

contact

Of The National Association
Of Free Will Baptists

OCTOBER 1973

By What Yardstick

Do We Measure

Church

Success?

By Lynn Frazier

Several northeast Missouri Free Will Baptists, who approach their ninetieth year, vividly recall stories told by parents and others of the back-breaking toil of the iron-souled pioneers who plowed their way through the fertile ground of this wilderness area, planted crops, and established homes for their families. They are quick to point out that the Word was planted also.

The Word fell on fertile ground as evidenced by the good fruit it has borne: dedicated local church workers, pastors, home and foreign missionaries, Bible college students, and other full-time Christian workers have come from this rugged northeast section of Missouri.

A sturdy Free Will Baptist taproot sinks deeply into this area. Reverend J. H. Wesscher and his small flock organized and built the First Free Will Baptist Church in Kirksville in 1865. Hard times hit during these Civil War reconstruction days, and the church survived for only seven years. But Free Will Baptists became permanently established in this area.

God has always provided a man. Posey Veach, a Civil War veteran, was one whom God chose to establish many of the rural churches that still exist in this area. Mrs. Lizzy Filkins, grandmother of Howard Filkins and Olena McLain, tells of the dedication of this "walkin'" preacher who could not even read the Word, but preached with



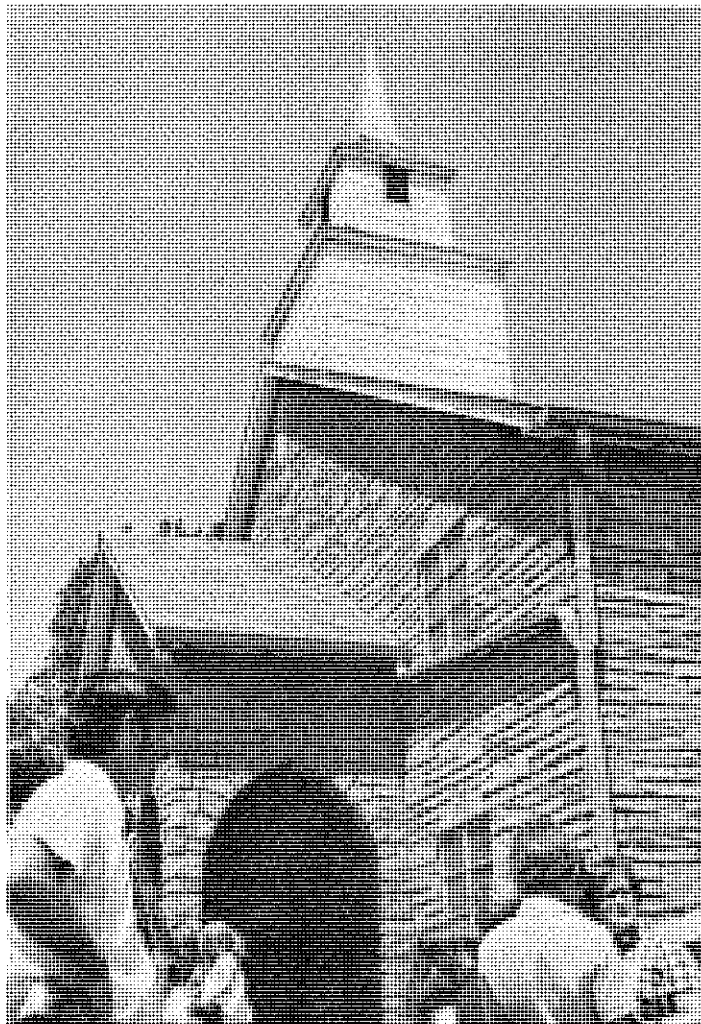
STANDING IN FRONT of their small rural general store, located in the Missouri community of Fegley, are Mr. and Mrs. Herman Miley, parents of Dr. LaVerne Miley, medical missionary to Ivory Coast, West Africa.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mr. Frazier, a native of Springfield, Missouri, is an assistant professor at Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville. He holds a B.S. degree in Education from Southwest Missouri State University and a Masters degree from the University of Missouri. He and his family are members of the First Free Will Baptist Church in Kirksville.

unbelievable power. He began his sermons by repeating the passages his wife read from the Bible and whispered to him. This handicap was overcome a thousand-fold by his tenderhearted concern for the souls of men. Many who were saved under Reverend Veach's ministry became the backbone of other churches in the Northeast Missouri Association of Free Will Baptists. Thirteen active churches made up this association, during one period of time.

None of these churches are overly pretentious structurally. Most fit the typical description of small rural churches. But, is church structure the yardstick by which great churches should be measured? Size of Sunday schools? Number of buses? Amount of money received? No — even though all of these factors are important. In the final analysis, churches should be measured by the *number of people they channel into Christian service.*

One of these relatively small rural churches has molded and shaped the lives of an unusually large number who are faithfully serving the Lord locally and around the world. The only surviving charter member tenderly tells of the birth of the Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church. Tears swelled in the eyes of Mrs. Lizzy Filkins as she described the revival that swept the Hazel Creek community. She related the challenging revival sermons preached by Reverend T. C. Ferguson. The Lord moved the hearts of this small group to recognize the urgent need to minister to the eternity bound folk in their sparsely populated area. They met the challenge. The Lord has bountifully blessed their faithfulness. How this group of believers thrill as they reflect on the joyous conversion experiences of those who have given their lives to the Lord in this unpretentious little church! And these



IN THE SHADOW of the steeple of the First Free Will Baptist Church of Kirksville, Missouri, Missionaries Jim (left) and Olena McLain (far right) visit with members of the congregation. Mrs. McLain attended nearby Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church prior to her departure for college. The Reverend Melvin Knott is the current pastor of Kirksville First.

folk relate, with a faraway look in their eyes, the good times shared with the youth of their church. Dr. LaVerne Miley, Howard and Joan Filkins, Olena McLain and so many others who are faithfully serving the Lord remember these good times also.

The youngest church in the Northeast Missouri Association has had a productive record also. Eighty-nine years after Reverend J. H. Wesscher's flock disbanded their Kirksville church, the first nail was driven into the existing First Free Will Baptist Church of Kirksville. That blow was struck with a spirit of determination that is so characteristic of the folk of this rugged section of Missouri. A much prayed about dream was being realized. Amid

the hammer blows, the clatter of lumber, the rhythmic quieting sound of handsaws, and the frequent high-pitched screams of skill saws, these men's minds drifted back through the miraculous chain of events that led to this joyous occasion.

Memories of the dream shared by several families, whose roots were deep in the common soil of several rural Northeast Missouri Association churches, were recounted as they labored on the auditorium. Their dream of a Free Will Baptist witness in Kirksville served as a catalyst for these families for many months. They persistently prayed that the Lord's will

ABOUT THE COVER

Now the only surviving charter member of the Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church, Mrs. Elizabeth "Lizzy" Filkins and her late husband, Harry, hand cast on a local creek bank some of the concrete blocks forming the foundation of the church. She is the grandmother of Howard Filkins, lay missionary serving in Africa, and Olena McLain, missionary to Japan. She lives on the family farm near Kirksville, Missouri.



By What Yardstick Do We Measure Church Success?

would be done. God's will became evident as families began to tearfully make their way to an old-fashioned altar as revival spirit raced through a meeting jointly sponsored by the National and Missouri Home Mission Boards. After twelve days, thirty-two had been challenged to establish a church in Kirksville. On Wednesday evening of September 30, 1953, the First Free Will Baptist Church of Kirksville was organized. All thirty-two charter members pledged to tithe their income.

Again, the Lord provided a man. A man with the leadership and technical skills to construct a church building. Reverend Lester Jones became pastor of this flock November 4, 1954. Shortly thereafter Reverend Jones and the men of the congregation erected the church auditorium.

Several years later a second building program was led by Reverend Andy Lay. A parsonage and educational unit were completed during Pastor Lay's ministry.

The church building was only a means to a far more important segment of their original dream. This group had loved ones and friends who were unsaved. They had a compassion for the lost of the community. There has been a steady stream of converts to the Lord Jesus Christ since the inception of this church. Not only have many found the Lord here, but many have been brought into Christian maturity and taken responsible positions in the Lord's work.

This church has the unique honor of having two families serving with the Foreign Missions Board, Jerry and Carol Pinkerton and Howard and Joan Filkins. (Howard and Joan moved their membership from the Hazel Creek

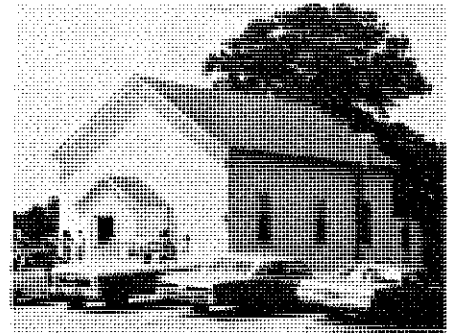
Church to the Kirksville Church after they returned from Free Will Baptist Bible College.)

Why have these two churches produced such good fruit for the Master? Even a casual observer catches comments and recognizes some of the outstanding characteristics of the believers in these churches.

Mr. Boyd Filkins, father of Howard Filkins and Olena McLain, mentions the influence that Sister Lizzy McAdams had on the lives of so many in this northeast corner of the state. "'Sister Lizzy' came for several years and held revivals in the fall, after crops were in," related Mr. Filkins, "and my! how she preached the Word! I've seen rough men who never darkened the door of the church attend these revivals and their hearts would be broken. I was one of the many who was saved under her ministry."

During the course of a visit with Mr. Herman Miley, father of Dr. LaVerne Miley, I asked if he recalled "Sister Lizzy." He responded, "I sure do... during one of her revivals my wife and I rededicated our lives to the Lord." Shortly thereafter, he and his wife moved their church membership to the Hazel Creek Church. I asked Mr. Miley if he could explain why so many missionaries had been produced by this church. Mr. Miley gave much of the credit to their pastors. "We have been blessed with many mission-minded pastors," he recalled. "These men (several FWBBC graduates) consistently preached missions," observed Mr. Miley.

What if Mr. Posey Veach, in spite of his educational deficiencies, had not heeded the call to preach to the folk of northeast Missouri? What if Mr. T. C. Ferguson had not held the revival in the



WITH THE TRADITIONAL LOOK of a small rural church, Hazel Creek Free Will Baptist Church stands unassuming in the Hazel Creek community near Kirksville, Missouri. The Reverend Archie Cooper is pastor.

Hazel Creek community? What if "Sister Lizzy" had not heeded the call to preach revivals in this area? Would Dr. LaVerne Miley be ministering in Africa? Would Howard and Joan Filkins be going to Africa as house parents to our missionaries' children? Would there have been people in Kirksville interested in establishing a Free Will Baptist church in their town?

What if the folk in Kirksville had not responded to the burden for a Free Will Baptist witness in their community? Would Jerry and Carol Pinkerton be going to Africa? Would Vernon Maggart have worked with the Missouri Home Missions Board in the St. Joseph church? Would Peggy Jo McElhinney be in full-time Christian service with Free Will Baptist Bible College? Would Stephanie Vincent be teaching full-time in a Christian day school? Would Ernie and Lila Thompson, Neva and Joyce Thomas have attended Free Will Baptist Bible College? Would Dean Dobbs, Keith Phipps, and Bob Jones be preaching the Gospel? Would the many other converts be consistently serving the Lord in local churches?

Why have all these wonderful things happened in these two small northeast Missouri churches? A few key people, many years ago, heard the call and responded, and many over the years have faithfully continued the work. ▲

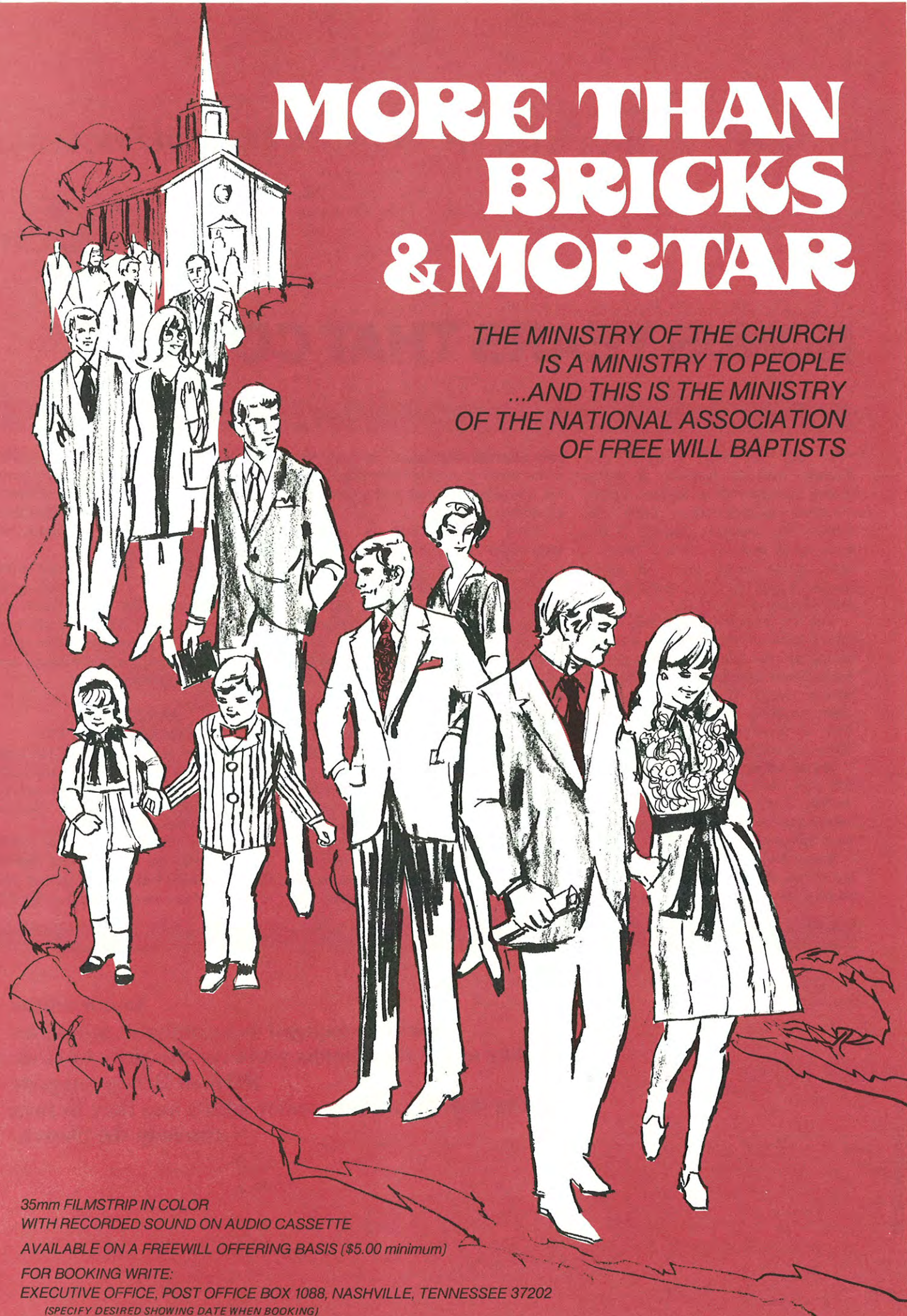
CONTACT

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BONUS YEARS THAT COUNT

It was fun time. Everyone was doubled over in laughter as Agnes Pylant pantomimed a western ballad, changing characters every other line. Sounds like teenagers, doesn't it? But these mirth makers — 176 of them — were senior adults from 14 states, ranging in ages from the late 50s to 102. Agnes Pylant is in her 70s.

The S.S. Emerald Seas sailing in the cool waters of the Bahamas was the setting for this hilarity. It was a Senior Adult Cruise sponsored by the Sunday School Board of Southern Baptists. These sprightly saints spent a glorious week of Bible study and prayer and fellowship and sightseeing.

Senior adults are important people and they need places of service in the church. They should be engaged in meaningful ministries as they spend their bonus years for the glory of God.

Many have lived to a ripe, old age, but ours is the first period in which it is possible for the majority to live beyond

their allotted thereescore years and ten. Since 1930 a woman's life expectancy has increased 13 years and a man's life expectancy 9 years.

With advancement in medical technology our senior adults can not only look forward to living longer, but healthier. Retirement age has been lowered in many places to 62 and some unions are talking about retirement at age 58. Thus senior adults have more time and this additional time can be one of the most valuable assets in our churches.

But, how do we view older people? Do they have to go to the hospital to get attention? Should they be content without pastoral counseling except in serious illness or grief? Is it right that many of them have no place of service in our churches? Why is there not a program designed for their age group?

A planned ministry to meet the particular needs of senior adults should be a part of every church program. We

provide ministers of youth, education, visitation and music. Why not consider a minister to senior adults? This ministry could have a two-fold thrust: What they can do for the church and what the church can do for them.

There must be no retirement from the Lord's work. God can do great things through senior saints. Surely He wants to use His children regardless of age. It must be remembered that there are active retirees, the home-bound and those in nursing care facilities.

MINISTRIES FOR SENIOR ADULTS

What can senior adults do for their church? Many things! Talents and skills acquired during working years can be utilized by the church. Service possibilities include:

Teaching opportunities — A recent survey conducted by Free Will Baptist Sunday School Department reveals that only 5% of our teachers are over age 60.

**Senior adults
should be engaged in meaningful ministries
as they spend their bonus years for the glory of God.
Herman Hersey suggests
ways the church can help senior adults and they in turn
can help the church.**

Many have a great store of Bible knowledge with years of experience to make the lessons relevant to life situations. Helpers are often needed in Sunday school, CTS and Bible School.

Church librarian — A great deal of detail work is necessary to make a church library successful. Senior saints have the time to keep the library open on a regular basis.

Music librarian — A former choir member would be thrilled with the opportunity to keep the music in order. This assistance will upgrade the choir director's efficiency.

Telephone Ministry — Ask senior adults to announce special meetings and contact absentees or prospects. In some areas senior adults are participating in a telephone reassurance ministry. This is a daily call to those living alone to see if they have any needs.

Office work — Your senior members can assist in mailings, bulletin preparation and general work. Help is needed in keeping Sunday school records, lists of visitors and absentees and in keeping general supplies in order. A person with bookkeeping experience could assist in record keeping.

Purchasing agent — Someone with experience could secure bids and make purchases for the church and its related organizations. A retired businessman could relieve the pastor of many man-hours spent in routine purchases.

General maintenance — Painting, minor repairs, landscaping and lawn care can be handled by retirees. Some could use their "green thumb" to plant flower beds on the church grounds.

Meals for church guests — Several could pool their resources and prepare meals for evangelists and missionaries. This could be a covered dish supper involving a large group or two or three in a home.

Committee work — Serving refreshments at Bible School and other events, helping in the nursery, helping with the transportation of other older adults, ushering, directing a tract and literature ministry, visitation and many similar ministries can be performed by retired members.

CHURCH MINISTERS TO SENIOR ADULTS

Now, what should the church do for them? There must first be a change in attitude. This was expressed by President Nixon on June 25, 1971: "What we must build in this country — among all our people — is a new attitude toward old age; an attitude which insists that there can be no retirement from living, no retirement from responsibility, and no retirement from citizenship." We would add "no retirement from Christian service."

The church should not only provide a place in its fellowship for them but minister to their individual needs. A survey should be made of the interests, needs, talents and desires of senior adults. They should take an active part in planning services. Our ministry to senior believers will vary according to the size of the congregation and particular interests of the group.

The church should be aware of the need for evangelism among senior adults. A survey discovered that 20 to 40 percent of the aged in various parts of the nation are not even church members.

Studies have shown that many older people do not go to church because they do not have a ride. Separate transportation should be provided for them apart from the usual bus ministry.

Another primary problem of the aged is loneliness due to the loss of loved ones and friends. A group of friendly visitors could be enlisted. They should have special training and a regular schedule of visitation. Some churches are using the Adopt-A-Grandparent plan. A couple, or family, adopts an elderly couple (or individual) and visits them regularly,

ABOUT THE WRITER: Following a fruitful 8½ year ministry in Garner, North Carolina, Mr. Hersey was appointed full-time Director of Retirement and Insurance Department (based in Nashville, Tennessee) in June of this year. The Bob Jones alumnus and wife Vernie have one daughter, Pat, a sophomore at Bob Jones University.

ministers to their particular needs, gives them special attention during holiday seasons and shares in their hours of loneliness.

Space in the church building should be provided as a meeting place for senior adults. Some have regular weekly or monthly meetings, usually in the morning and closing with a noon meal. This can be an informal time of fellowship or a definite program can be followed.

Travel opportunities are another avenue of service. It may be visiting a shopping center, going to another church during revival services, attending Bible conferences and associational meetings, seeing an historic site, taking an overnight trip or even a cruise together.

A church can provide practical transportation such as going shopping or to the doctor's office or the bank. Experience has proved that oldsters respond better if a modest charge is made for these trips. Practical help in housekeeping and maintenance should be considered.

Camping offers new experiences for senior adults. Associations and districts should sponsor camps if the facilities are adequate to meet the needs of older people.

The results of our ministering to senior members and their ministering through the church are worth noting. More senior adults will be attracted to the church that is concerned about its retirees. The church's outreach will be extended. Many psychological needs will be met. Senior believers will experience a greater depth of commitment. Responsibilities will rest upon many — not just a few.

Let's get some type of ministry started and put our retired people in the mainstream of church life. Your Department of Retirement and Insurance is ready to render assistance in implementing your program.

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth" (Psalm 71:9). Let's see the need, plan our program and then put it into action. ▲

what's your problem?



By R. Eugene Waddell

Question: My husband professes to be a Christian and has for several years. Yet he never leads in family devotions. I feel we need this and yet, if it is done, I must take the lead. I want to please the Lord in this part of our life and yet I wish my husband would seem more enthusiastic in his example before our two children. What should I do?

Answer: I am convinced that Satan wins more decisive battles in the area of the Christian's devotional life than any other. This includes family devotions.

It seems obvious that he wants to get his foot in your home through the open door of a neglected family altar.

You might try having a frank discussion with your husband on the responsibility of the Christian faith. Emphasize again how much family worship means. More than likely, he will respond to that which seems to mean much to you.

Leave no doubt in his mind that you feel family worship is essential to a happy home. Set a time most convenient to the whole family but give preference to the father's schedule. Stick to your schedule whatever comes up. In your planning with your husband, express your desire that *he* take the *lead*. If this will not work out, suggest a family conference to discuss how to improve the situation.

If your children are old enough, they will, no doubt, have some good suggestions. Some families allow the children the privilege of leading devotions occasionally.

Also, try to find out why your husband is reluctant to take the lead in devotions. Some folks just hate to read anything aloud to others. If this is the case, ask that he take charge but call on you or the children to read. Others are shy about public prayer. If this is your husband's problem, I suggest that he be in charge even if he calls on someone else to lead in prayer. He might overcome his fear by praying extemporaneously when the family bows their head for thanksgiving at the table.

Your problem requires discipline. Every family has to battle to keep family worship meaningful. God bless you as you give it your best.

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.

WHAT VISITATION EVANGELISM MEANS TO ME

A retired farmer discovers abundant joy in sharing his faith with unbelievers.

by L. C. Webber

Following my conversion in 1948, at age 43, I heard only casual remarks from the pulpit on visitation or witnessing. A visitation program was begun at Purcell Free Will Baptist Church, Purcell, Oklahoma, eleven years ago. But no classes were conducted to show the need to witness and very little promotion was done.

While attending a Sunday School—C.T.S. workshop at Capitol Hill Church in Oklahoma City, I observed two lessons on visitation. Examples of churches doubling in size convinced me that if we give time, love and get involved we will succeed, for this is God's way.

A few months later Brother Major Followwill became our pastor. He taught classes and started a visitation program. Many began participating in the program but only a few continued.

In February, 1968, Lonnie Sparks gave me the book *Soul Winning Made Easy*. I studied this book over and over, but still didn't try to lead anyone to Christ. Then I attended the National Association in Oklahoma City in July, 1968. One of the ministers spoke on

ABOUT THE WRITER: When Purcell Free Will Baptist Church was organized in 1956, L. C. Webber joined as a charter member. He was ordained to deaconship in 1961. Following retirement from his farm in 1969, Mr. Webber began devoting most of his time to Christian ministry. He has taught almost every class in the Purcell Sunday School.



WITH BIBLE IN HAND, L. C. Webber leaves the Purcell Free Will Baptist Church to begin house to house visitation.

"Possessing Our Possessions." He used Caleb as an example. And as he showed how each family could win their children to Christ through teaching and godly living, conviction came on me. I had never led a soul to Christ although I had been a Christian for 20 years and had been going on visitation for four years. That night I went to the altar, confessed my sin of unconcern for the lost, and vowed I would take the gospel to the lost, regardless of class or type — for they are all God's creation.

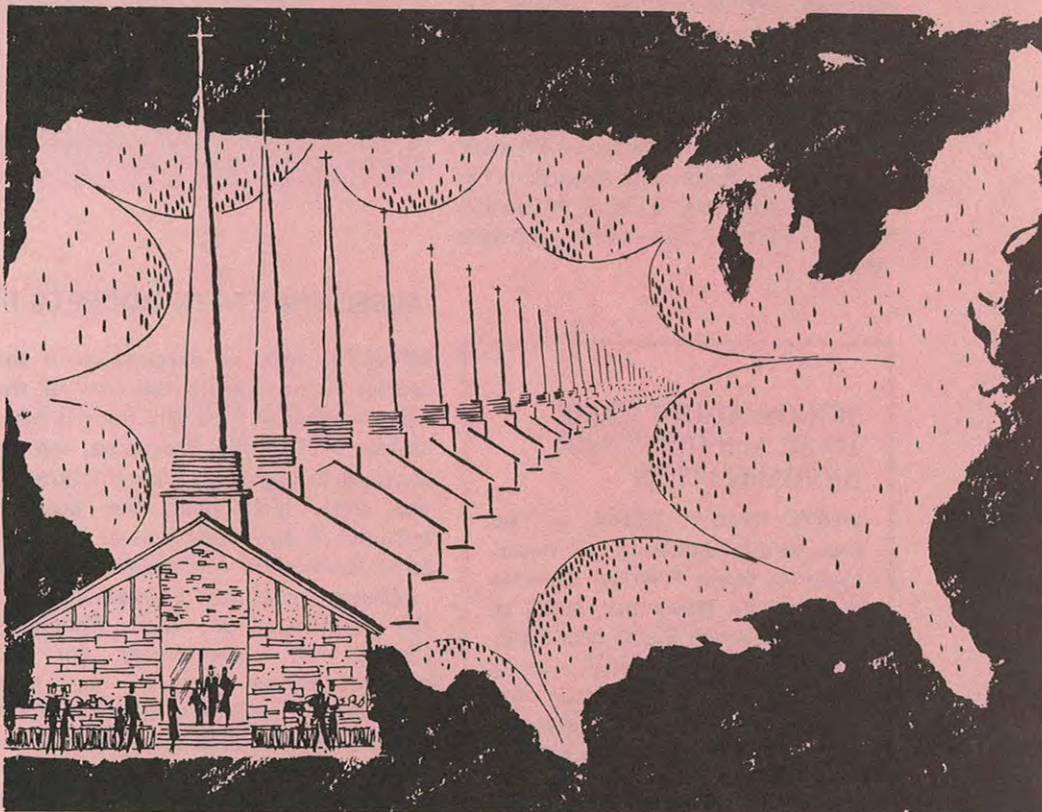
Two days later I tried to persuade the first individual to receive Christ. The first two persons said *no*. The next two said *yes* and one of these persons is in the church serving the Lord today and his conversion dates back to September 3, 1968.

The joy of seeing two people accept Christ caused me to want to carry on the work of witnessing. God gives great promises if we obey Him. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psalm 126:5).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:20). If I am His ambassador, what choice do I have but to go and beg people to accept Christ as Saviour? He is with me giving me the power I need. ▲

1974 GOAL 50 New Churches

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- *Share In This Ministry With A Special Gift
- *Arrange A Home Missions Rally In Your Church

Home Missions and Church Extension Department

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NEW MISSION UNDERWAY IN SOUTHERN ALABAMA

ENTERPRISE, ALA. — The Reverend E. R. Mayo and family have begun a missions ministry in Enterprise, Alabama, known as the "West Point" of the Air Force. Families are being contacted to participate in this recent outreach, and a building suitable for services has been located in the downtown area.

This missions endeavor is a joint project between the National Home Missions Board and the Home Missions Board of the State Line Association in Southern Alabama. This is Alabama's fourth jointly sponsored missions project.

SENIOR ADULT CAMP TO BE A "FIRST" FOR DENOMINATION

WHITE BLUFF, TENN. — The first denominationally sponsored camp for senior Free Will Baptists is slated for November 26-29 at scenic Hillmont Camp near here.

The retreat is designed to bring together senior adults for fellowship, recreation, Bible study and a time of sharing ideas relative to the type of programs needed and desired to meet the requirements of senior adults in the denomination. The camp is under the sponsorship of the Department of Retirement and Insurance of the National Association.

The cost of the three-day retreat — which begins with the evening meal on Monday and closes at noon on Thursday — is \$30.00 including insurance. It is open to senior adults, pastors and other persons interested in working with senior adults in their local areas. Hillmont Camp is an ideal setting for this retreat since all facilities are under one roof with no stairs.

For further information and reservations write: Senior Adult Camp, Department of Retirement and Insurance, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.



FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

MISSOURI STATE ACCEPTS FWBBC LIBRARY PROJECT

MONETT, MO. — Acceptance of the project to underwrite the cost of the Library Wing at Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee, and the approval to begin two Bible institutes in the state highlighted the business sessions of the 60th annual Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists.

Missouri Free Will Baptists accepted the challenge of Jack Paramore, Director of Development for the denominational college, to raise \$125,000 to underwrite the cost of the Library Wing. The project will span a three year period. The Library Wing was constructed in 1972 and already houses the bulk of the library's volumes.

The Missouri College Commission was authorized to set up two Bible institutes with identical programs of study at two strategic locations. Classes are to commence in January, 1974. Projected plans call for the two institutes to come together in a central location in 1976 for the purpose of establishing a permanent campus.

The College Commission will be funded by a four percent allocation from Missouri's Cooperative Fund.

Meeting August 21-23 at the First Church in this southwest Missouri town, the associational program was built around the theme "Facing the Crises of the Church." Delivering the main addresses were Pastors Russel Spurgeon, Trinity Church, Bridgeton; Lynn Wood, First Church, Mtn. Grove; Robert Francis, Southside Church, St. Louis; and Missionary Bill Fulcher of Panama.

On Monday evening preceding the state meeting, the State Sunday School

and CTS Boards were in charge of the evening service designed to benefit the youth. Bringing the message was Don Heard, a layman from Columbia, Missouri, who is a school superintendent. A youth banquet followed the evening service.

The State Woman's Auxiliary Convention met on Tuesday, August 21 under the banner of "Rise Up, Ye Women, At Ease." Guest speaker for the morning worship was Missionary Lonnie Sparks who has served three terms in Africa. Mrs. Sparks was the speaker for the Auxiliary Dinner that evening.

MASSACHUSETTS — SITE OF NEW FREE WILL BAPTIST MINISTRY

BILLERICA, MASS. — The Reverend Mack Owens, long time missions worker in the Northeast, recently moved to Billerica, Massachusetts. The new move marks the beginning of a Free Will Baptist church in this suburban town of Boston. Presently there are no Free Will Baptist churches in the state. If any CONTACT readers have friends in the metropolitan area of Boston who would like to participate in organizing a Free Will Baptist church, they should notify Mack Owens, P.O. Box 484, Billerica, Massachusetts 01821.

The Northeast Association, of which Mack Owens serves as clerk, is composed of nine churches in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and also a Canadian ministry.

NEW CHURCH LETTER FORM RECOMMENDED FOR USE

NASHVILLE, TN. — New multi-copy church letter forms have been approved by the National Association of Free Will Baptists and recommended for use by the local churches as a replacement for all previous forms.

The local church clerk will complete this letter once a year, retain one copy for church records and send three copies to the quarterly or district meeting. The district clerk will (1) keep a copy for the district's records, and (2) mail one copy to the state clerk, and (3) send the other copy to the National Office.

These new forms should be ordered before the next quarterly meeting from a state bookstore or Randall Bookstore, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. They sell for 75¢ a dozen (plus shipping charge). If these reports are distributed at the next quarterly meeting, or before the end of December, the church clerk can compile the statistical information which will coincide with the church record for the fiscal year of 1972.

The church will keep one copy and send the completed letter to the first quarterly meeting after January 1, 1974 — and each year thereafter. This will allow adequate time for the information to be sent to the state association and the national association.

Rather than sending one copy at a time, the National Office requests that the quarterly meeting clerk secure all the letters from every church and then mail a copy of all the letter forms in one large envelope to the state clerk and another copy to the National Office at one time.

Although these new forms request more comprehensive information, the

data is very essential to better evaluate our denominational work. The additional information will especially help the National Departments serve our churches more effectively.

In addition to the annual report forms, a shorter report has been prepared for the church to use in reporting to the other three quarterly meetings during the year. These shorter forms may be ordered in quantity lots (30¢ per dozen), or else you may make necessary changes for your particular associational needs and mimeograph your own copies.

It is necessary for associations to cooperate in using the uniform letters in helping to secure accurate statistical information at every level of our denominational work. Unless every association uses this new form, state and National associations will not obtain accurate and uniform information.

PASTORAL CHANGES

FLORIDA

W. C. Combs to Piney Grove Church, Chipley, from Cocoa Church, Cocoa

IOWA

Don Grice to Riverview Church, Bettendorf, from Sardis Church, Clayton, Alabama

MISSOURI

Max Courtney to Cabool Church, Cabool, from Salem Church, Salem
Ron Ivey to First Church, Fredicktown

NORTH CAROLINA

Eddie Riddick to Sherwood Forest Church, New Bern, from Piney Grove Church, Chipley, Florida

Mike Tart to First Church, Sanford
Alvis Harris to Maranatha Church, Greenville from First Church, Charleston Heights, South Carolina

R. J. Reynolds to Calvary Church, Jacksonville, from Bethel Church, Marion

OKLAHOMA

Charles Murphy to Northeast Church, Shawnee, from First Church, Holdenville

SOUTH CAROLINA

Robert Edwards to First Church, Darlington, from Sherwood Forest Church, New Bern, North Carolina

Robert Cooper to First Church, Charleston Heights

TENNESSEE

Levy Corey to Trinity Church, Nashville

Joe Bragg to Calvary Church, Nashville

ASSOCIATIONS ADOPT COOPERATIVE PLAN

NASHVILLE, TN. — A district association has joined two state associations in recently adopting the Cooperative Plan of Giving according to Rufus Coffey, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

The Blue Ridge Association, which represents 30 churches in Western North Carolina, adopted the Cooperative Plan during their annual meeting in August. The plan was presented to the Executive Committee of the association by Mr. Coffey. The Executive Committee later recommended the plan to the body.

Adoption of the Cooperative Plan in the Blue Ridge Association follows the action of the West Virginia and Ohio State Associations which adopted the plan at their annual meetings in June.

The Ohio State body authorized the Board of Directors to employ a full time promotional man. The Cooperative Plan will be a means of supporting the Ohio State Office while continuing to share in the work of national departments.

The National Executive Secretary expressed gratitude for these associations which have responded to the appeal for greater balanced giving to all denominational ministries. He requested more associations to consider the Cooperative Plan as a practical and effective way to fulfill their denominational stewardship responsibility.

The Cooperative Plan of Support touches every phase of our denominational ministries. Usually, the amount given is ten percent. By giving this way, a portion of everything a person gives to the local church goes to support the total ministry of Christ.

OUTSTANDING GROWTH MARKS SOUTH CAROLINA CHURCH

INMAN, S.C. — Established just four years ago, First Free Will Baptist Church of Inman, South Carolina reports an August 5 Sunday School attendance of 304. There have been 68 professions of faith since January. Pastor Earl Hendrix, who also serves as clerk of the state association, baptized 54 of these converts.

HYMN BOOK PRICES INCREASE

NASHVILLE, TN. — The following prices of *Free Will Baptist Hymn Books* are effective immediately:

1-24 copies	\$2.50
25-99 copies	2.40
100-up	2.25

"The new price list is necessitated by the increased cost of printing the hymnal," observed Executive Secretary Rufus Coffey. The hymnal is a publication of the Executive Office of the National Association.

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT SPIRIT FULLNESS?

AS THE SPIRIT
OF GOD MANIFESTS HIMSELF
IN VARIOUS PARTS
OF THE WORLD TODAY,
WE NEED TO TAKE ANOTHER
LOOK AT THE
SCRIPTURAL TEACHING ON
HOLY SPIRIT FULLNESS.

by Jack Paramore

Is the infilling of the Holy Spirit a once-for-all experience — a baptism that is evidenced only by speaking in tongues? Or is Spirit fullness realized on a continuous, day-by-day basis?

SCRIPTURAL HOLY SPIRIT FULLNESS

I do not believe the Bible even suggests we should seek Holy Spirit baptism, but rather we should repent of sin and turn to Jesus in simple faith. When this is done the miracle of regeneration occurs and in this experience one is simultaneously baptized into the body of Christ. This is Holy Spirit baptism.

The Bible tells us to be filled with the Spirit. Read carefully Ephesians 5:18-21.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

To find out what it means to be filled with the Spirit one needs to examine this passage. In many respects it is the most practical doctrinal passage in the Bible. "Be filled" in this passage literally means "be being filled," a continuous experience.

"... Be filled with the Spirit" is a clear *Bible admonition*. It is a statement of the will of God. Verse 17 says, "Wherefore be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but the filled with the Spirit..." This is the will of God for every believer.

"... Be filled with the Spirit..." is a necessary experience in God's work. You can build a building, get a crowd, deliver a lecture, influence people, etc., but you cannot produce genuine conviction and conversion nor can you build up saints without Spirit fullness. Man's work can go on without it, but God's work cannot.

"... Be filled with the Spirit..." is the *answer to most daily problems* in our Christian lives. Christians do have problems, sometimes mental or emotional, often discouragement, depression, frustration, sometimes domestic. The Spirit-filled life, as set forth in this passage, is the answer.

Two obvious questions arise as we examine the passage: What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? What are the evidences?

The answers to these questions are in the passage. In fact, that is exactly the message of the passage. The context explains the text.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?

The truth is set forth by contrast: "...and be not drunk with wine wherein is excess..." How often we leap over this phrase and rush on to the last five words. In so doing we completely miss the explanation set forth by the Holy Spirit Himself. There is obviously a relationship between being drunk by excessive wine and being filled with the Spirit.

To be filled with excessive wine puts a man under wine's control. The way he walks is affected, as is the way he talks. His mind is influenced so that the

ABOUT THE WRITER: This message was one of three delivered by Mr. Paramore at Free Will Baptist Bible College's 1973 Bible Conference. He serves the College as Director of Development, a position he assumed in 1966 after a successful ministry in full-time evangelism.

decisions he makes are affected. Many of us have seen a man stagger and heard him slur his words when drunk. And too many families have seen the foolish waste of money by a drunk father or mother.

A friend told me recently with tears in her eyes how her father would get drunk on payday and stagger home with his week's wages stuffed in his shirt pocket. Thinking himself rich, he would throw money into the stove though his family was nearly destitute.

We say, therefore, that a drunk man is "under the influence of alcohol." He is not really in control of himself. So the Lord says, "*Be not* drunk with wine wherein is excess; *but* . . ." The word "but" is important. It implies "instead of". In other words, instead of your walk being influenced by wine, let it be influenced by the Holy Spirit. Let your talk and your decisions be under His control.

This is the issue. Are you filled with *self* or with the *Spirit*? Who decides the way you live? Self and Spirit cannot sit on the throne of your heart. From the moment on the road to Damascus when Saul of Tarsus asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?", he was no longer in control of his life. The Holy Spirit was. He said, ". . . yet not I but Christ . . ." (Galatians 2:20) and ". . . God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross . . ." (Galatians 6:14) and "For to me to live is Christ . . ." (Philippians 1:21).

Before we move on, notice the language of the verse. "*And be not . . . but be . . .*" Holy Spirit fullness is available. It is God's will for you. Consequently, your responsibility is not that of seeking an experience, but rather that of surrender, yielding, coming to the end of *self* and committing your all to the Lord. Then by faith *claim* the promise. Be filled. Let it be so. Thank God for it.

WHAT ARE THE EVIDENCES?

It is extremely interesting to me that when God said ". . . be filled with the Spirit" nothing is said about any spiritual gifts, much less the gift of tongues. Modern heretics who teach that the evidence of being filled with the Spirit is speaking in tongues have to fragment scripture in the book of Acts. They cannot support the error from doctrinal books. It is certainly not set forth in the passage before us. Evidences

of Holy Spirit fullness are set forth nonetheless.

Now, notice that verse 18 starts a new sentence but ends with a semicolon rather than a period. The punctuation mark means the thought continues to the next verse which says,

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual song, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

In other words, the first evidence of Holy Spirit fullness is God gives you a new attitude toward yourself: *He gives you a singing heart*. God does something within you to bring you at peace with yourself. All good people are not alike. Some are a delight to be with. Others are depressing. Many people live like they have a bent axle in their soul. Things aren't running smoothly within them. No wonder they have such difficulty getting along with others. They need to die to self and allow the Holy Spirit to take over. He will set the orchestra in order and the melody will begin. They will like themselves better and so will everybody else.

Furthermore, notice that verse 19 also ends with a semicolon rather than a period which means the thought begun in verse 18, and continued in verse 19, continues on to verse 20.

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;"

In other words, God gives you a new attitude toward Himself: *He gives you a thankful heart*.

I was raised on a tobacco farm in North Carolina. Tobacco farmers aren't like anyone else in this whole country. You can believe that. He works 13 months a year. He goes broke every year. He buys a new tractor, a new car, a color TV, adds a room on the house, gets new furniture, buys another farm and goes back into business the next year. He never makes a dime. Just ask him, he'll tell you. I've seen them walk out in the fields after a blistering hot day and dig in the ground with the toes of their shoes to see how deep the moisture was. I've heard them moan from deep down in their soul and look up to the heavens as if to complain. It never rained right, always too early or too late, too much or too little. They were different men from the time of planting until harvest. Way down inside they seemed to say, "You're against me.

I have invested all I have in this crop and it won't rain. I work hard and the elements don't cooperate." And from deep within would escape a moan, "You're against me."

On the other hand I met a young mother who had buried a baby. She said, "I've been saved all my adult life. I dedicated my baby to God. I go to church regularly . . . Why? Please tell me why?" The tears on her cheeks testified of a broken heart. And in it all she was saying, "He's against me. He shouldn't have taken my baby." Whatever the circumstances, to every man full of self, adversity is an offense. But when he dies to self and is filled with the Spirit he settles some things.

He recognizes that *God is*. All doubts about the reality of God's existence are forever gone.

He recognizes that *God cares*. The Holy Spirit makes it ever so clear that God, Who is, cares — whether or not we understand the circumstance.

He recognizes that *God will provide*. So he bows his head in the midst of adverse circumstances and gives ". . . thanks always for all things . . ." Always? Always! For all things? For all things! Even adversity? Even adversity! You see, we see the circumstance today. God sees it in the whole scope of time and eternity. God will take care of His saints. Praise His Name.

He owns the cattle on a thousand hills,
The wealth in every mine.
He owns the rivers, the rocks and rills,
The sun and stars that shine.

Wonderful riches, more than tongue
can tell.

They are my Father's, so they're
mine as well.

He owns the cattle on a thousand hills.
And I know that He cares for me.

The Holy Spirit Who fills me tells me ever so clearly that God provides and gives me a thankful heart.

Notice furthermore that the thought begun in verse 18 and continued through verses 19 and 20 goes on to verse 21.

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord."

In other words, God gives a new attitude toward others: *He gives a submissive heart*. Self becomes less important. Others become more important.

(Please turn to page 18)

Orrs Island, Maine:

Where Free Will Baptists

Witness To Tourists

By Alwilda Hanson Stackpole

Orr's Island is only one of the 365 islands in Casco Bay, Maine. It's the second of three islands in the town of Harpswell, linked together by bridges on Route 24, coming directly from Brunswick, Maine and ending at Land's End on Bailey Island, Maine. Brunswick is joined to Great Island by the Gurnet Bridge, Great Island to Orr's Island by the Orr's Island Bridge and Orr's Island to Bailey Island by the Bailey Island Bridge — a granite, crib stone bridge, the only one of its kind in the world.

In 1748 Joseph Orr purchased the island, known then by the Indian name *Little Sebascodegan*. Joseph and his brother Clement immediately settled on the island and thereafter it was known as Orr's Island. It is 4.5 miles long. The price paid in cords of wood, delivered in Boston, figured out to be about two shillings an acre.

The Orrs were born in Scotland and lived briefly in Ireland before seeking religious freedom in America. They were buried in the cemetery near the Free Will Baptist Church on Orr's Island.

In 1855 William Orr, a son of Clement Orr, gave land upon which the first church was built on Orr's Island. It was called the United Church since residents of Orr's, Bailey and Great Islands joined in building the edifice. Four denominations — Free Will Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Calvin Baptists — held services there. All went to church to worship so there was usually a full house regardless of who the preacher was. Few people owned teams, and during the walk to and from church a good bit of news was

exchanged as there were no telephones there at that time. Music filled the air as hymns were sung on the return home.

In 1878 the Methodist group left the Union Church and built a Methodist Episcopal church about one quarter mile south of the Union Church and cemetery.

On Sunday morning families, friends and neighbors could be seen walking together until they came to the Methodist Church. Their ranks were divided, some to enter this church and others to go on to the Union Church which had now become the Free Will Baptist Church. All other denominations held their services elsewhere. Services were conducted here on Sunday morning, followed by Sunday school. There were also evening services and Tuesday evening prayer meetings.

The last baptism (by immersion) on the shore of Orr's Island was August 6, 1910. Voices of the crowd that lined the beach made the air ring with, "Happy Day! Happy Day! When Jesus washed my sins away; He taught me how to watch and pray and live rejoicing every day. Happy Day! Happy Day!"

Church suppers, held in homes, became a unifying factor in bringing islanders together. Everyone joined in a hymn sing after supper.

Christmas was a major event for adults and children alike. For many years two large trees, reaching from floor to ceiling, were laden with gifts of all descriptions. Occasionally a practical joke was called from the tree to make the evening more merry. There was always a concert at Christmas and

Easter in which all the children participated.

Records show that Benjamin Randall preached at Ocean Park, Auburn and Harpswell. And being a circuit rider, it is possible that he visited our church on Orr's Island. The Auburn Church, built in 1833, has records that show he came to our church for a quarterly meeting in the early 1900s.

In 1916 the church was closed for lack of funds to carry on the work. The older church members had gone to their reward and the younger had left the island to find employment as World War I had called our boys into service. Many of the Island people went to Bath Iron Works (ship building) and later to the Navy Base in Brunswick, Maine.

Donations received by the church treasurer, Mrs. Ellen Hanson, enabled her to keep the church in repair through the years. She was one of six living members when the church was reopened August 6, 1960 by a direct descendant of Clement Orr, Layman Bernard Berry, and his mother, Mrs. F. Mildred Berry, of Randolph, Maine. Mrs. Hanson died in 1968 at the age of 104.

It was through Mrs. Hanson's obituary, in August 1968, that the Reverend Herbert Bryan of Linneus, Maine contacted Home Missionary Mack Owens of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada, who in turn contacted Layman Bernard Berry. Our church was accepted into the Free Will Baptist Northeastern Association in May, 1969.

Bernard Berry was ordained in the Orr's Island church in August, 1970 by the Reverend James Nason of Orono, Maine, assisted by Deacon Alfred Rackley of Topsham. People came from far and near — some because they had once worshiped here and others out of curiosity to see what an old church looked like after being closed for so many years.

ABOUT THE WRITER — The Orr's Island Free Will Baptist Church has played an important part in the life of Mrs. Stackpole. On June 21, 1906, the first class ever to be graduated from Orr's Island Grammar School was given their diplomas at exercises in the Orr's Island Church. She was a member of that class. She united with the church and was baptized with the last group to be baptized from Orr's Island on August 6, 1910, a few years before the church was closed for a period of nearly 40 years. Today, Mrs. Stackpole is over 80 years young and serves the church as a trustee. She resides at Auburn, Maine.

Services are now held each Sunday, except during January and February. Prayer meeting is held on Wednesdays. Each year one Sunday in August is designated as *Old Home Sunday*.

Attendance is small except during the summer. Being a seaport area that attracts many tourists, there are names of visitors from many states, including Canada and England, on the church register. One visitor thanked God that there is *still* one church where folks can worship on Sunday night. "We hope the Bible-inspired messages in our church by the Reverend Berry have helped someone understand better the words of II Timothy 2:15," voiced one member. "The church doors are open to anyone — regardless of denomination or color — who wishes to worship or just visit," she continued.

For two summers we had Vacation Bible Schools. Not having adequate facilities, we could not have it the usual two weeks. So, during July and August we met every Sunday afternoon from two until four o'clock at the church. It became difficult to obtain teachers as there is no employment for ladies on the Island — except during the summer months in restaurants, motels and gift shops. Sunday is the busiest day in these businesses.

The 1963 Bible School offering was sent to the American Bible Society for Bibles to be sent to seven different countries. The 1964 offering went to Dr. Seagraves in Burma. Later a donation was made to the Burma Memorial Foundation in Korea. The 1956 Bible School took the form of a Young People's Worship Hour each Sunday, from March through Christmas.

While the church was closed (1916-1960) people found it more convenient to attend the Methodist church that had moved near the center of the Island. Much opposition was encountered during the reopening of the Free Will Baptist church, since it was a struggle to keep the already established church open. Many felt there was no need for two active churches in a small community. And they had also grown to accept the idea that it was not a church going community.

Ever since World War I, Sunday has become a day of unfinished business — namely, completing neglected duties. Many have to work six days a week to compete with the high cost of living and on Sunday they prefer relaxing by

television and going to church by radio.

The church plans to continue its missions emphasis. It helps support two Free Will Baptist missionary families — the Robert Bryans in Africa and Fred McCoys in Puerto Rico.

In spite of opposition, as one member observed, the Berrys have

continued to give of themselves and their free services to the work of God and the community.

The main thrust of the Berrys' ministry in Orr's Island is to guide believers into spiritual maturity and present a Gospel witness to tourists during spring and summer months. ▲

Thank You for Your Gifts to the . . .

COOPERATIVE PLAN OF SUPPORT August 1973

RECEIPTS:

State	Aug. '73		Aug. '72	Yr. to Date
	Coop	Design.		
Alabama	\$...	\$...	\$...	\$ 2,922.21
Arizona	...	...	...	828.77
Arkansas	1,181.02	...	1,114.60	7,628.13
California	542.51	...	1,037.22	4,518.19
Florida	451.08	...	...	6,051.43
Georgia	832.94	...	644.64	5,438.07
Idaho	59.86	...	90.62	523.47
Illinois	1,148.19	...	1,149.24	9,231.03
Indiana	...	...	106.69	81.92
Kansas	...	...	...	807.02
Kentucky	151.25	(151.25)	326.00	1,014.42
Maryland	70.00	...	20.95	464.49
Michigan	35.42	...	41.82	127.90
Minnesota	63.00	...	55.50	309.41
Mississippi	40.83	...	40.89	587.37
Missouri	2,594.76	(2,594.76)	3,237.24	22,291.98
New Mexico	...	...	...	29.24
North Carolina	125.00	...	100.00	830.00
Northwest Assoc.	...	...	...	89.65
Ohio	5.00	...	25.00	6,182.36
Oklahoma	273.89	(273.89)	3,426.61	5,539.88
Tennessee	439.91	(160.00)	353.19	1,983.14
Texas	96.23	(5.00)	...	1,422.22
Virginia	37.11	...	30.52	523.50
West Virginia	...	...	...	25.00
Totals	\$8,148.00		\$11,800.73	\$79,450.80

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Dept.	\$4,155.36	\$(806.64)	\$ 3,457.41	\$32,904.47
Foreign Missions	1,306.59	(837.92)	2,710.37	15,251.93
Bible College	1,048.95	(586.39)	2,289.18	12,834.15
Home Missions	971.12	(675.42)	1,581.79	9,715.07
Church Training Ser.	308.06	(146.60)	775.85	3,897.42
Retirement & Ins.	217.10	(87.95)	555.93	2,872.26
Layman's Board	95.36	(14.66)	315.99	1,451.17
Commission on Theo- logical Liberalism	45.46	(29.32)	91.97	519.73
Miscellaneous	...	...	22.24	4.60
Totals	\$8,148.00		\$11,800.73	\$79,450.80

A SIGN AND A SEAL

By Dr. Robert Picirilli

Romans 4:11 tells us exactly how circumcision, in the Mosaic period, related to salvation. In the verses preceding verse 11, Paul has proved that Abraham was justified by faith (verse 3) long before he was circumcised (verses 9, 10).

What, then, was the value of circumcision? Paul answers this question in verse 11. He uses two words in his answer. First, he says Abraham "received the *sign* of circumcision". Circumcision was a "sign". If you check back on the original account in Genesis 17:11, you see that God had said, when circumcision was established, that "it shall be a *token* of the covenant betwixt me and you." When Paul uses "sign" in Romans 4:11, he is simply quoting "token", which means the same thing.

"Sign", in Greek, is *semeion*, which refers to anything that signifies, stands for, represents, shows. Circumcision,

then, did not *establish*, but *signified* the covenant.

The other word Paul uses in Romans 4:11 is "seal". Circumcision, he says,

gems

from the
Greek New Testament

was "a *seal* of the righteousness" Abraham already possessed by faith. "Seal" is *sphragis*, which refers to a stamp, an image, an impression made on something for official identification. A notary public, for example, uses a "seal" to make a document official.

The "seal", then (like "sign"), does not *establish* the covenant relationship between God and man, but *testifies* to it. That is what Paul is saying. Abraham was already justified by faith, and he possessed right standing with God. Circumcision was added as a seal, a sign,

a token, identifying and testifying to the righteousness already possessed. As Griffith-Thomas puts it, circumcision did not *confer* or *convey* righteousness, it *confirmed* it.

In my opinion, *baptism*, in the New Testament era, has a very similar purpose and relationship to actual salvation. Baptism, too, is a *sign* and *seal*. The ordinance does not make righteous or establish a right relationship with God. But it does serve, when properly used, to signify, or testify, of that relationship.

As Stifler says: "In no dispensation do rites bestow anything; they are the shadow, not the substance; they are a seal. But the seal is worthless apart from the matter or the document that it attests. The Jew had torn off the seal from the covenant and then vainly boasted of this meaningless imprint." Naturally, there will be those baptised who never have put faith in God and been justified, just as there were Jews circumcised who never were saved. Still, the seal is full of meaning and blessing when practiced by those whose hearts are right by faith. ▲



WORDS FOR WOMEN

Stand up for Decency!

By Fern Crispin

Possibly one of the most frustrating things that has confronted Christians the past few years has been the steady increase in immorality and indecency about us.

Newspapers and magazines are filled with lewd and bizarre materials and many television programs are vulgar and degrading.

In trying to cope with the situation and being unable to determine the course of action to take, it is easy to become discouraged.

We tend to feel as Elijah did when he told God that the children of Israel had all forsaken his covenant, and he (Elijah) was the only one left to serve

him. But God reassured him that he had 7000 who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

I believe that today there are thousands of Christians who are serving God. They earnestly desire to see this moral decadence in America stamped out.

Hopefully we've reached the apex and with help from concerned Christians we can see an improvement in the near future.

The Supreme Court has now made it lawful for local agencies to seize pornographic materials from newsstands and bookstores. This is a beginning and we have had some raids with books and

magazines being confiscated in our state (Oklahoma).

Recently I read that through the efforts of one determined U.S. Senator to improve the quality of television viewing, we now have one of our better programs, "The Waltons."

Each of us may not be as influential as a U.S. Senator, but through our combined efforts we can surmount some of the obstacles.

Prayer is an avenue to God through Christ. Philippians 4:6 reads, "Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything; tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers."

Then to back up our prayers, let's begin on television. Our youth are exposed to that more than any other medium. Let's write to the major broadcasting companies and voice our disapproval of the programs that are vulgar and distasteful. Ask that they be removed and replaced with ones devoid of obscenity and blasphemy.

The address for the three major

Can Faith Exist with Doubt?

By Leroy Forlines

In previous articles, stress has been given to the fact that it is possible for a person to make a false profession of faith. It may be false because it is based on false doctrine. Or, it may be false because it is superficial. False profession forms the basis for a false assurance which is a matter of serious concern.

There is another area of concern. There is also the problem of lack of assurance on the part of people who are saved. The Bible expresses concern that those who are saved have assurance of salvation. While I John stresses the need for concern over false profession, it also stresses the possibility of assurance (I John 2:3; 3:18-21, 24; 4:13 and I John 5:13).

The reasons people may lack assurance fall into two categories: (1) problems related to knowledge, and (2) problems related to experience.

In the area of knowledge, problems arise from lack of knowledge and

misunderstanding. A person may have such a limited knowledge of the doctrine of salvation that he does not see clearly enough to have assurance. There are others who lack assurance because they either understand the

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Bible to teach that a person cannot know he is saved, or that the demands for assurance are so strict that it is difficult for a person to be sure.

The problems related to experience cannot be totally separated from problems of knowledge, but they are best treated as a separate category. Problems in this area are numerous. A person may have difficulty because he cannot be sure of the exact time of his conversion. Those who were converted very young in life cannot recall an experience of drastic change that many who were converted later in life frequently relate. There are others who have difficulty when they hear some people relate dramatic accounts of their conversion experience. Their own experience was less dramatic. Others are bothered by the fact that some people

seem to have a deeper emotional experience in their walk with God than is true in their own case. Others are bothered by their experience of moral victory as compared with what they think it should be.

Before discussing ways of coping with lack of assurance, one problem needs to be answered. Since faith is usually defined as embracing assurance, many feel that this means that to be saved by faith excludes the possibility of having doubts on the part of those who are saved. To hold such a view may seem to be logically convincing, but anyone who has discussed the lack of assurance with very many people cannot accept the conclusion that in every case these people are unsaved. My answer to this problem is as follows. Definitions describe things or ideas in their ideal state. For example, by description a dog has four legs, but that is not to say that there are no three-legged dogs. The same logic can be applied to faith. In its ideal state, doubt is excluded. This does not mean that it cannot exist with doubt. Mark 9:24 furnishes us with an example of this kind of faith. It is my conclusion that a saved person may lack assurance of salvation. In future articles, I will suggest ways of coping with this problem. ▲

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ABOUT THE WRITER — After 35 years as a public school teacher, Mrs. Crispin left the profession to "retire" to the role of a fulltime farmer's wife in the spring of 1973. She and her husband, Carroll, are active lay members in the Prairie Bell Free Will Baptist Church near Putnam in western Oklahoma. ▲

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What Does God's Word Say About Spirit Fullness?

(Continued from page 13)

This principle is applied in three relationships set forth in verse 22 through chapter 6 and verse 9. The first application is made in the husband-wife relationship. Do I hear someone say, "I'll never do it"? Then you're not a Spirit-filled Christian. You cannot be right with God and you will not find peace and happiness until you die to self and submit to your husband.

The other side of the relationship is set forth in verse 25. "Husbands, love your wives . . ." Show them you love them. Really love them "... as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it." Don't you see the message? Self must die. You can't love yourself and others. There must be a removal of self from the throne that the love of God might be shed abroad in our hearts.

We see then that many marital problems can be solved when both partners are filled with the Spirit.

The principle is also applied in the parent-child relationship. Look at chapter 6 and verse 1.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Could it be clearer? Children are to obey their

parents. When the parent says, "Get a haircut," the child should get a haircut. How ridiculous for a teenager to feel he can be right with God without submitting to his parents. Youth movements would do well to learn and abide by this truth.

The other side of this relationship is set forth in verse 4.

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

"Nurture" has to do with discipline while "admonition" has to do with instruction. Both are important. Children need loving, but firm, discipline. They also need instruction in word and godly example. To have a child's honor or respect, the parent should so live as to deserve it. A parent who can't get through the day without a couple of packs of cigarettes and a few beers or shots of liquor isn't in a position to say much to his child who smokes a joint of marijuana. Cigarettes, liquor and marijuana are but three different kinds of dope. So a child's obedience is right, but a parent should so live as to be worthy to discipline.

The third relationship is that of master-servant or employer-employee Verse 5 says:

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling,

in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;"

Servants, or those who work for others, who are filled with the Spirit should give their masters an honest day's work as though they were working for Christ.

The other side of the relationship is set forth in verse 9.

"And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

Those who work others should pay a fair wage remembering that some day their Master in heaven will pay them and He is no respecter of persons. Both the master and servant, if Christians, are alike before the Lord. God is not impressed with who owns the factory. He is concerned with the fruit of godliness, faithfulness, decency and justice. He is concerned about character. He looks at the heart, not the bank account.

So this passage sets forth practical lessons for living the Christian life day by day. Die to self that the Holy Spirit might fully possess you. Allow Him to take control of your walk, your talk, your decisions. And you will have a singing heart, a thankful heart, a submissive heart. This is what it means to be filled with the Spirit and the daily experience can be yours. Let it be. ▲

OUR READERS COMMENT

Dear Mr. Workman:

It pleases me to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to you and your staff for the fine work being done . . . to make CONTACT one of the most interesting publications in circulation today. It goes without saying, of course, that a great deal of your materials are contributions from ministers and laymen and lay-women of our ranks and these contributions highlight the contents of the magazine.

Sincerely
Rev. Milton Gann
Panama City, Fla.

Dear Mr. Workman,

Thank you so much for the July issue of CONTACT. Having been foster parents to an 8 year old Trainable Mental Retardee and a 14 year old T.M.R. for 1 year, I was so pleased to see our denomination realizing there is a work among the handicapped whether it be physical or mental. Our two boys come from different home situations and their needs are different. But they both need love and with God's help we are trying to supply this need. They attend church and Sunday school with us. Stacy, the 14 yr., old sits in the class for

primaries (6-7 yr. olds) and enjoys it. Jeff, our 8 yr. old, stays in our nursery group. Both love church and have learned the motions to our Sunday school choruses. The older boy has speech, the younger does not. We love them and pray that God will help us to help them. For we know we serve a God who can supply our needs and also the needs of two little boys who, in this life, live in a world where they are considered different. But thanks be to God when our Lord returns our little boys will go with Him and in Heaven there will be no differences.

Thank you so much for CONTACT.

Mr. & Mrs. R. B. Scroggins
Lompoc, Calif.

The Sunny Side of Life

By
Executive Secretary
Rufus Coffey

No one likes to think of growing old. Most people do not dwell long on such a depressing thought. Yet the inevitable reality of growing older is a fact of life. Since many adults face old age with a morbid perspective, it is important to look on the bright side of graduating to the role of a senior citizen.

Long ago Job's comforter pointed out how a person could live on the sunny side of life. He says, "Thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning" (Job 11:17). Zophar suggests in the context that anyone who puts sin out of his life discovers old age to be as bright as noonday. The sun breaks out from behind the thick clouds and the darkened shadows are as the bright morning or the sunny noontime.

This thought is expressed more clearly in Proverbs 4:18. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Light along the pathway of the righteous increases with passing years. The evening side of this world grows brighter because it is the prelude to the morning of one better.

Because of the bright prospects, Christians can approach the sunny side of life with confidence and hope. To the obedient child, God has promised long life (Psalm 91:16). Furthermore, the Lord provides and sustains His children throughout life. The psalmist testified, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor His seed begging bread."

Another bright hope for the future is the fulfillment which comes to those who attain maturity of years. In Job 12:12, 13 we read, "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding. With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding."

The senior years are bright because

they offer the possibility of a more productive period of life. Turning the pages of Scripture we find that Moses began his fruitful years of leadership at 80. Or hear the thrilling, exciting testimony of Joshua: "Behold the Lord hath kept me alive, as He said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day four score and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in." It was not until old age that Abraham's faith matured so that he could receive the promised blessing. Space does not permit us to dwell upon the accomplishments of Jacob, Job, Daniel, Samuel or the aged Apostle Paul. However, their life too was filled with exploits for God during their sunny side of life. Suffice it to say that we too can claim the promise that "they shall bring forth fruit in old age."

God has said, "Even to hoary hairs will I carry you . . . even will I carry and will deliver you." Old age with hoary hair is like a lawn covered with winter frost. When the sun shines, the frost melts into great dewdrops. Each drop hanging from its blade of grass reflects the bright rays of the sun to all around. Thus every believer can radiate the Son of God to a godless world. When a breeze passes over the dewdrops they shiver like sparkling tinted jewels reflecting the brilliant colored rays of the sun. In the same way the Christian senior citizen shines as the winds of adversity pass over.

Francis Ridley Havergal expressed the beauty of growing old in these words:

Fear not the westering shadows,
O Children of the Day,
For brighter still and brighter
Shall be your homeward way.
Resplendent as the morning
With fuller glow and power,
And clearer than the noonday
Shall be your evening hour.

New Perspectives on Family Relationships

"Break your child's self-well, not his spirit," urged Bill Gothard, noted Bible teacher. "If you break his spirit, he will grow up feeling inferior." Feverishly, my wife and I took notes as this 38-year-old teacher of the Word — with the aid of an overhead projector — told 9,700 seminar participants how to apply Scriptural principles of discipline in the family.

The seminar is a 32-hour exposure to insights into the meaning and purpose of life from God's perspective. It is based on ten universal, nonoptional principles such as self acceptance, God's order of authority and moral purity. The illustrated lectures vividly portrayed how the conflicts we struggle with in life can be traced directly back to violations of some basic principle during our youth. But even more important were the steps outlined on how to resolve the conflicts. Dr. Gothard expressed how inner conflicts could be resolved by applying basic principles which God has revealed in His Word such as making restitution for wrongs, turning bitterness to forgiveness and submission of teenagers to the authority of parents.

The instructor strongly emphasized God's plan in our day is to accomplish His work through the local church which is functioning in harmony with His divine standards. The strength and the effectiveness of any church is directly related to the spiritual strength of the families in the church, he stated. And, the strength of the family is directly by the vision and leadership of its father, he continued.

I came home from the seminar with new insights and a joyful certainty that God's Word is adequate for all our family needs. As our homes go, so goes our nation. Society rests on its homes. That's why we need to fortify our family life. An immediate return of the home to Biblical principles will save our deteriorating nation.

Our church ministries need to be geared more toward meeting family needs. This is one reason I recommend that you write for information on a seminar in your area.

Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts
Box 1
Oak Brook, Illinois 60521

Attending the seminar is a challenging and spiritually enriching experience.

VIEWPOINT

CONTACT

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Currently . . .

By
EUGENE WORKMAN
Administrative Editor

I appreciate older folks.

I recall as a junior high school boy that I was extremely interested in all phases of history. I often thought I would like to compile a family tree. I guess that is why I loved to hear my grandparents talk about some of the events of yesteryears of which they were a part or knew about. I was always glad for the opportunity to go visit them.

Now that I am older myself, I can look back and recall with fondness a number of folks I consider my elders with whom I have come into contact

while growing up. Most of them I encountered through church work.

Perhaps this is one of the reasons I decided to plan an issue of CONTACT around the theme of the senior adult. I feel that we sometimes overlook our older Christians simply because of their chronological maturity. This is sad, for I feel they can still make a positive contribution to the work of the Lord if given the opportunity. Granted, there are those who are somewhat cantankerous and oversensitive. But, oh, how sweet it is to the ears and heart of a younger Christian, especially a minister, when an elderly saint kindly gives some words of spiritual wisdom and encouragement equal to the maturity of their temporal years.

The Northeast Missouri Association has made a unique contribution to the work of Free Will Baptists. Down through the years this Association has thrust forth into active Christian service more young people than any other Free Will Baptist association of comparable size. A large segment of the Association

was in the past and continues to be composed of Christians who have been serving the Lord for nearly a half century or more. Lynn Frazier, who is one of the younger members of the Association, shares this thrilling account in "By What Yardstick Do We Measure Church Success?"

Herman Hersey, who in his role as Director of the Department of Insurance and Retirement is probably destined to be the crusader for more involvement of the senior adult in the work of the church and denomination, shows that service is a two-way street in his article "Bonus Years That Count."

A retired farmer, L.D. Webber, tells how the Lord used a messenger at the 1968 session of the National Association to awaken him to the need of visitation evangelism. Mrs. Alwilda Stackpole, who has seen the passing of more than eight decades, relates a first-hand history of the Free Will Baptist Church at Orr's Island, Maine, noting that the high attendance is now during the tourist season. ▲