



# Contact

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

July 1978

## Salvation:

What Can I Do About It?

Liberated!

Buttonwillow Gambler

Prodigal Mother

Welcome to the Family

Special Evangelism Issue

# REPENT OR PERISH

**“God doesn’t always  
forgive everybody . . . .”**

By  
Evangelist Bobby Jackson

**T**here is a false concept of God prevalent among men.

The religious song, “He,” popular a few years back, expressed it very well. Remember the words? “He lights the stars at night . . . He decides who writes a symphony . . . He takes the time to hear a child’s first prayer. . . .” He, of course, is God. Then the last sentence of the song says, “Though it makes Him sad to see the way we live, He’ll always say, ‘I forgive.’”

That is not so! God doesn’t always forgive everybody. God never forgives anybody—apart from repentance.

Repentance is certainly not the most popular subject during any age. And it is not the frequent note sounded from the pulpit today.

Wicked, selfish, materialistic, cheating, swindling, indulgent,

unrepentant sinners want a soft-sounding, ear-tickling, back-scratching, conscience-salving, Sunday morning sermon that upsets nobody, disturbs nobody, and permits a peaceful continuance in sin.

What a contrast modern preaching is to those courageous giants of God in biblical days!

### **Preachers of Repentance**

Nathan pointed an accusing finger in the face of king David and said, “Thou art the man. You adulterous murderer! You stole Uriah’s wife and murdered him.”

Amos, crude, uneducated, dressed in the garb of a herdsman, marched down streets, past guards, through halls, into the king’s chamber and thundered the message of God, “You which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters,

‘Bring, and let us drink.’ The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness . . . that he will take you away with hooks” (Amos 4:1,2).

What a different sound from those today who say to the crooked business man who has accumulated such gain at the expense of the poor and underprivileged, “Your wealth is a blessing from the Lord. All this is evidently God’s approval. Now you may share with great generosity with the poor unfortunates.”

Isaiah echoed the voice of God, “. . . when you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; *put away the evil* of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:15-17).

John the Baptist came crying, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:2,8).

To Herod, John said, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother Philip's wife." It cost John his head. But then prophets who preach repentance never win popular approval from the rebuked.

Jesus preached it. "I tell you," He said, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Peter clearly presented the truth: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out . . ." (Acts 3:19).

Paul sounded the same note, "God . . . commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

The resurrected Christ's commission to His disciples for evangelism was: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations" (Luke 24:47).

The Lord's last word to the church in Revelation is "Repent . . . or else!"

Repentance is evidently a necessary attitude of heart toward God for the remission of sins, conversion of the soul, salvation from death and hell.

### Meaning of Repentance

What is repentance? As is often the case, the most logical approach is negative.

Repentance is not conviction. A deep conviction of sin is a necessary prerequisite to repentance, but it is not repentance.

Many are convicted in conscience and heart who never repent. The enraged Jews "were cut to the heart" under the preaching of Stephen. They didn't repent.

Felix "trembled" at the preaching of Paul, but said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient

season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25).

The rich young ruler turned away from Christ "sad" and "grieved."

Many have listened to the message of the Word of God, been convicted of the Holy Spirit, stood trembling with clenched fists, and never repented.

Repentance is not contrition. A genuine godly sorrow for sin is necessary to repentance. But sorrow is not repentance. Tears and repentance are not the same. Many are weeping today because of sin, but they have not repented.

Many come to an altar in a preaching service, kneel, weep, get up and walk out the door to live like the devil. Repentance cannot be measured by the tears in a handkerchief.

Don't misunderstand. Most folks who repent probably weep. The problem is that most who weep don't repent.

Judas experienced sorrow. There is no evidence of his repentance.

Those imprisoned for crimes are sorrowful. Many of those in trouble as a result of sin are sorry. They are sorry they were caught or found out. This is not repentance.

Confession is not repentance. Now sincere repentance in the heart produces honest confession of sin. The problem is in misunderstanding biblical confession.

If confession means admitting to God you have sinned or even naming the sins, then confession is absurd.

No one need inform God of his sins. Don't you suppose God knows you have sinned and knows what the sins are?

A wife, praying for her husband, said, "Now Lord, you know John is drunk. . . ." Her husband broke in and said, "Don't tell Him I'm drunk. Tell Him I'm sick."



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## REPENT (from page 3)

You don't have to tell God when you're drunk, sick or have done wrong. He knows that.

True Bible confession involves turning from sin and is therefore linked with repentance. Read Proverbs 28:13: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but *whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*"

Isaiah said, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him

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**"Repentance  
means being  
sorry enough  
to quit."**

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return unto the Lord; and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (55:7).

Although conviction, contrition, confessions are not repentance, all are involved in repenting. Repentance actually is a deep conviction with Godly contrition involving genuine confession that brings about a discontinuance of sin.

Repentance in the Bible is from a word that simply means "to change your mind." Repentance, therefore, is a change of mind about self, God and sinning. It is a turning from self to God, from sin to righteousness.

This change of mind involves the entire person, conviction in the conscience, contrition in the emotions, discontinuance in the will.

A dear saintly lady told Sam Jones, "Repentance means to be sorry enough to quit."

No theologian could say it better.

Repentance made the young man who said to his father, "I'll not go work today in that vineyard," turn

around and go to work in the vineyard.

Repentance brought Zacchaeus to say to Jesus, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold."

Repentance produces a cessation of the sin and a desire toward restoration and restitution.

### Practice of Repentance

The problem between man and God is not ignorance of the subject. It is not a problem for theologians.

Repentance is not a sermon to be preached; it is an attitude of heart and mind to be practiced. Repentance is not a lesson to be taught in doctrine; it is a turning from sin to God to be done by human beings.

Repentance is not an article to be written for this magazine; it is an actual experience in life between a man and God.

So this is the question: Have you personally, honestly, genuinely, biblically repented of your sins? Have you changed your mind about sinning, turned by faith to Jesus Christ for mercy and pardon? Are your sins forgiven?

If not, then in your sins you will eternally perish, die without hope, be cast from God's presence forever.

Yet, it is not His will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (See II Peter 3:9.)

As the prodigal, will you come to yourself today and say, "I will arise and go to my Father"?

Then arise and go!

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Bobby Jackson, moderator of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, has been involved in full-time evangelistic work for 27 years. ▲*

## THE TESTIMONY OF A PAIR OF GLOVES

By Jack Littlejohn

Five years ago I was hanging in a five and ten cent store. I had hung there a long time. In fact, I had finally given up any hope that I would ever be used for what I was made. No one cared for me. Oh, they would glance at me, and some would even touch me. But none cared enough to buy me, for when they would see my price tag I could hear things like, "Are they nuts?" Or, "They're crazy!"

This was the story until he came in. I could tell he had his eye on me from the very first. He was a special kind of person. I'll tell you I didn't know how to act! He actually took me off the rack!

And then here came the salesman. "Here, here," he said, "those are the poorest quality gloves we have in the store; here, take these."

"No," said the good man, "I've been looking for this pair of gloves, and I'm going to buy them."

"But the price is much too high," said the salesman.

But the good man walked right by him, payed the price and took me home with him. I could hardly believe it! Someone had wanted me enough to pay the price.

Well, this was all new to me. When we got to the field, he pulled me out of his pocket and put his big warm hands inside me. So this was what I was made for. My, what a glorious feeling! I will never forget it.

As I look back, I didn't do so well those first days of work. I was stiff and didn't move well, but as I yielded to the contours of his hand, we seemed to work better and better together.

I'm old now. Holes are in my thumb and little finger, but it doesn't bother me.

In fact, I rejoice the more. Now others can see more of the blessed one that bought me.

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Jack Littlejohn is pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church, Clovis, CA. He is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College.*



# LIBERATED

Jesus Christ liberated me in August of my 16th summer. That was 20 years ago. What happened that 1958 Thursday, I discovered later, was successful evangelism on the muddy banks of a Louisiana bayou.

Sixteen others, mostly teenagers, prayed at the same crowded altar. I cannot vouch for the sincerity of the other 16, but as for me, I stepped across a threshold into a new world. The dark nightmare in sin was ended.

My life had a kind of second beginning. Something intensely personal, almost poetic, happened. This was before the "born again" cult became popular. If I recall correctly, the preacher said something

like "He's prayed through" to explain the change in me.

It's been a long time since I talked with any eyewitnesses to my conversion. Of my close associates, no one remembers when I was in sin and lost. They all know me as a preacher, an editor or Bible teacher. My children have never known a day when their father didn't love Jesus. My wife can't remember the foul, evil years that once were my total existence.

I alone know the joy of my personal release from sin. How exhilarating to have walked long enough with God that most people who know me call me "brother." That's what this issue of *CONTACT* is all about—tracing the threads of grace in many lives back to that precise moment of first life. No matter what a person can potentially become, he can never be anything until he is born. Everything else must wait.

We have prepared this special issue of *CONTACT* to celebrate beginnings of spiritual life. A sequence of articles narrating the

evangelism event highlight the pages.

We discovered a startling fact while mapping July *CONTACT*. Material we usually print tells how to grow and mature in the Christian life. We had published almost nothing in recent years explaining how to inaugurate spiritual life. The time is ripe to sound an evangelism note.

Evangelism is God's sunburst to keep the church fresh. It is the control room of Christ's Great Commission. The first public acts of Jesus and His last public words were sheathed in evangelism.

In more recent years evangelism has circled its wagons in high-walled coliseums or huge outdoor arenas. While massive rallies may be the most visible dimension, the fact remains that most successful evangelism takes place on a more humble level in local churches, in door-to-door canvassing or one-on-one witnessing encounters.

Evangelism is not optional for the church. Every Christian must find his place along the great evangelism river and its tributaries. Let me invite you to join the *CONTACT* staff in a celebration of new life—Evangelism! ▲

TESTIMONY

**THE  
BUTTONWILLOW  
GAMBLER**

By Johnie Hale

Always out to con or cheat someone, I was a professional gambler in California for many years. While other teenagers played football and baseball, I ran my own cardroom in Buttonwillow, California, before I was 16.

It didn't take me long to want more action than a tame cardroom could offer. Some shrewd card dealers showed me sleight of hand card maneuvers. I practiced long and hard and learned more ways to deceive other players at cards than you would believe.

I was caught cheating and thrown out of gambling casinos from Bakersfield to Reno. I then practiced dealing cards in front of a mirror until I couldn't catch myself cheating. My "luck" changed. Finally, some of the casino bosses knew I was cheating them but couldn't detect how. Gambling joint after gambling joint put out the word on me.

I made money in double handfuls and lost it just as quickly. My life was threatened by thugs in organized crime. When gambling got too hot in California, I switched to bootlegging whiskey in Oklahoma.

# SALVATION: WHAT CAN



# DO ABOUT IT?

My wife and I had everything, and yet we had nothing. The glitter was gone. Life was blackness and a terrible burden.

But that all changed in October, 1957.

Aurthur (Bo) Coffman was preaching his first revival as a licensed minister. My buddy, James Robison, insisted I go along with him to services that night to keep a promise he had made his brother that he would attend one night of the revival meeting.

James and I had been close buddies for the last 11 years and had gone through many scrapes together. I felt I owed it to him to

help keep a promise made his brother.

After work that Friday, instead of going to the bar to shoot shuffleboard as we usually did, we and our wives drove the 65 miles from Bartlesville, Oklahoma to New Hope Free Will Baptist Church in Claremore. This was the first time my heart was ever spoken to by the gospel message. I went home that night with conviction of sin heavy on my heart.

The next night found me in a different church to prove to myself there was something unusual about that Free Will Baptist church and to see if I would feel any

different. The conviction of sin was the same.

I spent a very miserable weekend. Monday back on the job with my buddy found us talking of attending that revival in Claremore again. James assured me if he felt the same as before, he planned to be saved that night. What he meant by that I really didn't know. We went that night. My wife declined the invitation to go as she



By Joseph G. Ange

It was a never-to-be-forgotten night in Philippi. The Philippian Jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" He couldn't have asked a more important question—the question people in all the world have been asking ever since.

Paul and Silas, God's mighty messengers, responded with the right answer and immediately said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

This is a thrilling story, the conversion of the Philippian jailer. It's the account of a man spiritually dead being made alive, a man's family getting saved, spiritual darkness turning into glorious light, the

drama of tragic and almost suicidal gloom changing to superlative joy. How wonderful!

Millions in this world need this same transforming experience—the joy of being saved.

God wants each one to go to heaven. God said, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked . . ." (Ezekiel 33:11a). Our Lord wept over the lost of Jerusalem and the multitudes during His earthly ministry. (See Luke 19:41.) He invited sinners time and again to come unto Him and be saved. Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

Even though God desires that all men be saved and go to heaven, only the saved will go to heaven. To the disciples Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). The unsaved will not be permitted to

enter that great city. (See Revelation 21:27.)

All men without Christ are lost. Romans 3:23 and Isaiah 53:6 declare man a sinner and gone away from God. The upper strata of society, even ecclesiastics without God, are lost and in need of the new birth. Nicodemus, the learned teacher of John 3, was repeatedly told that he must be born again.

The bottom rung of society are also lost. The sinful woman of John 4 was clearly shown to be a sinner and in need of salvation.

Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman were both saved. The method Jesus employed to win them was different. The message was the same.

Sin leads to eternal death. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." See also Romans 6:23a, Revelation 20:11-15, and Revelation 21:8 which tell us that sin's wages are frightening, fearful and forever.

God has wonderfully provided salvation. Jonah exclaimed, "... Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9c). Paul wrote, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11).



## GAMBLER (from page 7)

said people could lose their minds being in church so much.

That night my buddy made his way to an altar of prayer, but I stood rooted to the spot even though I wanted to go. James went home rejoicing, and I went home to spend another miserable night.

Tuesday morning, October 9, 1957, was a cold, damp, foggy morning. It didn't seem to me the sun would ever shine again. Arriving on the job, I found my buddy already at work and singing,

"Just a Little Talk with Jesus." I felt like clubbing him in the head. He spent the morning talking about how good it was to be free from sin.

I felt like I might die at any time because I was so miserable. Many times that morning I fell on my knees in a sandpile behind the new house we were working in. I pleaded that God would spare my life till I could get to church again, as I thought I had to be in a church to be saved.

Right after noon that day I told my buddy I was so sick I was going to the doctor. The doctor checked me thoroughly and said

he couldn't seem to find anything wrong—no fever, blood pressure okay, no sign of illness of any kind. My reaction to the doctor wasn't very pleasant as I didn't see how anyone could be as deathly sick as I was and not have any symptoms.

Going back on the job, I asked my buddy if he planned to attend the revival again that night. He said, "No, I was saved last night." I told him I would go, but I was too sick to drive. He volunteered to take me.

The evangelist preached a very short sermon, and when the invitation was given that night, I quickly

## SALVATION (from page 7)

This salvation is only through Jesus Christ, God's Son. I Peter 1:18-20 declares, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious"; II Corinthians 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"; John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

Hungry hearts are still asking, "What must I do to be saved?" John 5:24 fully supplies the answer to that great question: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Four facts are set forth by Jesus in this verse that clearly gives the answer.

First, there is the *hearing* of the Word. There is no case in the New Testament of any person getting saved without hearing. Paul agreed with Jesus in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Hearing implies recognition of the Word as a message from God for the soul. Hearing produces conviction of sin (Acts 2:37; Romans 3:10-23). The Law of God is a schoolmaster that shows us our need of Christ. Hearing the Word leads to believing, which only the Word of God can produce.

*Believing* is the absolute essential to receiving God's Son and being saved. The New Testament Scriptures are unbroken in stressing belief as the indispensable ingredient in salvation. (See John 1:12; 3:15,16,18,36; Romans 10:8-14.) It is always "he that believeth." Hearing leads to believing, and believing is receiving.

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## *"Hungry hearts are still asking, 'What must I do to be saved?'"*

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fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

Romans 5:8 tells us, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Love's sweetest story is told repeatedly in the precious Word. These passages underscore this blessed truth: I Peter 2:4,

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"; Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree"; I Peter 3:18, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." So we sing:

Oh, the love that drew  
salvation's plan!  
Oh, the grace that brought it  
down to man!  
Oh, the mighty gulf that God  
did span at Calvary!



went forward. Within a few minutes five more people had followed, two couples and James' wife.

That night the greatest thing to happen to me in my 34 years occurred. I found joy and peace in my heart, and the great burden of sin and guilt lifted. I didn't know why God had saved me, but I knew he had. He had called me out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Up to this time my life had been a continual cycle of disappointments, frustrations and failures, most of them caused by the dreadful, sinful life I had been living. Now to think that God in His great love and mercy could love me and

forgive me and lift that awful burden of sin was almost more than my mind could grasp.

I felt so empty and so weak that I stayed home from work the next two days wondering over this marvelous thing the Lord had done for me. I determined to follow the Lord and try to make as good a servant for Him as I had for the devil.

Within two weeks, my wife and three children were saved, and we were all baptized. God called me into the ministry. I tried to find services to be in every night of the week. I was licensed to preach February 8, 1958, and ordained

February 8, 1959. God has been good to me.

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Johnie Hale pastors Elnora FWB Church, Walnut Ridge, AR. ▲*

Therefore, the third factor answering the question "What must I do to be saved?" is *receiving*. This is expressed in the words "...hath everlasting life" (John 5:24c). The Scriptures repeatedly declare the truth of receiving as essential to being saved. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

The end result of receiving is explained in I John 5:12, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Getting saved is also conversion—an experience, a passing over.

John 5:24d says, "...but is passed from death unto life." The true hearer, believer, receiver has life. He has been born again (John 3:3,5,7). He has passed over from death to life (Ephesians 2:1). He has been translated from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1:13). This cannot be completely explained. It must be believed and experienced.

Therefore, John 5:24 sets forth the completed transaction—hearing, believing, receiving, experiencing.

Have you received the Son of God? Have you experienced new life in Christ? Christ alone can save. You can be saved now. The Scriptures

make this plain. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord; and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6,7).

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***"... sin's wages  
are frightening,  
fearful and  
forever."***

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"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (II Corinthians 6:2).

"While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation" (Hebrews 3:15).

Paul on the Damascus road, the learned teacher Nicodemus, the immoral woman at the well, the Philippian jailer on the verge of suicide, the maniac of Gadara in the cemetery, and the tax collector Zacchaeus were all saved instantly. You can have salvation instantly, too.

Are you asking, "What must I do to be saved?" Then, hear, believe, receive, and pass over from death unto life. In the words of John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that HEARETH MY WORD, and BELIEVETH on Him that sent me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation (or judgment), but IS PASSED FROM DEATH unto LIFE."

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Ange is director of religious activities at Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, TN. ▲*

## TESTIMONY

# I DIED IN VIETNAM

By Jim O'Donnell

Bullets began to rise. They seemed as big as Ping-Pong balls. I knew one was going to kill me. I wasn't scared—I was terrified!

Every muscle in my body tensed; my mouth went dry. Beads of sweat ran down my face. I could have cried, but instead I began to pray.

I prayed that God would forgive me and save me. As I prayed this simple prayer, I felt a warm glow enter from my head and work all the way to my toes. I was saved.

I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior while flying an

Army helicopter in I Corps Vietnam. But that's only the middle of the story. It began when I was a college student about three years earlier.

A friend, Stan Geyer, was a member of Campus Crusade for Christ. He had spent many hours telling me of Jesus and His love. I had spent many hours telling him how crazy he was.

All my life I had felt self-sufficient. It seems that everything I set my mind to I accomplished. God and church were for weak people, who couldn't stand on their own. I didn't need that.

I met and married Patty Blecha

# BORN AGAIN--

# ~~IMPOSSIBLE~~ ?

By Fred Warner

It was Nicodemus who asked Jesus, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

Obviously Nicodemus was in the dark as to the meaning of our Lord's statement, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." However, his plight was not an uncommon one. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to

him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Man cannot grasp or understand spiritual truth apart from divine assistance in some form. The eunuch found himself in much the same dilemma as Nicodemus in Acts 8:30,31. When Philip asked him if he understood what he was

in college. We were married in a church only because it would be a nicer ceremony. We felt self-sufficient with one another. We didn't need God.

When those eventual orders came sending me to Vietnam, I knew I was going to die. I thought I hid this knowledge from Patty and my family, but they knew. The thought crossed my mind, "Run to Canada." But I couldn't live with myself if I had. That day arrived when I said my last good-bye to Patty at Travis Air Force Base, California, and headed to Vietnam—fully knowing I would die there.

When I arrived in Vietnam, a

heavy weight seemed on me. I was almost frantic in my letter writing to Patty. I knew each would be my last letter. I was lonely in a crowd. I was assigned to the 23rd Infantry Division located in what seemed to be the worst area of Vietnam—Military Region I.

I boarded an Air Force C-130 and headed north to Chu Lai. My fears were not helped at all when the airfield was being mortared when we arrived. From Chu Lai I was given orders to join F Troop, 8th Cavalry at Marble Mountain Air Field. F Troop was an Air Cavalry unit whose mission was to search out and destroy the enemy. Our

area included all of Region I, clear to the demilitarized zone.

After that day in the helicopter when Christ entered my life, everything seemed to change. I knew then that even if I died I had nothing to fear. Yet, more importantly I saw the Lord's hand protect me. I became platoon leader of the Aero-Rifle Platoon.



reading in Isaiah 53, the eunuch replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" And Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

Although Nicodemus was a "teacher," he still did not understand. So Jesus proceeded to explain the nature of the new birth. In John 3:5 Jesus makes it clear that the new birth is spiritual as opposed to physical. Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here Jesus is speaking solely of the new birth—of being born from above. (The term "water" in this verse is symbolic of the Word of God without which no one can be saved. Salvation is wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. See Romans 10:17, Ephesians 5:26, and 1 Peter 1:23.)

In the verse that follows Jesus re-emphasizes the fact that there are two births—the physical and the

spiritual. That "which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

In John 3:8 Jesus takes Nicodemus yet another step in understanding the new birth. Jesus compares the office work of the Holy Spirit to the wind. He says,

Later in the conversation, Jesus illustrates the simplicity of experiencing the new birth by reminding Nicodemus of Israel's experience with the serpent in the wilderness. According to Numbers 21:8 all those who had sinned in the wilderness were healed by simply looking upon

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*"The new birth is a mystery you cannot explain, but a reality you cannot deny!"*

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"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." In substance Jesus said, one cannot deny the existence of the wind because he cannot see it when he can see the effects of it. Someone has put it another way, "The new birth is a mystery you cannot explain, but a reality you cannot deny!"

a brass serpent. (The serpent in the wilderness typified Jesus Christ being crucified on the cross as the sacrifice for man's sin.) With this background Jesus says in John 3:14,15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." So we conclude that one is *born again by believing*—by trusting



## I DIED (from page 11)

One mission found me leading a flight of four aircraft into a landing zone (LZ). We were taking fire from both sides. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) taught its soldiers to aim at the lead aircraft; in case they missed the lead, they might hit the second craft. Three of the four aircraft in my flight took hits. The only one not hit was mine!

A medical evacuation (medi-vac) was called after some men had been badly wounded. An effort was made to land, but due to heavy fire they turned back. I was asked if I would try. I said, yes. I am not brave; yet I felt the Lord urge me to go.

As I made my approach, two Cobra Gunships providing fire support were driven back. After I landed, I found I was in the wrong LZ. My medi-vac was in the LZ just beyond a tree line on my left. I then did what seemed to be a very foolish thing: I picked up the

helicopter and hovered above the trees.

As I went over, I could see NVA soldiers shooting straight up at me. My door-gunners were yelling as they returned fire straight below us. We did not take a single hit. Skill as a pilot? No, I would have been thrown out of flight school for such a stunt. Bravery? No, I was shaking too much for that. Luck? No, that wasn't it. It was the Lord showing me His love.

Easter became an important time to me in Vietnam. First, as a newborn Christian I finally knew

## BORN AGAIN (from page 11)

and relying solely upon Christ and His redemptive work on the cross for salvation. Numerous Scriptures verify that a person is saved by faith alone. See Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16 and Ephesians 2:8,9.

John 1:11-13 explains the new birth. In verse 12 the "power to become the sons of God" is again linked to "them that believe on His name." Then in verse 13 John gives us a more detailed explanation of the new birth.

First, he informs his readers that the new birth is "*not of blood*" or not of human descent. Salvation is not something one inherits. The fact that one's parents are Christians does not mean that he is a Christian. Salvation is a matter of personal choice.

Second, John makes it clear that salvation is "*not of the flesh*" or not by human desire. No degree of human effort can make one a Christian. Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves. . . ."

One cannot be a Christian by trying anymore than one can be an elephant by trying. To be an elephant, one must be born an elephant; so it is with being a Christian.

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***"One cannot be a Christian by trying anymore than one can be an elephant by trying."***

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Finally, on the negative side, John tells us that the new birth is "*not of the will of man*" or not by human design. No person or human organization on earth has the power

to make one a child of God. One can belong to anything and everything, even a local church, and still not be a child of God.

Having given the negative side as to how one is *not* "born again," John turns to the positive side of salvation. He says, the new birth is "of God!" That means one must be "born of God" to be saved from sin! So we conclude salvation is not human but heavenly in its origin.

The new birth is wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

Accept no substitutes! There isn't one. The only way to go to heaven is through the new birth. There is only one way to be born again, and that is by believing! "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Fred Warner is pastor of First FWB Church, Russellville, AR. He is a member of the Foreign Missions Board. ▲*

what Easter really meant—Christ's resurrection. Secondly, Easter was the toughest time for my unit. We were hit by the NVA invasion across the DMZ; I lost several friends during that time.

But for the grace of God I would have been one of those killed. My commanding officer pulled me off a mission to return to our base. The next trip out the crew I left was shot down.

Soon the Lord had me on my way home. I was whisked away so rapidly that I didn't have time to

pack or tell my wife Patty. Yet the Lord told her I was coming.

Upon returning to the States, I went through a period of questioning about my experiences and salvation. Brother Jesse Dunn, home missionary to Boise, Idaho, who had helped my wife to find Jesus began to answer many of the questions that had filled me. Soon I knew that my next step was to reaffirm my commitment to Christ. Brother Dunn and I then knelt and prayed by the coffee table in my living room.

As I look back, I thank God that I died in Vietnam—the old sinful me died, and a new me dedicated to Christ was born.

*ABOUT THE WRITER: James (Jim) O'Donnell is pastor of Community Free Will Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon. ▲*

## TWO GOLDEN DAYS

By Ken Doggett

**T**here are two days of the week about which I never worry. Two carefree days, kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension.

One of these is *yesterday*.

Yesterday with all its cares and frets, with all its pains and aches, all its faults, its mistakes and blunders has passed forever beyond the reach of my recall. I cannot unsay a word that I said yesterday.

All that it holds of my life, of wrongs, regret and sorrow is in the hands of the mighty God who can bring honey out of the rock and sweet waters out of the bitterest desert—the God of love who can make the wrong things right, turn weeping into laughter, give beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, joy of the morning for the woe of the night.

Save for the beautiful memories, sweet and tender, that linger like perfumes of roses in the heart of the day that is gone, I have nothing to do with yesterday. It was mine; it is God's.

And the other day I do not worry about is *tomorrow*.

Tomorrow with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its perils, its large promise and poor performance, its failures and mistakes is as far beyond the reach of my mastery as its dead sister, yesterday. It is a day of God's. Its sun will rise in roseate splendor or behind a mask of weeping clouds. But it will rise.

I have no possession in that unborn day of grace. All else is in the safekeeping of that infinite God who holds for me the treasure of yesterday. His love is higher than the stars, wider than the skies, deeper than the seas. Tomorrow—it is God's day. It will be mine.

There is left for me, then, but one day of the week—*today*.

With faith and trust in the Lord any man can fight the battles of today, and any woman can carry the burdens of just one day.

O friend, it is only when to the burdens and cares of today carefully measured out to us by the infinite wisdom and might that gives with them the promise, "As thy day so shall thy strength be," we willfully add the burdens of those two awful eternities—yesterday and tomorrow—that we break down. It

isn't the experience of today that drives men mad. It is the remorse for something that happened yesterday, the dread of what tomorrow may disclose.

These are God's days. Leave them with Him.

Therefore, I think, and I do, and I journey but one day at a time. That is the easy day. That is man's day. Nay, rather, that is our day—God's day and mine. And while faithfully and dutifully I run my course and work my appointed task on that day of ours, God the Almighty and the All-loving takes care of yesterday and tomorrow.

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).

"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear" (Psalm 118:6).

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself" (Matthew 6:34).

*Reprinted from The Sower, publication of Oak Park Free Will Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Ken Doggett pastors. ▲*

## TESTIMONY

# THE BLACK SHEEP

By Roy Thomas

I grew up on a farm in the Magic Valley of southern Idaho. Because of the strong Mormon influence in that section of the country, there are few gospel preaching churches. Since my parents were not Christians and no pastor or

church ever worked with us, our family never attended church.

My parents were good, hard working, honest people, but an emptiness was in their hearts that can only be filled by Christ. A home filled with searching, frustrated, dissatisfied people produces a miserable existence.

When I was 20, I enlisted in the United States Air Force. I was scheduled to leave home April 9, 1951. Two weeks prior to my leaving, the first Free Will Baptist preacher who had ever been in the Northwest came to Filer, Idaho, a small town about 30 miles from my home, and conducted a revival

# Welcome To The Family

*It's a time of new friends and newer ideas for the convert. Pastor Jim Walker offers practical suggestions for those all-important first few weeks in the Christian's life.*

By Jim Walker

**N**ow that you are saved, you are a babe in Christ. As far as God is concerned, you have just been born.

We (as pastors) are concerned that you not become a casualty. As parents care for a newborn baby, we

meeting. His name was Jake Gage. My parents had known him in Arkansas where they grew up. They went to hear him preach and were saved.

I remember the excitement and joy that was theirs. I understood very little about what had happened to them, but I was quite sure it was not for me!

I left for the service not to return home until Christmas. During that time my mother wrote every week and usually my father would include a page or so. They poured their love for Christ, the new joy they had found, and their burden for me into those letters. It

sounded so strange to read the words, "We're praying for you, son." Although I couldn't explain why, I didn't like it. I wished they would stop praying.

Not long after I left for the service, my parents and other Christians had come in contact with Rev. Virgil Florence, a Free Will Baptist preacher living in Oklahoma. Brother Florence consented to come to Idaho and begin the first Free Will Baptist church in that state or anywhere in the Northwest. My father drove his truck to Oklahoma and moved the Florence family to Idaho.

The church was built in Buhl,

Idaho, 14 miles from where we lived. I received a letter from Mom telling about the church's beginning and about my sister Pauline's conversion. Soon a letter came which said that my brother Bob had been saved. Not long after, her letter said that Ronnie, my baby brother who was 10 years old at the time, had accepted Christ at church that Sunday. That left me as the "black sheep" of the family.



need to take care of you the same way. No one expects a newborn to walk before he crawls; neither do people put him out in the street and say, "Good Luck! If you need help, let us know."

No! Parents take good care of that newborn so that he will mature into a healthy adult. We, too, do not want to put you out into the world as a fledgling to survive the brutal attacks of Satan. We want you to know that we are available to help you. Several steps will assist you in growing as a new Christian.

Just as it is important for you to grow physically from infancy to adulthood, you need to grow spiritually. One such way is to start immediately attending a new converts' class in your church. If there is no class, ask the pastor about starting one.

In our church, we have a class on Sunday morning during the Sunday

school hour. We use the 13 lessons from the National Home Mission Department and concentrate on one lesson per week. As pastor, I teach this class. Anyone can begin the very next Sunday after he is saved.

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*"Allow those  
you meet in  
church to become  
your friends."*

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It is a very informal class, and we discuss any problems the new converts have encountered the previous week. I have found that those who complete the course usually continue on to join the ranks of others who support the church in all areas.

Don and Becky Franklin, who after being saved started attending our new convert's class, said:

The Converts' class gave us a better understanding of what

the Free Will Baptist church believes. We were able to ask questions about anything that was on our minds. We gained better Bible study habits and were put under conviction about things we had thought nothing about before.

Because the first weeks will be very crucial for you as a new convert, a new convert's class can be a vital link to strengthening your Christian experience.

Baptism is another step toward growth. The very first command that God gives to the new convert is to be baptized: "Repent, and be baptized . . ." (Acts 2:38). Some may want to wait until a later date for various reasons. However, by waiting Satan will try his best to convince you not to be baptized. Furthermore, baptism will give you victory and assurance. After your conversion, in obedience to God's



## BLACK SHEEP (from page 19)

Things began to happen to bring dissatisfaction with my way of life. I had a new Ford car. I was really proud of that car. In three month's time I wrecked it three times. As soon as the garage would get it repaired, I would wreck it again. Each time I would get a letter from

my parents saying, "The Lord spared your life. We are praying for you."

Then I received orders to go overseas. I thought of the airplane ride, and I had never flown. I thought, "What if it should crash?" I went to see the first sergeant, and he said, "You will go by ship." I talked to other boys and learned that the ocean is eight miles deep in places and that we would travel through 7,000 miles of water. I thought, "What if the ship should sink?"

Then I left for home on furlough. I had just got my car out of the

shop the night before. Going across Illinois on slick roads I slid into the back of a pickup and smashed the front end and the radiator into the fan. It took them until noon the next day to get it to where the car could limp home.

I arrived at home on Saturday, and my family insisted that I go to church with them the next day. I made it through Sunday school pretty well, but the preaching tore me up. It seemed that everything the pastor said was about me. I wondered how a man I had never met could know so much about me. During the invitation I had a

## WELCOME (from page 15)

command, you will want to please Him and be baptized. Baptism gives public announcement that you have died to your old life of sin and are raised to new life in Christ.

The next step for you is to join a church. You may be asking, "What kind of church?" Personally, I hope you will join a Free Will Baptist

never settle down often stay immature in their spiritual growth.

Examine the program of the church before you join. Ask yourself these questions: "Is this church involved in a worldwide ministry of soul winning and missions? Is it meeting the needs of the whole family? Are people being saved on a regular basis? Is the program

cannot buy. There is nothing wrong in allowing your life to become involved in God's work and His people.

Take the opportunity to share what you found in Christ with others. After Andrew came to Jesus, he went first to his own brother Simon Peter and told him what he had found. (See John 1:35-42.) Not much is known about Andrew except this incident in his life. How wonderful to be used by God to bring your brother to Jesus. Let God prove that He will use anyone who will let himself be used. Ephesians 3:20 describes God as "him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Start tithing to the local church the first week you are saved. Let God's promises become real to you. He will open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings, more than there is room enough to hold (Malachi 3:10).

Also, begin right away to support missions in your giving. The church at Philippi found this promise to be true *after* giving their support to Paul. (See Philippians 4:15-19.)

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***"By joining a church you gain a feeling of belonging. You will have a place to serve as well as a place to serve you."***

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church.

By joining a church you gain a feeling of belonging. You will have a place to serve as well as a place to serve you. This will discourage "church hopping." Christians who go from one church to another and

geared so there would be a place for me to become active?"

As you become a regular attender of the church services, allow those you meet in church to become your friends. The result of fellowship with other believers is something money



strong urge to go to the front, but I resisted.

That afternoon I went out alone for awhile to try to get my thoughts collected. All I can remember was the misery!

We returned to church on Sunday night for the evening service. They had a testimony service, and my whole family testified about the joy, peace and contentment they had found in Christ.

I can't remember what Brother Florence preached on that night, except that it fit me. When the invitation was given, my brother

Bob, who was standing beside me, said, "Roy, I'll go with you, if you want to go." We stepped out into the aisle, and the rest was easy. I knelt at the altar, repented of my sins, placed my trust in Christ, and arose a new man in Christ Jesus!

My life changed. For the first time I knew real happiness. Somehow, I wasn't afraid of the airplane or the boat ride or anything else. I had a peace in my heart that told me God would take care of me. For 27 years now I have experienced the joy of salvation and the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Roy Thomas is Associate Director of the Home Missions Department. He will assume duties as department director August 1. ▲*

See page 31 for  
your invitation  
to accept Christ.

"God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7.)

Study God's Word. Have you ever received a love letter? How exciting to receive news from that special friend who has a first place in your heart. God's Word is His love letter to you. You will get to know more about Him and more of what He expects of you as one of His children. Find a time during the day that best suits you to get alone with God and His Word.

Communicate with God. Do not allow anything to keep you from spending time with God. Most marital problems come from lack of communication between the husband and wife. Time should be taken to talk about each partner's needs and desires. You will get to know God better the more you talk to Him. Do not be afraid to express to Him your needs and desires. Remember He loves you and has proven it (Romans 5:8). He wants you to call unto Him and expect great and mighty things which you do not even know (Jeremiah 33:3). He wants you to ask for wisdom (James 1:5,6). He desires to bless

you because you obey Him (I John 3:22).

By now Satan has already told you how silly you were by confessing your sins to God and receiving Jesus as your Savior. This is one of his ways of getting you to doubt your salvation. If you have not yet, be sure you write in the front of your Bible something like this: "I received Jesus as my personal Savior on (date you were saved)."

When Satan makes you doubt your conversion experience, you can stick that under his nose. I guarantee he will have no defense. Keep in mind that your conversion was an experience not an emotional feeling. John knew you would have those kind of days, and that is why he wrote to you the words of I John 5:13: "That ye may know that ye have eternal life." Do not get discouraged; others have experienced the same problem.

When you slip and do or say something that is not becoming to a Christian, do not throw up your hands and quit. Realize that God is aware of your human frailness

(Psalm 103:14). He has promised to help you (Isaiah 41:9b,10,13). Brush yourself off, and continue on. Ask God to forgive you and to help you not to do it again. Remember new converts like yourself will make mistakes.

Finally, have fun being saved! Others will notice the change. Some may scorn you, but to others your life-style will become contagious.

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Jim Walker is pastor of Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, South Roxana, Illinois. He is a member of the Foreign Missions Board. ▲*

Did you miss

"Liberated!"

on page

5?

## TESTIMONY

# A PRODIGAL MOTHER

By Joyce Nutting Bollinger

I was brought up in a Christian home. My father has been a minister for 23 years. My great desire in life had been to go just as far into the music world as possible. It seemed glamorous and fascinating to see singers and musicians on and off stage in their sparkling clothes and their exciting way of life.

So, I began following this way of life. I got a job singing in supper clubs. It did not take long to realize how empty and meaningless this could be. Instead of being glamorous and exciting to me, it began to show me teenage alcoholics, dope

heads, prostitution, broken lives, and other sin in its ugliness. I began to wonder what I was doing working around things such as this.

This was so different from the sheltered life I had lived at home. I remembered how peaceful it was to come home and enjoy one of Mom's home-cooked meals, then to lie down, relax and appreciate the feeling of a Christian home.

But I continued the supper club route. One tour took my band to Toledo, Ohio. While in Toledo, I called home to see how my three-year-old twins were doing. Mother told me in as kind a way as possible that the children missed

# WOMEN AND

**There's a bright, fresh dimension  
awaiting women who study  
beyond devotional books and  
Sunday school quarterlies.**

By Rebecca Pugh

**W**here is your treasure? "Where your treasure is," Jesus said, "there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

Mary is the prime example of a woman whose heart was set on being a learner at Jesus' feet rather than assisting Martha in preparing a meal (Luke 10:38-42). Jesus commended her as having chosen the "good part."

Like Mary, we should be willing to adjust our priorities so that being a disciple or learner of Jesus is most important. We should let God do something in and through us that may surprise, hurt, but always stabilize us.

The very word "learner" expresses the idea of a continuing, transforming process that has a beginning but no end. Because of

hurried life-styles, women, unfortunately, are often content to remain Sunday-school-quarterly learners or *Streams in the Desert* or *Daily Bread* learners rather than diligent, self-disciplined, personal students of God's Word.

Out of neglect or inability to interpret or comprehend the Scriptures, we leave such things to the men. Hiding behind an apron, diapers, a job or even soap operas, we as women are prone to shun our responsibility to "grow up into Him in all things" (Ephesians 4:15), to be "rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith" (Colossians 2:7), to be skillful in the "word of righteousness . . . having our senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Jesus said in John 8:31, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples . . ."

The Bible expresses purpose for our lives as believers: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime

me and it would probably be best that I be with them.

They would listen to my records. Sitting in front of the record player, they cried, "Momma, Momma, I love you." Then they would kiss the records as if they were me. As I listened to Mother tell me these things, I began to cry. I told her that I was coming home.

I came home and was only there a short while when I received a call to come back to Caesar's Palace. Even though something inside me said, "Don't go," I felt that I needed the money.

I moved in with the folks and sang in Joplin. While at home I watched my Dad as he would go to

church and preach the Gospel and labor for the Lord. I knew that a short time later I would be singing in a club. I could hardly sit across the table from him and Mom, for I knew it was breaking their hearts.

Finally, after losing 20 pounds under the weight of guilt and conviction, I walked down the steps of my folks' place one Sunday morning and began to think of the wreck I had made of my life. I had come out of a family of ministers and missionaries, but my life had been lived so differently. I had, in effect, turned my back on what I had been taught.

So I began to pray and ask God's forgiveness. I unloaded all

my cares upon Him and asked that He give me happiness once again. I must have prayed for two or three hours.

The Lord did forgive, and He has blessed my life. He has given me a Christian husband and three beautiful children. I shall sing His praises until He calls me home. I want to do so much for Him because He has done so many wonderful things for me. What a wonderful Savior!

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Bollinger is the daughter of Rev. Lester Nutting, pastor of Pleasant Grove Free Will Baptist Church, Anderson, MO. Reprinted from the Gem, January, 1978. ▲*

# THE BIBLE

were written for our learning..." (Romans 15:4). Through a study of God's writings, we gain understanding into God's perspective of life. (See II Timothy 2:15.) Joshua confirms that meditation in God's law produces obedience which leads to true prosperity and success (Joshua 1:8).

Psalms 119 is an excellent commentary on the value of being a wholehearted (v.2), diligent (v.4) learner of God's Word. First, the learner must be undefiled, uncontaminated, not polluted (v.1). She is pure in body, mind, soul and spirit. She is keenly sensitive to righteousness (vs. 7,9,11,22,29,36,104). Her priorities are in proper view in relation to material possessions (vs. 14, 18,35,47,113,127). She is free to do right, to be the woman God intends her to be (vs. 45,73,128).

The need to be a Bible-learner frustrates many women who feel there are not enough hours in the

day to study God's Word. Yet, memorizing Scripture while washing dishes, ironing, or even drying one's hair gives a woman a sense of self-fulfillment because she knows she is using her time wisely. Then during other periods in the day whether driving or cooking, she is able to reflect on some truth that has been especially meaningful.

Further consideration should be given to spending less time talking on the telephone, watching television, or reading secular novels or magazines.

Many benefits are gained that enhance one's entire life from making the effort to be a serious student of God's Word. One benefit is a clearer understanding of God's ways. We begin to see life from His point of view. Our desire is not only to obey and please God, but our lives are changed to serve others cheerfully.

Furthermore, our conversation with friends will become more meaningful when we focus on God's

exciting lessons we are experiencing rather than on empty chatter. The Psalmist said, "Make me to understand the way of thy precepts; so shall I talk of thy wondrous works" (119:27).

We will appreciate the dear friendship of other Christian women who also consistently study God's Word. Psalm 119:63 points out, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." Our enthusiasm will be evident to others and influence them also to be learners.

Ultimately, we will be trophies of praise to God. God delights most in an upright heart that yearns to know Him. "I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments" (Psalm 119:7).

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Rebecca Pugh teaches at North County Christian School, St. Louis, MO. She is a member of Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, South Roxana, IL. ▲*



FREE WILL BAPTIST  
**newsfront**

**TRYMON MESSER NAMED  
NEW HOME MISSIONS  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

NASHVILLE, TN—Kansas laypastor Trymon Messer has been appointed associate director of the National Home Missions Department. Messer is replacing Roy Thomas, who will become Home Missions director in August. Thomas vacated the associate director's office when General Director Robert Shockey resigned to accept another position.



The new associate director has pastored First Free Will Baptist Church, Salina, Kansas, for 13½ years. Messer, 45-year-old Mississippi native, sparked First Church growth from two families to an 864 record attendance. The Salina Church is the largest established as a National Home Missions project.

Mr. Messer is widely known as a conference speaker on evangelism and soul winning. He has initiated the Attack program in several churches and taught church planting methods to home missions churches. Messer's successful lay ministry is unique in Free Will Baptist annals.

He garnered Layman of the Year awards in 1964 (Oklahoma Bible College) and 1969 (National Association). The business minded layman has chaired the Kansas State Missions Board and served on both the National Home Missions Board and the Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College Board of Trustees, Moore, Oklahoma.

The United State Marine Corps veteran and his wife Opal have three children. Their sons Rick and Mike are students at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College.

**OKLAHOMA PASTOR NIXES PEPSICO VODKA INVOLVEMENT**

MOORE, OK—Pastor Dan Farmer, First Free Will Baptist Church, Moore, says he has bought his last Pepsi Cola. Based on Pepsico's (the company manufacturing Pepsi Cola) deep involvement in Russian vodka trade, Rev. Farmer wrote in an editorial, "I have drunk my last Pepsi. I have had it with the Pepsi generation of which I have been a part."

Farmer's editorial reported that although Pepsico is only importing 200,000 cases of Stolichnaya Vodka to the United States annually, the company is now seeking to raise that annual import figure to

1,000,000 cases. The company's stated goal is to place one bottle of Russian vodka on the table of every American household.

After learning of Pepsico's alliance with the Russian vodka industry, Mr. Farmer said, "I am sorry that I have drunk Pepsi for the last several years . . . . Pepsi has been the national drink of Free Will Baptists."

Farmer concluded that he intended to write his local Pepsi bottler and inform the company they had lost one customer at least. He called for others to join him in the Pepsi protest.

**CTS FALL CAMPAIGN  
TO "DEVELOP DISCIPLES"**

NASHVILLE, TN—"Developing Disciples" is the theme for the 1978 National CTS Promotional Campaign. Four subthemes, one for each week of the campaign, focus on the goals of Church Training Service: "Developing Disciples Obedient to Jesus Christ," "Developing Disciples Committed to the Church," "Developing Disciples Dedicated to Winning the Lost," "Developing Disciples Able to Reproduce Themselves in Others."

The enlargement drive will begin on the first Sunday in September and continue throughout the month. National awards will be given to the top church with the largest percentage of increase in attendance in each of four divisions. Average attendance will be taken from the four Sundays in September with the percentage of increase based on comparison with the average CTS attendance during March-April-May, 1978.

In order to enter the campaign and be eligible for the national award, a CTS must register by sending in an official registration form by August 21. A report of September's average attendance must be sent to the National CTS office no later than October 9.

The four divisions are as follows:

- A—150 up
- B—100-149
- C— 50-99
- D— 49 & below.

The CTS director's promotional guide contains ideas and suggestions for making the promotional campaign successful. Church promotional materials are also available now. Write to CTS, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, TN 37202.

## OHIO CHURCH CREATES OUTREACH POSITION, EMPLOYS BDB SHOCKEY

COLUMBUS, OH—Welch Avenue Free Will Baptist Church, Columbus, has secured the services of Bob Shockey to fill its newly created position of director of missions and evangelism outreach effective August 1. Paul Thompson pastors the growing Ohio congregation.



Mr. Shockey's duties will include setting up a missions and evangelism department in the church. Ultimately the department will specialize in area church planting and team evangelistic ministries. Shockey will also be responsible for organizing soul-winning and church growth retreats for ministers and laypersons.

Another major dimension of Shockey's new task will be building a 13-week Christian bootcamp for ministers and laymen. Bootcamp training is designed to focus on an accelerated Bible institute level approach. Shockey is also expected to organize on-the-job training for local church workers in two-day sessions.

Mr. Shockey will be terminating as general director of the National Home Missions Board July 31. He has served as general director for five years. He was field secretary three years and a board member six years.

Under his leadership gifts to National Home Missions swelled to \$700,000 annually. Missionary personnel increased from 26 to 46 families on the field.

## NASHVILLE NEWSMAN FETED BY LOCAL PASTORS

NASHVILLE, TN—The Metropolitan Free Will Baptist Pastors Association of Nashville hosted an appreciation dinner May 23 for retiring religious news editor Bob Bell Jr. of *The Nashville Banner*.

Bell left the Nashville paper in May after 27 years as church news editor to assume a public relations post. During his years at the *Banner*, Mr. Bell was hailed for his fairness and ethics in reporting church news.

Cofer's Chapel pastor Eugene Waddell spoke of his deep appreciation for Bell because of the kindness shown to Free Will Baptists by the reporter. Executive Secretary Rufus Coffey lauded Bell's professionalism and genuine warmth.

Mr. Bell spoke informally to the group and cited the great untapped resource of effective church bulletin usage. He pled for accuracy in all news reporting.

Bell confirmed his commitment to a God-called ministry. He underscored the necessity for preachers to become experts in biblical truth and not wander into adjacent fields. The retiring newsman urged local pastors to utilize newspaper ads in promoting community awareness of their churches.

Bell concluded by praising the Free Will Baptist reputation in Nashville. "You have the solid historical background that people want. You have learned to shun the very appearance of evil. You have a reputation that others in this city wish they had."

## BIBLE COLLEGE OBSERVES SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER

NASHVILLE, TN — Students and teachers at Free Will Baptist Bible College held a Day of Prayer on campus April 19.

President L. C. Johnson in an opening convocation challenged students to take full advantage of the opportunities the day could open to them. Students then assembled in smaller prayer units, led by upperclassmen, to share prayer requests and give thanks. Teachers and staff workers also met to pray.

At 11:30 the college family reassembled in the auditorium. Several students testified as to what the day had meant and shared further requests. Dr. Johnson then called for earnest prayer centered around three requests: for the unsaved families of students, for students' physical and financial needs, and for the spiritual needs of those assembled.

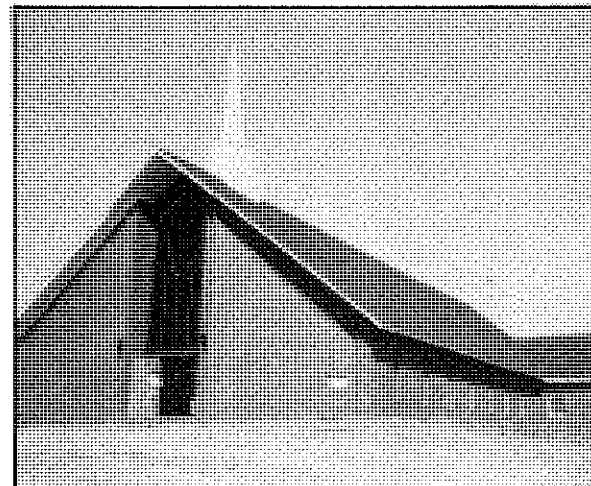
One refrain was repeated by several students who testified: "Thank God for a school where people believe in prayer!"

## "WORLD OUTREACH SUNDAY" BEGINS CHURCH'S NEW LIFE

SPARTANBURG, SC—North Spartanburg Free Will Baptist Church celebrated "World Outreach Sunday" in its new facilities on Belcher Road April 9. Pastor Robert Rose led the congregation of 300 in giving \$557.12 to foreign missions. Faith promises amounted to \$270 per month.

Rev. Henry Van Kluyve, Foreign Missions Department director of deputation, climaxed a week of services held at the old location with a special missions emphasis message for the first service in the new church.

Previously known as First Church, Spartanburg, the congregation moved to their new \$210,000 building after 10 years of planning and praying. The brick edifice, located on seven acres, provides 16 classrooms and is centrally heated and cooled. The sanctuary, which seats 400, has laminated beams. Attendance averages 150, according to Pastor Rose.



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## newsfront

(continued)

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### JIM COX TO FILL ACADEMIC DEAN ROLE

FRESNO, CA—James H. (Jim) Cox has been named academic dean at California Christian College effective the fall semester, 1978. CCC President Dr. Daniel Parker says Cox will be moving to California in August to assume his new duties.

Cox, pastor of West Jefferson Free Will Baptist Church, West Jefferson, Ohio, is a Ph.D. candidate in administration of higher education at Ohio State University. He will limit himself to student counseling and essential administrative responsibilities during the 1978-79 academic year in order to complete his doctoral dissertation.

Mr. Cox, 35, earned an M.A. degree at Ohio State University and a B.S. degree from Malone College, Canton, Ohio. He also attended Brethren Seminary, Ashland, Ohio, and Morris Harvey College, Charleston, West Virginia.

Since August, 1977, Mr. Cox has been a graduate research associate in continuing education at Ohio State. In that capacity he was academic advisor and orientation instructor for new students.

He has taught eight years in the public school system at elementary and junior high levels. Brother Cox's pastorates include churches at Mansfield, Cleveland, and West Jefferson, Ohio.

The Logan, West Virginia, native has chaired Ohio's Home Missions Board, moderated the Central Ohio Conference and served on the conference Executive Board.

Dr. Cox is married to the former Diana Prichard. They have two sons, James (15) and Terry (13).

### REV. E. M. FRENCH, RETIRED MINISTER, DIES

GREENEVILLE, TN—The Rev. E. M. French, 75, of Route 1, Greeneville, died Friday, April 21, in Laughlin Memorial Hospital.

The retired Free Will Baptist minister spent 47 years in the ministry and had pastored in Knox, Greene and Jefferson counties.

Brother French served 35 years on the Board of the Free Will Baptist Children's Home, Greeneville, with 15 of those years as chairman. He supervised the construction of three campus buildings. French was interim superintendent at the home for a short period.

Rev. French served as moderator of Tennessee's Union Association and State Association.

The funeral was conducted Sunday, April 23, at East Greene Free Will Baptist Church, where he was a member. Interment was in Mosheim Central Cemetery. Dr. Charles Thigpen and Rev. Roy Neas officiated.

Rev. French is survived by his wife Gurthie Johnson French; two daughters Mrs. Robert (Lucille) Cutshaw Jr., Greeneville and Mrs. Larry (Marie) Cutshaw, Mason, Ohio; one son Norman A. French, Greeneville; five grandchildren, one brother, one sister and several nieces and nephews.

### MASTER'S MEN CHAPTER SPONSORS "MEET THE PASTOR"

SMITHFIELD, NC—The Master's Men organized at Unity Free Will Baptist Church, Smithfield, just over a year ago with the declared intention to be more than "just another activity." In keeping with self-imposed guidelines, the group staged a five-man "Meet the Pastor" program to really inform laymen of pastors' needs and ideas.

Members of Unity Church's Master's Men coordinated a program on pastoral relationships following television's "Meet the Press" format. A local radio announcer hosted the occasion, and five area pastors served on the panel. They fielded questions ranging from involvement in civic

### FWBBC GRADUATES 67

NASHVILLE, TN—Sixty-seven graduates were honored in Free Will Baptist Bible College's 35th Commencement Exercises held in Nashville May 11. Thirty-seven students received the bachelor of arts degree; 19, the bachelor of science degree; seven, the Christian worker's Bible diploma; and four, the two-year business certificate.

Families, friends and fellow students filled the College's Activities Building for the 10:00 a.m. graduation exercises.

Three seniors addressed the assembly and Dr. Robert Picirilli, registrar, delivered the final challenge. Senior speakers were David Burgess ("The Christian Philosophy of Education"), Frank Breeden ("The Impact of Our College"), and Freda Crittenden ("Tribute of Thanks"). Dr. Picirilli's challenge urged graduates to make all of their lives a ministry. "Gird yourself today with the towel of service," he said, "and make the washing of men's feet your life's work."

The Board of Trustees honored the college treasurer Rev. E. B. McDonald for 25 years of outstanding service, making Free Will Baptist Bible College a model of sound financial management that has been emulated by other institutions.

organizations to church conference trips to determining pastoral salaries.

Forty-six key laymen helped keep the agenda lively and informative. Host pastor John S. Craft said Master's Men provided an ideal setting for such open discussions.

The Unity Free Will Baptist Church Master's Men chapter defined their purposes as an attempt to interest, challenge and utilize every man for Christ within the church. They pursue those goals through supporting the local church, pastor and all levels of denominational work and by promoting fellowship among men of the church.

Pastor and Mrs. Riley Haskins (R.) and charter members launch Elsinore Church.



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### FREE WILL BAPTISTS MOVE INTO RESORT COMMUNITY

ELSINORE, CA—Valley Free Will Baptist Church organized May 10 in Elsinore, one of California's opulent resort communities. The new church, located 75 miles north of San Diego, called veteran preacher Riley Haskins as pastor.

Haskins led the 14 charter members to unite with California's West Coast Association at a May 13 quarterly meeting in Norwalk. West Coast's Executive Board officiated at the May 10 organizational meeting for Valley Church.

According to Pastor Haskins, Valley Free Will Baptist Church plans to purchase an existing

church building within Elsinore's city limits. The structure has a 150 seating capacity. Rev. and Mrs. Haskins are credited with starting another thriving southern California church in Baldwin Park some years ago.

Members from area churches in Garden Grove, Gardena and Ontario participated with West Coast's Executive Committee in Valley Church's organizational meeting. Valley Free Will Baptist Church is southeast of Los Angeles and is the first Free Will Baptist extension into southern California's resort communities.

### FIVE BUILDINGS WORTH \$100,000 GIVEN TO CCC

FRESNO, CA—Five buildings assessed at above \$100,000 in total value were donated in late spring to California Christian College by a local contractor. Until recently the structures housed Fresno's Lafayette School. The school closed, and the property was purchased for other purposes.

According to President Daniel Parker, California Christian College's only obligation is to move the buildings from Blackstone Avenue to the college campus. The four edifices contain 10 classrooms. A large cafeteria/auditorium is also included in the gift package.

The Board of Trustees voted to approve the expansion project and endorsed a \$125,000 budget to move and relocate the buildings. Estimates run as high as \$500,000 if the college had actually built the structures instead of only moving them.

Dr. Parker confirms that in order to keep renovation costs at a minimum, a group of Christian house movers has agreed to transport the buildings at cost and count all profits as a gift to the college ministry. Other craftsmen in California have volunteered to work without pay in order to ready the

buildings for the fall semester, which begins in August.

Parker specified, "This program is vital to the planned expansion in curriculum and educational programs at CCC. As we work toward accreditation, we must have adequate library and study areas, larger classrooms and a multi-purpose building for physical education and recreation. These buildings will meet our needs for several years."



## Currently . . .

By  
**JACK WILLIAMS**  
Editor

**Oxnard Christian Academy, Oxnard, CA**, has published its first yearbook. The 32-page soft-cover publication carries the name *Genesis*. **Larry Essick** is principal. Oxnard Christian Academy operates in conjunction with **Oxnard FWB Church**. **John Smith** pastors.

Both the educational building and the church sanctuary have been completely remodeled at **Tabernacle FWB Church, Coward, SC**. **Harry L. Cooper** pastors.

FWB evangelist **Calvin Evans** has a weekly 30-minute television program on six major TV stations in addition to more than 50 cable systems reaching into nine states. The **Pedro, OH**, based evangelist recently added three television stations to his network. The three additional stations are in Nashville, TN; Hickory, NC; and Clarksburg, WV.

The fifth annual ministers' retreat was conducted by **Georgia** Free Will Baptists May 23-26 at Kolomoki Mounds State Park, Blakely. Program personalities for the 1978 retreat included evangelist **Willard Wilcox, Dr. Melvin Worthington, Herman Hersey, Norman Richmond, Billy Sharpston, Vernon Whaley** and **W. C. Combs**.

Evangelist **Bobby Jackson** was in **Sesser, IL**, April 30-May 5 in a revival crusade sponsored by the Sesser Ministerial Alliance. The North Carolina based evangelist has preached more than 1,000 revival campaigns during his ministry.

**Jefferson Road FWB Church, Sumter, SC**, held its first missionary conference this spring. The youth oriented conference raised \$166 for the **Jim Cowart** account, and an additional \$50 per month support was promised to Cowart over the next year. Pastor **Wade Conger** reports the church has also begun a 15-minute radio broadcast on Sunday mornings.

The **Arizona District Association** voted in March to establish a newsletter for their state. **Dan O'Donnell** was selected editor. The monthly publication was tentatively named "The Free Will Baptist Arizonan."

**Dr. Roger Reeds**, Sunday School Department director, was guest speaker at the **Liberty Association Sunday School and CTS** rally conducted at **Pleasant Hill FWB Church, Bonifay, FL**, April 22. Liberty Association's mission board sponsored an overlapping missions conference April 19-23. Conference speakers were Florida home missionary **J. D. Norris**, Tallahassee; and **Wayne Morrison**, Sunny Hills, FL.

Between April 30 and May 7 some great things were happening at **Tupelo FWB**

**Church, Tupelo, MS**. The annual college day sponsored for **Free Will Baptist Bible College** tallied more than \$1,700. On Sunday evening, May 7, Pastor **Billy Bevan** baptized 10 converts.

**First FWB Church, Raleigh, NC**, designated Sunday, May 21, as **J. D. Ballance** Sunday. Pastor **Randy Cox** said the tribute was given in order to honor a faithful lay servant. Brother Ballance, 83, was a charter member at First Church more than 30 years ago.

Missionary **Carlisle Hanna** expressed great joy at having seen 15 people converted and united with the church at **Isalampur, India**, in the first quarter, 1978.

Seventeen people were saved and one called to preach in **Spain** according to missionary **Lonnie Sparks**. This harvest of souls in the first three months of 1978 has buoyed spiritual interest in the area.

They stretched a big revival banner across Main Street in **Spencer, OK**, June 26-July 2. Over 3,000 handbills were distributed. It all was a different way of advertising a tent revival sponsored by **Spencer Road FWB Church**. Evangelist was **Wade Jernigan, Waldo Young** pastors.

Pastor **Leroy Lowery, Deep Creek FWB Church, Midville, GA**, advertised an unusual sermon topic on Sunday evening, April 23. His sermon title was "Where Are the Dead," and it dealt with the teaching of the afterlife put forth in the movie, "Beyond and Back."

It was **Dave Franks** Day at **Hamilton FWB Church, Hamilton, AL**, May 28. Pastor **W. B. Hughes** reports that since the Franks' account was in the red for the first time since they had been on the mission field, the Hamilton Church wanted to do their part to alleviate the deficiency.

**Oak Park FWB Church, Pine Bluff, AR**, celebrated its 30th anniversary on May 21. Former pastor **Elro Driggers**, now at Woodbine FWB Church, Nashville, TN, was guest speaker. **Ken Doggett** pastors.

**Melvin and Jean Clark** report that the **Rio Grande FWB Mission, San Juan, TX**, has praise items to share with the denomination. A badly needed mimeograph machine was given the mission group. Another party loaned them a piano and five benches. This mission is a Spanish outreach in the Rio Grande Valley. Brother Clark was pleased with *Contacto*, the Spanish version of *CONTACT* which is being mailed to Spanish-speaking Free Will Baptists.

"Joy Makers" are becoming quite well-known around **DeSoto, MO**. The group is made up of ladies from **First FWB Church**. They have assumed responsibility for sponsoring helpful projects for aged and handicapped individuals who need their assistance in a variety of ways. **Charles L. Miller** pastors.

Here's some news to make a pastor smile. Sunday school superintendent **Bob Rachel, Shiloh FWB Church, Bristol, VA**, awarded perfect attendance pens to 33 members of the Sunday school. **Walter Statzer** pastors these consistent churchgoers.

Members of **Sylvan Park FWB Church, Nashville, TN**, took coin banks home with them May 7. The banks were then filled with coins and returned to the church on Father's Day. The special Father's Day offering went toward the ministers' retirement program. **Bob L. Jones** pastors.

What is a Free Will Baptist? Pastor **Jim Nason, First FWB Church**, is not leaving anything to chance. The May issue of his church publication, "Manna," carried a 2½ page section explaining the history and some key doctrines believed by Free Will Baptists. The **Pontiac, MI**, pastor believes that in light of liberalism and false doctrine rampant today, members must be well-informed on sound doctrine.

When Pastor **Billy Buchanan, First FWB Church, Stanley, NC**, was called to be evangelist at **Faith FWB Church, Cary, NC**, he had no idea he would wind up in prison. Actually the assistant warden at Central Prison in Raleigh is a member of Faith Church. Faith Pastor **Joe Wallace** and evangelist Buchanan were given a guided tour of the prison facilities.

The English language has changed radically since the King James Bible was translated from Greek and Hebrew languages. A bulletin board display in the vestibule of **First FWB Church, Odessa, TX**, illustrated an occasional need for revision or retranslation of the Bible. **Thurman Murphy** pastors.

**First FWB Church, Ada, OK**, is developing a program especially for a group called the **Pioneers**. This is for individuals 60 and older. Pastor **David Sutton** says the church has received a new 1978 Transette Vista bus for transporting Pioneers during weekly activities. A monthly fellowship dinner is also planned for the group. A Pioneer choir and special singing groups are other aspects of a tribute to this age group. In addition the local Master's Men initiated a project whereby they will assist in performing home repairs which Pioneers cannot do for themselves.

**Memorial FWB Church, Fresno, CA**, sponsored a graduation social May 10 for **California Christian College** students. Memorial's graduation social has been one of the highlights of CCC's commencement week activities for the past 10 years. **June Rolan** engineers the annual festivity. **Lonnie Rolan** pastors.

**Grady Williams**, clerk of **Western Piedmont Association, NC**, informs that **Mountain Peak Church** was received into their fellowship this year. What makes this church so special is that it is the first all-black congregation to unite with the association.

When the national Church Training Service competition gets underway in Kansas City, MO, July 17-19, **First FWB Church, Berkeley, MO**, will be well-represented. This church is



sponsoring three national representatives for the state of Missouri. Pastor **Bill Van Winkle** says that first and third grade Bible Memorization winners and the winning state Bible Bowl team are from his church.

Pastor **Ivan Ryan, Arnold View FWB Church, Creal Springs, IL**, has a nice problem. So many young people have been attending the church they now fill six pews each Sunday morning and night. Every FWB church should have to contend with those difficulties.

It's a good thing they completed the baptistry at **Bibleland First FWB Church, Phoenix, AZ**. Pastor **Clarence Newman** had to baptize 13 people shortly after the baptistry was completed. Furthermore, God has called four young men out of this congregation to preach. They are **Clay Ingram, Billy Kelley, Johnny Williams, and Robert Nieman**.

This is the first year **Oak Grove FWB Church, Lake Village, AR**, has had a full-time pastor. The church's faith to launch out into a full-time ministry with Pastor **Paul Payne** has had immediate results. The church is averaging a record 100, and Pastor Payne baptized 19 converts on April 2.

The church library at **Maranatha FWB Church, Ardmore, OK**, has been given a gift of \$100. What makes the gift a little unusual, according to Pastor **Leroy Holman**, is that it came from a nonmember.

The **Evangel Players** from **Free Will Baptist Bible College** came to **Fellowship FWB Church, Nashville, TN**, on April 30. Although the church did not reach its goal of \$1,000, Pastor **Joe Grimmer** did consider the \$960 commitment to the college over the next 12 months was a significant trophy for the congregation.

Outgoing Home Missions Department Director **Bob Shockey** has written a booklet, "Five Smooth Stones." It is an exposition of II Timothy 3:16 in five messages.

**Trinity FWB Church, Bridgeton, MO**, believes in supporting missionary **Jim McLain**. Members turned in faith promise cards amounting to \$250 monthly in support for the missionary to Japan. **Russell Spurgeon** pastors.

They had a grocery shower to end all grocery showers in **Kirkville, MO**. **Northeast Association Woman's Auxiliary** gave the **David Kirby** family, who minister at the **Moberly, MO, mission**, 40 bags of groceries. The family Pinto was filled to overflowing on the trip home.

Pastor **Harmon Herndon, First FWB Church, Blythe, CA**, is a happy man. The church has built a parsonage for the pastor and his wife. Such accommodations mean a great deal when one labors on the edge of the great California desert.

For the first time in the history of the church, the congregation is debt-free at **Cuba FWB Church, Cuba, MO**. Pastor **Daniel Martin** and members burned the mortgage earlier this year.

The mayor of **McAllen, TX**, donated \$5,000 to **First FWB Church, McAllen**, to purchase



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State	May '78		May '77	Yr. to Date
	Co-op	Design.		
Alabama	\$ 15.80	\$ ...	\$ 11.86	\$ 995.37
Arizona	...	...	...	696.67
Arkansas	3,436.73	...	2,501.85	12,464.02
California	860.41	...	772.47	4,634.72
Florida	507.18	(490.52)	16.66	1,679.79
Georgia	412.13	(140.00)	270.61	1,953.41
Hawaii	100.00	...	...	200.00
Idaho	124.22	...	126.75	124.22
Illinois	1,626.36	...	1,332.42	6,255.65
Indiana	50.00	...	50.00	100.00
Iowa	265.41	...	277.56	1,101.69
Kansas	209.18	...	66.56	751.76
Maryland	40.00	...	75.00	380.43
Michigan	614.39	...	...	907.13
Mississippi	106.29	...	91.46	510.46
Missouri	5,090.37	(5,090.37)	4,130.08	25,346.71
New Mexico	...	...	...	90.28
North Carolina	129.00	(54.00)	201.12	1,083.09
Northwest Assoc.	89.49	...	...	388.86
Ohio	752.88	...	1,307.98	4,410.02
Oklahoma	11,927.14	(11,596.00)	4,386.55	27,895.68
Tennessee	840.45	...	1,342.68	4,870.35
Texas	167.42	...	214.49	922.71
Virginia	...	...	...	87.69
Virgin Islands	159.00	...	75.00	716.00
West Virginia	21.74	...	20.68	85.65
Interest	...	...	...	398.69
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 27,545.59</b>		<b>\$ 17,271.78</b>	<b>\$ 99,051.05</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 6,923.17	\$(2,355.95)	\$ 7,043.67	\$ 34,140.31
Foreign Missions	6,956.17	(5,520.70)	3,472.33	22,219.76
Bible College	4,253.56	(2,856.81)	2,281.44	14,163.38
Home Missions	3,991.25	(2,954.30)	1,934.99	12,459.01
Church Training Serv.	2,464.34	(1,623.20)	1,128.15	7,424.41
Retirement and Ins.	1,953.39	(1,280.52)	952.10	5,921.96
Layman's Board	817.89	(621.63)	353.09	2,157.63
Commission on Theological Liberalism	185.82	(157.78)	95.67	564.59
Other Ministries	...	...	10.34	...
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 27,545.59</b>		<b>\$ 17,271.78</b>	<b>\$ 99,051.05</b>

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sanctuary furniture. **Larry Powell** pastors the 18-month-old church. The group completed a \$250,000 building program in June and now have a 500-seat auditorium.

Seventy-five people participated in a 10-mile walk-a-thon at **Bailey, NC**, to raise funds for the North Carolina Project benefiting Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, TN. **White Oak Hill FWB Church** pastor **Darrell Pickle** said \$2,500 was received in the March trek. The church averages 225 in attendance.

**Thomas Marberry**, Bible professor, delivered the commencement address at **Hillsdale FWB College**, May 12. **Clarence Burton**, promotional secretary for Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists, was baccalaureate speaker.

Channel 10 TV cameras were rolling in **Surprise FWB Church, Surprise, AZ**, on April 19. Pastor **Harold Sanders** and the congregation honored **Mrs. Lydia Montgomery** in a special service for her 34 years as church pianist. A television newsman filmed the special plaque-awarding ceremony.

Some 37 people have enrolled in a 15-week Bible course sponsored by **St. James FWB Church, Phenix City, AL**. Pastor **Dennis Keen** calls the program *Mail-a-Study*.

Would you like to be a member of the Sunday School Hall of Fame? You could if you attended **First FWB Church, North Little Rock, AR**, and brought three or more visitors to Sunday school with you. Pastor **Ben Scott** indicates the program is working, and he is happily adding new members to the hall of fame.

**CONTACT** welcomes "The Beacon," publication of **First FWB Church, Erwin, TN**. Pastor **William Johnson** writes the church has averaged just over 400 in recent months.

**Doug Little, associate minister** at **East Nashville FWB Church**, is now writing music for John T. Benson Publishers. Doug, a gifted pianist and soloist, has several numbers on the market, including "Now I Belong to Him," "King of Kings" and "He Did Not Have to Die."

Every month a teenager is selected to acquaint the congregation at **First FWB Church, Albany, GA**, with a hymn of the month. **Vernon Whaley**, minister of music, uses a hymn story monthly to help educate the congregation regarding the background of hymns in the *Free Will Baptist Hymn Book*. **Dr. Melvin Worthington** pastors.

The **Springdale FWB Church, Oxford, MS**, has called its first full-time pastor, **Herbert Knight** from Amory. Members have also built a fellowship hall and purchased a trailer for use by the church.

The **Georgia State Association Historical Commission** has outlined a project to beautify the grave site of **Rev. John Broadnax**, founder of the Free Will Baptist work in Georgia. It will take approximately \$2,000 to erect an historical marker, designating the site of the First Free Will Baptist church constructed in the state of Georgia.

Oklahomans now know that lightning does strike twice in the same place. **Oklahoma State Office and Book and Bible Supply store** were hit by burglars in late December. Officials now report that the Oklahoma City facility was broken into again in April. This time damage was less extensive than the December intrusion.

Seven **Southern Illinois** churches banded together to sponsor a missionary conference April 2-6. Missionaries participating in the conference were **Walter Ellison, Jim Summerson, Jim McLain, Robert Helms, Bill Fulcher, Dennis Owen, and Charolette Tallent**.

**Harrold Harrison**, Sunday School Department manager of promotion and sales, conducted a teacher training institute May 8-11 at **Sophia FWB Church, Sophia, WV**. **George Smith** pastors.

**CONTACT** salutes **Village Chapel FWB Church, Ceres, CA**. This suburban congregation had 40 first time participants at a feet-washing service Sunday evening, March 19. **Adrian Condit** pastors.

The salvation-to-discipleship home Bible studies have begun to show results in **Flagstaff, AZ**. Pastor **Mark Vandivort** has added two new families to **Sunset FWB Church** as a direct result of these studies. The new church has been averaging 30 in attendance.

**Earl Hood** has arrived at **Stratford FWB Church, Stratford, OK**, to assume responsibilities as intern and youth director. Pastor **Jerry Dudley** delegated Hood with authority to initiate a bus ministry and responsibility for planning, coordinating and directing youth studies, activities and outreach.

A **Free Will Baptist Bible College Victory Celebration Dinner** drew 452 people from **Palmer Association** churches in **North Carolina** on April 7. After hearing **Dr. Robert Picirilli** speak, the group pledged more than \$25,000 to the Bible College during 1978. On April 8, 230 members from **Randall Association, NC**, heard **Dr. Picirilli** challenge them, and they pledged more than \$22,000 to the college.

**Liberty FWB Church, Berkeley, MO**, was organized May 21 at the **Stanton Elementary School**. The congregation called **Jerry Norris** as pastor. During April the group averaged 67 in morning worship services.

Seniors at **Woodbine Christian Academy, Nashville, TN**, were treated to a 12-day sightseeing tour in May. The group visited the Statue of Liberty, stock exchange, Empire State Building and the Liberty Bell. They spent blocks of time sightseeing in Richmond, VA; Washington, DC; Philadelphia, PA; and Manhattan, NY. **Steve Ange** is principal of WCA. The Academy functions under the auspices of **Woodbine FWB Church**. **Elro Driggers** pastors.

The quality of cassette tape recordings should be considerably higher now at **Fairmount Park FWB Church**. Pastor **Dale Burden** reports that **Tim Young** donated an expensive tape deck to the church tape ministry. The **Virginia** congregation has an outreach far beyond the boundaries of **Norfolk**.

It was rock-around-the-clock time on Friday, April 21, at **Lawnwood FWB Church, Tulsa, OK**. Twenty-two young people rocked 12 hours in an effort to raise \$650 for their youth fund. **J. C. Morgan** pastors.

A missions conference conducted at **First FWB Church, Monett, MO**, resulted in a total cash offering of \$2,500 for Free Will Baptist missions. Another \$174 per month in regular support was pledged. **Dr. James T. Davis** pastors.

South Carolina home missionary **Ansel Smith** began the **Faith Temple FWB Mission, Rock Hill, SC**, in February. By May the group was averaging 70 in attendance. Smith's goal is to have five full-time missionaries on the field in South Carolina in order to build Free Will Baptist churches in the 23 counties that do not have a Free Will Baptist church.

**Laura Belle Barnard**, former professor of missions at Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, TN, was keynote speaker at **Florida State Woman's Auxiliary** meeting June 3. The state gathering met at **Hollywood FWB Church, Hollywood, FL**.

Twenty-one families have been added to the rolls of **First FWB Church, Bakersfield, CA**, as a direct result of the bus ministry. Pastor **Claude Hames** is convinced that the bus ministry is more than a means of getting children to church. He says that on April 30 he baptized 10 adults and three teenagers.

May 10 was a special day at **Central FWB Church, Huntington, WV**, when Pastor **Carl Vallance** celebrated his 40th year as a Christian. Members of the congregation surprised Pastor Vallance with a "This Is Your Life" program.



# Sin Challenges The Church

## PART X

By Leroy Forlines

In the previous article I suggested ways of dealing with those who have fallen into sin. In this article I want to discuss that which is involved in the person's experience as he deals with sin in his life.

There are two concerns when a person has fallen into sin: (1) He needs to deal with the sin itself; (2) He needs to deal with the problems in his life that contributed to his sin.

In dealing with sin, the person needs to arrive at a clear-cut conclusion that what he has done is sin. He needs to evaluate the negative consequences that sin has already brought to himself and others. He needs to evaluate the negative consequences that it will bring to others if he continues in the sin. He also needs to consider the positive value that will come to him and to others if he overcomes the sin and practices righteousness. We do in life what we value.

The second area to consider includes the things that contributed to the sin. Depression, despair, frustration, social maladjustment, loneliness and boredom are factors that frequently lead to sin. Unhappiness is dangerous.

It is impossible to deal thoroughly with the above listed problems.

However, a few observations will be helpful. Depression, despair, and frustration usually come from negative thinking. Many people have for a long period of time been hung up on thinking about their weaknesses, failures, problems and disadvantages. Such an approach cannot possibly result in a healthy attitude toward life.

What a person needs is a true opinion of himself. The only way this can be done is to have an accurate assessment which must take in the positive as well as the negative. Honesty sees both our good and our bad. A proper awareness of our positives will contribute to more self-acceptance and self-confidence.

Positive thinking helps a person overcome depression. Negatives that can be changed need to be changed. As this is done, a person will develop a better attitude toward life. The person who develops a good healthy sense of self-acceptance will have a far better chance of living right. He will not have a need for alcohol, illegal drugs, and immorality.

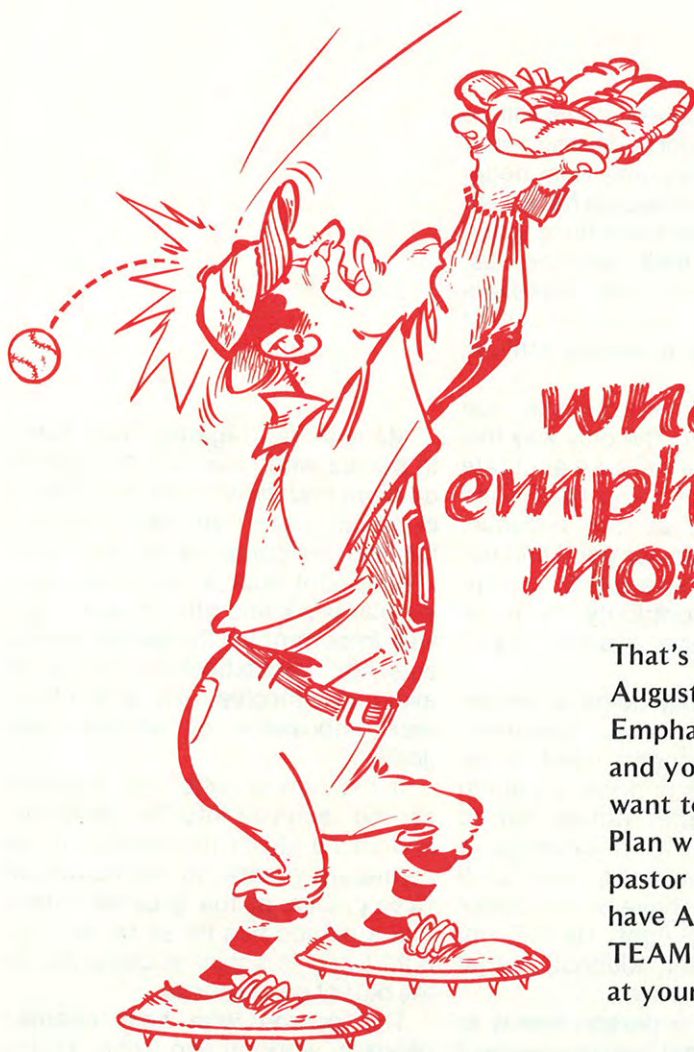
Another area a person needs to work on is to avoid overinvolvement and impossible goals. One of the most discouraging and depressing experiences is to get involved with impossible or unreasonable goals. A person must discover what for him is reasonable and live within that framework. Overinvolvement spins a web around a person that is hard to live with and hard to escape.

Many moral tragedies have come to people who have felt they should do more than they could. The feeling of despair came over them. They fell into sin. In some cases this overinvolvement was a combination of secular work and church work. It is very important for the person who is seeking to reestablish his life that he avoid overinvolvement and otherwise impossible or unreasonable goals.

If the person who has repented can be received into the fellowship and social life of the church, it will contribute greatly to his continued victory. One of the greatest needs that a person has for stable and upright living is social acceptance on the part of good people.

The person who has repented needs to work on two fronts: (1) He needs to work on establishing strong convictions and walls of protection; (2) He needs to find answers that will help him find peace and satisfaction and cope with the problems of life. What has been said in this article will introduce some helpful ideas for those who are seeking to reestablish their lives. ▲

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## **DIRECTORY UPDATE**

### **PASTORAL CHANGES**

#### **ARKANSAS**

Vernon Nordin to Maple Springs Church, Russellville

Chester Higgs to Moreland Church, Moreland from Oak Grove Church, Russellville

Geno Jackson to Oak Grove Church, Russellville

Hearley Reeves to Pine Ridge Church, Atkins from Kenwood Church, Atkins

Reece Webb to Sweet Home Church, Atkins

Rayburn Teague to Walnut Grove Church, Hector

George Latham to Woodlawn Church, Russellville

Bobby Cox to Benton Church, Benton

Thomas Movis to Hickory Grove Church, Casa

Taft Standridge to Jerusalem Church, Jerusalem

Avaugh Vaughn to Kenwood Church, Atkins

#### **CALIFORNIA**

Ralph Clark to Princeton Church, Ontario from First Church, Ontario

#### **FLORIDA**

Ken Walker to First Church, Deerfield Beach from First Church, Mobile, AL

#### **GEORGIA**

Ernest Harrison Jr. to Dalton Mission, Dalton

#### **KENTUCKY**

Grant Saverance to Trinity Church, Bowling Green from Fellowship Church, Flat River, MO

#### **MISSOURI**

Jerry McArthur to Hammon Church, Liberal

#### **OKLAHOMA**

Doyle Hood to First Church, Shawnee

James Mertz to First Church, Pryor from First Church, Lebanon, MO

Jim Shepperd to First Church, McAlester

Earl Judd to Community Church, Kiefer

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

Paul Fred Hall to Calvary Church, Georgetown from Union Chapel Church, Chocowinity, NC

#### **WEST VIRGINIA**

Russell Wright to Ansted Church, Ansted

Major Holt to Price Hill Church, Mount Hope



## BALLARD, WRC EXECUTIVE, GIVEN OVERSEAS ORIENTATION

VALLEY FORGE, PA—Jerry Ballard, executive director of World Relief Commission, accompanied by Dr. Everett S. Graffam, WRC's former executive, traveled 24,000 miles to six countries to familiarize himself with Asian projects.

He assured the various national counterpart agencies, missionaries and recipient government officials of his continued support and special assistance in times of disaster.

Among the places visited were primitive refugee camps along the Mekong River in Thailand. WRC left \$20,000 from exigency funds with Christian & Missionary Alliance personnel to help alleviate some of the agony by providing medicines, food, clothing, blankets, sleeping mats and nets. This amount supplements regular budgeted funds which have been provided for two years to help the refugees become self-supporting through production of crafts.

New refugees had just arrived the day before the WRC executives did. Some had walked hundreds of miles through mountains and across rivers for two months. Only a third of the people live to reach the camps.

Dr. Graffam reports: "The people were scratched and bruised. Women and children sat staring like zombies from illness, fatigue and hunger." Some of the little ones were mere skeletons in as bad shape as those he observed during war conditions in Bangladesh or Vietnam. The babies and small children were suffering drug withdrawal effects. They had been drugged during the escape to keep them from crying.

World Relief Commission, overseas relief arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, is providing assistance in 30 countries with a budget of \$2,200,000 for 1978. WRC moved from Valley Forge to Wheaton, Illinois, on July 1, at which time Mr. Ballard assumed leadership.

## BIBLE IN TAXICABS?

ASHEVILLE, NC (EP)—Allergist Claude A. Frazier noticed a Bible lying on the seat beside the driver of a Chicago taxicab and wondered, "Why not?"

The outcome is a pilot project in cooperation with the American Bible Society to place Bibles in taxicabs just as the Gideons place them in hotel rooms.

"People read newspapers in cabs," says Frazier. "Why not the Bible?"

## NCC LEADER WARNS CONGRESS OF TAX REFORMS THAT HAVE HIT CHURCHES, CHARITABLE UNITS

WASHINGTON, DC (EP)—National Council of Churches President William P. Thompson has urged Congress to treat charitable contributions different from other deductible expenses in making tax reforms because unlike others, they do not benefit the spender.

Testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Thompson said, "To be sure, givers often gain some esteem or approbation as a result of their philanthropies, but in no other part of the tax code are esteem or approbation considered taxable. The charitable contribution is essentially giving away for the benefit of others."

The deduction for charitable giving, he commented, "is not like the other deductions allowed to taxpayers who itemize their deductions. It is not like interest paid on money borrowed or medical expenses or taxes or professional expenses or casualty losses.

"It is not a 'loophole' for avoiding taxation, since the gifts deducted do not remain under the control of the giver but go to benefit the whole community, often with greater efficiency and effect than the same amount paid in taxes."

## FLORIDA ACTS TO HALT SALES OF BONDS BY 'RELIGIOUS' UNITS

ORLANDO, FL (EP)—In what was called an unprecedented move, the State of Florida has taken steps against three organizations to halt the sale of religious securities.

The State Comptroller's office has invoked civil and administrative measures, contending alleged fraud in the sale of church bonds and related securities on the part of the three groups, located in Orlando, Fort Myers and Leesburg. It holds that investors have been defrauded of \$12.8 million.

Cease and desist orders were issued by Comptroller Gerald Lewis against the Michigan Baptist Foundation, a Florida corporation with offices in Fort Myers; University Prep, Inc. of Orlando; and the Oxford Foundation of Leesburg.

## GAINS IN BIBLE TRANSLATION CITED BY BIBLE SOCIETY

NEW YORK, NY (EP)—Portions of the Bible are now available in 1,631 languages—the number spoken by 98 percent of the world's population, according to the American Bible Society (ABS).

The ABS reports that it now has published portions of the Bible for the first time in 28 languages which never before had been reduced to writing. The society reports that the complete Bible is now available in 266 languages; the New Testament, in 420.

## WITNESS TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COSTS CHRISTIAN TEACHER HIS JOB

PALMYRA, IL (EP)—A sixth grade teacher at Northwestern Community School here will not be offered a contract for the fall term because he led a junior high school girl to Christ on school property during school hours.

Lucien Daigneault, an American Baptist minister, said he led Lisa Etter, 13, to Christ, while she was on released time at the grade school. She later joined the nearby Modesto Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation. Pastor Ralph Helenthal said that her parents Mr. and Mrs. Don Etter—though not church members—are supportive of Lisa's decision and came to see her baptized.

Soon afterward, Daigneault was called to a conference with Superintendent Victor Funk and Principal Charles Langley. Later Funk wrote Daigneault not to use the Bible or sectarian literature as classroom materials and that he not encourage students to accept Christ during school hours.

Daigneault said he responded to the letter about two weeks later, saying he would conform to the instructions, but "apparently it was not done as soon as the administration wanted."

Following the next board meeting, Funk again wrote the teacher that he would not be offered a contract. Daigneault is a first year employee, not on tenure.

He said, however, that personal witnessing is not his common practice at school. Lisa was in his classroom with another student during a time his class was not present, he explained.

"We talked about going to church, and I asked her if she were saved," he related, "and I could tell by her expression she was not. So I felt I couldn't pass this opportunity. It came so easily that I believe the Holy Spirit was in it.

"When I asked if she wanted to be saved, and she said 'yes,' I explained the Roman Road to salvation and asked her to pray. She did," Daigneault said.

## HOMEOWNER'S RELIGIOUS SIGNS BRING HIM SUMMONS, FINE

WALKERTON, Ont. (EP)—Donald Roberts believes religion should have the same prominence as liquor in advertisements.

And that attitude landed him in court accused of breaking the law.

Mr. Roberts put up two signs with religious messages at the edge of his property in defiance of a law that specified that signs along county roads be at least 52 meters back from the road. He received a summons to appear in court or pay a \$50 fine.

"I can't understand why the hotel down the road has permission to advertise their business, namely liquor, for profit, when I can't advertise the Lord's business for nothing," he argued.

Provincial Judge F. W. Olmstead found him guilty, but fined him only \$5 plus \$3 costs and gave him two months to remove the signs.

## DOCTOR FINDS THAT THINGS GO BETTER WITH FAITH

NEW BRIGHTON, MN (EP)—A physician told members of Cross of Glory Lutheran Church here that people with faith in God live better, do better during illness and die better.

Dr. John Brown, president of the Minnesota chapter of the American Cancer Society, said years of caring for the terminally ill have taught him: "People with faith just do it better."

The absence of fear of dying "is really a positive force," Dr. Brown said. He added that patients without faith suffer more. "They become bitter because they think they're about to lose all they have. To them, this life is the whole ball game."

## CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT HELD IN CONFLICT WITH BIBLICAL DOCTRINE BY SYNOD UNIT

ST. LOUIS (EP)—The Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod says "some of the practices and theological tenets" of the charismatic movement "conflict with biblical doctrine."

Its statement, "The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement: Guidelines for Congregations and Pastors," considers "perhaps the most serious doctrinal problem of this movement" to be "its tendency to claim direct spiritual illumination apart from the Word, a malady that may have its origin in a loss of confidence in the divine efficacy of the bare Word."

A new CTCR document reiterates principles which speak of "concerns" set forth in a 1972 document, "The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology": (1) "Spiritual gifts are not to be considered means of grace"; (2) "God has not promised to reveal His will to us directly and immediately (without means), as for example through visions and dreams"; (3) "Special signs and wonders are not indispensable guarantees that the Spirit of God dwells within an individual"; (4) "Faith in Christ does not necessarily eliminate illness and affliction from the life of a Christian"; (5) "Christian certainty is not based on 'feeling' but on the objective promises of the Gospel"; (6) "'Baptism with the Spirit' is not a basis for church fellowship"; and (7) "The gift of the Holy Spirit does not necessarily include extraordinary spiritual gifts."

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN AMERICA ESTIMATED TO NUMBER 17,950

WASHINGTON, DC (EP)—There are an estimated 4.8 million students in 17,950 nonpublic schools in the United States, according to a newly published federal survey.

Nonpublic school enrollment accounts for 9.8 percent of the estimated total of 49,139,000 pupils in the nation's elementary and secondary schools, the National Center for Education Statistics reported.

The overwhelming majority of private schools have religious affiliations, according to the report, and nearly 3/4 of all nonpublic school pupils are in Catholic schools.

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST MEMBERSHIP RISES 160,594 TO 13,083,199

NASHVILLE, TN (EP)—The Southern Baptist Convention, largest Protestant body in the U.S., has topped the 13 million mark in membership. In fiscal year 1976-1977 the convention added 160,594 members, bringing the total to 13,083,199.

During the year total receipts for the convention rose by 9.2 percent to a total of \$1.8 billion. Mission gifts increased by 10.3 percent, just short of \$27 million, to a total of nearly \$290 million.

The denomination received a serious blow, however, in a 10.1 percent decline in baptisms, from 384,496 to 345,690, the church's lowest ebb since 1949.

## WORLD EVANGELISM TV SPECIAL PRESENTED ON PRIME TIME

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (EP)—About 200 angry viewers called station WCCO-TV, the CBS affiliate here, when they found that five hours of prime time were being preempted for the "1978 World Evangelism Special."

But supporters of the religious TV spectacular were much more numerous than critics, judging by the volume of pledges of money and prayers telephoned to the sponsor of the special, the World Literature Crusade.

Almost 2,500 callers from some 200 upper Midwest communities promised to devote 648,000 quarter hours of prayer for world evangelism during the coming year and pledged to give more than \$240,000, enough to finance Christian literature for some 24 million people.

The World Literature Crusade paid \$25,000 to WCCO-TV and a 15 percent commission to an agency for the five hours of choice viewing time. It is also buying time on some 120 other U.S. television stations for similar showings this year. The special also will be shown in Australia.

## HIGH COURT UPHOLDS FBI RAID, REJECTS SCIENTOLOGY CHURCH PLEA

WASHINGTON, DC (EP)—The Church of Scientology's charge that a raid on its headquarters here last July by the FBI was unconstitutional has been rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The justices declined to review a decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that a search warrant and a 33-page affidavit were legally adequate to justify the FBI's raid.

FBI agents simultaneously raided Scientology Church offices in Washington and Los Angeles, using identically worded warrants. They seized numerous documents, allegedly in a search for documents stolen from the government. The two raids have been handled in separate court cases.

## STATE TROOPER RESIGNS TO SPEND TIME IN CHURCH

SILER CITY, NC (EP)—A patrolman with five years experience and an otherwise "good" record has resigned from the North Carolina State Highway Patrol because, he said, his superiors would not allow him to use his supper hour to attend church services.

He said insubordination charges might be brought against him if he continued to go to church during his supper break.

Jackie Leon Franks, now a magistrate here, said, "It all came as a real shock to me" when he was told last November that he was "going to church too much" on patrol time. He said he was called in by Highway Patrol Sgt. J. S. Jones of Chatham County for his annual evaluation report.

"There was just one complaint. Sgt. Jones said I was going to church too much. He said I was spending too much patrol time in church. He said he was doing it because the other men might resent it if I had a different supper hour."

## COMPUTERS ASSESS SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

PORTLAND, OR (EP)—A counselor at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary and his associates have worked out a computerized program to help a Christian discover his spiritual gifts and learn how to use them best.

Gordon McMinn directs the program designed to uncover biblical concepts of the meaning of each gift.

The gift of exhortation, for example, is like the gift of counseling, of assisting a person with problems, or of sticking with one who needs help and counseling, McMinn explains.

He said the gift of the "word of wisdom" includes skills for arbitration in case of strife and contains the idea of being a conciliator.

The seminarian tries not to oversell his product. But when a student gets through the inventory, he has a good idea of what spiritual gifts he possesses, McMinn believes. He is currently a counselor at the Beaverton Family Counseling Center.

## DIAL A BIBLE STORY POPULAR WITH CHILDREN

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (EP)—A suburban congregation here has launched a "Dial-a-Story" program to allow elementary-age children to hear stories of the Bible over the telephone and learn how they relate to their lives.

By calling an advertised number, children can hear a prerecorded Bible story which lasts three minutes or less. A different story is recorded each week.

The project is sponsored by Messiah United Methodist Church in suburban Wayzata. The first story recorded for the project was about Noah. It featured Messiah's pastor, Rev. Richard M. Harper, and Stacy Arnold, 7, a second grade student.

# YOUR INVITATION TO ACCEPT CHRIST

By Bob Shockey

**T**his invitation is an opportunity for the unsaved to receive Christ as Savior. It is an opportunity for backsliders to return to God, and it is an opportunity for Christians to dedicate their lives to Christ for service.

After reading the articles on repentance and the new birth, perhaps you realize a need in your life today.

Ask yourself this question: Do you know for sure that if you died today, you would go to Heaven? If the answer is yes, just praise God that you have this wonderful assurance.

However, if the answer is no or you are not sure you are saved and you wish you could say that "If I died now I know I would go to Heaven," remember there are only two persons who know your heart—you and God.

He will be the last one you will face, but God loves you! Jesus wants to save you. Today could be the greatest day in your life. The Holy Spirit is stirring your heart even now. The fact that you desire to be saved means that the Holy Spirit is urging you.

Right now with your heart bowed before God, will you repent of your sins? Are you willing to confess that you are a sinner? Acknowledge your sorrow for your sins, and ask God to forgive you. Accept His Son Jesus as your personal Savior. If you will honestly do this and mean it with all your heart, God will save you.

Perhaps you know you have been saved. But you realize the devil has cheated you. Your fellowship with God has been broken because of sin, or you have become indifferent and are walking a guilty distance from God.

Your desire is to go to Heaven, and you want your relationship to be restored with God. Acknowledge your sin and your wrong. Claim the promise of I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (wrong-doing)."

You do not confess your sins to a preacher, but you do have to confess your sins to God. You are aware of the specific sin or sins that have broken your fellowship and relationship with God. Confess them to God. Acknowledge your sorrow for them. Ask Him to forgive you, and believe that He will because He said He would.

This invitation also extends to those who are saved, know that they are saved, and feel that God is speaking to them about special dedication for His service.

Romans 12:1, 2 challenges, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,

*ABOUT THE WRITER: Bob Shockey is finishing five years of service as general director of the National Home Mission Department.*

acceptable unto God which is your reasonable (spiritual) service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed (but be daily being transformed) by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove (put to the test) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

Perhaps you know generally what God wants you to do. It may be that you are not sure of the specific task He has for you, but you do sense His call to dedicate your life to full-time service.

Simply bow your heart before God. Tell Him you are available and that you take your hands off your life completely. As best you can, surrender your will to Him, for direction, and be willing to live one day at a time as He prepares you for service. Remember a call to service is a call to preparation.

Thank Him for speaking to your heart, and ask your friends to pray with you concerning His will for your life.

What if you are saved and serving God the best you know how and yet feel that you just need a closer walk with God? Just bow your heart before Him, and tell Him that you love Him and want to serve Him. Ask to be filled daily with His Spirit to empower and direct your life in His Word through your devotions and in service to Him and others.

If you have read this invitation and accepted Christ as your Savior or you have rededicated your life to the Lord or dedicated your life for service, please fill in the blanks below and mail this form to CONTACT, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.

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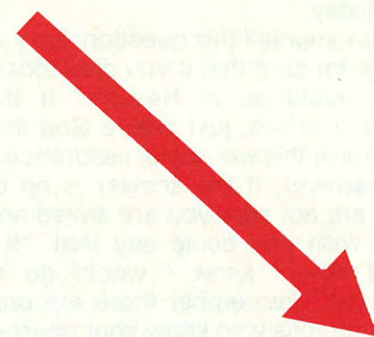
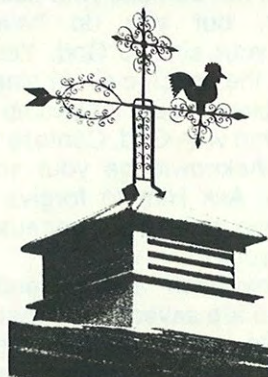
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