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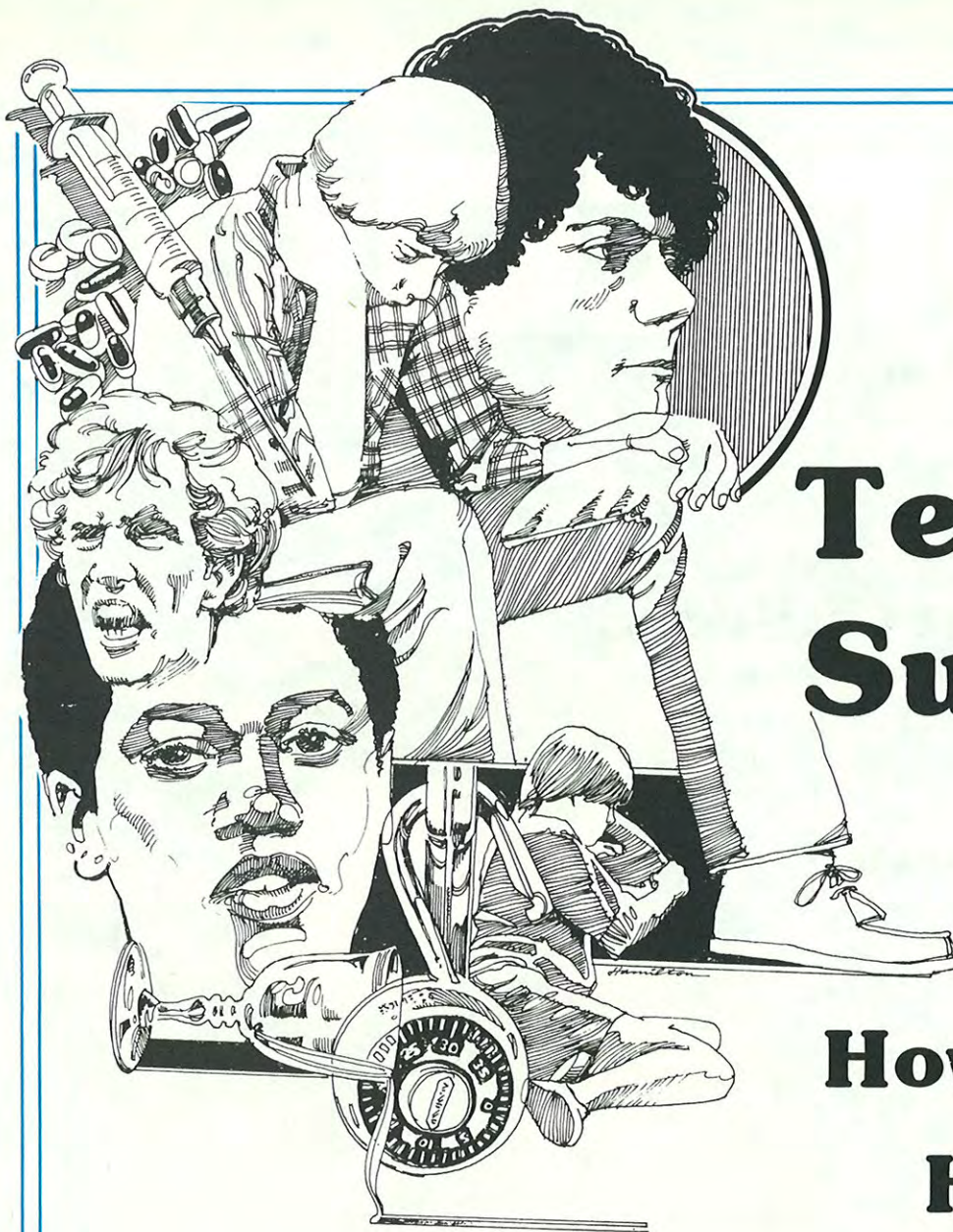
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

AUGUST, 1980

Time For Our Children

- **Teenage Suicide**
(Page 2)
- **Your Children Are Worth It**
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Chair**
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Teenage Suicide,

The classic loners who scream for help are, of course, high on the list, but not always successful in their attempts at suicide. And especially not, if their parents or others heed their distress signals and care for them.

"Whatever their reasons," says Dr. Calvin Frederick, of the National Institute of Mental Health, "they add up to a state of mind that is best expressed as 'hapless helpless and hopeless.' They don't believe in the future!"

For example, sometime ago a 17-year-old boy in Massachusetts who seemed well adjusted, shot himself at a graduation ceremony. He said in his last message to the world, "There are too many issues in America. It's the American way." Happily, he survived, but the clear note and the attempt made plain that something was drastically wrong.

A 13-year-old girl in California shot herself to death sometime ago. Her last note said simply that the death of Freddie Prinze, TV comedian, and the deaths of a friend, a dog and a pet cat, made it impossible for her to go on living.

These are merely examples of the way in which life ebbs to its bitter end for untold numbers of precious young people in our land. Government statistics show that between 1968 and 1976 the increase in youthful suicides was about 100 percent. Even among younger children 10-14 years there was a large increase.

Suicide affects all races and socio-economic levels. More young men than women take their lives. Girls attempt suicide twice as frequently, but are unsuccessful.

Girls usually use sleeping pills or other drugs and death comes more slowly. Therefore, they are often discovered and saved. Young men generally use guns and are far more successful in their attempts than are the girls.

INTENSE PERSONAL FRUSTRATIONS

Furthermore, statistics do not reflect the full problem. Out of shame and for other reasons, many suicides are not reported, or death is

attributed to some other cause.

Many accidents which bring death to youths are doubtless direct suicides but these are not provable. The picture may be even worse than it seems.

Dr. Frederick believes that father-son and mother-daughter relationships often suffer under modern stress of trying to live up to parental

"Teenagers need prohibitions and restrictions—they just do not want to be treated like children."

expectations. Parents are often totally unaware that it is not only what they say to the young person which influences him, but their actions also.

For instance, a young person brings home a poor grade. The parent looks at the report card and simply frowns, says nothing. Immediately, the youngster reads a very strong disapproval of his grade, far more perhaps than the parent felt or would have expressed.

Perhaps few people in the world really know how much parental influence has to do with the young person's overall behavior.

Father often thinks Junior loves to fish with him. Junior merely tolerates it. But in neither case will the young person speak up and say what they are feeling and thinking—it is too dangerous—they cannot stand the parental reaction.



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SUICIDE (From page 3)

Often when parents quarrel and fight in the home, the results are disastrous for the children. "If you must fight, get a babysitter and take your wife out to dinner and then fight in the parking lot or in the car or on a country road." This is the advice of a widely known marriage counselor. Not bad advice. It could even help the marriage.

YOU CAN HELP

What can parents do to help prevent suicides among youth? There are several things:

First, keep the communications line fully open at all times. *Listen* to what your children have to say to you, especially teenagers. Try to understand what they are saying, even though their language may be different from yours.

When they talk, don't talk back to them until they have finished. Hear them out to the end of what they want to say; then you will be better able to advise them. Often they don't want or need advice—they know what to do or not do—they simply want to be understood!

Second, show them you really do understand them, and above all, that you love them dearly. Teenagers often act like they do not want you to be loving to them—no hugging or kissing or making over them. But inside they are crying out for this very thing. They want to appear so adult and strong, but inwardly they are begging you to show them some love and care.

Third, don't cut them loose and

place them on their own too soon. They will yell and shout at you about restrictions and pray every minute of that time that you will not totally lift all restrictions.

Teenagers need prohibitions and restrictions—they just do not want to be treated like children. Accept them as adults, especially the 15 to 19 year olds.

They are far from emotionally mature, and they know this, but they still want certain freedoms within limits. Don't tell them one thing today and something else contrary to that tomorrow or next week.

Be firm in your restrictions but not totally unbending where common sense dictates a change. They want to know that you are reasonable, loving and above all, that you are *there* when they need you. That is part of good parenting today.

Fourth, be constant in your taking time out for your teenagers and some good activities with them each week. They will not want to go with you every time, but always invite them to places you may go together.

Urge them to play with you and even to help you in doing household chores. Let them feel the warmth of your love for them. Correct them firmly when they need it. This will be deeply appreciated by them.

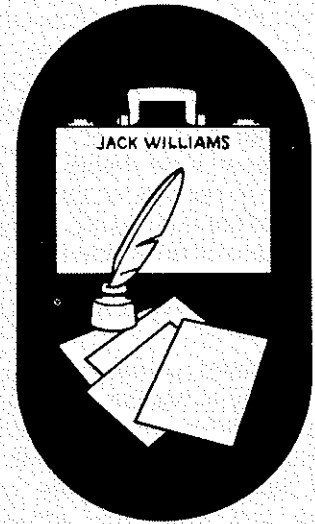
Fifth, always have prayers with them sometime during the day. As late teenagers if they prefer to have their devotions alone, do not oppose them, but keep an open channel for regular family prayers together. It is wise to persuade but never coerce them to stay for prayers with the family.

Let your godly concern so surround them that they feel its warmth more than your words. Keep them ever on the altar to God for His service but never try to persuade them to accept this or that "call" to Christian work. Just be there to tell them God will guide them when they ask for your opinion.

Above all, keep your own values straight and never compromise with anything which you are sure is un-Christlike. Live your religion daily. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. Deal is a California state licensed counselor in Marriage, Family and Youth relations and author of many Christian books.

Briefcase



A secretary dropped my copy of *Reader's Digest*—America's most trusted monthly—on the desk. It contained a tear-out eight-page supplement praising the most deadly cult in America—Mormonism. I felt deceived.

My friend Jeff (not his real name) passed through town headed West. Emergency. Said he needed to cash a check. My signature at the bank gave him the money. Three weeks later the banker called. Jeff's \$300 check bounced. Twice. I felt betrayed.

George (not his real name) called five minutes after I got home from a desperate day at the office. Had to see me he said. Something important. Thirty minutes later, George stared across my kitchen table and tried to hard-sell me a \$189 set of devotional books. He called it a ministry. I felt used.

A RISKY BUSINESS

No one likes to be used. The end never justifies the means. How a thing gets done is just as important as the fact that it gets done. Motives and methods must be as thoroughly Christian as the results they produce.

Detour well out of your way to avoid even the appearance of using others for your own profit. A trust betrayed can be forgiven, but even forgiveness cannot restore honor tossed aside or abandoned integrity.

DON'T MISS
Convention Tapes
Order Form
(Page 26)

Deception on Demand

People eventually discover they've been used. When they do, the person who used them faces closed doors that may never open again. No hurt sears deeper than when friends betray each other. It's like the fellow who abuses his credit. Once it surfaces, the community puts him on a cash-and-carry basis.

There is something sacred about assuming a man's motive pure, his word trustworthy, his integrity without price. These are the colors that stripe Christian leaders.

It takes a long time for people to finally believe we won't use them—but once done that sparkling confidence courses through church and business activities binding phone call and handshake agreements as firmly as notarized statements.

Everybody wants to trust somebody. Deliver us from the fear of always having to wonder if backroom agreements, hammered out at the price of character, will negate what's been agreed to publicly.

Resist the attempt to be used. Reject the temptation to use others.

A FLAWLESS EXAMPLE

Jesus never once used anyone for selfish personal gain, never exploited others' weaknesses nor played on their sympathies. He did not misrepresent the demands of

His cause, even when those demands turned multitudes away.

Those who tried to use Him failed. Wonder of wonders that He who knew what was in men and could read the thoughts and intents of the heart, did not write us all off as a race of con-artists.

In a generation where nothing is ever what it appears, Jesus is refreshingly genuine, without guile. Can anyone charge that He acted from inferior motives or falsely accused? No, He danced on the edge between hating sin and loving the victim of sin, never losing His balance.

He who was betrayed did not betray. He shunned favoritism but embraced the often embarrassing truth about His followers. He who was forsaken by everyone never walked away from a friend in trouble. To Jesus Christ truth meant more than life.

Surely here is proof that right doctrine produces right speech and right attitude. Did He not render to Caesar with the same ease that He rendered to God? He did not dodge into an alley when the blind man said, "I can't see." Nor did he sniff in indignation when a Pharisee puzzled about the new birth.

He rose above extremism. He remembered the greater problems. He knew when to preach and when to

multiply bread, when to announce "your sins are forgiven" and when to order "take up your bed and walk."

Jesus passed up opportunities to elevate the undeserving in order to praise the overlooked. He lived with the hard issues. Although Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding, he is loved more for emptying sick beds and sepulchres.

When men followed Him, tax collectors and tax evaders ate from the same bowl. Master and slave, Jew and Gentile, saint and sinner—the very best and the very worst changed. His word made enemies brothers.

Exists there a place today where to be a Christian exempts men from suspicion? Where to be a preacher means a man sacrifices his life rather than soils his calling?

There's a short line standing at the gate marked "Christian Character." It's overshadowed by a long line of sad men who found that 30 pieces of silver won't buy much, that a mess of pottage leaves you hungry.

Oh, Solomon, how right you were! "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold" (Proverbs 22:1).▲



Trinity

What We Believe and Why

By Bobby Jackson

There is one God. He exists in three eternal distinctions which are represented to us under the figure of persons. These are one essence and equal. Never divide the essence nor confound the persons.

THE CONCEPT

"The Scriptures teach that there is only one true and living God, who is Spirit, self-existent, eternal, immutable, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, independent, good, wise, holy, just, merciful, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the Universe; the Redeemer, Savior, Sanctifier, and Judge of men; and the only proper object of worship" (*Treatise of the Faith of Free Will Baptists*, p. 9).

The word TRINITY is not in the *Treatise*. But then neither is it found in the Bible. The concept of the tripersonality of the Godhead, however, is contained in both.

"From the forgoing the conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is in reality God and one with the Father in all divine perfections. It has also been shown that Jesus Christ is God—one with the Father. Then these three—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are one God" (*Treatise*, p. 23).

In the Bible these four facts are clearly presented.

The Father is God. The Son is God. The Spirit is God. There is but one God.

The Father is called God so often in the Bible, it seems unnecessary to list the passages such as "... foreknowledge of God the Father" (I Peter 1:2); "... him the Father, even God, hath sealed" (John 6:27).

Jesus Christ is recognized as God. He is called God. Thomas addressed Him, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Paul said that we look for the glorious appearing of "the Great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

He possesses the attributes of God; among these are: unchangeableness, truth, love, holiness,

eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence (Hebrews 13:8; John 14:6; I John 3:16; Luke 1:35; John 1:1; Matthew 28:20; Matthew 9:4; Matthew 28:18).

The works of God are ascribed to Christ—Creation (Colossians 1:16); Upholding all things (Colossians 1:17); Judging all men (II Timothy 4:1).

He is worshipped as God (Hebrews 1:6; Revelation 5:12-14; Philippians 2:10).

His name is associated with God

make Him one with Jehovah, yet distinct from Jehovah (Isaiah 9:6; Malachi 3:1).

There is no question. The Bible teaches, the *Free Will Baptist Treatise* teaches, and we believe in God who is one in essence, while manifested in three Persons.

THE MYSTERY

"The mode of His existence, however, is a subject far above the understanding of man—finite

"Here lies the great problem with the cults . . . their false concept of God leads to denial of Jesus' deity."

upon a footing of equality in the formula for baptism, the apostolic benedictions, the giving of eternal life and spiritual gifts (Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 1:3; John 17:3; I Corinthians 12:4-6).

The Holy Spirit is also recognized as God. He is spoken of as God (Acts 5:3-4). The same attributes are ascribed to Him as to the Father and Son (Hebrews 9:14; Psalm 139:7; I Corinthians 12:11; John 16:13; Ephesians 4:30).

He performs the works of God, such as creation (Genesis 1:2); regeneration (Titus 3:5); resurrection (Romans 8:11). He receives worship as God (I Corinthians 3:16). He who inhabits the temple is the object of worship. He is associated as equal with the Father and the Son in the baptism formula and the benedictions.

Yet, there is but one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; I Corinthians 8:4; I Timothy 2:5).

The seed of this concept of God is found in intimations in the Old Testament. The plural noun *Elohim* is used of God, along with a plural verb (Genesis 20:13). God uses plural pronouns speaking of Himself (Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8). Descriptions of the Messiah

beings cannot comprehend Him. There is nothing in the universe that can justly represent Him for there is none like Him (Job 11:7; Romans 11:33; Exodus 9:14)" (*Treatise* p. 11).

Strong suggests that the concept of the tripersonality of God comes only from revelation, not reason. One could know the unity of God by of God by reason, but man knows the trinity of God only from revelation.

All the effort to explain the Trinity by analogy are vainly inadequate, because there are no analogies in our finite experience that could represent God.

Many have attempted these explanations: The fountain, the stream and the rivulet (Athanasius); the cloud, the rain and the rising mist (Boardman); color, shape, size (Robertson); the actinic, luminiferous and caloric principles in the ray of light (Solar Hieroglyphics); the three dimensions of space—length, breadth, thickness (Geer).

Others have sought to draw analogies from: the psychological



TRINITY (From page 7)

—unity of the intellect, affection and will (Augustine); the philosophical—thesis, antithesis and synthesis (Hegel); the metaphysical—subject, object and subject-object (Melancthon).

As Strong observes, "No one of these furnishes any proper analogue of the Trinity, since in no one of them is there found the essential element of tripersonality. Such illustrations furnish no positive explanation of the mystery of the Trinity."

However, the Trinity would be self-contradictory only if it declared God to be three in the same sense He is said to be one. This we do not. The same God who in one respect is three, in another respect is one. We do not say that one God is three Gods, nor that one person is three persons, nor that three Gods are one God, but only that there is one God with three personal distinctions in His being.

Again while this may seem beyond our comprehension, by revelation we know it is true.

THE NECESSITY

What difference does it make? If it is so incomprehensible, how important is this doctrine?

Without this Trinitarian concept of God, He could not be a loving Father. "Love is an impossible exercise to a solitary being." One who is an absolute unit, whom would He love? This road leads to the eternity of matter, or Pantheism (many gods).

If there be no Trinity, Christ is not God. If Christ is not God, He could not reveal God to us. There would be no perfect revelation of God.

In like manner, the Holy Spirit could not be God. And if He is not God, there can be no self-communication of God to the human soul.

Probably most important, at least to mankind, is this concept of God in redemption. If man is separated from God by an infinite gulf of sin, who can span that chasm and bring man to God? Whoever does must be infinite.

Christ cannot bring us nearer to God than He is Himself. Only one who is God can reconcile us to God. So, too, only God can purify the soul to make man godlike. If the Holy Spirit is not God how can He do the work of God in the human heart?

God, who is only unity, but in whom is no plurality, could possibly be Creator and Judge, but could not be Savior and Sanctifier.

Here lies the great problem with the world of cults. Almost without exception their false concept of God leads to the denial of the deity of Jesus Christ.

In the July-August, 1979, issue of *Moody Monthly*, there is a listing of the cults and where they stand on the deity of Christ. Space prohibits quoting the article here. Suffice it to say their problem begins with a false concept of God (anti-trinitarian), leads to a denial that Jesus Christ is God and results in a plan of salvation that cannot save.

Can any person be a Christian and not believe in the Trinity? No man can be a Christian and deny the deity of Jesus Christ.

Can one be a Free Will Baptist and not believe in the Trinity? Absolutely not! (*Treatise* pages 9, 10, 11, 15-24).

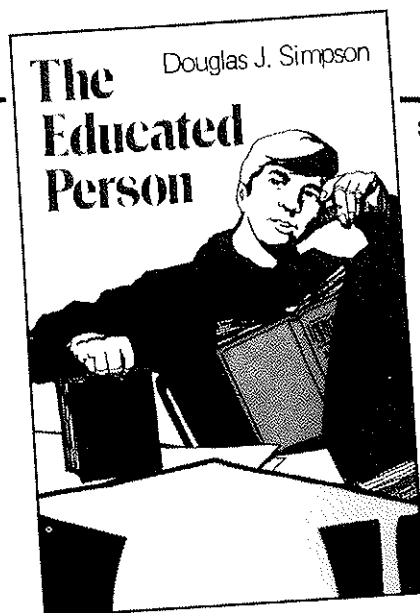
THE FINAL WORD

God, who exists in tripersonality, is the true living God. He has the compassion, concern and ability to save and meet the inmost needs of the believer.

Jeremy Taylor said it best, "He who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, and does it by words and names of man's invention, talking of essence and existences, hypostases and personalities, priority in coequality, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself and build a tabernacle in his head, and talk something—he knows not what; but the renewed man, that feels the power of the Father, to whom the Son is become wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is shed abroad—this man, though he understand nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone truly understands the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."

Amen! And Amen! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Bobby Jackson is a full-time Free Will Baptist evangelist based in Greenville, North Carolina. He is moderator of the National Association of Free Will Baptists.



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Two very concerned parents
offer down-to-earth suggestions
about how to avoid cold war standoffs
in the daily parent-child encounter.

Your Children Are Worth It

By Chuck and Violet Cox

No area has changed more in recent years than the structure of the American family. Members of this God-ordained unit have found themselves removed from each other in terms of interests and personal interaction. Everyone is busy doing their own thing and trying to meet individual goals, desires and deadlines.

Many families are finding it hard to even eat meals together on a



CHILDREN (From page 9)

regular basis. And some of our churches, while advocating a stronger family unit, plan activities (unconsciously, we hope!) which prohibit family togetherness.

With a combined teaching experience of over 16 years, we could write a book on how family life should *not* be. We are now convinced that if some children make it in this world, it will be in spite of their families and not because of them.

Just so that you don't misunderstand, we are not speaking exclusively of unbelievers, but also of people who claim the name of Jesus.

You've always heard that confession is good for the soul? We readily admit that it is a difficult and delicate job to tell other Christians how their families can feel secure and successful together. Please try to keep in mind this sobering fact—raising children in a loving Christian environment is a one-shot affair. There are no second chances.

Young minds develop, bodies mature, and habits and opinions are formed. We would like to share some ideas that have worked for us and other Christian families that we know.

Praying Together

It is important to have a time set aside for the family to read the Bible and pray together. This produces a closeness of spirit and attitude that cannot be gained in any other way.

When your children are older they may forget some of the gifts you have given them along the way, some of the trips you have taken and many of the experiences you've shared, but they will never forget the times that you've prayed with them.

Working Together

As a youngster you probably had chores to do. (Many of you had more than chores—you had plain hard jobs!) They didn't hurt you did they? Some parents want their children to have it easier than they did. This is often a mistake.

Kids need to learn the meaning of work and taking on responsibilities. Mothers need to work with daughters to develop skills, and fathers can help sons in areas of maintenance and mechanics.

You will find that it is smarter and more gratifying to work along with children until they understand how to do a job (though it is often more trying!) than to yell and scream at them because they failed to do exactly as you said the first time.

While we're talking about working together, there are a couple of fragile items that need to be mentioned. One is discipline. This is an area where both parents need to agree and be consistent. We have both had parents come to school and tell us that if their child doesn't do thus and so, we should paddle them.

"Some of our churches that advocate a strong family unit plan activities which prohibit family togetherness."

Usually if parents took care of discipline at home, teachers wouldn't need to. This shifting of disciplinary responsibility is unfair to the teacher, confusing to the child and a scapegoat for the parent.

Christian parents have to work at setting reasonable rules and regulations. It is cruel to allow children freedom in areas that they are not intellectually, emotionally or spiritually equipped to handle.

To allow teenagers liberal dating privileges at 14, to permit them to

take public jobs that separate them prematurely from the atmosphere of a warm Christian home life and to encourage them to become egotistically independent is extreme negligence on a parent's part.

Playing Together

What are some things that your family can begin doing together? Conduct a family interest survey. Have each family member suggest activities. Then honestly and openly discuss them. Ask these questions:

1. Can each family member participate?
2. Is the activity economically feasible?
3. Are all members willing to try?
4. Is the activity consistent with our Christian testimony?

Get things started at your house by having some "conversational meals." Turn off the television and talk to each other at the dinner table. Since everyone in our family goes to school every day, we each tell about what happened in our classes.

Have "dates" with your children. Please don't think this is a trite suggestion. Try not to pass harsh judgment unless you've tried it. Children feel very special when they are taken out by a parent and are privy to their complete attention.

Consider the personality differences between parents. If mother needs more privacy or peace and quiet, father could volunteer to take the children out and do something with them for a while. Of course, the same would be true for the father who might enjoy a quiet house for the afternoon.

Take advantage of those few nights in the week when everyone is at home together. Have a hobby time—do macrame or hook rugs. Play games together or read to your children.

Most everyone reading this article lives within an hour or two of a state park, a zoo, a museum or an art institute. Spend some time in these places. There is no virtue in being culturally ignorant.

All the experiences we gain and all the knowledge we assimilate

allow us increased opportunities to share our faith in Jesus Christ.

Put Babysitters Out Of Business!

We don't think it would be a bad idea to start a crusade to put babysitters out of business. Now we realize that there are times when one or both parents must be away from home, and a Christian babysitter in whom you have confidence can be a blessing. And there may be occasions when Mom and Dad need some time out together.

But this thing of children coming home to a motherless house, being fed hot dogs and chips by a different sitter every night, while Mom and/or Dad go bowling, to ceramics, golfing, to play racquetball, or just out to eat is inexcusable. (By the way, you shouldn't take them bowling with you and keep them out until midnight, either.)

Generally, it is our practice not to have babysitters. If we go shopping, our children go along. If we go out to eat, so do our children.

Learning Together

Become involved in your child's educational processes. Check over their school work. If you have concerns, visit the school. Help out with homework. Stifle the thought, "Let the teachers get it across. That's what they're getting paid for."

Volunteer your time at school. We know a Free Will Baptist preacher who went to his child's public elementary school every week and tutored in the Learning Center. The effect was dynamic. He got an inside view of the workings of the school. His children thought it was super special to have their dad help out, and the community respected his position and were affected by his testimony.

If you want your children to attend a Christian college, work toward that end. Talk it up around your house. As a matter of fact, don't talk about any other kind of school.

For example, if you covet (in God's will, of course) an education at Free Will Baptist Bible College

for your children, talk about Free Will Baptist Bible College. Support the school. In so doing, they'll see that you really have confidence in the school and what it offers educationally and spiritually.

If a group from the college tours your area, entertain some of them

None of us has any assurance of tomorrow. Would that we could respect and interact with one another with that possibility in mind.

The Christian family is an endangered species. As we once read on a poster, a family "is a

"It is cruel to allow children freedom in areas they are not intellectually, emotionally or spiritually equipped to handle."

in your home. If you have a missionary conference, keep a missionary. The influence on your children is most valuable.

Extending Yourself To Others' Children

Some of you no longer have children at home. Perhaps you have never had children of your own. You can still be involved in molding young lives.

Make yourself available in bus ministries, Sunday school classes and children's worship. Encourage those teens who come to your church but have unsaved parents. When they step out by faith to do a job for God, support them with your prayers and gifts.

Offer to keep a nursery so that more young mothers can participate in choir practice or visitation. Open your home for a Bible Club or teen gathering.

And Finally . . .

We have a very new and profound appreciation of what a family really is. Just as we were putting the final touches on this article, a member of our family was involved in a potentially fatal traffic accident.

As he lay among the twisted steel and broken glass, we all were overwhelmed with the realization that God had given us a wonderfully complete family. Without even one member, things would be so different.

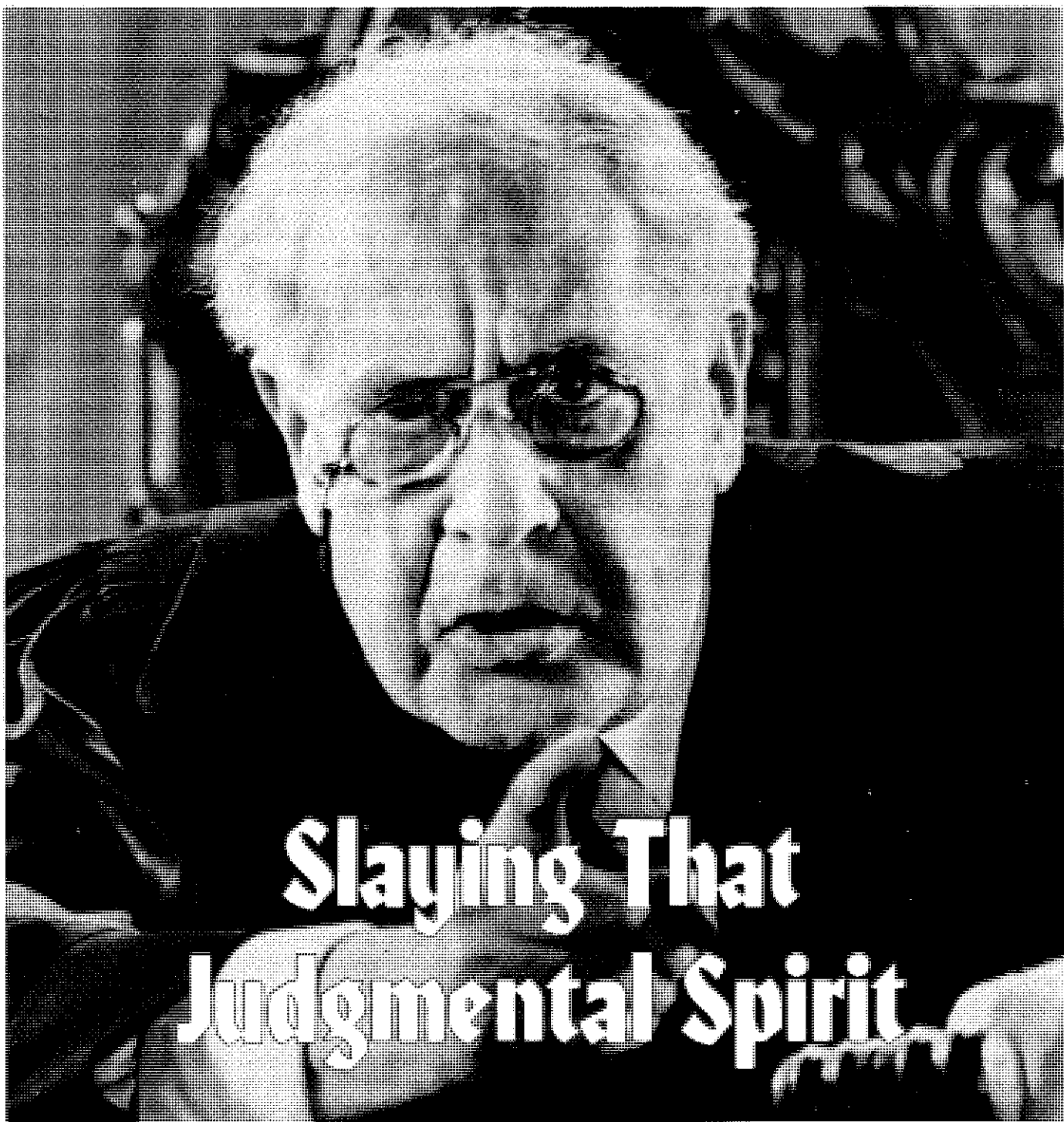
place where character is formed, values are learned, ethics are created, and society is preserved. It is a place where all members contribute and share, cooperate and work, and accept their responsibilities toward the good of the group.

"A family is where each can find solace in grief, pleasure and laughter in joy, and kindness and encouragement in daily living. A family is a haven of rest, a sanctuary of peace, and a harbor of love."

The Christian family is an endangered species. But it must be preserved at any cost! Are you doing your part to maintain and preserve that most sacred of all institutions? ▲

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Chuck and Violet Cox are members of Central Free Will Baptist Church, Royal Oak, Michigan. Chuck is a deacon, Sunday school teacher and choir director. Violet is in her 12th year teaching the second grade in Hazel Park Public Schools. Both are FWBBC graduates. Both have earned master's degrees. The Cox's have two children.





Slaying That Judgmental Spirit

By Charles Marshall

Have we ever stopped and considered the importance of exchanging words or thoughts with another human being? Have we ever analyzed the process? It's almost a miracle.

We try, in words mostly, to convey an idea, thought or feeling from our mind to that of another person, with hopes of them understanding and feeling about the "thing" as we.

I can't recall when a barking dog, a falling star or an unmowed lawn caused me great distress, nor on the other hand brought me a blessing. Now, these things are important, but they will never have the impact on your mental and spiritual makeup

that another human being will.

Therefore, I wonder if we place too little value on the exchange of ideas or the thoughts of another human?

Sometimes a single word will make or break us for a whole day or longer. Suppose you are a Sunday school teacher, and the mother of one of your students calls on Monday morning and says: "I think you

are a wonderful teacher."

That statement is going to do something for your mental and emotional makeup. Most likely it's going to increase your faith and make you feel good about your service to the Lord.

But on the other hand suppose that mother says: "I think you are a terrible teacher." That statement is also going to have an impact on you. It's going to suggest that you are a failure as a teacher, and if it should come at a bad time (some times are worse than others) the Sunday school superintendent might have your resignation on his desk the next day.

Please notice, only one word was different. We exchanged "wonderful" for terrible." In both cases, the teacher was judged! Words either build or destroy.

Proverbs 25:11 says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Words are beautiful if they are chosen wisely. If we can realize the power words have, then we can recognize the destructiveness of these vehicles of communication.

Criticizing or judging someone's idea, purpose or person goes far beyond the actual criticism. There is a lasting effect that is not noticed until sometime later.

Why then do we judge or criticize with the hope of destroying? Psychologists tell us that jealousy could be the underlying cause of constantly desiring to judge others.

Jealousy is an attitude of envy or resentment toward a more successful rival. The jealous person exhibits numerous forms of behavior which reveal his true nature. He is at odds with his environment. He may be suspicious and stubborn. He frequently attacks the individual who is the object of his envy by making slanderous statements or, in some cases, by actual physical assault.

By slandering and downgrading those with more ability, he attempts to enhance his own self-esteem.

The Bible says a great deal about this subject. In Solomon's Song 8:6b he says, "... jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are

coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

Someone who is jealous of you or your ideas is both dangerous and in need of help. If our criticism or judgment is present because we are jealous, then we sin by saying anything. Judgment based on jealousy is not a judgment whereby you seek to improve that individual, their ideas or program, but is offered only to destroy—and that's sin.

Have you ever been criticized and the criticism did you more harm than the things you were criticized for doing? We all have.

There is an area in which our critical voices may be heard—but in only *one* context. That's constructive criticism.

A father showing his son the proper way to hold a baseball bat might say, "Son, you are holding the bat wrong (that's criticism), but this is the correct way" (that's positive reinforcement). Dad did nothing to destroy the boy, but to build his batting ability. He was gentle in dealing with the wrong and helpful in implementing the right.

Two principles have to be present if any judgment is made.

First, you must not be guilty of the thing or idea you are criticizing or judging.

While serving in another church, we had a large number of young people who enjoyed getting together on Sunday afternoon at the church and playing volleyball. One fellow was against playing volleyball on Sunday afternoon. He thought it was sin and said so (he was judging).

Later he was in my office and told me his son was coming for a visit. His son was not a Christian so he wanted me to meet him and get to know him. He knew his son would not come to church, so he asked me to come to his home on Sunday afternoon and engage his son in a game of ping-pong as a way of getting acquainted.

Now in this situation he was criticizing something that he condoned. If it was wrong to play volleyball on Sunday, then it was wrong to play ping-pong. There needs to be con-

siderable thought given to criticism and judgments.

SSecond, all criticism and judgments must be made with one purpose in mind: To help the person, to improve the program, idea or product.

In the Gospels there are many judgments made by the Lord, and in every case it was done that He might improve the situation.

The woman taken in adultery is a noted example (John 8:1-11). As the men condemned (judged) her, Jesus did not defend or refute her guilt. He knew she was guilty. After several lessons were taught, Jesus said to the woman, "... Neither do I condemn (destroy) thee, go and sin no more."

He did not judge her to destroy her; but, His judgment was based on love so that He was able to help. To condone sin is to help no one—you only hurt them. But to criticize or judge for the purpose of destroying places you in the category of an adulterer/adulteress, thief or liar.

Someone has said, "A person can be killed in many ways." James reveals the destructiveness of words (tongue) in chapter three. Words can destroy in minutes what it's taken months or maybe years to build.

More of our conversation should be "Yea, Yea, or Nay, Nay." We should think through something before we say it, asking ourselves WHY... am I saying this? What is my motive?

Communication with another human being is a wonderful experience. But we must guard every word because these simple things (words) produce life or death. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Charles Marshall pastors Waipahu Free Will Baptist Church, Waipahu, Hawaii.

Light on Life's Questions . . .

By Wade Jernigan

QUESTION: *Should all scripture be preached, even that which is offensive?*

ANSWER: No hint was given in the question as to which scriptures might be considered offensive. It's unthinkable that any scriptural words or expressions should be thought of as offensive when read and explained in context. God is the author of the scriptures. All scripture is God-breathed and is profitable (II Timothy 3:16).

Biblical language is not offensive. Some, in their ignorance, have at times spoken words that are to be found in scripture and when reprimanded have replied, "It's in the Bible". Such doings have proven to be offensive. God's language is not vulgar.

Students and ministers at times try to dodge biblical language or substitute what they feel to be better expressions, but this practice usually results in blunders or embarrassment.

That all scripture should be preached is clearly seen from scriptural statements: "... Teaching them to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). "... Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word* of God" (Luke 4:4).

Preaching of the Word (regardless of the content) at times brings offense. When Christ preached "he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me . . ." (John 6:56), many of His disciples remarked, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" (John 6:60) and went back and walked no more with Him" (John 6:66). Christ had questioned them, "Doth this offend you?" (John 6:61).

Paul questioned, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16). At times the truth (no questionable words involved) offends.

By Judy Hammersmark

As my 13-year-old daughter finished Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* she turned to me with flashing blue-green eyes—"That's the best book I have ever read!"

I remembered that same feeling after reading it as a girl about her age. Joe, Beth, Meg and Amy were real and alive. Reading it again as an adult filled me with the same tingling sense of wonder.

I felt somehow renewed—overwhelmed by the emotion that life was chock-full with meaning, purpose, love—in spite of daily headlines proclaiming the opposite.

My children have established the habit of reading, and I am extremely thankful. A taste for the written word can be a God-send on a rainy or snowbound day, on those long summer and Christmas vacations.

What could possibly take the place of cozy winter afternoons by the fire? Or lazy summer days in the hammock with lemonade and a good book? I feel truly fortunate that my children's lives are filled with good literature.

Still I do not think books have become a substitute for real life. My children ski, play tennis, basketball and baseball, babysit, deliver papers, participate in church and community activities.

Reading enhances their living by enlarging their scope. Their budding ability to comprehend a secular world is enhanced through their daily encounter with the written word, enabling them to sort out right from wrong more easily.

Because they read, my children seem different from their peers. They are easier to get along with, talk to, reason with—and they seem more understanding and compassionate of their fellows than many youngsters their age.

Don't get me wrong! They are far from perfect. We have our differences, perhaps more than the aver-

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Adventure In A Rocking Chair



**Author Judy Hammersmark says
children who read are rarely bored
and seldom seen in juvenile court.**

age family—yet through the application of biblical principles we have learned to disagree, (at least most of the time), agreeably.

It is satisfying to watch them grow as they absorb new truth through Bible stories and Christian magazines. As they are exposed to a broad perspective of wholesome literature, they seem more capable of coping with various problems that occur.

Reading Makes The Difference

Other parents agree that reading does make a difference, that whole-

some literature helps in bringing kids up straight. Many mothers and fathers are not as fortunate.

"My kids read nothing but the funnies," they moan. Yet to my way of thinking this is not entirely bad. At least they are reading. Some experts contend that comics offer a beginning. Not only do the funnies expose youngsters to others like themselves who try, fail and sometimes triumph—they also provide a spark of interest that can be kindled and sometimes ignited by concerned adults.

After all, most readers are made, not born. The love of reading has to be cultivated in almost any child.

The sooner we establish the habit of reading and the love of words in our offspring the better.

Starting in early infancy we cultivate love for reading by cuddling the youngster on our lap—reading aloud those simple nursery rhymes and prayers, helping those tiny fingers turn the pages. In this way we nurture a child's budding interest in the English language.

For me there has been no joy to compare with my babies' bright-eyed sense of wonder as I introduce them to *The Lord's Prayer*. Shared



ROCKING CHAIR (From page 15)

reading provides shining moments to be savored for years to come, opportunities for snuggling close—the physical intimacy deemed so essential by anthropologists, psychologists and psychiatrists for a secure and truly happy childhood.

A teacher friend tells me she can easily detect children whose parents invest much time reading to them at home. Listening skills, vocabulary, social intelligence, attention span—all these are honed and sharpened by early encounter with the written word.

It is almost impossible to start too soon. At barely six months, my oldest delighted in being held as I pointed out pictures in *Better Homes & Gardens*, the daily newspaper and *Sears & Roebuck*. As he grasped for the pictured object, invariably his eager fingers crumpled the pages. So what! These were destined to be recycled anyway.

After the birth of my second child—a little girl, the unrelenting routine of infant care was brightened for me by reading to her from the popular women's magazines. I got some fun reading done that way—and since my singing voice is not of lullaby quality—my reading to her provided the cradle songs she might have missed otherwise.

By the time this little girl was

three she would tell me—"Sit down I will read you a story!" I had read to her so much that she knew her simple stories by heart.

Don't Rush A Good Thing

Unfortunately many attempts to teach a youngster to read before he/she is equipped physically and emotionally for such a feat, prove futile and frustrating to both parent and toddler. Just like riding a bicycle, learning to walk or driving a car—learning to read exacts a certain readiness.

Every child must acquire alertness and eagerness to read along with emotional and physical readiness. Therefore, too early efforts to teach a child to read serve as a distraction from their natural enjoyment of the written word.

Only rarely before the age of six is a child capable of mastering reading techniques. More often than not a four and five-year-old child is put under physical and emotional strain by parents who press them to read too soon.

Experts at Gesell Institute say the average girl is not able to read until fully six. A boy, on the other hand, is usually not fully prepared for such an accomplishment until he is almost seven.

When a good friend undertook coaching her four-year-old in the art of reading, she was thoroughly convinced it would be easy since the child was a miniature genius in the eyes of adoring parents and grandparents.

Zealously she cut out sandpaper cardboard letters—some over a foot high. On everything from toothbrush to shoelaces she attached neatly lettered labels. After many tearful bouts (dreaded by mother and son alike), she finally realized the whole project was a mistake.

The little boy's hearty delight in the written word was restored only after many carefree read-aloud sessions with his favorite—*Snoopy*.

For this reason most parents should mainly be interested in establishing a hearty interest in storybooks, rather than trying to teach their child to read. Various authorities say reading readiness, (preparedness, physically, emotionally,

psychologically), involves on the part of parents a certain degree of preparation and coaching.

Parents can easily cultivate this potential by reading simple stories to their child over and over again, by chanting familiar nursery rhymes and prayers.

Repetition sharpens a child's listening skills and visual perceptiveness. For many children who have not been exposed to the sing-song world of *Mother Goose*, mastering skills that go along with reading can prove just too difficult.

So conscientious parents (and grandparents) will not send their little ones off to school with a serious handicap. Read and reread those stories and rhymes, no matter how tiresome it seems!

Another teacher friend was concerned about one of her pupils who was failing the first grade. Somehow he could not grasp the fundamentals, so she called in the little boy's mother, hoping to find in her an ally.

"Read to him," she suggested after a tactful discourse.

"I have," the young parent exclaimed defensively. "His father gave him a book once, and I read it to him!"

This mother, like many others, did not understand that readiness for mastering the intricate art of reading comes only after a child has been adequately prepared. Verbally skimming through a book a few times simply will not do.

According to my teacher friend, it takes constant exposure to the same books on a regular basis to promote that degree of visual and verbal awareness essential to the first-grader's success with the written word.

Opening Magic Doorways

Magic doorways are opened for children through books. Starting as toddlers with *Mother Goose* and simple Bible stories, a child advances in awareness. He/she learns that might does not always make right through *David and Goliath* or *The Three Little Pigs*, that beauty is sometimes only a matter of waiting to grow up (*The Ugly Duckling*), and that one should not indiscriminately

informed
prayer
is effective
prayer

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"Sustain interest in the written word. Let your child find you studying your Bible, reading the daily paper, perusing Christian magazines."

accept handouts from strangers, (Snow White.)

Many times these stories lessen a young mother's load by getting her off her feet and providing her children with positive moral examples to be more cheerful, mannerly and persistent.

In *Bequest of Wings* (Viking Press) Annis Duff claims that children who master the art of reading are fortunate in that they acquire a sense of self-mastery and power over their lives. Independent reading provides personal satisfaction on an intense level.

In Christian homes where children learn to love to read from an early age, many have an opportunity to begin independent Bible study even before their teens.

It seems that certain children are predestined bookworms. Others find enjoyment mainly in occupations that involve only physical activity—yet many can be turned on to reading if tactfully motivated by concerned adults.

Sustaining interest in the written word is no small accomplishment for parents, especially with the myriad distractions of television.

Still it is possible for parents to foster the love of reading. Start by letting your child observe your pleasure in reading. Let him find you studying your Bible, reading the

daily paper, perusing Christian magazines.

Don't be a stranger at your public library. Make trips to your church library a part of your schedule. Buy books for your child as gifts for birthdays and Christmas. Subscribe to a journal slanted toward the Christian youngster.

And then it is important to be available for the lively discussions that ensue as a result of new ideas. Provide space for books—a shelf or small bookcase.

In your own reading, share with your offspring those ideas and passages that inspire and move you—and in turn, I have found, a child will come to you with stars in his/her eyes—"Mom, listen to this . . .!"

A friend of mine, a mother of four, works full-time away from home in order to provide for her growing family. Still she finds means to instill the love of good literature in her offspring. Although she has little time for leisurely pursuit of reading, she encourages her kids to read aloud to her while she does dishes or mops the kitchen floor.

In their home space and time are set aside for reading. Many evenings her children are snug in bed early so they might spend an hour or so with a good book. For this family bedside reading tables and lamps, (built by a loving grandfather), provide an important part of their environment.

I will never forget the fertile reading ground of my grandmother's parlor. There I learned to treasure the written word. Bookcases stretched to the ceiling, lined with worn, sturdy volumes.

On her shelves I discovered *Pilgrim's Progress*, Dickens, Emerson, Poe. Countless happy hours were spent poring over her collection, as I found comfort and respite from my day-to-day existence.

Beware Forced Spiritual Reading

I have come to realize that not everything a child reads need to be "morally uplifting" as long as it is wholesome and relevant to his/her world. Children can be turned off reading entirely when a well-meaning parent presses to channel a youngster's reading materials into

exclusively spiritual areas.

I made this mistake with my son. He responded by quitting reading altogether. Only after I let up on my crusade did he start to read again. Our impasse culminated in a compromise of sorts, when I subscribed to a magazine that emphasized Christian principles along with his favorite subject.

Today his teacher tells me—"He's read every book in our library on the subject closest to his heart—sports." My son says he found inspiration through one of his books to defeat an opponent with a 30-pound edge during a wrestling match. And through his increasing understanding of biblical truths he is learning to accept with equal grace victory and defeat.

The "right to read"—even the ability to read can be worthless unless we also learn to savor and enjoy the written word. One teacher described a "virtual miracle" when a non-reader suddenly mastered the art of reading after discovering a subject that turned him on.

Truly, there is joy in reading. Your child can experience wholesome delight between the covers of a book, by discovering the Bible on his/her own, in finding out for themselves what Jesus Christ is like.

Envy the parents of children who love to read! Seldom is the youngster who savors the written word in trouble with juvenile authorities, or spaced out on drugs. Children who read are not often bored—for as my oldest puts it—"There is not enough time to read all the good books that have been written."

Other parents dash hither and yon in attempts to keep their offspring occupied. Constantly they invest in expensive games and gadgetry in order to satisfy their sons' and daughters' craving for excitement.

As connoisseurs of the written word many children discover whole worlds of adventure, knowledge and guidelines for their young lives—without ever stirring from the rocking chair!▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Judy Hammersmark is a Rawlins, Wyoming homemaker who left a lucrative career as women's editor of a daily newspaper to enjoy the growing-up years of her children. This article is adapted from her book, OCCUPATION: NEST BUILDER, published by Accent Books.



THE LORD'S DAY TODAY

By William F. Davidson

It snowed this past Sunday and I helped my neighbor push his car out of an icy drive. Was the Sabbath broken? What is the Sabbath? As a Christian, how do I relate to the keeping of the Lord's Day?

SABBATH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Sabbath was established by example long before it became law (Genesis 2:2,3). God's blessing of the seventh day at Creation leaves little doubt as to the importance He placed on it.

Later, when the law was given at

Sinai, the Sabbath was given a place among the basic commandments—"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy . . ." (Exodus 20:8). The example had been strengthened by law.

The Hebrew word "Sabbath" means rest or rest day and for the ancient Israelite, it meant just that—all labor was suspended. The law, as explained in Exodus 20, reminded the Israelite that even his servants and his cattle were subject to the "no-work" regulation.

The injunction was reinforced by its appeal to holiness—rest and godliness were uniquely related in Sabbath keeping.

Tradition and Abuse of the Fourth Commandment

Many Israelites accepted the Sabbath commandment as the most solemn injunction from Jehovah, and it is not surprising that the religious leaders continuously stressed its importance. In fact, much of the tradition that appeared during the late Old Testament period served to protect this most important command. A huge bloc of lesser laws were introduced that sought to insure proper observance of the Sabbath.

Following the exile and surely by the time of the New Testament, religious leaders (specifically the Scribes and Pharisees) had made Sabbath keeping a burden. The law's original intent was lost in the complexity of tradition.

While some traditions might have enhanced the keeping of the Rest-day—cooking for the Sabbath was to be completed before the official observance of the day began—most were trite and troublesome and led to pride rather than to holiness.

It was considered unlawful to spit on the street on the Sabbath, because rules of sanitation demanded that spittle be covered with dirt and such covering was defined as "ploughing."

Travel was forbidden except for short distances. A traveler could walk three-fifths of a mile from his home, but excursions beyond that distance were taboo.

While it would seem that initial motivation—determination to keep the whole law—was pure, the

burden of the growing tradition led to long, complex discussions on the intent of the law. The discussions often resulted in exceptions that circumvented traditions and the accompanying burden.

For instance, it was determined that one could travel twice the traditional Sabbath distance if he stored food at the outer limits of travel before the Sabbath began. He then

*"As a child I
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inference was that
we kept the Lord's
Day holy by being
totally miserable."*

could stop at the boundary and, by eating a meal, establish residency there.

Additional travel was now possible. With ingenuity and advance preparation, the problem of travel could be solved quite easily. The keeping of the Sabbath had become totally legalistic.

LORD'S DAY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

By the first century A.D., the system of tradition was complete and Christ often found himself in conflict with both the tradition and Jewish religious leaders. His attitude toward the Sabbath was a radical departure from the norm.

Upon being accused of breaking the Sabbath by allowing His disciples to pluck and eat corn (Mark 2:23-28), Jesus startled His opponents by declaring that man was not made for

the Sabbath but the Sabbath for man. He illustrated Jewish bondage to tradition by pointing to David's willingness to enter the temple and remove the shewbread (forbidden to all except the priests) in order to meet the physical needs of his men.

In Mark 3, Jesus is angered at the "hardness of heart" of religious leaders because they objected to His healing a withered hand. The Pharisees were so shackled by their love for the law that they had lost all sense of love and compassion for their fellowman. So important was their law that they "straightway" sought to have Jesus killed because He dared do good on the Sabbath (Mark 3:6).

The Greek in John 5:18 infers that the Jews accused Jesus of continually breaking Sabbath tradition, and it's true the New Testament records at least six times He deliberately broke rabbinical rules. The death conspiracy in Mark 3 could have been the result of a growing number of confrontations between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.

New Testament Observance of the Lord's Day

An article of this length prohibits full discussion of the New Testament's Sabbath teaching. For this reason, the scope of this section is limited to the teachings and example of Christ.

REST

If we establish a requirement for actual rest on the Lord's Day, we have to go all the way back to the introduction of the "Rest Day" at the beginning of time. Even the discussion of God's rest in Hebrews 3:7-4:11 falls short of an injunction to rest on a particular day. While it might indirectly speak to the question of the Sabbath (the Genesis origin of the Rest Day is quoted), its main concern is eternal rest in heaven.

Granted, we do not have an account of all of Christ's Sabbaths or even all the hours of those that are mentioned, but the records we do have point toward busy days—days that were full of service.

It could be that we are limited in the New Testament to Sabbath acti-



LORD'S DAY (From page 19)

vities of Jesus and the disciples, and that the record does not give a full picture of Sabbath observance for the layman. It is noted that His followers rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment, after the Lord's death (Luke 23:56).

WORK ON THE SABBATH

In Mark 2:23-27, Luke 13:15, John 5:8, Matthew 12:11 and Luke 14:5, Jesus indicates it is acceptable to prepare food, water cattle, pull cattle out of ditches and heal on the Sabbath—works of necessity and compassion. He supported His teaching through His own practice.

Jewish legalism was being directly attacked by a Jewish teacher. Is it any wonder that the Jewish leaders sought to have this "traitor" killed?

WORSHIP

Again, we are limited to example and to a few verses that refer to Jesus' practice. Luke reminds us that it was the Lord's custom to worship at the synagogue on the Sabbath (Luke 4:16). Most recorded Sabbath activities of Christ center around His works of compassion rather than His acts of worship.

In spite of the lack of pointed evidence, it is quite clear that worship was a part of Sabbath activity. The apostles' practice after Jesus' death confirms the fact that worship had become an important part of the infant Christian faith (Acts 13:42; 13:44; 18:4).

LORD'S DAY AND THE PRESENT

Early in its history, the Christian church changed its day of rest and worship to the first day of the week to commemorate the Resurrection. The change did not indicate a rejection of the Sabbath idea. It continued to be the Lord's Day—a sacred day set aside to honor the Saviour.

The Present and Tradition

It might be necessary to stop here and define the legalism introduced earlier. A colleague mentioned recently that the rejection of legalism does not deny the existence of obligation.

The Old Testament Rest-Day, the New Testament Sabbath, and the

Sunday of Church history have always proclaimed the obligation to set aside one day in the week and keep that day holy to the Lord.

In the examples of Jesus, He rejected, not the Sabbath obligation, but the abuse that had developed in Jewish tradition. The Sabbath was designed for rest and worship. It offered renewal, refreshment, unique relationship to the Father. Jewish tradition had made it an unbearable burden.

Evangelical Christianity in the mid-20th century, came very near to the legalism of early Judaism in its observance of the Lord's Day. A number of ordinary and acceptable activities were chosen as scapegoats, and "proper" observance of the Lord's Day excluded those activities.

As a young child, I must confess I dreaded Sundays. While I enjoyed the few hours of worship and fellowship, the long dull afternoons were unbearable—adult conversations that meant nothing to the young, inactivity for a young body that was very much in need of exer-

find little argument in the contemporary church.

We expect farmers to feed their stock. We would be disappointed if Sunday failed to be the local pastor's busiest day. On the other hand, the 20th century forced us to redefine "works of necessity."

Textile machines that must be run continually (restarting costs thousands of dollars), newspaper publishing houses, hospitals and nursing homes demand constant attention.

The problem becomes more difficult. Is the continual running of a textile machine (for machine protection and for financial reasons) the same as pulling an ox out of a ditch? The problems we face were not in existence for the early church. Does our cultural situation allow us to broaden the definition of "works of necessity"?

Worship and Rest on the Lord's Day

God knew the limits of both our humanity and our spiritual stamina. There seems little question but that the day of rest and worship was designed to aid in those areas of limi-

"Is the running of a textile machine on Sunday the same as pulling an ox out of a ditch?"

cise and movement, and the constant inference that we kept the Lord's Day holy by being totally miserable.

Proper Sunday observance was measured by externals—by those things we didn't do. Little attention was given to heart attitude or quality worship. Legalism was alive and well in evangelical Christianity.

Work on the Lord's Day

Jesus taught that works of necessity and compassion were legal activities on the day set aside for worship and, by example, He included works of ministry. He would

tation. This can be said without rejecting the element of Godwardness in worship.

Worship strengthens our spiritual bodies as rest renews the physical. Jesus went so far as to say "the Sabbath was made for man . . ." We are not selfish when we seek personal renewal in our observance of this special day.

But, even here, tradition has played a major part in evangelical practice. We force worship into the evangelical mold and then wonder why it has so little impact on our parishioners. The hours of worship,

the order of worship and the length of the worship service have become sacred. Any deviation from the norm is considered as much heresy as would be the preaching of false doctrine.

While we reject any sort of prescribed liturgy and proclaim with great pride that we are not bound to our bulletins, any break with tradition brings gasps from the congregation.

I visited a church recently that shifted the morning offering to the end of the service. It was the topic of conversation for the rest of the day. A new definition of justification would not have had nearly the impact of this breach of ritual contract.

The best illustration of our bondage to tradition was the "evangelistic service," born in the middle part of the century and duly installed in every church of the denomination as Sunday night worship.

It served an important purpose in the late 30's, 40's and early 50's when churches were filled with the unsaved. But by the time society had shifted its direction and the unsaved stayed away from the churches in droves, the service was a necessary part of Sunday worship.

Crowds dwindled and saints starved in the pews as we continued to preach the simple gospel message to those already redeemed. We wept at the number of "babes in Christ" in the church but were too tradition-bound to feed the sheep.

Why are our churches empty on Sunday nights, Wednesday nights? Who do we blame for the church membership exodus to the lakes and mountains?

Is it really the mobility of the society—just the way things are in the late 20th Century—or have we been so tied to our past that we still minister to the past generations and lose touch with the now?

Conclusion

I worked on Sunday afternoons while completing my doctoral program. I set type for a large newspaper and as the newest man on the job, I couldn't avoid Sundays. While I disliked the schedule, I saw the good job as part of God's

promise to supply my needs while in training for ministry.

He never failed us, but supply always came through good jobs rather than miraculous gifts. I didn't feel less spiritual because other

***"Should we
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eat out
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so that
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won't have
to work?"***

ministerial students did receive gifts. This was God's way of providing for me.

My wife still works on Sunday but, as a nurse, her work is related to compassion and fits the New Testament pattern. The problem increases as we face other jobs with definition less clearly defined.

The problem is really more complex than it appears on the surface. What responsibility do we have to others? Should we refuse to eat out on Sunday so that waitresses won't have to work?

Should we refuse to buy Sunday newspapers so printers won't have to work? (In our zeal, we often forget that Sunday papers are printed on Saturday and, to be consistent, we would have to refuse to buy Monday papers).

Would our refusal have an impact? What impact would it have on those who feel they need the Sunday work to make ends meet? What's our motivation? Are these things really matters of conscience or do they offer opportunities for us to demonstrate our "holiness"?

There must be a balance—a proper observance of the Lord's Day that stops short of legalism. The things that can be done before Sunday should be done. Our family buys groceries early and we refuse to work on the cars or cut the grass. In no way can these routine duties be considered works of necessity or compassion.

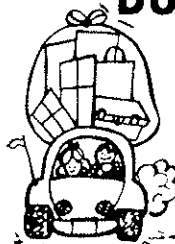
I wonder, however, if the ice cream cone for fellowship, the meal out after church to relieve the good wife or even crocheting to relax the body and mind really constitute abuse of the Sabbath.

I must confess again. I remember and miss one element of the good old days. When I was in my teens, the American society respected the Lord's Day. "Blue Laws" weren't needed to control unnecessary businesses. Even the unsaved "rested" and many of them attended church.

The tragedy is that we have gone beyond the works of necessity and compassion and Sunday has become like other days and, again, we can't blame society. We, too, are guilty. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Dr. William F. (Bill) Davidson is director of graduate admissions at Columbia Graduate School, Columbia, South Carolina.

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FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

**TRANSIT AUTHORITY CITES
 FREE WILL BAPTIST LAYMAN**

ATLANTA, GA—The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) published a news item in the May, MARTA TRANSIT TIMES describing heroic action by Chuck Snow to aid an Atlanta police officer.

Snow (member of First Free Will Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia and the Georgia Master's Men Senator) who drives a bus for MARTA, observed a scuffle between Police-
 man Barney Barnwell and a taxi driver about 4 p.m. on April 18. Snow braked his bus and rushed to aid Officer Barnwell.

Together Snow and Barnwell subdued the man who was subsequently charged with aggravated assault and several misdemeanors.

Barnwell suffered a broken wrist and a knee and elbow injury in the struggle. But he was grateful for Snow's help, "I was very glad he was there because all of the rest of the people just stood around doing nothing."

Snow considers his actions something he had to do and would readily do again. Although he does not view his involvement as heroic, MARTA Police Sergeant Lois Stevens said of Mr. Snow, "Operator Snow acted without regard for his own safety."



VANDALS SET BLAZE; MICHIGAN CHURCH GUTTED

HAZEL PARK, MI—Unidentified vandals burglarized and burned First Free Will Baptist Church, Hazel Park on May 21, according to Pastor Johnnie E. Floyd, Jr.

Floyd said, "It was unreal at 3:00 a.m. in the morning to see smoke pouring from our church basement. But God gave me strength as firemen hosed the fire and smashed windows for smoke ventilation."

Members have been padlocked out of the main sanctuary and basement areas since May, pending major repairs to wiring, windows, walls and water pipes. Pastor Floyd said the church has been meeting for worship in the Lewis Wing, the first section cleaned up after the blaze.

The vandals used hammers to break and deface property before

piling splintered baby beds in the basement and starting the plastic wood fire. Although the fire was contained in the basement, black smoke coated sanctuary pews and musical instruments to such an extent that chemical cleansing was required. The pastor's study and church office were virtually eliminated.

Damage estimates at First Church soared to \$150,000. Pastor Floyd says the church is more fortunate than other area churches where similar attacks totally destroyed buildings. "Our people have been closely knit together through this tragedy."

Floyd remarked, "We paid off the mortgage less than a year ago. But we believe God will get glory from this also." Members expect repairs to be completed in August.

MISSOURI CHURCH SPONSORS MISSIONS READ-A-THON

COLUMBIA, MO—Twenty members of the Columbia Free Will Baptist youth group participated in a nine and one-half hour Bible Read-A-Thon for foreign missions on May 2-3.

Teams of four divided 20-minute reading shifts that took the group through Matthew, Mark, Psalms and Proverbs before the marathon ended at 2:00 a.m. on Saturday. The 220 chapters read netted \$600 for missions.

Seventy-five percent of the pro-

ceeds went for missions in France, while 25 percent was marked for local projects. As each group of four took its turn reading in the sanctuary, other team members gathered in the church basement for fellowship and a foreign missions film.

Pastor John Postlewaite says the Columbia Bible Read-A-Thon may be a first for Free Will Baptists, but in any case recommends similar projects for denominational youth groups.

DEPARTMENT TO 'VOTE CTS' IN NOVEMBER PUSH

NASHVILLE, TN—November is the new month for Church Training promotion and enlargement. Since this is an election year, the emphasis is VOTE CTS.

For churches with an existing CTS, this is a special opportunity to give CTS a boost in promotion and attendance. For those churches who need to organize a Church Training program, it affords a natural opportunity to begin.

This competitive campaign is open to all Free Will Baptist churches. It is a time of recruitment for new attenders.

National awards go to first and second place winners on the basis of greatest percentage of increase in CTS attendance over the average attendance of March-April-May, 1980. Four divisions based on average attendance will be set up plus a separate division for newly organized CTS's.

Division A	150 — up
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The material is simple and easy to use. Information and materials are available from the Sunday School and Church Training Department, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, Tennessee 37217.

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After 43 years of active duty in the ministry, Rev. **Raymond Riggs**, pastor of **Cookeville FWB Church, Cookeville, TN**, announced to the membership that effective October 7 he will vacate full-time pastoral ministry. Brother Riggs said, "I do not mean to ever retire, but I would like to be available for revival work, conferences and minister-at-large responsibilities."

Billy Bevan had only been at **Hilltop FWB Church, Fuquay-Varina, NC**, a few months when the church entered their first revival under his leadership. Whatever fears concerning revival effectiveness that Brother Bevan had can now be put to rest. During the revival 11 people were saved along with 14 other commitments for rededication. Since May 25 the pastor has had the happy responsibility of baptizing 31 people.

And here's another pastor who doesn't mind being all wet. He's **Alfred Cutshall**, pastor of **Limestone FWB Church, Limestone, TN**. Following a revival with evangelist Doyle Pruitt, pastor Cutshall baptized 28.

National Home Missionary to **Lexington, KY**, **Sandy Adams**, conducted his first service on May 11 with 63 attending morning service and 54 returning for evening services. Adams reported three salvation decisions. The group has been averaging 44 in attendance. They have initiated plans to purchase three acres on which to build.

On May 30 Pastor **Lester Horton** concluded 25 years in the ministry. While a number of Free Will Baptist ministers have been preaching that long, Brother Horton has one advantage over most of the rest. He has invested 24 of his ministerial years pastoring the same church. It's **Fairwood FWB Church, Fairfax Station, VA**. By the way, Brother Horton has not grown stale by remaining more than two decades with the same flock. His evangelistic

efforts have resulted in more than 60 conversions this spring.

It cost \$135,000 to erect in 1979, but Pastor **James Childers, Jr.**, said of the beautifully furnished auditorium at **Whitney FWB Church, Spartanburg, SC**, "This building stands at a testimony to the growth of Free Will Baptists in South Carolina. It is designed to seat more than 600 on comfortable padded pews." Brother Childers celebrates his 11th year with the Whitney Church this August. The group has grown from an average of 60 in 1969 to over 300.

How's this for a growth rate—Going from 32 in 1967 to 450 in 1980. That's the story behind **First FWB Church, Inman, SC**. This is also a testimony to the ministry of Earl Hendrix who led the congregation from a trailer chapel to an expansion movement which resulted in three buildings and a parsonage. This church began a Christian academy in 1973 with a total of 25 students. The program now instructs 157 students.

CONTACT commends **Roy Thomas**, general director of the Home Missions Department for his editorial in the May-June issue of **Mission Grams**. The editorial is titled "Let's Not Forget The Smaller Towns." Thomas concludes his remarks by saying, "Many preachers need to give consideration to picking out a fast, growing smaller city and moving there to start a Free Will Baptist Church."

Garden Grove FWB Church, Garden Grove, CA, will add another outreach to their overall ministry this fall. Pastor **Ken Sluder** announces plans to start a preschool in the Southern California church.

CONTACT welcomes THE SOUTHSIDE NEWSLETTER, publication of **Southside FWB Church, St. Louis, MO**. Church youth groups are sponsoring the publication according to Pastor **James Mertz**.

Members are beginning to refer to their "peddling" preacher at **First FWB Church, Selma, CA**. But Pastor **Dennis Pettyjohn** says the affectionate title does not refer to moonlighting the gospel but rather to the fact that

he makes the more routine around-town pastoral calls on a second-hand ten-speed bicycle.

Rev. **John H. West**, Free Will Baptist Pastor-at-Large based in **Tulsa, OK**, has written a 28-page funeral manual. The booklet is a practical handbook of suggestions for ministers before they face a funeral, and also a guide for how to conduct themselves while attempting to comfort a bereaved family.

Oklahoma Executive Secretary **Lonnie DaVoult** fielded questions during an hour interview on Radio Station KTOK. He was a guest on John Dale's Talk Back Show. During the hour interview, Brother DaVoult discussed Free Will Baptist history and doctrine. Listeners joined in the interviewing process and quizzed DaVoult during the program.

Free Will Baptist Bible College Director of Public Relations, **Paul J. Kettman**, says the school lacked only \$389 reaching their \$495,000 general fund budget this year.

Here's some good news about a church bus ministry. **Tick Ridge FWB Church, Wheelersburg, OH**, report four conversions as a direct result of the bus ministry. One of the conversions was a man whose wife had been praying for him 34 years. **Emil Cartee** pastors.

Pastor **Steve Trail** reports 22 additions at **Rose Hill FWB Church, Monticello, AR**.

CONTACT welcomes THE PASTORAL CALL, publication of **Greater Tulsa FWB Church, Tulsa, OK**. R. D. Hidde pastors.

Sunday school attendance at **First FWB Church, Tucson, AZ**, registered a 34 percent increase this year according to Pastor **Dan O'Donnell**.

A new Master's Men Chapter was begun at **First FWB Church, Phoenix, AZ**. **Ron Stoneburner** pastors.

Twenty-six people were saved as a result of a three-day soul winning conference conducted at **First FWB Church, Bakersfield, CA**, by Associate Director of Home Missions, **Trymon Messer**. **Claude Hames** pastors.

Mr. Messer said that during the 12-day tour in four California churches, 42 conversions were witnessed and more than \$8,000 in faith promise commitments raised. ▲

DIRECTORY UPDATE

ARKANSAS

Barry Scott to First Church, **San**
City, from First Church, **Searcy**
Leola transfer to First Church,
Barkville, from Christian Supply
Store Company, as Manager
John Proctor to First Church,
Clontarf

CALIFORNIA

Gay Johnson to South Union
Church, **Shafter**, from Hawaiian
Garden Church, **Hawanan Gardens**
Patricia Adams to Hawaiian Gardens
Church, **Hawanan Gardens**
Joanne Scott to Apple Church, **Or**
inda Anderson Church, **San Jose**
Keith Barden to Harmony Church,
Pruned, from Locust Grove Church,
Locust Grove, CA

ILLINOIS

Oliver Carter to First Church, **Chen**
in City, from Pleasant Church, **Bel**
verton, IL

OKLAHOMA

Jim Christian to Green Church, **Ch**
ton, from Trinity Church, **Claring**
Ed Pate to First Church, **Edmond**

By Debbie Ziegler

Our society is extremely inquisitive about human existence. Philosophers are delighted with the increased interest in the subject of life, since it prompts people to ask intriguing questions that demand complex answers.

We are confronted with baffling questions such as "Do we truly exist or are we merely dreaming that we exist?"

Reincarnation and life hereafter are popular conversation pieces. Movies and novels focus on devil-possessed humans and other unorthodox topics. Some people are doubtful about their purpose for being here on earth, while many feel that man has no purpose at all.

When studying life and our existence, religious questions often arise. Is there a Creator? Is God dead? The theory of evolution developed because an inquisitive mind was examining life.

America allows her population the freedom to make their own decisions and form individual opinions. Therefore, hundreds of explanations and compositions abound on the subject of life.

Life is much too short to be spent wondering and questioning its purpose. We must make the most of each hour for we do not know (although many speculate) what tomorrow may bring. Each day of life is precious and important.

When one comes in contact with God, a purpose and complete understanding of life is available. Life and the promise of life hereafter are gifts from God. Through following the Bible, we know the path we are to travel and the reward for following that path.

Once dependence on God is established, life becomes less complicated for we have given it to One who can guide us in the right direction. We are released from the fear of mistakes and troubles. The Lord asks that we cast our burden upon

When



Life Hits

High "C"

Him (Psalm 55:22), and we serve a God who is capable of delivering us out of our distresses (Psalm 107:6).

Life is like a piano keyboard. The keyboard has two parts, treble and bass. A pianist can play treble or bass or both if he chooses.

Life presents two melodies. A person can sing the one he desires or attempt both. He may select the conventional which includes following God and holy goals for living. Or he may prefer walking without God or any religious convictions. Some attempt to walk with God on appointed days and stand without Him at other times.

Again, life's keyboard has high notes and low notes, sour sharps and sweet flats, and ups and downs. Our lives are contoured by the mountains (high spots) and the valleys

(low spots) of disappointments and tragedies. We are enriched by a sweet melody of flats when we permit God to make our decisions, but burdened with the bitter tone of sharps when we try to go it alone. We find ourselves uplifted when God heads our lives and downtrodden when Satan is permitted to take control.

Let's not make life more complicated than it is. God already has the answers to our questions written in His Book. Let us be prepared to accept and understand the truth that has been biblically revealed.▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Debbie Ziegler is a member of Christ's Free Will Baptist Church, Corpus Christi, Texas. Her husband is a deacon. She is the mother of two sons.

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By Leroy Forlines

The concern of this article is the nature of the pastoral relationship as implied by New Testament words that reflect the pastor's heart attitude, concern and approach. We turn our attention to words that denote a mild tone in these areas.

The word that occurs most is *parakaleo*. It is used 65 times in Acts and the epistles with reference to Christians exercising responsibility toward other Christians either directly or indirectly. It is translated "beseech," "call for," "comfort," "be of good comfort," "desire," (in the sense of invite or urge), "exhort," "exhortation," "give exhortation," "intreat" and "pray".

TONES THAT COMFORT

The basic meaning of *parakaleo* is "to comfort," "to encourage" and "to appeal to". With reference to past and present trials and difficulty, it suggests the idea of comfort. With reference to future action, it suggests an appeal for appropriate action and supportive encouragement.

The supportive and comforting concept in the verb *parakaleo* is seen in the meaning of the noun *paraklesis*. This word occurs 29 times in the New Testament. It refers to Christians' relationships to one another 11 times (Romans 12:8; I Corinthians 14:3; II Corinthians 1:6-7; 7:13; 8:4,17; I Thessalonians 2:3; I Timothy 4:13; Philemon 7; and Hebrews 13:22).

In these places it is translated "exhortation," "consolation," "comfort" and "intreaty". According to Hebrews 13:22 the book is an expression of exhortation or encouragement. Peter considered that he had been exhorting or encouraging his readers in writing I Peter 5:12.

The supportive and comforting concept in *parakaleo* is also seen in



The Pastor And His People

Part VIII

parakletos which is closely related to *parakaleo*. *Paraklatos* occurs five times (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7 where it is translated "Comforter" and refers to the Holy Spirit; and I John 2:1 where it is translated "Advocate" and refers to Christ). The basic idea is that of being a helper with the context determining the nature of the help involved.

Christians are never referred to by the word *parakletos*. This is not because the word could not have been so used, but since it was first used with reference to Christ and the Holy Spirit, New Testament writers chose not to use it with reference to themselves. However, the relationship between *parakaleo* and *parakletos* is such that we should think of ourselves as those who help, comfort and encourage.

Observe the tone difference between *epitasso* and *parakaleo*. *Epitasso* denotes a strong tone. It is frequently translated "command" and used only once of one Christian addressing another.

Paul used it in Philemon 8. *Parakaleo* occurs in verse 9: "Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin

(*epitasso*) thee that which is convenient. Yet for love's sake I rather beseech (*parakaleo*) thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

For love's sake Paul chose to use the mild tone approach of *parakaleo* rather than the strong tone approach of *epitasso*.

THIRTEEN RESPONSES

We now refer to several passages where *parakaleo* is used to see 13 kinds of responses that were sought by the use of this word when addressing others.

An appeal is made for unsaved to be saved in Acts 2:40 and II Corinthians 5:20. Christians are encouraged to continue in the faith (Acts 11:23; 14:22; and II Corinthians 6:1). Christians are urged to commit themselves fully to God in Romans 12:1-2.

A request is made for Christians to pray (Romans 15:30 and I Timothy 2:1-2). Christians are told to live in a manner befitting Christians (I Corinthians 4:16; Ephesians 4:1; I Thessalonians 2:11-12; 4:10-12; II Thessalonians 3:12; and I Peter 2:11).

An appeal is made for Christians to minister to the needs of other Christians (I Thessalonians 5:14-15; Hebrews 3:13; 10:25). Christians are instructed to forgive and encourage one who has been disciplined by the church in order to help him reestablish his life (II Corinthians 2:7 and 8).

Request is made for church unity (I Corinthians 1:10 and Philipians 4:2). Then members are taught to respect and submit to leadership of worthy church leaders.

Two writers ask that Christians contend for sound doctrine (Titus 1:9 and Jude 3). Paul wants believers to detect and avoid those who cause trouble with false doctrine (Romans 16:17). Titus is charged to finish his work in receiving an offering from the church at Corinth for the saints in Jerusalem (II Corinthians 8:6 and 9:5).

Finally, Peter tells the elders to carry out their work with the right



DOCTRINE (From page 27)

attitude and in the proper manner (I Peter 5:1-3).

In the above references *para-kaleo* is translated by either "exhort" or "beseech" except in II Corinthians 8:6 where it is translated "desired".

Three other words denoting a mild tone are used describing Christians' relationship to one another.

Paramuthia is translated "comfort" in I Corinthians 14:3. Concerning this word, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of the New Testament* suggests "primarily a speaking closely to anyone (*para*, near, *muthos*, speech), hence denotes consolation, comfort . . ."

Paramutheomai which is akin to *paramuthia* is used twice with reference to Christian relationships. It is translated "comfort" in I Thessalonians 2:11 and 5:14. In other New Testament references, it is translated "encourage" and "cheer".

Paragoria occurs only in Colossians 4:11 where it is translated "comfort". This is the Greek word from which we get our English word "paragoric".

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Based on our study in this series on the pastor and his people, we draw the following conclusions:

The exercise of the pastoral relationship, while at times requiring strong language of rebuke, reproof, warning and charging is primarily one of caring, encouraging, comforting and appealing to people.

This is clearly borne out in the meaning of Greek words for pastor and bishop as well as the fact that by comparison there are more references where words denoting a mild tone are used than words denoting a strong tone. This neither indicates a spirit of compromise nor a spirit of weakness on the part of the pastor.

He can be firm in his insistence concerning what Christian responsibility is where the case is clear in scripture. At the same time the element of appeal, encouragement and comfort must be strong in his ministry. ▲



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Gratitude

Part XIII

By Robert Picirilli

Galatians 5:22, 23 doesn't list it among the "samples" given there, but the New Testament says so much about being thankful that we can be sure *gratitude* ought to characterize the genuine Christian.

This attractive grace is certainly one of the fruits of the Spirit. The spirit of the person who is grateful is made far more beautiful for the presence of this quality, and ugly for the lack of it.

Consider how often the epistles urge us to develop this grace of thankfulness: Ephesians 5:3,4,20; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 3:15; 4:2; I Thessalonians 5:18; I Timothy 2:1; Hebrews 13:15 are good examples. Perhaps one of the best ways to get a clearer picture of its nature is by making comparisons that show the difference.

1. Gratitude goes with appreciation and humble acceptance of things instead of with complaining and criticizing.

It's easy for us to become complainers about the weather, food, taxes or anything that doesn't suit

us; critics of the government, the church, the preacher or anyone that doesn't please us. We get to be experts at knowing what's wrong with everybody and everything.

But the grateful person recognizes that God has created all things to be *received with thanksgiving* (I Timothy 4:3,4). The grumbler's arrogance reflects a feeling that he deserves better, but one who is grateful humbly appreciates what he receives.

2. Gratitude goes with contentment and serenity instead of with discontent and covetousness. Complaining is an expression of dissatisfaction, according to Hebrews 13:5. Grumblers are dissatisfied with everything: possessions, circumstances, their "lot" in life.

And that discontent produces a greedy lust for more: power, popularity, possessions. That covetousness, in turn, produces envy and jealousy over others and what they have. According to the Bible, all sorts of rotten fruits grow on the bitter tree of covetousness: lust, greed, selfishness, laziness, theft, oppression, even murder.

But the person who is truly grateful is at peace (Colossians 3:15). Humbly accepting and appreciating what he has, he is contented, not covetous (see I Timothy 6:6-10).

While the grumbler is all wrapped up in his *wants*, the grateful person gladly rejoices in what he *has*.

3. Gratitude is associated with joy and praise instead of fear and anxiety. It's only a short step from discontent to fear and tension, from wanting more to doubting and strain over what one does not or may not get.

Paul said we should be careful/anxious about nothing—and the secret to that freedom is in gratitude (Philippians 4:6).

"In everything give thanks" is preceded by "Rejoice evermore" (I Thessalonians 5:17,18)—the two go together. Hebrews 13:15 links praise and thanksgiving.

The grumbler's dissatisfaction leads to fear and worry, but the one who is gratefully appreciative for what he has graciously received is relieved of the strain of uncertainty and has joyous praise for God as the giver of everything good.

Gratitude, then, is humble submission to the will and hand of God. It goes with faith. Its opposite is unbelief. We don't have to labor long to figure out what gratitude really means, or how it would affect us if we possessed it.

What we need to do, then, is decide to obey God and practice it—toward God and man. ▲



NEWS OF THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

SON REPUDIATES ATHEIST MOTHER

AUSTIN, TX (EP)—Atheist Madalyn Murray, O'Hair's 33-year-old son, the schoolboy plaintiff in a 1963 suit that ended prayer in the public schools, says he feels responsible for the "destruction of the moral fiber" of American youth.

"Looking back on the 33 years of life I wasted without faith and without God, I pray that I may be able to correct just some of the wrong I have created," William Murray of Houston said in a letter published in the Austin American-Statesman.

Mr. Murray was 16 when named as the plaintiff in the school prayer suit. "The part I played as a teenager in removing prayer from public schools was criminal," he said.

Mrs. O'Hair would not talk to reporters about her son's letter, but her Austin-based Society of Separationists issued a release saying: "We note in the news that William Murray has retired early. We are happy to see an atheist getting religious dollars and wish him the best. We anticipate that he will tithe to the American Atheist Center." The statement was not explained further. A spokesman said there had been little contact between Murray and his mother in the last three years.

Mr. Murray apologized to the people of Austin for helping build his mother's "personal empire." "I loathe the idea that I lowered myself to editing her anti-God magazine," Mr. Murray said.

AMERICANS RESPECT BUT DO NOT READ THE BIBLE

PITTSBURGH (EP)—The Bible is the most revered book in the country. It is also little read.

That was the conclusion of "Christianity Today" magazine based on a poll it commissioned by the Gallup organization. According to the poll, not only is the Bible little read, especially by non-Protestants, but most people are ignorant of its most important teachings.

Forty-five percent of the persons polled could not name more than four of the 10 commandments. When asked what Jesus said to Nicodemus in one of the most famous passages in the Bible, only 17 percent of the Catholics and 30 percent of the Protestants answered correctly—"You must be born again."

ASTROLOGY DIVERTS OR GUIDES FOUR OF EVERY TEN TEENAGERS

PRINCETON, NJ (EP)—Forty percent of American teenagers believe in astrology, more than twice the percentage of the adults that do, says the latest Gallup Organization Youth Survey. That figure represents about 10 million teenagers, particularly young girls, who believe that the characteristics and the shifting positions of the stars influence the daily events of their lives.

Thirty-six percent of boys and 44 percent of girls 13 to 18 years old said they believed in astrology. Forty-seven percent of girls in the 13 to 15 age bracket said they believed, making them the most likely adherents. Least likely to believe were 16 to 18 year old boys, 30 percent.

EVANGELICALS MUST ADJUST THEIR POLITICAL VISION

WASHINGTON D.C. (EP)—When it comes to politics, evangelicals have traditionally focused on the wrong things, theologian Dr. Carl H. Henry told the NAE Insight Briefing here. Dr. Henry warned that while more evangelicals are becoming involved in politics, they must be ever wary of thinking that evangelical faith necessarily means competency in government.

"We have a history of rallying to single issues or personalities," Dr. Henry said, "and our track record is that of ignoring principles, programs and party involvement. We are intellectually lazy and give no guidelines for Christian philosophy when our nation is in crises. We should be searching for principles and setting goals. And then we should be listening to one another as we wrestle with those goals."

SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION IN AFRICA SHOWS HUGE LEAP

NEW YORK (EP)—Scripture distribution in Africa by the Bible Societies in 1979 increased by nearly 25 percent over the previous year, according to a report issued by the American Bible Society. Throughout Africa, the Bible Societies distributed 18,376,000 scriptures, 3.5 million more than in 1978. This represents an increase of more than one-fourth, making Africa the fastest growing region in the world in terms of scripture distributions.

This corresponds with the rapid and dramatic increase in the number of Christians in Africa. According to Bible Society observers and missiology experts the rate of Christian growth in Africa is twice that of the general population. There are now an estimated 200 million Christians in Africa today—approximately 40 percent of the total population.

"JESUS SEX FILM" TERMED ANOTHER HOAX

INDIANAPOLIS (EP)—The increasing number of pastors being asked to sign petitions in protest of the "Jesus Sex Film" which the petitions say was brought into the United States by Modern People News of Franklin Park, Ill., is a misguided effort, according to a spokesman for the agency.

The petition pastors are faced with urges them to support letter writing campaigns to Modern People News to protest its alleged intention to bring a Jesus sex film to the United States. When Gene Medaris, editor of the Indiana Baptist, called the Modern People News, it flatly denied they had any such intention. In fact, the agency answered the phone with, "No, there is no such film."

"First of all, let me stress we have no such plans and have printed this fact," said Elaine Shpak of the agency. "About three years ago we ran a brief article about the proposed film's entrance into the U.S. market. We found it was in error and ran retractions of the article. Someone must have found this old news item and failed to check the date on the paper. When mail first began to arrive, we didn't keep it. Then our vice president realized its value, for most of the letters were in protest. For the past six weeks, we have kept the mail and have over 100,000 letters. This morning we received seven more mail sacks in protest. But there is no film to my knowledge."

No determination has been made by the agency if this is a hoax being played on churches or misguided efforts of well-meaning people, but all efforts are futile since no problem exists, says Medaris.

NEW MOONIE HEAD SAYS HE'LL 'TURN AMERICA UPSIDE DOWN'

NEW YORK (EP)—"We're going to turn America upside down with the revolutionary principles of Rev. (Sun Myung) Moon," said Dr. Mose Durst, the new president of the Unification Church in the U.S., at his first press conference at national headquarters here.

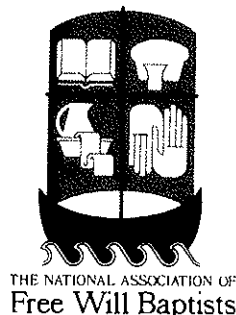
"I hope to travel throughout the U.S., until we can inspire and excite everyone," said Dr. Durst, 40, a Brooklyn-born Jewish professor who headed the church in northern California with his Korean wife, Onni. Mrs. Durst is one of Mr. Moon's top disciples. Dr. Durst was recently elected national president by the church's board of directors, succeeding Neil Albert Salonen, 35, who had been president of the Unification Church in the U.S. since 1972. Mr. Salonen, who comes from a Lutheran background, asked to be released to pursue other church goals.

The changes in national leadership grew out of Mr. Moon's announcement in April to church members, proclaiming the end of his personal 21-year ministry and the beginning of a new 21-year period of greater personal responsibility and growth for members. ▲



The Secretary Speaks

Fashioned in the Fire



By Melvin Worthington

Servants of God often face persecutions and problems which tempt them to disobey the Lord. Throughout the scriptures illustrations abound of believers who had their courage, convictions and character pushed to the limit.

Situations often arise when one must take a stand on the principles of God's Word regardless of consequences. Obedience to the Word of God is not an option but an obligation for the Christian. Loyal obedience brings abundant blessing.

Daniel chapter three unfolds the account of three young men—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—who faced a decision to obey or disobey God. Nebuchadnezzar erected an image on the plain of Dura and gathered all his leaders for a dedication. Instructions were issued that when the people heard the music they were to fall down and worship the image. Everybody did except the Hebrew boys.

The penalty for disobedience was a fiery death in the furnace. Upon hearing of their disobedience, Nebuchadnezzar summoned the lads and offered them another chance to follow his instructions. In this confrontation three notable things are seen about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

THEY WOULD NOT BOW

In spite of the king's rage and threats, they refused to serve his

gods or worship the golden image which had been erected. Bowing to Nebuchadnezzar's image meant to disobey God. No other course of action was possible in light of God's Word. The inevitable pressure and punishment did not cause them to reevaluate their action.

We must obey the Word of God without compromise in spite of the pressures. There is no substitute for fully obeying the Lord in every circumstance.

THEY WOULD NOT BEND

After taking their stand, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to reconsider their action. They would not budge from their former decision. They clearly understood the proper course of action. Any other action meant disobedience. They did court martyrdom but bravely acquitted themselves under trying circumstances.

Their course of action had been determined on the basis of God's Word. They saw no reason to question what was right. Faith in God enabled them to suffer for Him rather than sin.

Careful attention must be given to our courses of action. These must be determined by the Word of God. When we know the truth we must stand on it under all circumstances. Crowds, confrontations and convenience must not cause us to waver in obedience.

To be flexible in given situations is one thing, but to be disobedient is

another. Disobedience is always inexcusable.

THEY WOULD NOT BURN

In a rage Nebuchadnezzar commanded that the Hebrews be thrown in a blazing inferno. The fire was so hot that it incinerated the guards who pushed the boys. When the king peered into the furnace, he saw four men walking in the fire and the fourth was like the Son of God. He called for the release of the men and found to his amazement that the fire had no effect on them.

When one obeys God the fiery trials are a means of trying, testing and tempering. During periods of great affliction the Lord often gives the greatest victories. Rather than losing by obeying the Word of God these lads were promoted in the province of Babylon and their God acknowledged as the true and living God.

The servant of God is revealed, refined, reaffirmed and reassured in the fiery furnace of trials and tribulation. He is fashioned in the fire. ▲

The Secretary's Schedule August, 1980

- 12-14** Arkansas State Meeting
Camp Beaver Fork
Conway, AR
- 24** Wesconnett FWB Church
Jacksonville, FL

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