLEEN, NORTH CAROLINA — Not only will the congregation of the Caroleen Free Will Baptist Church have new facilities in which to worship upon completion of their new church plant, but they will also get a new church name.

Construction is scheduled to begin in August on a new church facility which will be of a Gothic design and feature laminated beams. It will contain 16 classrooms, an office, a nursery, quarters for a kindergarten and an auditorium to seat 300. The auditorium will be constructed so that a balcony to seat an additional 100 people can be added at a later date. The new structure will be located adjacent to the present church building which will be torn down upon completion of the new plant.

The new church will be named Harriett Memorial Church in honor of

the late Mrs. Harriett Allen who was a charter member of the church. Her son, A. L. Allen, gave \$10,000 to be used in the construction of the new church as a memorial to his mother.

Pastor Ted Reynolds, who has been ministering with the congregation for 18 months, stated the progress within the church shows that one cannot limit God's power. During a revival in the fall of 1972, the church witnessed 25 first time decisions. In January, 1973, a special drive was initiated to climax on Easter Sunday for the benefit of the building fund. That goal of \$3,500 was surpassed when \$6,638.02 was raised, amid the rejoicings of the congregation. The church now has some \$40,000 in its building fund. Pastor Reynolds also spearheaded a successful building fund drive in early 1972.

During 1972, the average Sunday school attendance was 110.

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE SLATED FOR NOVEMBER

Have you been a subscriber to **CONTACT** since its initial appearance, November, 1953? If so, I would like to hear from you. Just send a note to me stating you have subscribed to **CONTACT** since November, 1953.

Thank you.

Eugene Workman
Administrative Editor

GROUND BREAKING AT CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA

CLOVIS, CA. — The Clovis Free Will Baptist Church conducted ground breaking ceremonies on June 10 for a \$25,000 sanctuary expansion.

Clovis Church was organized in 1953. Except for a one-year interval, Pastor Meryl Erickson has served the church since 1964. He presented a brief historical resume and expressed joy as the church solemnized final steps toward construction of the new 300 seat addition. Upon completion of this bank financed project, the present sanctuary will convert into a junior chapel, multi-purpose area.

Members of the Center Association Executive Board participated with the church and friends at the occasion.



BREAKING GROUND — Fred and Clara Burton, original charter members of Clovis Free Will Baptist Church, Clovis, California, wield "golden" spades while turning the first shovels of soil which denoted the beginning of a new church auditorium.

newsfront (continued)



CALIFORNIA CHURCH COMPLETES NEW SANCTUARY

GARDEN GROVE, CA. — Garden Grove Free Will Baptist Church held dedication services for their newly constructed sanctuary on May 6. Former Pastor Francis Boyle, now Director of Executive Church Bonds, Inc., in Nashville, Tennessee, delivered the dedicatory message.

Seating capacity of the new sanctuary is 350. The new building includes a full basement and is joined to

an existing two-story, 16-unit educational complex.

The church was built with a \$125,000 bond issue through Executive Church Bonds, Inc.

The Garden Grove Church was organized in April, 1959 and moved to its present location in early 1962. It is strategically located in the heart of a rapidly growing metropolis, according to the present pastor, Edwin Wade.

NORTH CAROLINA DELEGATES OPPOSE KEY '73

GOLDSBORO, N.C. — The North Carolina Association of Free Will Baptists, meeting here for their 11th annual session June 11-13, adopted a resolution condemning the "Key '73" interdenominational evangelistic effort because, a spokesman said, among other things it "attempts to get everyone under the same umbrella."

In other resolutions the association opposed legalizing the sale of liquor by the drink in North Carolina, which will be voted on in a state-wide referendum November 6, and opposed "brown bagging," now legal in the state, in which persons may carry liquor into restaurants and mix their own drinks.

The association also commended the National Association of Free Will Baptists for withdrawing from the National Association of Evangelicals and voted to urge support of Christian schools.

Meeting at the Faith Free Will

Baptist Church, the delegates discussed at length their state's newly rewritten By-laws and Constitution which were presented by the committee appointed last year for the purpose of revising the documents. After close examination, the documents were declared unacceptable and were referred back to a new committee.

Meeting simultaneously on the day prior to the State Association were the North Carolina State Woman's Auxiliary Convention and the State Youth Activities. A varied and well received youth program was presented that evening under the direction of Gene Hales. Jeff Steinberg was the guest singer-speaker. On Tuesday evening, a youth banquet was held with Missionary Bill Fulcher of Panama as speaker.

The 1974 session will be hosted by the Swannanoa Free Will Baptist Church. ▲

KENTUCKY DELEGATES APPROVE STATE PAPER

OIL SPRINGS, KY. — A significant step to unify the work of the Kentucky State Association of Free Will Baptists was taken during the annual meeting June 16, while in session at the Pigeon Creek Free Will Baptist Church, when delegates approved the establishment of a state paper. The Reverend Eddie Dollar, pastor of the Second Free Will Baptist Church in Ashland, was elected editor and publisher.

The Reverend Charles Stapleton, pastor of the hosting church, was elected as Kentucky's promotional man for the year 1974. He will also serve as moderator for the upcoming session which will meet with the First Church at Louisa. Assistant Moderator is Ted Green of Lexington.

McLEOD ALBUM PROCEEDS EXPAND MISSIONS OUTREACH

FUQUAY, N.C. — Proceeds from the sale of the recently-released gospel album "Beyond The Stars," recorded by Donna and Harold McLeod of the Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church, will go to the support of the Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department, according to James Denton, pastor of the Hilltop Church. The proceeds will be used at the discretion of department personnel.

Mr. Denton stated the McLeods are active Sunday school workers in the Hilltop Church.

The record, which contains ten songs, sells for \$5.00. Tapes are also available at \$7.00 each. Orders may be sent to the Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church, Route 3, Fuquay, North Carolina 27526.

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MISSIONS
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615 242-1771

what's your problem?



By R. Eugene Waddell

QUESTION: My husband died 10 years ago. It's been bothering me ever since whether or not I'll know him when I die. Do you think I'll know him and he'll know me?

ANSWER: Yes, I definitely believe you'll know each other. I'm assuming that your husband was saved and that you are saved. If so, consider some Bible facts.

God promises to give us a body like Jesus' glorious body (Philippians 3:21). When Jesus showed Himself to Thomas, He said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side..." (John 20:27). So Jesus' hands had the nail scars and his side still showed the signs of the spear that hit Him. This enabled Thomas to recognize Jesus.

Secondly, Paul promises: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Our intelligence will not be diminished by death. We can expect to be more intelligent in glory where we'll have no distractions and interruptions.

Thirdly, consider the appearance of Moses and Elijah upon the mountain with Christ during His transfiguration. The sleepy disciples knew them though they had not seen them before. This implies expanded perception in heaven (Matthew 17:4).

In the fourth place, the rich man who went to hell knew Lazarus and even Abraham who may have been dead nearly two thousand years before he was born (Luke 16:23).

Finally, Paul's comfort for the bereaved Thessalonians strongly implies recognition beyond the grave. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, he plainly discusses the fate of specific individuals — "concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not..." God promises the living Christians at the second coming that they "shall be caught up together with them in the clouds..." This seems to promise comfort because they would know each other.

That is why I believe you can rest assured if you are trusting in the Lord Jesus as your Savior you will see and know your husband if he was a Christian.

Readers may address their questions to Mr. Waddell at P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Please limit each question to one specific topic. There will be no personal correspondence regarding those questions which are not used in the magazine. The column will not necessarily be considered the official voice of the denomination relative to the problems involved.

Social Security and the Minister

Congress in 1972 approved some of the most significant changes ever made in the Social Security law. The changes affect all who participate. One change boosted benefits 20 per cent across the board for 28 million recipients. Then, an amendment was added which makes benefit payments "inflation proof" by providing automatic, periodic increases to keep up with the cost of living.

To pay for these extra benefits, active participants must pay higher taxes. Ministers, for example, who are considered self-employed, now must pay 8% of annual earnings up to \$10,800. Beginning in January, 1974, the maximum covered earning jumps to \$12,000.

The action is significant and must raise questions in the minds of many ministers. "Where do I stand with Social Security?" "What should I do about my retirement plan?"

As a self-employed person, the minister, by law, must pay his own tax. For the past several years, some denominational leaders have

recommended that the church pay the dues in the retirement program for the minister because he had to pay his own Social Security tax. The reason now is the same as then: Social Security alone will not be enough to meet the rising costs of living.

Social Security also is geared to favor the lower salaried person. Consequently, the higher your average salary, the smaller will be the percentage of benefits you get. To illustrate, a person with an \$800 a month salary pays four times as much tax as a man with a \$200 salary. Yet, the larger base provides only 2-1/3 times as much benefit.

The chart below shows the percentages at different monthly salary averages. Keep in mind these figures represent average salary on which taxes have been paid. The only person who could have a \$1,000 a month average would be one whose coverage begins on that required amount in 1974 or later and who pays continuously on that amount.

Another way to illustrate is to give an example of a minister born in 1913 who retires in 1978. He has paid on the maximum tax base allowed since 1956, when ministers were first eligible. His average monthly salary is about \$639. This means the maximum benefit for him and his wife, if both are 65 or over, will be \$489.90 a month. If this minister failed to enter Social Security back in 1956, but waited until it became compulsory in 1968, his benefit will be far below that amount. *Many ministers will not get what the chart shows because they did not enter Social Security until the mandatory date.*

It is recommended that you check your record with Social Security. You should do this automatically every three years to make sure your taxes are being credited to you. You can obtain a special card for requesting this information from your local Social Security office.

Once you know what you have in Social Security, you can plan more effectively for your total protection need. As a guide, Social Security plus 50% of your final salary in retirement benefits should enable you to maintain the standard of living to which you are accustomed.

Monthly Average Salary	Retiree Age 65 Benefit	Retiree & Spouse Age 65 Benefit
\$ 100	\$108 108%	\$163 163%
200	154 77	231 115½
300	193 64	289 96
400	233 58	350 87½
500	269 54	404 81
600	309 51½	464 77
700	342 49	513 73
800	364 45½	546 68
900	384 43	576 64
1000	404 40	606 61

Reprinted by permission from "The Years Ahead", the official publication of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dallas, Texas.

UNION ASSOCIATION PASSES CENTENNIAL MARK

The historical roots of Tennessee's Union Association date back to 1850. The Toe River Association was cradled in the hills of Yancy County, North Carolina at Jack's Creek Church, November 15, 1850. Mossevia Peterson chaired that first meeting, while William Bonapart Woolsey served as clerk. Woolsey held this post for 18 years — until the organization of the Union Association.

Eighteen years after its formation, the Toe River Association expired and a new association was formed. The short-lived American Association, for some unknown reason, died in infancy.

However, four years later, in 1872, two new groups were formed from the same churches which had previously identified themselves with the defunct American Association. These new groups became known as the French Broad Association and the Union Association. The latter, formed with six churches, boasted a membership of 212. Both associations are actively proclaiming God's truths today and have joyously celebrated their 100th anniversaries.

Site of the Union Association's centennial celebration in 1972 was the association's campground, located near Greeneville, Tennessee. The Reverend Paul H. Woolsey, grandson of William Bonapart Woolsey, highlighted the observance by honoring families of the early founders.

The first meeting of the Union Association met at the home of William Bonapart Woolsey with ten churches represented. Several are still active today: Liberty, Midway and New Cross

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was compiled with the assistance of Mr. I. L. Stanley and Mrs. Pearl Morgan of Greeneville, Tennessee. It begins a series on Free Will Baptist heritage which will appear periodically.

UNION ASSOCIATION'S STATISTICAL COMPARISON

1872		1972
10	Churches Reporting	74
15	Ordained Ministers	97
\$7.37 - \$60.85	Minister's Average Annual Salary	\$7.00 - \$8,100.00
75 - 120	Conversions Reported by Ministers	0 - 176
15	Delegates to Association	86
\$6.20	Associational Funds	\$17,041.45
\$6.50	Cost of Minutes	\$566.00

Will the next 100 years see a proportionate, or even greater growth?

(Greeneville, First).

During a review of the association's historical records, an observer spotted a motion made to fine each delegate 10¢ who did not answer every day's roll call. "Even down to the last day," the record says, "not a name was missing."

The newly-formed Home Missions Board soon ran into financial trouble. So, in the 1888 session, the association voted to "assess each church \$1.00 per year for home missions."

Records indicate that the quarterly meeting, in years past, convened for three days. The first such three-day conclave was held at Liberty Church in 1890. Total collection received during the associational meeting was 60¢.

In 1915, Piney Grove (a merger with Woolsey College) advertised in the minutes for a pastor: "Educated, devoted, and a leader." For a man of such qualifications, they offered to pay \$30.00 to \$60.00 a year.

The Union Association was represented by the Reverend Paul H. Woolsey at the Eastern General Conference which met in 1933 in Jakin, Georgia. Two years later this conference became an affiliate of the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

The Free Will Baptist Orphanage property was purchased from the Greene County School Board. Following its May, 1939 opening, Trula Gunter Cronk became the home's first beneficiary on June 3, 1939. Two charter board members of the Home attended last year's centennial observance — B. M. Pierce and the Reverend E. M. French.

After securing a lease from the State Association for a campground, the Union Association began holding their annual meetings at this campground near Greeneville in 1956. The buildings were crude, with dirt floors in both the tabernacle and cafeteria. Today there are 13 attractive cabins with bath facilities in several cabins. Both the tabernacle and cafeteria are enclosed, floored, painted and comfortably furnished.

In 1968 twenty-seven churches in one quarterly meeting requested withdrawal for the purpose of organizing a new association. It was named the Appalachian Association and is affiliated with the Tennessee State Association. Even with the loss of these 27 churches, the Union Association today is 74 churches strong. ▲

THE PROMISE OF REST

The casual reader of our English New Testament, seeing the word "rest" both in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 and in Hebrews 4:1-11, might think the same idea is involved in both places. Such is not the case. Two entirely different Greek words are used in the two passages.

In 2 Thessalonians 1:7, the noun for "rest" is *anesis*, which has the idea of *release, relief*. The word literally means

a loosening, slackening, letting loose. The word was used, for example, when one would let the tension off his bow-string. You can easily see how appropriate this word is in Second Thessalonians, where Paul is promising "rest" from persecutions. The Thessalonians would not have been interested in the kind of rest one needs who is tired from hard labor. They needed to know there will be release and relief from the tauntness and

tension of persecution, a relaxing of the pressures caused by their oppressors.

In Hebrews 3 and 4, the noun for "rest" is *katapausis*, which has the idea of a *cessation of activity*. Actually, the word is a compound. In Greek, the simple *pausis* refers to the cessation, the stopping. With the extra *kata* on the front, there is a greater emphasis on the settled state of rest.

You can also see how appropriate this word is for the context in Hebrews.



WORDS FOR WOMEN

My Last 'Self-Pity' Break

By Oretha Hamlin

Several years ago a young woman was faithful to the Lord. She attended all church services and functions. And she participated in all church activities. Unaware that an affliction was invading her body, she maintained a very active pace in various ministries.

When she heard the diagnosis of her affliction, disbelief flooded her mind and spirit. But as years passed and the affliction grew worse, disbelief turned to bitterness and self-pity. Pain made her difficult and irritable, causing domestic problems.

Self-pity time ticked around every morning, noon and night. Sometimes this discouraged wife even took a mid-afternoon self-pity break, if time permitted. That's where I left the world's smallest party. (Only *one* person attends a "self-pity party"!

I say that's where I left the party because it was during a morning self-pity break when I drifted off into a daydream. When I noticed the time, two hours had passed — two hours of allowing my mind to dwell on everything that entered. Instead of facing reality I was trying to escape. I became frightened and cried to God, "What should I do?" And the simplest answer came as the fog cleared from my mind. *The Word!* Every problem can be solved or faced through God's Word. It was as though a strong pressure had hindered my breathing. Suddenly it was removed and I could take a deep breath of fresh air. I picked up my Bible, confessed my sins, and asked God to guide my thoughts.

Knowing they contain some very comforting passages, I turned to the

Psalms. I read a few verses in Psalm 119 and started to stop. However, I continued until I came to verse 71 — which really did stop me: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." When I read those strengthening words I felt the presence of God. I thanked Him with a heart overflowing with gratitude.

After that experience my whole attitude changed. I stopped whining, "Why me?" and asked, "Why not me?" God loves me. He will not allow more to be put upon me than I can bear. Satan still desires to sift us as wheat, but a hindrance can be turned into an asset if placed in God's hands. For instance, 11 Corinthians 1:3-4 teaches us that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, comforts us in our affliction, making us able to give comfort to others — the very same comfort He has given us. One never knows but that his perseverance and trust in the Lord may be the encouragement needed by someone who is disheartened or in pain. Allowing God to work in you may help someone else endure present suffering.

After turning my eyes off myself and onto Jesus, I discovered there are others who suffer, some much worse than I.

Whether my affliction comes from Satan to tempt my faith, or from God

Here believers are being promised an eternal "rest" if they persevere in faith; note verses 8-11 especially. In the passage, this "rest" is compared to that of God Himself on the seventh day of the creation week, when He had finished the work and was ready to "rest from all his works" (verse 4). Thus the writer of Hebrews is assuring us that we are scheduled for this kind of rest, too, as well as for release from tension. All our activities will be done. The work will be finished, and we can settle down in a permanent rest in Heaven. Of course, we must not miss the warning, that we could come up short of this final and eternal rest if we are not faithful (verses 1, 11).

By the way, you need to realize that the "Jesus" referred to in verse 8 is really the Old Testament Joshua. The Greek name is *Iesous*, and it can mean either Jesus or Joshua. The two names

are simply varying spellings of the same name, one spelling based on the Hebrew form of the word and the other spelling based on the Greek form of the word. Compare Acts 7:45, where the same

thing is true. Joshua, leading Israel into Canaan, did not bring God's people into a settled and permanent rest. Only Heaven will fulfill God's standing promise to give His people rest. ▲

Thank You for Your Gifts to the . . .

COOPERATIVE PLAN OF SUPPORT

June 1973

RECEIPTS:

State	June '73		June '72	Yr. to Date
	Coop	Design.		
Alabama	\$...	\$...	\$...	\$ 2,100.87
Arizona	661.74	(661.74)	628.29	828.77
Arkansas	844.70	...	...	5,396.88
California	816.22	(376.42)	488.42	3,891.68
Florida	1,393.42	...	354.21	4,756.78
Georgia	703.60	...	692.40	3,982.30
Idaho	86.71	...	32.07	463.61
Illinois	...	...	1,153.43	5,913.27
Indiana	...	...	...	81.92
Kansas	807.02	...	166.00	807.02
Kentucky	...	...	...	863.17
Maryland	80.00	...	44.10	359.49
Michigan	...	...	...	92.48
Minnesota	35.50	...	92.38	213.41
Mississippi	56.50	...	32.48	429.54
Missouri	2,540.86	(2,540.86)	2,434.50	16,605.85
New Mexico	...	...	...	29.24
North Carolina	75.00	...	30.00	630.00
North West Assoc.	30.00	...	...	67.50
Ohio	1,044.70	(5.00)	910.26	5,377.84
Oklahoma	380.13	(380.13)	2,732.55	4,921.08
Tennessee	167.94	...	104.00	1,292.67
Texas	361.26	...	181.00	1,112.60
Virginia	51.11	...	28.94	451.56
West Virginia	...	...	20.00	25.00
Totals	<u>\$10,136.41</u>		<u>\$10,125.03</u>	<u>\$60,694.53</u>

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Dept.	\$ 3,921.62	\$ (896.92)	\$ 3,371.63	\$24,392.93
Foreign Missions	2,089.06	(1,175.26)	2,208.61	11,936.99
Bible College	1,696.62	(794.78)	1,897.11	10,000.84
Home Missions	1,400.95	(824.44)	1,274.16	7,525.90
Church Training Ser.	458.31	(143.55)	641.77	3,035.77
Retirement & Ins.	337.92	(86.13)	428.97	2,247.19
Layman's Board	171.74	(14.36)	234.28	1,148.86
Commission on Theo-				
logical Liberalism	60.19	(28.71)	68.50	401.45
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	4.60
Totals	<u>\$10,136.41</u>		<u>\$10,125.03</u>	<u>\$60,694.53</u>

as chastisement, or is a natural result from a badly-tended body, I know not. It matters not. I don't even question God anymore. He assures every believer, just as He did the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee . . ." Paul adds, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

I demand from myself to . . .

- (1) Believe God, whatever happens to me or mine.
- (2) Pray for His will and accept it.
- (3) Keep a sense of humor, quick to smile.
- (4) Never gripe or groan.
- (5) Never detail personal ailments, unless asked.
- (6) Eliminate defeat from my thinking.
- (7) Take hold with an unbreakable grip.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57). Victory is already ours. We only have to take it.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Despite being a rheumatoid arthritic, Mrs. Hamlin continues to be active in the Sherwood Forest Free Will Baptist Church at El Sobrante, California. She is an alumnus of Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, Tennessee. ▲

The Test of a Genuine Profession

By LeRoy Forlines

In the last article on Christian Doctrine, I discussed risk factors that can cause children to make shallow, superficial professions which fall short of salvation. The risk of false or superficial professions is made worse by cheap-easy-believism, but it is not a new problem. Paul was aware of this problem. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Corinthians 13:5a). He also addressed this problem in Romans 8:5-14; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-7; Titus 1:16.

The basic thrust of 1 John is to help the reader come to a reliable conclusion regarding whether his profession is real. This is made especially clear in the following passages: 2:3-4, 9-11, 15-16, 3:3-10, 13-21, 24; 4:7-13, 20; 5:2-5.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

It does not even take a careful reading of the passages listed above to arrive at the conclusion that a profession not accompanied by a righteous life is a false or superficial profession. To fail to see that is not to misunderstand the passages, but to fail to believe them.

There is a real concern about the matter of false profession among all ages, but the major concern of this article is with children. If a child should make an empty profession, it is very important that a correction be made not later than his early teens. If the correction is not made then, it may never be made.

How can we help a child see that he is not necessarily saved even though he has made a profession, has been baptized, and has joined the church? It is absolutely imperative that he associate righteous living with being a Christian. He must not be allowed to

believe that saving faith and righteous living can be separated.

Righteousness and sin must be discussed in terms of life as the child is experiencing it. When we talk about "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 10:12a), and the seriousness of disobedience, we are talking about a vital area of the child's experience. We dare not let the child develop the opinion that obedience to parents would be nice, but he can have saving faith and disregard this commandment.

A child needs to be constantly encountered with character training. Honesty, reliability, responsibility, etc. must be constantly upheld. Lying, stealing, cheating, etc., must be constantly condemned. Sexual purity, proper behavior for girls, and proper behavior for boys need to be emphasized at the right time.

In accomplishing the goals we have been discussing, two things are of vital importance: (1) that church functions be conducted properly, and (2) that people who work with children and young people have high standards and deep convictions. It is bad enough when children have to see sub-Christian standards in church members. It is unpardonable when they see sub-Christian standards at church-sponsored events with church approval, and in the lives of church leaders.

It seems that many people think that the way to reach children and young people is to lower the standards. One might ask, "To reach them for what?" The standard of righteousness is the only standard the church can adopt for any age group. Workers with high standards and deep convictions are a must especially for those who are in their formative years.

Let's evangelize our children. Let's also make it so clear that saving faith and righteous living go together that those who have made false professions will see the error of their way and turn to Christ in true repentance and saving faith. ▲



by
Executive Secretary
Rufus Coffey

A dynamic, explosive concept among conservative, evangelical churches has taken root in numerous Free Will Baptist churches. It has become a prominent factor in the surging attendance among the fastest growing Sunday schools. In many evangelical circles the booming bus movement is producing fantastic results.

Attendance at Bethel Church in Newport News, Virginia has skyrocketed from 46 in 1970 to a peak attendance of 933. Operating 20 buses, the pastor reports the church is witnessing as many as 25 conversions in a single service.

Although transporting people to church is not a new idea, renewed interest has been generated in this old method of reaching souls for Christ. The bus ministry is more than giving people a convenient ride to church. It is an evangelism tool. Busing is being used as a valuable and effective means of enlisting new people. A principal reason for the Southern Baptist Convention's reversal of their downward trend in Sunday school attendance is the revived interest in utilizing buses. William A. Powell, director of bus evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Missions Board, estimates that more than 500,000 riders are enrolled on 14,000 bus routes.

This grassroots ground swell, if properly organized, offers almost any church the opportunity for growth and outreach. There is nothing magic about

BUSING: BANE OR BLESSING?

starting a bus ministry. If dedicated workers put forth some real Spirit-directed effort they can expect to see significant results. It is a proven fact that one quick and sure way to have an immediate, substantial increase in attendance, professions of faith, giving and enthusiasm is to launch an aggressive ministry of bus evangelism.

Yet, it should also be observed that several perils are inherent in this type of ministry. While recognizing the merits of capitalizing on the undeniable blessings which many are enjoying, words of caution seem pertinent lest busing become a bane.

First of all, busing sometimes creates a false enthusiasm. Amid the excitement of overloaded buses and packed classrooms, people are on the mountain top. Then comes inclement weather. Or a bus breaks down. Or because of circumstances, fewer contacts are made. When buses arrive partially filled, enthusiasm suddenly fizzles, a dismal mood prevails and discouragement sets in like rigor mortis. Genuine enthusiasm for God's work should not depend upon outward success.

A second problem is the outcome of the first. To overcome "low days" in attendance and morale, promotional aids are used to keep the crowds coming. Even though these aids are dressed up as promotion, they may be carnal, worldly gimmicks. Traditional annual awards for attendance — such as Sunday school pins — are now overshadowed by ridiculous weekly attractions — such as swallowing a gold fish, or giving kids a water gun with permission for everyone to drench the bus driver.

These novel ideas may seem innocent on the surface, but they offer dangerous pitfalls. The gimmick route means that each succeeding Sunday must have a new idea with greater novelty than the

preceding Sunday. Does it not cheapen the gospel and degrade the dignity of the church by resorting to a continual diet of give-a-ways, prizes or attractions? We ought not cater to the frivolous whims of overly zealous leaders and workers. Church attendance should be taken more seriously than attending a circus. Bus evangelism can develop a light-hearted attitude toward the church if it becomes a lark or just some place for children to go to escape boredom.

Even such ordinary indulgence as ice cream or hot dogs may be abused. If you give a hot dog to get them to come, you may have to give two hot dogs to keep them. This attraction has a tendency to develop — what is called in India — "rice Christians." It is easy to rationalize and justify dubious methods which are superficial. Good judgment dictates that we guard against sensationalism, clowning or fleshly methods to get a crowd. A church may get so caught up in competing for crowds that it gets involved in a numbers racket.

A third danger involved in the bus ministry is that it sometimes hampers the vision of the church. Because of the tremendous expense of purchasing and operating buses, a church that once had a concern for ministries beyond its own community now finds itself content to minister just to its own city. While it is imperative that a local church minister in its own area, the total missions thrust

should not be confined only to "Jerusalem." The Great Commission involves a worldwide witness.

The purpose of the church is more than enlisting numbers. The ultimate goal is discipleship. Developing disciples involves sacrifice, devotion and learning of Christ. Following a true conversion experience, believers must be taught the Word of God. The temptation to manipulate someone who is unchurched in order to produce a psychological conversion is part of Satan's strategy to counteract God's work. Where are the vast numbers of reported conversions within or without our denomination? Undoubtedly, many people are genuinely converted. But how many more are lost to the church because of a superficial encounter?

May we never forget the prominence of the Holy Spirit in New Testament evangelism! Should He direct your local body of believers to use busing as a tool in evangelizing your community, busing will be a potent blessing. If, however, your bus ministry was not instigated by the Holy Spirit, if it is not under His control, then this fleshly attempt to board the band wagon for the highest attendance record will never exalt our wonderful Lord.

While faulting the liberals for devious tactics or the new evangelicals for questionable methods such as cooperative evangelism, it is well to set our own house in order by evaluating the methods we use to evangelize. ▲

VIEWPOINT

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AUGUST, 1973



Editor-in-Chief: Rufus Coffey / Administrative Editor: Eugene Workman / Circulation: Lucy Boyle, Jean Stone



NOTES from the Editor

Eugene Workman

Church busing is not new!

I well remember as a junior age lad when a church bus made a trip each Sunday morning three miles outside the city limits to pick up several families in our rural area. The bus also traveled through certain areas of my hometown enroute to the church which, incidentally, was not a Free Will Baptist church.

But the use of church buses in the late '40s and early '50s was mostly for the sake of convenience. Two cars were not sitting in every driveway in those days.

There's more involved in the bus ministry today than just a convenient mode of travel for those who wish to attend the services of a particular church.

Because of the important place the bus ministry is playing in the revitalization of many Free Will Baptist congregations, this issue is devoted to the various facets of the bus ministry. Attention is given to the Biblical sanction of this means of evangelization, the promotional aspects of the ministry and some problems that must be solved if church busing is more than a momentary success.

Statistics concerning the bus ministry at the local level were sought from every Free Will Baptist church known to be engaged in this contemporary outreach. An interesting chart has been prepared based on the information received from the responding pastors and bus ministers. Many churches did not respond to the inquiry.

I trust this issue will be an encouragement to every individual who is engaged in the bus ministry and an incentive for those church leaders who have thus far been reluctant to enter this worthy phase to "reach out" and at least explore its possibilities. ▲

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