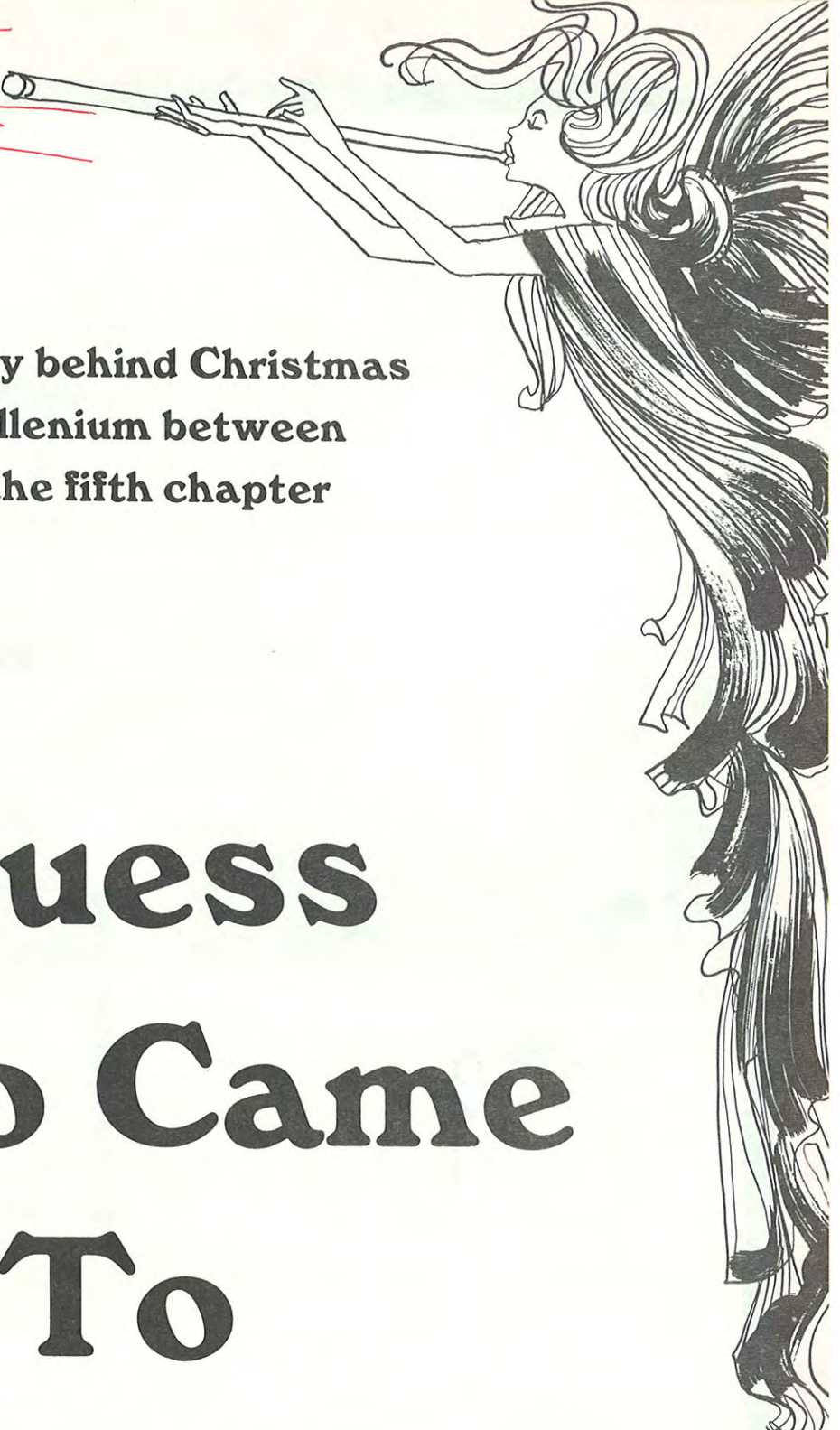
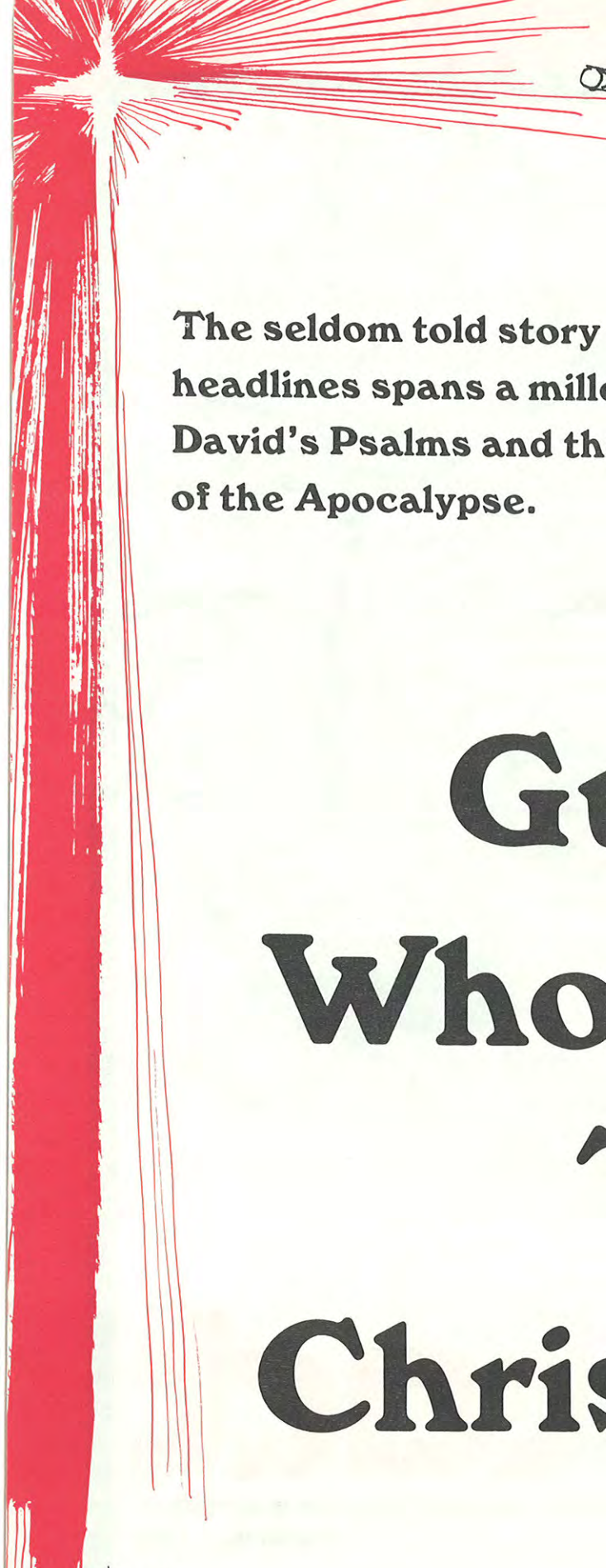


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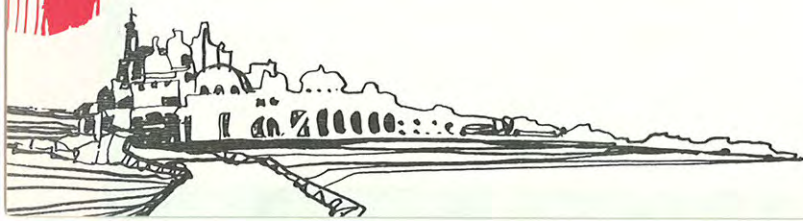
December, 1978



The seldom told story behind Christmas headlines spans a millenium between David's Psalms and the fifth chapter of the Apocalypse.

Guess Who Came To Christmas!

By Floyd Wolfenbarger



Some events are too significant to be enjoyed in solitude. Rejoicing at the first Christmas is unequalled in annals of biblical history. God had determined not to rejoice alone. Into the joy of Christmas He invited a multitude of witnesses with whom to share the rejoicing.

The Scriptures allow us a brief glimpse at the rejoicing of some of the characters in this splendid drama.

THE HEAVENLY HOSTS

God's invitations were often delivered by His chief celestial messenger Gabriel. God himself had sent invitations to rejoice because the fulness of time had come.

In Heaven a great host came before His holy presence. Weeping over Satan's bruise halted and rejoicing began because the lion of the tribe of Judah roared. He stood on a crystal sea before the great rainbow canopied throne in Heaven. A throne sparkling from the light of seven fiery lamps.

He took a mighty book from the right hand of Him that sat on the throne and said, . . . "A body hast thou prepared me. . . . In the volume of the book it is written of me, lo I come to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:5,7).

A voice like thunder returned . . . "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psalm 2:7,8).

The elders who surround the throne dressed in white garments bowed prostrate, their crowns resting at the Son's feet, and they cried "Holy, Holy, Holy."

The throne voice addressed the Son again: "Thy throne is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (Hebrews 1:8). And the elders cried out: . . . "Blessing and honor, and glory and power, be

unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:13).

Again the voice lifted: "Thou hast loved righteousness . . . therefore even thy God hath anointed thee with gladness. Thou in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish but thou remainest" (Hebrews 1:9-11).

Elders sang: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things: and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

Finally the voice from the throne spoke again saying: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." At that moment angels worshipped saying "Amen, Blessing, and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen."

The rejoicing in heaven was so gloriously triumphant that God unveiled the heavenly host before the eyes of Judean shepherds.

He prepared their hearts with a preliminary message: "Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-12).

At that moment God offered simple men a rare glimpse of what was happening in heaven. These humble shepherds were beckoned to join the rejoicing already in progress as the angels continued: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

THE WAITING WITNESSES

The Christmas invitation to rejoice was not confined to divine and angelic beings. Mystery enshrouds the abode of departed saints. However there are

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indications that events on earth are not hidden to those in the bliss of paradise. The degree of awareness of this "cloud of witnesses" is yet undetermined.

Jesus however implied there was great rejoicing in the abode of the dead by saying, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). The impression is God would not have slighted Abraham but lifted the veil over that grotto manger so he could gaze upon his true seed (See Galatians 3:16).

of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things."

"Wondrous things indeed," boomed a voice, behind Abraham and David the proud ancestors. It was Isaiah. "The great wonder is the sign, a virgin shall be with child and bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel. For unto us this day a child is born, unto us this Son is given and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

God invited a man from this group to come and celebrate the birth of His Son. Simeon was "just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel." He cried for joy, "My eyes have seen Thy salvation."

Anna, a widow temple pietist was another of the "poor ones" to whom God brought rejoicing, gave thanks and went among those who "looked for redemption in Jerusalem" and told them of this child.

God desired that all nations and kindred and tongues should rejoice, therefore the Magi came rejoicing. God wanted this joy to extend to unborn generations, therefore the unborn child of Elizabeth leaped for joy in her womb.

Guess who came to Christmas! God did, coming not as angels but with the flesh of men to feel our sorrows so men everywhere may rejoice.

Blessed be God for His unspeakable gift!

"Some events are too significant to be enjoyed in solitude. God had determined not to rejoice alone."

What delight filled Abraham's heart for God had kept His oath. The importance of Abraham in this celebration cannot be overlooked for he is mentioned twice in connection with the advent (See Luke 1:55, 73).

Surely one must be cautious in conjecture but it should be no exaggeration to infer that David also saw the child. If it were true then what words might have come from that poetic tongue: "All the kings of the earth shall fall down before Him. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, and the poor, also him that hath no helper . . . His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed."

David looking at the humble family and Holy Child would likely burst forth spontaneous praise: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God

Other prophets were there each rejoicing and praising God for they had seen the light unto the Gentiles and the glory of Zion.

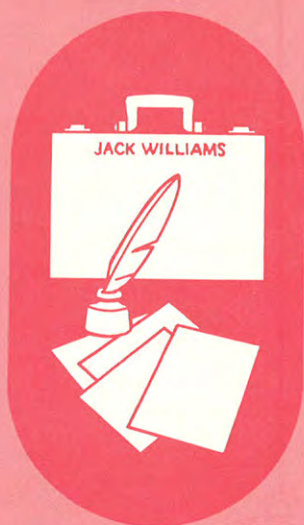
In Judea there was a subculture who called themselves *Anawim*, "the poor ones." Initially the term described the physically poor but came to include those who trusted in God for comfort and consolation. Unlike the Essenes of Qumran, the *Anawim* were temple pietists who awaited in Jerusalem the consolation of Israel.

It may be that Elizabeth and Zechariah, parents of the Baptist, were part of a community of *Anawim*. In fact, the Virgin herself had great prophetic knowledge as is evidenced in the Magnificat. These "poor ones" poured over the consolations of Isaiah and were marked by Messianic hope.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Floyd Wolfenbarger is pastor of Newark Free Will Baptist Church, Newark, Ohio. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the National Association. ▲



Briefcase



Mr. Average Citizen is right, of course, when he remembers the Christmas Christ as an innocent born in a stable, laid in a manger, attended by Magi and shepherds and lulled by a pasture full of angels.

This Christmas Christ has almost universal appeal. Even non-churchgoers smile benignly at sweet-voiced carolers strolling December streets singing about the child in yonder stall. It isn't the swaddling clothed manchild in Bethlehem that draws glinty-eyed stares.

The whole world wants to rock the Christmas cradle. The slightly religious as well as the irreligious get a warm holiday glow recalling some long ago Christmas-past that probably never existed or if it did has been carefully bandaged by the kindness of years.

Oh, the church has done an excellent job selling the Christmas Christ to society. So good a job in fact that society has grabbed the story, retold it, embellished the characters and reworked the plot to make the entire Christ event begin and end in the first two chapters of Matthew.

What it took God 4000 years to prepare the world to receive is now reduced to 30-second spot announcements run twice daily December 1-24. The Christmas Christ comes conveniently packaged in three-act dramas for kiddies, two-hour musical cantatas for music lovers or 20-minute festive sermons for busy pastors.

He is marketed commercially as "The Miracle on 39th Street." Stalwart actors from local churches maintain nightly December vigils garbed in long, loose-fitting garments as they pose in well-lighted vacant lots or on church front lawns recreating the Bethlehem scene. Everyone boos bloodthirsty Herod and oohs and ahs over the cute little red-haired O'Shaugnessy boy sleeping through it all as First Church's version of the Christmas Christ.

And the crowds love it. We prowl Christmas tree lanes refreshed by the wonder of glittering lights. The Christmas Christ seemingly brings out the best in the worst. Even newspapers, notorious harbingers of disaster stories, pursue human interest articles and sprinkle their pages with seasonal warmth.

As I say, the church has done a super sales job on the Christmas Christ. But now that we've got the

world's attention, why not spring the rest of the story on them! The crowds adore our Christmas Christ; it was not so in the beginning.

There was no traffic jam in Bethlehem that first Christmas. The multitudes came 30 years later after the Christmas Christ had fasted alone in the wilderness. They came when He began speaking "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

The crowds stayed when He said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). They thronged Him when He confronted evil and denounced hypocrisy. The world in century one knew they needed more than a babe in Mary's arms. It was not the helpless child that startled a generation but the God-man carrying the missing pieces to life's puzzle.

Our generation must be told what lies beyond Matthew 2:23 this Christmas.

First century humanity discovered the Christmas Christ a realist. This year let the church pull back the gospel curtain and reveal to the people a Christ who stepped from the cradle to the cross to an open grave and rose three days later passing through a stone wall. Let them see a Christ who wept and prayed and Who now offers the world a quality of life they've never known.

It is *this* Christ that Christmas is all about. ▲

"If you're trying to have
an authentic colonial
Christmas, forget the
electric tree lights
Edison had not yet
arrived."



Create A Christmas

By Violet Cox

Christmas for some means running up charges which will barely be paid before it is time to Christmas shop again. Others spend a good part of the Christmas season trying to guess who will buy them a gift, so that they might be sure to give a reciprocal gift. Christmas is often a time of relaxing standards.

But Christmas can and should be a very special season for believers. Christmas can be a time for sharing the miracle of Christ's birth and realizing anew the wonder of the stable and the star. Christmas can also be a time to pause, and, for a while, recapture the magic of childhood Christmases. It can be the supreme joy of making happy someone who is less fortunate than you.

Christmas is a time for meditating, for recalling that night long ago when Bethlehem cradled its heart and gave us the Redeemer of the world. It is a season that truly brings "Peace on earth, good will towards men."

INCLUDE THE FAMILY

Christmas should also be a family time! It provides a wonderful opportunity for fellowship within the family unit. Come on! Let's get out of the Christmas rut and do some meaningful things together.

If your family would like for your celebrations to take on a change of pace, write to your favorite missionary and see how Christians celebrate Christmas in their land of service. Then follow suit, making appropriate decorations and serving the same food. This will broaden your understanding of other cultures and cause you to be more empathetic with our missionaries who are home for Christmas only once every four or five years.

You could have an ethnic Christmas. Determine your descent. For example, let's assume that your

ancestors were German. Become acquainted with German Christmas customs and traditions, then celebrate Christmas in a manner befitting a Christian German family.

You might like to try a colonial Christmas. Go into a nearby forest or Christmas tree farm. Select and cut your own tree. Decorate it with homemade garlands of popcorn and cranberries. Make colorful paper chains from construction paper.

There are several ways to make attractive ornaments for your tree. Carve out the centers of walnut shells, and decorate them in various patterns. Egg shell ornaments are nice and a real challenge to make. Make a small pin hole in each end of an egg. Blow carefully but steadily on one end of the egg until all the contents have come out the other end. Decorate the empty shell with paints, glitter or sequins. Glue a piece of colored yarn to one end and hang your masterpieces from the tree.

If you're trying to have an authentic colonial Christmas, forget the electric tree lights. (Remember, Edison had not yet entered the scene.) Surely none of the celebrations that have been mentioned would be complete without the entire family sitting down together and reading aloud Luke's account of Christ's birth.



REMEMBER THE OTHERS

Perhaps your family would like to volunteer to decorate a bulletin board at church or maybe the sitting room at a local nursing home. This creates a spirit of unity and allows you to share the glad tidings of your own hearts.

Bake several batches of your family's favorite cookies. Distribute them to unsaved friends and neighbors. Many will call back to express their thanks for your thoughtfulness or ask for your recipes. This will give you a further opportunity to share the Christ of Christmas.

Christmas is an excellent time to remember your postman, newspaper carriers, teachers and other public servants with a small act of kindness. Try to select cards and gifts that would draw their attention to the true meaning of Christmas. Frivolous gifts, cartoon cards and practical jokes show poor taste when given at Christmas time.

Your family would receive a real blessing from adopting a college student or person in the military as a big brother or sister during the Christmas season. Send cards and packages to cheer these friends who are away, especially if they won't be home for the holidays.

Get together with other families and go caroling throughout your neighborhood. Be sure not to accept any monetary recompense for this good deed. A cheery "Merry Christmas!" or "God Bless You!" will be more than sufficient payment for your efforts.

Extend your kind thoughts out-of-doors to birds and other small creatures who face the threat of starvation in the bitter winter months. Bird seed, cranberries, crab apples and pine cones covered with peanut butter are delicacies for birds. It is a rewarding and cheerful experience to watch the birds gather and enjoy what you have provided.

KEEP IT CHRISTIAN

None of the customs or traditions that your family observes should violate the true meaning and spirit of



CREATE (From page 7)

Christmas. Christmas cards should be chosen because of the message they convey. Don't waste your time, effort and money on jolly Santas and prancing reindeer. Christian people should mail Christian cards. Homemade cards and family portrait cards are nice to send because the people who receive them realize that time and thought went into their preparation.

House decorations, both inside and out, should be consistent with your Christian testimony. Candles, stars, wreaths, evergreen boughs and nativity scenes are appropriate. Think of lights at Christmas as representing Christ as the Light of the world. Martin Luther was perhaps the first man to illuminate a Christmas tree. According to a popular story, Luther lit his tree to represent the glory and beauty of the stars above Bethlehem on the night of Christ's birth.

Christmas is a time of gift-giving. The very day itself is a commemoration of the fact that God gave His Son to be born among men. The Magi traveled great distances to present their gifts to the newborn King. The thing we must concentrate on is remembering Whose birthday Christmas is. Hence, we must not forget to include Christ and His work in our gift-giving. This gift could be in the form of a monetary contribution to the local church, a Bible College, a missionary or some other aspect of the Lord's work. But even more important than the giving

of money is the giving of ourselves to Him Whose birth we celebrate.

DO SOMETHING SPECIAL

There are many special gifts your family members can make for each other. Draw names and have each member of the family design, draw and paint a plate for the person whose name they drew. (Information may be obtained from Small Fry Originals, 2700 S. Westmoreland, Dallas, Texas 75224). If you would

***"Cartoon cards
and practical jokes
show poor taste
when given at
Christmas time."***

like to make a matching cup or tumbler, write to Color-Me-Products, P. O. Box 36393, Houston, Texas 77036.

These items are fun to make, relatively inexpensive and charming keepsakes. It has been fun for our family to think back to the time we made the plates and be able to see the great progress in coordination and artistic ability our children have made. What's more, you have a new set of plates!

Try making yarn surprise balls for each other. It is hilarious to unwind them. The ball is made by winding yarn in which you wrap one, two or three *small* gifts. Start by wrapping the yarn around one trinket. When it is covered, add another trinket, and so on, winding the yarn until you have a good-sized ball. Keep the ball as perfect in shape as possible. Fasten the end with a gummed star or a bit of glue and some glitter. Don't forget to make thank you notes. Cut from colored paper or cloth a tree, a star or a sprig of holly and paste it on your card. If you prefer, use Christmas seals or decorate the card with colored crayons.

Our children find great delight in receiving presents from us. But there are some intangible, yet far more important, gifts that we can give them. First and foremost, we can live such exemplary Christian lives that they will desire to turn to and follow the Christ whose birth we celebrate.

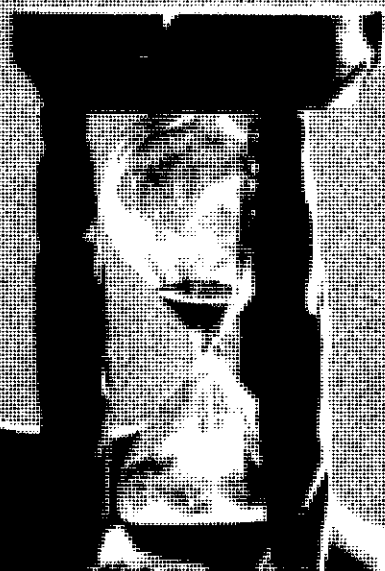
We need to give our attention to our children. One day they will not want it. We must give them discipline, courage, conviction and self-respect. They will also need from us a sense of humor, a will to work and the knowledge that they are loved, a helping hand reaching down for a small child, impromptu praise, an unexpected kiss, a straight "yes or no" answer and the memory of a good home.

It is imperative that Christmas come to mean more to our Free Will Baptist families than toys and tinsel, giving and glitter, feasting and festivity. Use some of these ideas, develop some of your own. Put forth a little extra effort, go the extra mile. Commit your family to the Lord and may He bless you with your most joyous Christmas ever!

ABOUT THE WRITER: Violet Cox is a member of Central Free Will Baptist Church, Royal Oak, Michigan. She graduated from FWBBC with the B.A. degree and Eastern Michigan University with the M.A. degree. Mrs. Cox has taught in public schools in Hazel Park, Michigan for 10 years. ▲



What could she do? Her formal education ended 35 years ago in the sixth grade. The doctor gave John only three months to live.



When A Husband Dies . . .

By Maile Lee Grizzle

I was 52 when I had the first indication that something was about to end my way of living. Friday, October 31, 1966, my husband came home from work chilled and running a high fever. Before morning, I knew he was seriously ill. X-rays showed a spot on his lung. He was hospitalized for extensive examinations. It was cancer.

A doctor talked with my husband, our three children and me. He said John had three months to live. I simply could not think it possible. That diagnosis, however, proved to be correct as he lived only three months and seven days.

I was too busy caring for my husband in those last few months to give much thought to my future. It was after the funeral that I really became frightened. I almost lost control at this point and was deeply troubled about how I would live financially, emotionally and, worst of all, alone.

Although I knew I had to assume full responsibility for our home, car, insurance, taxes, as well as make a living—I had no idea where to start. My formal education ended in the sixth grade. The only work I had done during 35 years of marriage—outside of being wife, mother and homemaker—was benevolent work through my church.

But even that benevolent involvement proved to be an asset in building my new life.

One month after my husband's death, a friend arranged an interview with a restaurant owner for the position of cashier. I



HUSBAND (From page 9)

worked at the restaurant over a year before another job opportunity came along.

One day the owner of a local funeral home approached me to work in public relations and be assistant to the director. Being a long-time family friend, he knew I had assisted others in times of illness and death as a part of my church work. It took months before my decision was made. I wondered if I could cope with the demands of the job after my own personal experience. Finally, after many discussions over lunch and coffee, I started a new job.

My duties included driving with families to and from memorial and interment services. My husband was buried on a cold, windy Valentine's Day. Our hearts were as full and heavy as the grey, winter skies overhead; but as we left the cemetery and headed home, the car suddenly filled with laughter. When we looked back for a glimpse of that sad scene, we discovered one of the sons-in-law still visiting with friends and completely oblivious to our departure. It was such a relief to hear laughter burst forth.

Quite often now, I find families applying the salve of laughter to relieve sorrow. "You must think we're terrible laughing at a time like this," they say. My personal experience which I thought would be such a hindrance becomes a blessing as I say, "No, it is not a terrible thing . . . for, you see, when my husband died. . . ."

"PR", that abbreviation meant little to me until I entered that field. Public Relations was helping people settle insurance claims, working with the Social Security office and often reading scripture and having a time of prayer with a weeping family.

A former pastor who worked with me on several occasions remarked that my job was certainly a type of Christian ministry and a most rewarding one to me. It has

taught me many lessons over the years. I suppose the most important lesson has been to learn respect for the faith of all people, because without faith, it is difficult to overcome sorrow.

The years have not been without problems. One evening after arriving home late from work, I discovered that my home had been burglarized. Considerable damage had been done to the house and several pieces of furniture and personal items were missing. Fear, a feeling I had rarely experienced, was now a close companion. Hebrews 13:6 became mine as I used it in daily living to overcome this problem, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

The city had bought our home place as site for a library a year before my husband's death. We then built our first brand-new home and worked painstakingly on the lawn, but fall arrived before our yard did. While gazing at the barren front lawn a few weeks before he died, John remarked, "I suppose I'll never see the green grass here at our new home." That plain, pure statement melted our hearts as the truth of God's Word became so clear. "As for man, his days are as grass . . ." (Psalm 104:15a).

My daughter, Lorene, and her husband Jack returned from a quick errand in town with gallons and gallons of green paint and a spray gun! Our yard was as beautiful and green as the seasonal Christmas tree in our home and fulfilled the last request of a loved one.

With such kind, thoughtful children it has been difficult to remain independent. Their love has bolstered me over the hard days and I have learned to lean, but not too heavily, upon them.

Of course there are still times when I miss the way it used to be—that morning smell of shaving cream in the bathroom, the companionship on long winter evenings, sharing quiet meals together and playing dominoes with our friends.

Contentment does not come, however, when we live in the past. The present is our possession to share and enjoy. After 12 years living alone, I now feel productive again. I have gained a multitude of friends with whom to enjoy the present.

What makes for a productive life? Trusting God, staying busy, making new friends, thinking of others and learning to love and lean on others. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).



ABOUT THE WRITER: Mattie Lee Grizzle lives in Norman, Oklahoma, where she is employed at Primrose Funeral Home. She is a member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Norman, where her son, Joe, pastors. ▲

COMING NEXT MONTH

- Test Tube Generation
- Sunday School May Be Your Child's Best Friend
- Faith Works the 8-5 Shift

Our Arminian Heritage

By Thomas L. Marberry

Tom Marberry takes a serious look at the Dutch theologian who blunted 16th century Calvinism and led his generation to reconsider God's unlimited atonement.

At the funeral of James Arminius on October 22, 1609, Petrus Bertius said, "There lived in Holland a man whom they who did not know could not sufficiently esteem, whom they who did not esteem had never sufficiently known."

This statement was an excellent summary of the life of James Arminius. He was an excellent preacher, a fine scholar, a good teacher, a devoted husband and father and a loyal follower of Jesus Christ. He faced much opposition in his lifetime from those who did not share his beliefs especially on the subjects of predestination and the

free will of the believer. Arminius was one who dared to depart from the accepted Calvinistic theology which had gained the upper hand in Dutch Protestantism.

He was one who was not afraid to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to him through the words of Scripture regardless of the views and opinions of the church authorities. It is to this brave spirit that we as Free Will Baptists today point as one of our spiritual forefathers.

Obviously there is not sufficient space in an article such as this to do a complete study of the life and thought of Arminius and its relationship to modern theology. It is the

purpose of this paper 1) to examine the historical context in which Arminius ministered, 2) to examine briefly the thought of Arminius on the questions of predestination and free will and 3) to examine the contribution of Arminius to modern Free Will Baptist theology.

THE HISTORICAL SITUATION

The Reformation first came to the Netherlands at a very early date as the writings of Martin Luther began to circulate and the Bible was translated into Dutch so that it could be



read by the people of the land. By the latter part of the 16th century Calvinism had replaced Lutheranism as the dominant form of protestantism in Holland. The Dutch Reformed Church was organized by men who were strict followers of John Calvin and Theodore Beza who followed Calvin as leader of the reformation in Geneva, Switzerland.

The strict Calvinism of Beza, however, did not win complete acceptance in Dutch Protestantism. Even before the time of Arminius there were those who held more moderate views. Guilhelmus Feugeureus, under whom Arminius studied in Leiden, was a moderate Calvinist. Casper Jansz. Coolhaes who was active in the founding of the University at Leiden and a long-time friend of Arminius was of similar sentiments.

A number of Dutch students with whom Arminius studied at Geneva (including his closest friend Johannes Uitenbogaert) were also quite opposed to the strict Calvinism of Beza. This difference in theological belief set the stage for decades of bitter conflict within the Dutch Reformed Church. For most of his adult life, Arminius was in the center of this controversy as the main exponent of the more moderate view.

Arminius was born in Oudewater, Holland, probably on October 10, 1560. On October 23, 1576, Arminius entered the University at Leiden. He finished his studies there in 1581 and a short time later went to study at Geneva with the financial support of the city of Amsterdam.

After studying at Geneva and traveling to other places, Arminius returned to Amsterdam and became a pastor in the fall of 1587. He remained there until he accepted a teaching position at the University at Leiden in 1603. He continued teaching there until his death on October 19, 1609.

THE PREDESTINATION CONTROVERSY

Most of the controversies which Arminius had with the followers of

Calvin and Beza centered around the question of predestination. Beza and his followers defended a position which has come to be known as Supralapsarianism. Arminius summarized their view as follows in his *Declaration of Sentiments*:

1. That God has absolutely and precisely decreed to save certain particular men by his mercy or grace, but to condemn others by his justice: And to do all this without having any regard in such decree to righteousness or sin, obedience or disobedience, which could possibly exist on the part of one class of men or of the other.
2. That, for the execution of the preceeding decree, God determined to create Adam, and all men in him, in an upright state of original righteousness; besides which he also ordained them to commit sin, that they might thus become guilty of eternal condemnation and be deprived of original righteousness.
3. That those persons whom God has thus positively willed to save, he has decreed not only to salvation but also to the means which pertain to it . . . and that he also in reality leads them to these results by a grace and power which are irresistible, so that it is not possible for them to do otherwise than believe, persevere in faith, and be saved.
4. That to those whom, by his absolute will, God has fore-ordained to perdition, he has also decreed to deny that grace which is necessary and sufficient for salvation . . . so that they are neither placed in a possible condition nor in any capacity of believing or of being saved.

There seems to be little doubt that Arminius after years of conflict understood the Calvinists at this point and has fairly presented their position.

Arminius proceeded to criticize this viewpoint from several aspects. Arminius argued that the Calvinistic

Supralapsarianism approach did not include within it the Gospel because it included nothing about repentance, belief, faith or the forgiveness of sins which are so often mentioned in the Scripture as an essential part of the Christian life. He also argued that this belief was not true to the history of the church in that none of the early church councils during the first six centuries had defended this viewpoint.

Arminius also argued that this was not the historic position of Dutch Protestantism because it was not presented in the Belgic Confession or the Heidelberg Catechism which were basic statements of belief adopted by the Dutch Reformed Church. This viewpoint was also contrary to the goodness of God. Arminius wrote,

How vastly different are such statements as these from the expansive goodness of God by which he confers benefits not only on the unworthy, but also on the evil, the unjust and on those who are deserving of punishment, which trait of Divine Beneficence in our Father Who Is In Heaven, we are commanded to imitate.

According to Arminius, this viewpoint was contrary to the nature of man because it did not recognize that man had been created in the image of God with a capacity to love, know and worship God. Neither did this viewpoint recognize the free will with which man, according to the Scriptures, had been created. Supralapsarianism prevented "... the exercise of this liberty, by binding or determining the will absolutely to one subject, that is, to do this thing precisely, or to do that."

In summary, Arminius said that this viewpoint was contrary both to the traditional teachings of the Christian church and to the revelation of God as given in the Bible as regards faith, belief, salvation and the nature of man.

On the issue of free will, Arminius was often accused of teaching Pelagianism which is the view that man's moral nature is neutral and that he may choose to be good or to be evil. Arminius never taught this. He taught that man could never perform the good without the

assistance of Divine grace. He did hold, however, "that many persons resist the Holy Spirit and reject the grace that is offered." Arminius believed that God gave to man a freedom of the will which allowed man to resist the grace of God.

ARMINIAN INFLUENCE TODAY

A number of different denominations today share beliefs similar to Arminius. Methodists, the Church of the Nazarene, certain Baptist churches (like Free Will Baptists), some Episcopalian bodies, some Anabaptists groups (like the Mennonites) and many others have been influenced to one degree or another by the theology of Arminius. Some beliefs such as a universal atonement are now widely held even by churches that are moderately Calvinistic.

In many situations others have come to basically the same conclusions as Arminius through an independent study of the Scriptures without being directly exposed to the writings of Arminius. This is probably what happened with Free Will Baptists.

The founders of our denomination such as Benjamin Randall and Paul Palmer were not men who had been technically trained as theologians or church historians. It is doubtful that they had studied the writings of Arminius, but through their study of the Bible they came to many of the same conclusions. It is wonderful how the Spirit of God may speak to different men even decades apart in basically the same way.

The writings of Arminius are difficult, but they deserve to be studied by Free Will Baptists.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Thomas Marberry is an instructor at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Moore, Oklahoma. He is pursuing doctoral studies at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. ▲

Here's Your Question!

By Wade T. Jernigan

QUESTION: *Why is Jacob allowed to have four wives in the Old Testament and still be called an example?*

ANSWER: That Jacob was ever set up by the Lord as a spiritual example has escaped my attention. Israel (the nation) was frequently called an example of the believer (See I Corinthians 10:6, 11 for instance). In I Corinthians 10, Israel is shown to be a positive example in spirituality, and a negative example in carnality.

The key word in your question is "allowed". God allowed Jacob to have two wives and two concubines (See Genesis 29:21-10:13). Men who took concubines for themselves were considered to be husbands to those women (See Judges 19:1-4). Using that as a commentary it would be proper to say Jacob had four wives. God later, in Leviticus 18:18, specifically forbade a man to "take a wife to her sister".

In Genesis 33:5 Jacob implied that God had given him both (Leah and Rachel) his wives and possibly also the concubines. One must remember that there were no civil laws governing such and that though He never sanctioned it, God did permit plural marriages and in many cases blessed the offspring.

A Christian's concept of marriage should be forged from New Testament teaching. God's original law on marriage (See Genesis 2:24-25) is that which Christ taught in the New Testament (See Matthew 19:1-9).

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

DIRECTORY UPDATE

PASTORAL CHANGES

ALABAMA

Robert Edmonson to First Church, Mobile

ARKANSAS

Lavelle Reeves to Center Point Church, Vilonia from Stockton Mission, Stockton, MO

Ronnie Blanks to Willoughby Church, Warren from First Church, Arkadelphia

Ralph Hart to First Church, Paris from Liberty Hill Church, Rosebud

James Mutchler to First Church, Arkadelphia

CALIFORNIA

Dennis Pettyjohn to Selma Church, Selma from Son Valley Church, Phoenix, AZ

FLORIDA

Ron Knight to First Church, Vero Beach from First Church, Flomaton, AL

Larry Montgomery to Hollywood Church, Hollywood from Butterfield Church, Aurora, IL

Thomas Coxwell to Torah Church, Crestview from Rome Mission, Rome, GA

GEORGIA

Mike Stevens to Providence Church, Columbus

Larry Williams to Pine Level Church, Chester from First Church, Eastman, GA

ILLINOIS

Cliff Donoho to Oak Valley Church, Geff

KENTUCKY

Billy Hanna to Trinity Church, Bowling Green from First Church, Savannah, GA

MISSOURI

Russell Caughron to First Church, Cartersville

OKLAHOMA

William Walker to Hectorville Church, Mounds from Panama Church, Panama

Jim Goines to First Church, Wagoner from Hectorville Church, Mounds

Dale Vanderburg to United Church, Blanchard from Hanford Church, Hanford, CA

TENNESSEE

Wayne Williams to Roan Street Church, Elizabethton from Sikeston Church, Sikeston, MO

TEXAS

Bob Thornburgh to Garland Church, Garland

Dale Price to Trinity Church, Fort Worth from Stewart Church, Henderson

Other Personnel

Tim Thompson to Woodbine Church, Nashville, TN as Assistant Pastor

Roger Houston to Guin Church, Guin, AL, as Minister of Music from Pocahontas Church, Carbon Hill as pastor

Steve Riggs to Goodsprings Church, Pleasant View, TN, as Associate Pastor

Steve Koonos to First Church, Moore, OK, as minister of music and youth

COOPERATIVE PLAN OF SUPPORT

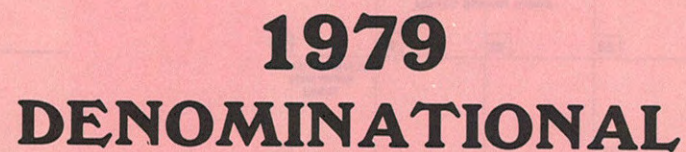
September, 1978

RECEIPTS:

State	Sept. '78		Sept. '77	Yr. to date
	Co-op	Design.		
Alabama	\$	\$	\$	\$ 1,383.42
Arizona	322.56	(322.56)	1,055.81	1,174.73
Arkansas	5,571.15		2,412.54	23,437.21
California	724.38	(724.38)	922.86	7,791.54
Florida	224.64	(207.90)	16.74	3,091.74
Georgia	115.00		153.34	2,899.15
Hawaii				200.00
Idaho	136.75			260.97
Illinois	1,345.35		1,265.44	10,962.75
Indiana				150.00
Iowa	220.43		188.41	2,061.43
Kansas	185.03		184.06	1,265.35
Maryland	140.00		50.00	751.73
Michigan			60.16	1,734.59
Mississippi	87.86		62.35	853.47
Missouri	5,027.08	(4,927.08)	4,517.29	45,081.33
New Mexico				90.28
North Carolina	420.00	(125.00)	228.88	2,012.24
Northwest Assoc.				388.86
Ohio			840.00	6,967.22
Oklahoma			4,950.18	45,846.20
Tennessee	814.09		888.22	9,297.96
Texas	317.21		124.09	2,207.77
Virginia	61.78		17.80	370.24
Virgin Islands			99.00	1,140.40
West Virginia	20.20		23.56	175.52
Interest				398.69
Totals	\$ 15,733.51		\$ 18,060.73	\$ 171,994.79

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive Office	\$ 6,246.54	\$(1,206.05)	\$ 2,745.51	\$ 57,461.38
Foreign Missions	2,904.13	(1,781.20)	4,978.44	38,762.23
Bible College	2,356.04	(1,263.41)	3,526.89	25,116.90
Home Missions	1,898.39	(1,087.24)	2,940.47	22,385.13
Church Training Serv.	1,133.46	(475.70)	1,825.25	13,043.08
Retirement & Ins.	878.43	(352.21)	1,408.70	10,325.39
Layman's Board	227.66	(74.18)	501.66	3,770.29
Commission on Theological Liberalism	88.86	(66.93)	122.04	1,030.39
Other Ministries			11.77	100.00
Totals	\$ 15,733.51		\$ 18,060.73	\$ 171,994.79



CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<h1>February</h1> <p>EMPHASIS: National Teacher Training Month</p>				1	2 Ground-Hog Day	3
NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK — "Concern and Commitment January 29-February 4						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday	13	14 St. Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18	19 George Washington's Birthday	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			
CONFERENCE ON EVANGELISM Tulsa, OK February 26-28						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March EMPHASIS: Spring Sunday School Enlargement Campaign				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
BIBLE CONFERENCE FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE March 11-15				FWB Bookdealers Meeting Nashville, TN — March 14-16 Spring Vacation for FWBBC — March 15-20		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
CONFERENCE ON EVANGELISM Modesto, CA March 26-28						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Palm Sunday	9	10	11	12 Passover	13 Good Friday	14
WNAC PRE-EASTER WEEK OF PRAYER AND OFFERING FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS April 9-14				Welcome Visitors Days FWBBC — April 12-14		
15 Easter	16	17	18	19	20	21
FOREIGN MISSIONS CALL-A-THON April 15						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	April				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
May		1 May Day	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
National Home Missions Board Meeting May 7-9						
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19
FWBBC Baccalaureate 8:00 p.m. — May 13				FWBBC Commencement 10:00 a.m. — May 17		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
FWBBC Summer School May 21-June 22						
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		
Servicemen's Sunday May 27			Foreign Missions Annual Board Meeting April 30-May 3			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
September EMPHASIS: Church Training						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 Sweetest Day
Layman's Day October 14	21	22	23	24 United Nations Day	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Halloween	<h1>October</h1> <p>EMPHASIS: Fall Sunday School Enlargement Campaign</p>	
MISSIONARY CONFERENCE — FWBCC Campus October 28-31						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
November EMPHASIS: National Home Missions Month				1	2	3
4	5	6 Election Day	7	8	9	10
11	12 Veteran's Day	13	14	15	16	17
WNAC PRE-THANKSGIVING WEEK OF PRAYER AND OFFERING FOR HOME MISSIONS November 12-16						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Home Missions Sunday November 18	25	26	27	28	29 Thanksgiving Day	30

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
December EMPHASES: State Home Missions Month Wiley Memorial Christmas Gift to Foreign Missions						1
2 Advent	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Wiley Memorial Gift December 9	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27	28
FWBCC Fall Semester Ends — Dec. 20						
Bible College Christmas Checkbook Project — December 25-30						
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				



FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

CANDOR AND ANALYSIS SPOTLIGHTED AT ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

NASHVILLE, TN—Thirty-eight state and national personnel representing 15 states caucused at Hillmont Camp near White Bluff, Tennessee, October 16-19 for the annual Free Will Baptist leadership conference. Striking candor and openness characterized the mid-October gathering.

Fourteen sessions including times of lengthy mutual interchange outlined the conference theme "Recharting the Course". National Moderator Bobby Jackson guided opening night's free-wheeling dialogue drawing participants into a sharing of diverse opinions on what each man's hopes and aspirations for the denomination were.

Ohio Promotional Secretary Alton Loveless and FWBBC Dean Dr. Charles Thigpen moved participants through orientation blocs centering on listening and leadership development. The national cooperative program was analyzed, its strengths

and weaknesses cataloged, its history discussed and its future outlook assessed.

Denominational identity and issues related to maintaining that identity were pursued in a two-hour group exchange led by Wade Jernigan, California executive secretary.

Representatives from national departments made themselves available for fact-finding periods during the four-day meeting. The annual conclave was moved from its traditional December dates to mid-October this year to avoid inclement weather.

A number of newly elected state leaders attending for the first time as well as personnel who have shared in a number of such conferences assured Executive Secretary Rufus Coffey they were already making plans to return in 1979 for the October 1-4 session.

PENSION FUND SURPASSES \$1 MILLION MARK

NASHVILLE, TN—Herman L. Hersey, director of the National Board of Retirement and Insurance, announced October 13, that assets of the denomination's pension plan reached the one million dollar mark.

"This milestone is just the beginning," says Mr. Hersey. "Our potential for the future is unlimited in the ministry of this newest department of the National Association."

The retirement program was started by the North Carolina State Association of Free Will Baptists in May, 1968 and was adopted as a National program in 1969.

The million-dollar fund represents deposits of 450 missionaries, pastors and denominational employees together with the deposits of 34 separate trust funds of individuals, churches and denominational agencies.

"The funds are invested within our denomination through loans and bonds," Director Hersey says, "giving us a two-fold ministry that provides for retirement and helps churches finance building and expansion programs."

OKLAHOMA HONORS JOHN WEST

TULSA, OK—The Rev. John H. West, widely known as editor of *Optimism* and Free Will Baptist pastor-at-large, was saluted by more than 900 delegates and visitors gathered for Oklahoma's State Convention at Tulsa's Sheraton Inn-Skyline East, October 9-12.

Oklahoma State Association presented West with a "Certificate of Appreciation" for 40 years service. Brother West was celebrating his 50th year attending the state association and his 45th year in the ministry.

In other action delegates voted to expand Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College's board of trustees to 16. Executive Secretary Lonnie DaVoult was reelected.

The 1978 convention theme "Total Commitment" was explored by four state ministers: Bailey Thompson, Joe Grizzle, Keith Burden and Gene Jackson.



Dr. Charles Thigpen, FWBBC dean, lectures during October Leadership Conference.



newsfront

(continued)

WHALEY JOINS FWBBC MUSIC FACULTY

NASHVILLE, TN—Vernon Whaley will join the faculty at Free Will Baptist Bible College in January, according to Dr. Charles A. Thigpen, dean. Mr. Whaley is minister of youth and music at First Free Will Baptist Church, Albany, Georgia. He will be teaching in the college's Music Department.



His duties will include instructing in choral conducting and church music methods and materials, as well as giving private lessons in voice. He will also direct the 60-voice Mixed Chorus, which performs on campus for Chapel and in special services from a repertoire that ranges from gospel music to the classics.

Mr. Whaley received his Bachelor's degree from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1972. He has since earned his Master's in music.

He directed music ministries at Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, and Collinswood Free Will Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Virginia, before assuming his current position in Albany. He has toured with his youth choir at Albany among Free Will Baptist churches in several states.

He served as president of Free Will Baptist Music Ministries 1972-77, a fellowship of people interested in church music.

Mr. Whaley will be moving with his family to Nashville in December. He will begin working with the college January 10.

He is married to the former Beth Smith and has two children—Laurie Elizabeth and Jeremy Joel.

PARSONAGE BURNS AFTER TELEVISION EXPLODES

ALMA, GA—Fire roared through the parsonage of Pine Level Free Will Baptist Church Tuesday, October 9 gutting the rural structure. Pastor Bob Hancock said nothing was saved from the blaze except a washer and dryer.

A television set exploded causing the afternoon fire. Mrs. Hancock was home alone at the time. The children (ages three and six) were in school. Mr. Hancock had departed shortly before on church visitation rounds. Mrs. Hancock, unable to control the flames, could do nothing as scorching flames incinerated family belongings.

The parsonage was located on Alma's Route 4 some five miles outside city limits and beyond help by the local fire department. The 20-year-old wood structure ignited quickly and burned out of control before summoned neighbors could extinguish the flames.

DEACON HONORED AT CHURCH'S SILVER ANNIVERSARY

JONESBORO, AR—Eight pastors and a quarter century later First Free Will Baptist Church, Jonesboro, celebrated its 25th anniversary year.

The September 6 occasion honored Deacon and Mrs. Ray Branham with a commemorative plaque citing their 25 years faithful service in the church.

First Church was organized under the leadership of Will S. White with nine charter members. The first service was conducted in a log service station. First Church moved to its present location on West Washington September 16, 1956. Two additions valued in excess of \$200,000 were completed after the original structure was built.

W. H. Bostic pastors the north-central Arkansas congregation. The church has prospered from the ministries of his predecessors Alton Loveless, John Small, Oscar Wright, Ben Scott, Lonnie Skiles and Nick Hollis.

MERGER MEANS CHANGE IN ORDERING CURRICULUM MATERIALS

NASHVILLE, TN—The Church Training Service Department has now been merged with the Sunday School Department. The new name is Sunday School & Church Training Department.

All orders and correspondence should be directed to the new name at Post Office Box 17306—114 Bush Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37217. The telephone number is (615) 361-1221. A codaphone is in operation after 4:30 p.m. and on weekends for after-hours ordering.

Beginning with the Spring Quarter, 1979, both order blanks will be combined. Please begin to take the necessary action to see that both Sunday school and CTS materials are ordered at the same time and are to be shipped to ONE address.

CAMPUS ABLAZE WITH REVIVAL

NASHVILLE, TN—The campus revival at Free Will Baptist Bible College, September 13-17, was characterized by fervent praying, dynamic preaching, humble repentance and changed lives.

Well over 100 students sought the face of God on the altar in inquiry rooms and in the dormitories. There was a wide range of decision making, including assurance of salvation, finding the will of God, answering the call to preach and answering the call to other full-time Christian service.

There is a new spirit on campus, and the world has yet to feel the full impact of decisions that were made.

Reverend Dann Patrick, pastor of Randall Memorial Free Will Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, was used as God's messenger to deliver powerful, pointed, and practical sermons.

CCC OPENS WITH NEW ADMINISTRATION

FRESNO, CA—California Christian College opened its doors this fall with a new administration. Dr. Daniel W. Parker began his first academic year as president after three years as dean of students.

James H. Cox arrived in California from a pastorate in West Jefferson, Ohio, to assume academic dean and registrar duties. Cox has a Ph.D. in Administration of higher education in progress at Ohio State University.

Ted Wilbanks, a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College and Oklahoma Baptist University also joined the CCC staff. Wilbanks pastors Harmony Free Will Baptist

Church in Fresno and is responsible for Christian Service Training at the College. Wilbanks previously taught at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Moore, Oklahoma, and at Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville.

Five new buildings have been moved on campus. The buildings formerly housed a public school. They were donated to CCC by a local contractor. It is anticipated that the four classroom buildings and multi-purpose gymnasium will meet the needs of the college for several years. One of the buildings is being remodeled to house the library.

The college plans an aggressive student recruitment to attract Free Will Baptist youth. CCC's administration believes many young people from California churches and other states could benefit in both academic and spiritual areas by attending the Fresno based Bible College instead of secular institutions.

Dr. Parker and Dean Cox attended the annual meeting of the American Association of Bible Colleges in Chicago and then toured churches in Cleveland, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio in early November.

NOTED AUTHOR LECTURES AT HILLSDALE

MOORE, OK—Mr. John Morris conducted a seminar at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College November 17-18 on the "Twilight of Evolution". Mr. Morris is one of the men involved in exploring Mount Ararat as a possible identification of Noah's Ark. Author of several books, he was consultant to the television program, "In Search of Noah's Ark."

The college added five part-time faculty during the fall semester. They are Rev. Jim Puckett teaching Bible Survey, Rev. Homer Young teaching Life of Christ, Rev. Dale Smith teaching homiletics, Rev. Leroy Welch teaching music and Mrs. Helen Watkins teaching English.

One hundred eighty-three students from 15 states and six foreign countries enrolled for the fall semester at Hillsdale. The increase was especially noticeable in the freshman class as 86 freshmen began their degrees.

Hillsdale's Bible conference schedule March 5-7, 1979, will feature eight alumni: Bob Thompson, Wichita, Kansas; Jim Shepherd, McAlester; Frank Giles, Newcastle; Frank Wiley, Oklahoma City; Jay Tilson, Norman; Andy Percy, Mansfield, Arkansas; and Richard Robinson, Thayer, Missouri.

The spring seminar features denominational personalities Herman Hersey and Bob Shockey who will lecture from the perspective of their particular areas of interest. Hersey specializes in retirement planning while Shockey's strength is evangelism.

MISSIONS COMES TO LOCAL CHURCH

EL SOBRANTE, CA—Sherwood Forest Free Will Baptist Church, El Sobrante, hosted 33 Japanese students for three and one-half weeks during the summer as part of an Inter-Study Program, a North American educational and travel organization that arranges good will tours for foreign students.

Pastor Milburn Wilson said the California church both hosted and coordinated activities for touring visitors. Most students were housed in homes of church members. They were able to see first-hand how an average American family operates. Students shared in meal functions, weekly activities, worship services and general family living procedures.

Three-hour classes Monday

through Wednesday each week were conducted at Sherwood Forest Church. Students probed American etiquette, culture and religion. On two occasions (an hour and a half each time) Pastor Wilson lectured on worship and its meaning. The students attended regular Sunday services at the church.

Two of the 33 visiting Japanese students were led to Christ during their stay. "It was bringing missions to our local church," reflected Wilson. "I'll never forget the tearful eyes and smiling faces of those two new Christians as they left to return to Japan."

The foreign mission board and Free Will Baptist missionaries in Japan have been alerted for follow-up activities.



Currently ...

By
JACK WILLIAMS

On Saturday before the World Series, a marathon 75-inning, nonstop softball game was played in **Fresno, CA. Memorial FWB Church** raised \$868 for the Jerry Webb account in the 12-hour extravaganza. The boys, the men, the women and the girls all took part in the record shattering dawn-to-dusk ballgame. Pitcher **Lonnie Rolan** also pastors the church.

Members of the past 50 set were honored at a luncheon October 1 at **Horton Heights FWB Church, Nashville, TN.** The DMA luncheon was directed by **Mrs. Jill Kettelman** (DMA stands for "don't mention age"). A barbershop quartet provided nostalgic entertainment. The DMA luncheon has become an annual fling for the Horton group. **Harold Critcher** pastors.

CONTACT welcomes the *Paper Pulpit*, mid-week voice of **First FWB Church, Russellville, AR.** **Fred Warner** pastors.

Fairmount Park FWB Church, Norfolk, VA, has voted a \$450,000 bond issue in order to construct a new church on the Gateway Bible College campus. Pastor **Dale Burden** said he is convinced there's only one way to build a real church though there may be many ways of gathering a crowd. That one way of building a church is "people reaching people".

Here's a nice custom that seems to be catching on in the eastern part of the country. Missionary **Jerry Banks** spoke at **Victory FWB Church, Goldsboro, NC,** in mid-October. Among other things the church did for Brother Banks while he was there was to purchase him a new suit. The church Woman's Auxiliary took the hint and started a similar project for Jerry's wife. **George C. Lee** pastors.

It was Senior Saints' Thursday on October 12 at **Guin FWB Church, Guin, AL.** Pastor **Richard Cordell** said free transportation and meals were provided for all senior saints in the community who wished to participate. Recognizing that senior saints' ministry could be exciting, the congregation opened the doors wide to senior community members who were not saints but wanted to come anyway.

Want a new idea for Wednesday evening Bible studies? Here's one fresh from **Tupelo FWB Church, Tupelo, MS.** Pastor **Billy Bevan** reports that his congregation is doing a study on the "one another" verses.

Arkansas Promotional-Secretary **David Joslin** released survey results regarding hymnbook preferences in **Arkansas Free Will Baptist churches.** Joslin sent survey forms to 230 Arkansas churches; 125 responded. Sixty-nine of them indicated they used one hymnal, 41 churches used two hymnals and 15 churches used three or more. One church even used six different hymnals. According to Joslin, the Free Will Baptist Hymnal led the top 10 list but just barely. Forty-five responding churches said they used the Free Will Baptist Hymnal.

Although there are a number of fine hymnals available for church use today, every Free Will Baptist church should give top consideration to using the Free Will Baptist Hymnal. Enormous effort has been expended in the preparation and printing of our hymnal.

The fourth annual pastors and workers' conference sponsored by **First FWB Church, Newport News, VA,** was conducted November 20-22. Host pastor **Don Pegram** offered free motel rooms on Sunday night for pastors and their wives present for the service. Featured speakers included **Jack Hyles, Wally Beebe, Roy Thomas, Dale Burden, John Gibbs** and **Rudy Atwood.**

Some disturbing news reached this office concerning **First FWB Church, Austin, TX.** It appeared for several weeks that the Austin Church would lose its sanctuary due to a lack of communication. The church was late in making a deposit one month and the Bank of Austin accelerated their payments and demanded that full payment or other arrangements be made. At one point while pastor **Louis Nettleton** was making necessary arrangements the bank foreclosed, sold their property and gave the congregation 30 days to vacate. The matter was resolved and the members have returned to occupy the building.

Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Moore, OK, presented a certificate to **Southern Oaks FWB Church, Oklahoma City, OK,** extolling the church's generosity during the past year. Pastor **James Puckett** and his members contributed nearly \$12,000 to Hillsdale.

Courtesy of the golden agers at **Fellowship FWB Church, Flat River, MO,** a memorial flagpole was erected at the educational building in memory of **Albert Tucker. Wayne Phillips** pastors.

First FWB Church, Cushing, OK, has begun a bus ministry in connection with their Sunday school program. **David Archer** pastors.

Happy Birthday, **Cofer's Chapel Church, Nashville, TN.** The Middle Tennessee congregation celebrated its 98th birthday on October 8. Rev. **John L. Welch,** who pastored Cofer's for more than 46 years, brought the morning message. **Eugene Waddell** pastors.

Oklahoma's Union Association has assumed responsibility for a new mission begun in **Elk City.** The work was pioneered by **E. Morris, DeArthur Yandell** and **Paul Wood.** Property on Main Street has been purchased.

The **First Oklahoma Association** which sponsors a mission in **Choctaw, OK,** is underwriting expenses of the endeavor by slating fund raising dinners. **Jerry Dudley** is the new mission worker.

CONTACT applauds the faculty of **Free Will Baptist Bible College** upon its completion of a 183-page institutional self-study for the American Association of Bible Colleges. AABC is the accrediting association for Bible colleges in the United States and Canada. FWBBC was granted accreditation in 1958, since then the college like all institutions accredited by AABC has been reexamined every 10 years.

Some churches count their age by years, others count their age by Sundays. **Central FWB Church, Huntington, WV,** is 133 Sundays old. The congregation averaged 133.4 persons in attendance during that span of time. According to pastor **Carl Vallance,** members voted a record budget exceeding \$90,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

Pastor **Bob Jones** at **Sylvan Park FWB Church, Nashville, TN,** sent this message, "If ever a church has had revival, we have. Among those saved while **Ronald Creech** was preaching for us was a Bible College student, a Sunday school teacher, a teenager and a Woman's Auxiliary officer." That, ladies and gentlemen, is a revival with far reaching effects.

Sixteen members of **Head's FWB Church, Cedar Hill, TN,** were honored for perfect attendance in Sunday school. Lapel pins recognized perfect attendance from two years to 28 years in the congregation. **Ron Parker** pastors.

Waldo Young turned in his 10-year report at **Spencer Road FWB Church, Spencer, OK,** in mid-October. During the past decade 207

people have joined the church, an attendance high of 283 was reached, a new sanctuary was constructed in 1969 and four of the 207 converts are now pastoring Free Will Baptist churches.

Lightening struck the air conditioning unit at **First FWB Church, Ada, OK**, causing extensive damage. Pastor **David Sutton** said that with insurance and the \$860 members contributed the unit would be replaced.

First FWB Church, Wellington, KS, had a record 89 in Sunday school September 17. Pastor **Troy Dobbs** has begun a bus ministry and says he is beginning to see the altars fill.

Pastor **G. C. Lee** has begun his sixth year of daily radio broadcasts. The program has continued without interruption since October '73. This makes more than 1500 consecutive broadcasts. Lee pastors **Victory FWB Church, Goldsboro, NC**.

The newly organized **Newark FWB Church, Newark, OH**, was in desperate need of pews. Pastor **Floyd Wolfenbarger** felt that the members might have to hock their future in order to obtain the needed pews. However, the Lord still hears people when they pray in Ohio. A church (a non-Free Will Baptist church) heard of Brother Wolfenbarger's need and gave 22 pews to the Newark work. Rejoice with those who rejoice!

Pastor **Homer Young of Capitol Hill FWB Church, Oklahoma City, OK**, has begun talking about a Christian school grades one through 12 near Hillsdale College. Young said, "This church has from 10 to 15 students in Christian schools this year. It is probably true of other churches in the area."

They love **Blaine Hughes** and his family at **Bethany FWB Church, Norfolk, VA**. Blaine was honored with a well deserved 10th anniversary celebration sponsored by members and friends at Bethany. Taped messages, letters, telegrams and words of encouragement from pastors and workers who had served with Mr. Hughes topped the evening. Heartiest congratulations to one of the denomination's leading laymen.

Pastor **Ben Scott of First FWB Church, North Little Rock, AR**, claims there was nothing really unusual about Mr. **Alan Gilbert** repairing the motor on his lawnmower. Gilbert did some work on the fly wheel, replaced a worn out part in the carburetor and released some tension on a spring. But according to Pastor Scott all that work is totally out of perspective until he drops the bottom line on listeners. For you see, Mr. Alan Gilbert has been blind for nine years.

The **Northeast Mississippi Bible Institute** registered 34 for its Tuesday evening classes. **First FWB Church, Amory, MS**, hosts the learning center. Instructors for the fall semester include **Larry Gunnoe, Danny Dwyer, Mike Jones and Billy Bevan**.

First FWB Church, Benton, IL, is sponsoring the **Benton Bible Institute**. According to Pastor **Gene Norris** an arrangement has been reached with Moody Bible Institute to use books and materials offered in Moody's Home Study Bible courses. Grading will be done by staff members from Moody Bible Institute on any test given in class. A certificate from Moody will be awarded upon completion of each particular series. ▲

Imperfection Made Perfect

OUR WOMEN SPEAK



By Lois J. Peters

"Everything is too commercial! Everything costs too much! MERRY? With the world in the mess it's in? I don't have any Christmas spirit this year. I'll be glad when Christmas is over!"

If the Christmas season only brings to your mind thoughts akin to one of these oft heard phrases, search for a side path that can lead you to a small country church. Lay aside the cynicism and sophistication that brought the commercial thoughts to your mind and join the group gathering to hear the age-old story and learn that imperfection can be made perfect.

When the lights plunge the sanctuary into semi-darkness, settle back and listen to a young man begin reading the familiar, loved verses of the Savior's birth accompanied with carols by a small choir of non-polished voices and realize that you are hearing imperfection made perfect.

While the young man is reciting and the dedicated choir is singing, church members from five to 70 act out the pageantry. Beginning with the decree from Caesar Augustus forcing the people to gather in their hometowns to pay taxes, through the blessing of the infant at eight days old in the Temple by the ancient Simeon, you will see imperfection made perfect.

If you have missed the sight of shiny tinsel wrapped about wire harnesses to give the "angels" their wings and halos, you have missed a blessing. If several sets of those wings/halos have gaps in their tinsel revealing bare wire, and one halo has been bumped askew forcing a little angel to do a miniature shoulder dance to keep that halo above his head instead of over his ear, you have missed imperfection that is perfect.

If those same angels begin to clomp carefully from the scene after the shepherds leave the stable, and a door waves vigorously while an unintelligible murmur reverses those reverent feet to quickly rearrange themselves for the arrival of the wise men, that is perfect imperfection.

When Simeon goes through the whole pantomime of blessing the infant in semi-darkness, scarcely seen by the thrilled congregation, and then is blinded by the click of the switch of the forgotten spotlight which is aimed right at his glasses, then imperfection is perfection.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Lois J. Peters resides in Monticello, Florida. She has been a Free Will Baptist since 1949. This is her first time to write for publication. ▲

When the Well Runs Dry

By David A. Joslin

Some preachers seem to think that when they've had a few years pastoring and preaching they have arrived and are now full-fledged preachers. Secretly, (privately, of course) they consider themselves masters of the pulpit.

Sometimes later and sometimes sooner the realization dawns that the preacher has not bothered to enrich his life since he started preaching. To put it plainly, the well has run dry.

He's out of ideas, approaches, words, new ways to dramatize the message he wants to preach. Instead of a sermon that convicts the sinner or motivates the believer, he utilizes 30-40 minutes that never can be recalled.

The biblical admonition of Christ to Peter is up-to-date for our times. Three times, Christ told Peter to

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE



PART IV

By Leroy Forlines

Christian liberty is a New Testament doctrine. It is connected with the fact that God views New Testament Christians as mature in contrast to immaturity of Old Testament believers.

Maturity, while giving more freedom, requires more and gives greater opportunity for fulfillment of Christian values. In characterizing New Testament believers Paul said, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

The Choice

Christian liberty is not absolute liberty. It is liberty within the framework of solid commitment to Christian values and principles. Any failure to have commitment to holiness, love and other Christian values either destroys, distorts or corrupts liberty. Such practice may be liberty, but it is not *Christian* liberty.

There can be no doubt; Christian liberty is a New Testament doctrine (See Galatians 5:1). This liberty permits individual believers to apply New Testament values and principles to situations not specifically named in the New Testament. However, we must always keep in mind the Christian is duty bound in liberty to uphold Christian values and principles.

One of the foundation stones of New Testament Christian liberty is that the New Testament believer is viewed as being mature. The other

foundation stone is that we are persons. This is not to suggest that Old Testament believers were not persons. However, the fullest development of personality does not take place in childhood, but adulthood. The maturity of New Testament believers gives the opportunity for fuller personality development.

The essence of being made in the image of God is that man is a personal being. A person is one who thinks (activity of the mind), feels (activity of the heart or emotions) and acts (activity of the will). Personality is the way a person thinks, feels and acts.

For the activity of a person to be genuine, it must represent his own thinking and feeling. When dealing with children, we urge them to think, feel and act right, but we do not allow them as much freedom as adults. Children have less freedom

"Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-17)

In the fold of Christ, there are the young, the weak, the helpless and the immature. Then, there are the strong and the mature. Both groups require spiritual nutrition. Neither can exist long without it. The right kind of spiritual nourishment is as essential to the development of spiritual life as physical nourishment is to physical development.

The selection of spiritual food must be right both in quality and quantity. It has been stated that "Souls will starve if they have to breakfast on mere rhetoric, dine on mere words and sup on empty ceremonies. The food must be appropriate, plentiful, and timely; otherwise, the sheep and the lambs of Christ will not thrive."

The preacher who attempts to draw water out of a dry well had better prayerfully analyze his situa-

tion. Feeding the young lambs is one thing, but he is also accountable to God for feeding the sheep. The latter requires more effort and spiritual power to dig down for the hidden treasures of God's Word.

What's the solution, preacher?

First, read your Bible. Many preachers actually spend more time trying to impress people on how much is read than in actually reading.

Second, pray. Prayer is like swimming. No matter how many books you read on prayer, how many seminars you attend on this vital subject, it still is not prayer. Like swimming, you have to try it before you can do it. What the average preacher needs is not more courses on prayer, but actual experiences in prayer.

Third, read fundamental religious periodicals. Know what is going on

in the world other than in your own locality. Listen to and read sermons by the masters of the pulpit. Be careful in reading from the secular. Obviously, discretion must be used here. You won't find any new ideas in a trash can.

Fourth, set your priorities. Facing your congregation next Sunday morning with a message direct from the throne of God and burning in your soul takes precedence over any of the other so-called "pastoral" duties. This takes sacrifice, but it is worth the effort.

Fifth, attend conferences, retreats, and associational meetings to hear others preach.

Whatcha gonna do when the well runs dry? What you do here will determine whether or not you ever will be a preacher.

ABOUT THE WRITER: David Joslin is Promotional Secretary of the Arkansas State Association of Free Will Baptists. ▲

is Yours

and are under more authority. As they grow older, we give them more freedom and remove imposed authority.

If Christian training is successful, when the child becomes an adult he will have at some point received Christ and he will be living by Christian values and principles as an expression of his own thinking and feeling. During childhood we impose certain things on children. If this type of imposition carries over into adulthood, either by parents or church, we are not dealing with people as adults.

Dealing with an adult in full recognition of his adulthood does not mean taking a hands-off policy. It means we do not try to control him with imposed authority, nor by manipulation.

We influence people by appealing to them as thinking, feeling, acting beings. Mind is the gateway to personality. Right feeling and right

acting proceed from right thinking. On matters of right and wrong, good and bad, we must seek to persuade people by biblical evidence and sound reasoning.

We have no right to expect a person to think a certain way if he is not convinced. It should not be our aim to crowd people into agreeing with us by use of threats, intimidation or by withholding facts from them. Even if we succeed in getting people to do or refrain from certain things that do not represent their own thinking and feeling, and even though the action may be correct, it does not represent genuine Christian activity.

Christian liberty recognizes a person's right to think things through and reach his own conclusions. This is consistent with what it means to be a person in the full and true sense. This does not mean that person's conclusions are necessarily right, but it does mean if they

do not appear to be right to me I must appeal to him as one who thinks, feels and acts rather than from a strictly authoritarian viewpoint.

This approach is consistent with what the Bible says about truth and knowledge in relationship to our spiritual experiences (See John 8:32; 17:17; II Peter 1:2-4; 2:20). God always appeals to men as thinking, feeling, acting beings. A good example is Isaiah 1:18).

If our position is correct, we will have success when we present a good case to those who are committed to Christian values and principles. People who are not committed to Christian values and principles cannot arrive at the proper conclusion and have the proper experience in ethical matters until repentance takes place and they do become so committed. ▲



MEXICAN EVANGELICALS PRAY AND FAST FOR FREEDOM OF RADIO WITNESS

MEXICO CITY (EP)—A day of prayer and fasting for the cause of Christian radio in Mexico was scheduled for Tuesday, October 31, by leaders of some 8,000 evangelical churches who banded together in an Executive Committee of Denominational Leaders.

In their September 4 meeting, chaired by the Committee president, the Rev. Agustin Acosta (Baptist) and secretary Efrain Espinoza Lara (Independent Presbyterian lawyer), the group decided to request that Evangelicals throughout Mexico dedicate the last day of October for intercession on behalf of their radio ministries, and also to request interviews with prominent government leaders to petition for more liberty for Christian programs.

A number of evangelicals have sent telegrams to officials of the Office of Radio, Television, and Cine asking for reconsideration of the order prohibiting Christian programs on 50 Mexican radio stations.

PASTOR HITS 'SILENCE' OF CHURCHES ON N.C. SCHOOL CONTROVERSY

RALEIGH, NC (EP)—A Baptist clergyman has rapped the "silence" of church bodies on the controversy involving North Carolina's Board of Education and 63 Christian academies which refuse to submit reports on school operations to the state.

The Rev. W. W. Finlator, pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church here, charged that "the silence of the church bodies" constituted "an abdication of responsibility." A frequent spokesman for the North Carolina Civil Liberties Union, Mr. Finlator said the denominations owe the state education agency their "solid support."

"Not only do the religious communions owe the courts and the school board both their involvement in, and the benefit of their thinking on, the issue but they also have the obligation to define in positive terms the meaning of a religious freedom," he said. "Thus far, they have defaulted on such a definition."

HOLIDAY INN SETS GAMBLING CASINO AND SUDDENLY LOSES ITS PRESIDENT

MEMPHIS (EP)—Much has been written about the decisions a president and chief executive office of a mammoth corporation must make that entail ethics, complete honesty and religious feeling. Meet a man named L. M. Clymer. He's quitting as the number two man of the Holiday Inns empire. A matter of "personal and religious convictions" was involved in his taking "early retirement" at 55.

Holiday Inn's board had decided to build and operate a \$55 million hotel-casino in Atlantic City, the gambling capital of the eastern U.S. Mr. Clymer, president and chief executive officer, opposes gambling and promptly quit his high-paying job.

In a statement issued by Holiday Inns, Inc., Mr. Clymer said: "It is my overriding regard and respect for my Lord Jesus Christ which has led me to this decision. My determination to follow His leading for me is the basis for this decision. It has been discovered through prayer and the study of His Word over many months. It is a very personal discovery and, as well as I presently understand, it is His will for me alone."

SUIT BLOCKS IMPLEMENTATION OF '10 COMMANDMENTS' LAW

FRANKFORT, KY (EP)—Five Louisville residents have obtained a court order blocking implementation of Kentucky's new law directing display of the Ten Commandments in all public school classrooms.

The suit, filed against state Superintendent of Public Instruction James B. Graham, says the law is unconstitutional because "it gives preference to a religious sect, society or denomination, a particular creed, mode of worship or system of ecclesiastical policy."

The law in question, passed easily by the 1978 session of the General Assembly, requires the state to have framed copies of the Ten Commandments on display in all schoolrooms if the project is financed by private donations. The suit, backed by the Kentucky Civil Liberties Union, contends the law violates both the United States and Kentucky constitutions. Its purpose is to enjoin the state Department of Education from taking steps to place the Commandments displays in classrooms.

The plaintiffs in the suit include Dr. Martin Perley, a rabbi and former director of the Louisville-Jefferson County Human Relations Commission, and four women who variously describe themselves as a Quaker, a Unitarian, a mother and a "non-believer."

NEW ARABIC NEW TESTAMENT SURVIVES LEBANON TERROR AND NEAR SHIPWRECK

NEW YORK—Despite the turmoil and civil strife raging in Lebanon, and the near loss of the manuscript at sea, a modern language Arabic version of the New Testament is now on press.

Amidst mortar and bombs came news that the page proofs and films for printing the Today's Arabic Version New Testament were preserved in an extraordinary way.

The acting secretary of the American Bible Society in Lebanon, Mr. Samuel Yeghnazar, reported that he and several colleagues braved the gauntlet of fire and heavy shelling to protect the precious manuscript. Fortunately, the equipment, on which composition of the Testament was undertaken, remained undamaged.

Its very survival is being hailed as a miracle by many Christians in war-torn Lebanon. Two years ago, the entire manuscript was feared lost, when a tiny ship carrying it and one of its translators nearly sank off the Lebanese coast. At that time, a dozen Christian Lebanese were also accompanying the priceless document. A violent storm arose on the Eastern Mediterranean, the same sea that the Apostle Paul braved 20 centuries ago. Without radio or motor the vessel drifted to the port of Jounieh, north of Beirut—to be greeted by a rain of bullets.

The long-awaited Arabic New Testament will be ready this year for distribution among the 90 million speakers of this ancient language, who live mainly in North Africa and throughout the Middle East.

NORTH CAROLINA ALSO APPEALS RULING ON CHRISTIAN ACADEMIES

RALEIGH, NC (EP)—The North Carolina Board of Education, which won a court decision upholding its right to regulate certain aspects of Christian academies, now finds that in the process it lost a few established rights of its own.

In his decision on September 3, Superior Court Judge Donald Smith had ruled that the state has no statutory authority over what textbooks the schools use, nor has it the right to regulate the physical facilities of a school plant.

State Attorney General Andrew A. Vanore, in filing an appeal, said, "We feel that if the state has the right to administer and protect the rights of parents and children in non-public schools, we have an inherent right to assure that the buildings they are housed in are safe."

The Christian academies have appealed the decision to a higher court, protesting state regulation of curriculum, teacher standards and promotion requirements.

REPORT ON TEENAGERS IN BRITAIN: MORE BELIEVE IN UFOs THAN IN GOD

LONDON (EP)—Nearly 75 percent of Britain's teenagers own a Bible but more young people believe in Unidentified Flying Objects and life on other planets than "definitely believe" in God, according to a survey published here.

The survey was sponsored by the Bible Society, the Scripture Union, the Evangelical Alliance, which embraces more than 700 churches, societies and fellowships throughout Britain, and Buzz magazine, Britain's largest circulation interdenominational monthly.

The study revealed that 73 percent of the young people questioned own Bibles and that 80 percent own a New Testament. British girls are more likely to own Bibles than boys—80 percent compared with 67 per cent. Only four percent of those surveyed had read the Bible on the day of the survey, nine percent read it each week, and only 14 percent read it in a month.

As regards the belief in UFO's and life on other planets, 50 percent of the teenagers questioned claimed to belong to Christianity. One in two believed in UFO's and 54 percent thought there was life on other planets.

Asked whether they believed in God, only 26 percent said they definitely believe in God, 36 percent 'think' they believe, 26 percent sometimes believe and 12 percent definitely do not believe in God.

SEXUAL ATTRACTIVENESS, AUTHORITY AMONG ISSUES WOMEN CLERGY CONFRONT

NASHVILLE (EP)—Women clergy pose psychological problems for parishioners such as coping with sexual attraction, female authority, and feelings of competition, a Southern Baptist consultation was told here. "For any person to function effectively in ministry, that person must be seen by others as a person both possessing and deserving authority. This creates an immediate problem for the woman who is attempting to minister," said Andrew Lester, associate professor of psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He told some 300 people attending the Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations that the cultural myth that women are inferior affects parishioners' willingness to view clergywomen as authorities—and also affects the willingness of women in ministry to claim authority.

Commenting on the problems of sexual attraction, Mr. Lester said, "many males have unconsciously thought that ministry was asexual or neuter. Since all ministers have been male, they have rarely had to think otherwise."

"Men are not surprised to find themselves sexually attracted to the females who teach their children, greet them in offices, pour their coffee, or nurse them in hospitals," he said, "but to feel sexual attractions to someone who is a minister seems somewhat shameful, even sacreligious."

EVANGELICAL LEADER WARNS OF RISE IN PERMISSIVENESS

LONDON (EP)—The prevalence of marital infidelity among Christians in both North America and Britain is "alarming," according to the Rev. Gordon Landreth, general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, which embraces more than 600 churches, societies and fellowships throughout Britain.

Mr. Landreth made the remark in the latest issue of the Alliance's quarterly bulletin, as an illustration of how Christians often follow the swings of fashion in secular society, and said the present generation is in danger of letting the world squeeze it into its mold.

"Christians," he says, "can follow the swings of fashion as much as secular society. In each generation certain themes and emphasis are 'in' and are pursued to an extent that can be positively unhealthy. Often Christian fashion owes much to secular fashion, too."

Mr. Landreth adds, "In social morality, evangelicals of an earlier generation subjected themselves to a rigid code of behavior—and were accused of being legalistic and thus denying the gospel of grace. The present generation emphasizes Christian freedom and is in danger of letting the world squeeze it into its mold."

"Permissiveness in society can invade the church, too, and Christians become 'soft' on marriage discipline, sexual morals, and telling 'white lies.' The prevalence of marital infidelity among Christians in both North America and Britain in recent times is alarming."

"A common reaction when faced with one of these swings in fashion is to push the pendulum vigorously back the other way."

NEW NAVAJO SCRIPTURES AVAILABLE FROM ABS

NEW YORK (EP)—Highlights from the Gospel account of the life of Jesus have recently been published in the Navajo language by the American Bible Society. The booklet "Jesus Be 'Iina' Baa Hane" (The Life of Jesus) consists of 20 passages selected from the four Gospels and is illustrated with striking line drawings.

This Scripture is part of the Bible Society's "Good News for New Readers" program, which makes Scriptures available in nearly 300 languages to those who are just learning to read. The program introduces readers to the Word of God, beginning at a simplified reading level and gradually becoming more advanced.

NANCY DREW AND HARDY BOYS AN ISSUE IN LIBRARY HEARING

NEWTON, MA (EP)—Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys book series can't make the shelves, but Playboy can. That's one of the issues facing Newton's libraries.

It all began when Alderman Mark White called for an examination of children's book selection policies. Librarian Virginia Tashjian explained why the Drew and Hardy books are not stocked. "They are not written well," she said. "We decided not to stock the books because of the quality of the literature."

Newton's librarians say, "Don't yield. Uphold the superior selections we have," she said. Asked about the withdrawal of the Drew and Hardy books, Miss Tashjian said, "It boils down to this: Do I spend money for what I know is wrong?" The libraries do not censor books. "We even carry Playboy," she said. "But Playboy is stolen the day it is put on the shelf."

BAPTIST TEAM LEAVES TOURNEY, REFUSING TO PLAY ON SUNDAY

OKLAHOMA CITY (EP)—They traveled 1,300 miles to take part in the Men's National Slow Pitch Softball Tournament, then dropped out of the competition because the schedule required them to play on Sunday.

That's the story of the players representing Friendship Baptist Church of Abbeville, South Carolina. Playing "on the Lord's Day doesn't set well with us," said Arnold Thomasson, the team's coach. "It's just a shame that a tournament is played on Sunday. It's against our principles."

A softball association aide regretted Friendship Baptist's withdrawal, adding: "I can certainly understand why they would do this, but I'm a Christian and I don't think a church can sin by having its members play softball on Sunday for the good of their church."

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— Compiled by CONTACT Staff

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The Unwritten Letter



January 1, 66 A.D.
Jerusalem

Rev. Saul (Apostle Paul)
Independent Missionary
Corinth, Greece

Dear Mr. Paul:

We recently received an application from you for service under our Board. It is our policy to be as frank and open-minded as possible with all our applicants. We have made an exhaustive survey of your case. To be plain, we are surprised that you have been able to "pass" as a bona-fide missionary. We are told that you are afflicted with a severe eye trouble. This is certain to be an insuperable handicap to an effective ministry. We require 20-20 vision.

Do you think it seemly for a missionary to do part-time secular work? We hear that you are making tents on the side. In a letter to the church at Phillippi you admitted that they were the only church supporting you. We wonder why. Is it true that you have a jail record? Certain brethren report that you did two years time at Caesarea and were imprisoned at Rome.

You made so much trouble for the business men at Ephesus that they refer to you as "the man who turned the world upside down." Sensationalism has no place in missions. We also deplore the lurid "over-the-wall-in-a-basket" episode at Damascus. We are appalled at your obvious lack of conciliatory behavior. Diplomatic men are not stoned and dragged out of the city gate or assaulted by furious mobs. Have you ever suspected that gentler words might gain you more friends? I enclose a copy of Dalius Carnagus' book *How to Win Jews and Influence Greeks*.

In one of your letters you refer to yourself as "Paul the aged." Our new mission policies do not anticipate a surplus of elderly recipients. We understand, too, that you are given to fantasies and dreams. At Troas you saw a "man of Macedonia," and at another time "were caught up into the third heaven" and even claimed "the Lord stood by" you. We reckon that more realistic and practical minds are needed in the task of world evangelism.

You have caused much trouble everywhere you have gone. You opposed the honorable women at Berea and the leaders of your own nationality in Jerusalem. If a man cannot get along with his own people, how can he serve foreigners? You admit that while you were serving time at Rome that "all forsook you." Good men are not left friendless. Three fine brothers by the names of Diotrophes, Demas and Alexander the coppersmith, have notarized affidavits to the effect that it is impossible for them to cooperate with either you or your program. We know you had a bitter quarrel with a fellow missionary named Barnabas. Harsh words do not further God's work.

You have written many letters to churches where you have formerly been pastor. In one of these letters you accused a church member of living with his father's wife, and you caused the whole church to feel badly and the poor fellow was expelled. You spend too much time talking about the "second coming of Christ." Your letters to the people of Thessalonica were almost entirely devoted to this theme. Put first things first from now on.

Your ministry has been far too flighty to be successful. First Asia

Minor, then Macedonia, then Greece, then Italy and now you are talking about a wild goose chase into Spain. Concentration is more important than dissipation of one's powers. In a recent sermon you said "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ." It seems to us that you ought also to glory in our heritage, our denominational program, the unified budget and the World Federation of Churches.

Your sermons are much too long for the time. At one place you talked until after midnight and a young man was so sleepy that he fell out of the window and broke his neck. Nobody is saved after the first twenty minutes. "Stand up, speak up, and then shut up" is our advice.

Dr. Luke reports that you are a thin little man, bald, frequently sick and always so agitated over your churches that you sleep very poorly. He reports that you pad around the house praying half of the night. A healthy mind in a robust body is our ideal for all applicants. A good night's sleep will give you rest and zip so that you wake up full of zing.

You wrote recently to Timothy that "you had fought a good fight." Fighting is hardly a recommendation for a missionary. No fight is a good fight. Jesus came not to bring a sword, but peace. You boast that "I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus." What on earth do you mean?

It hurts me to tell you this, Brother Paul, but in all my twenty-five years of experience I have never met a man so opposite to the requirements of our Foreign Mission Board. If we accept you, we would break every rule of modern missionary practice.

Most sincerely yours,
J. Flavius Fluffyhead, Secretary
Foreign Mission Board ▲

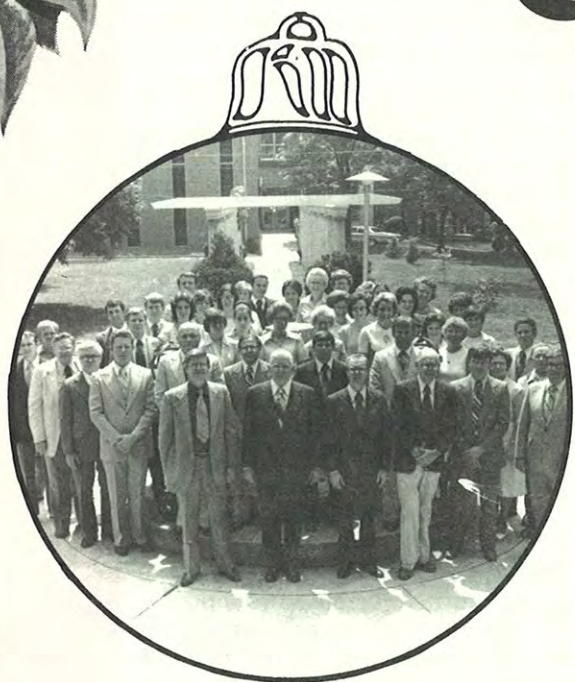
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