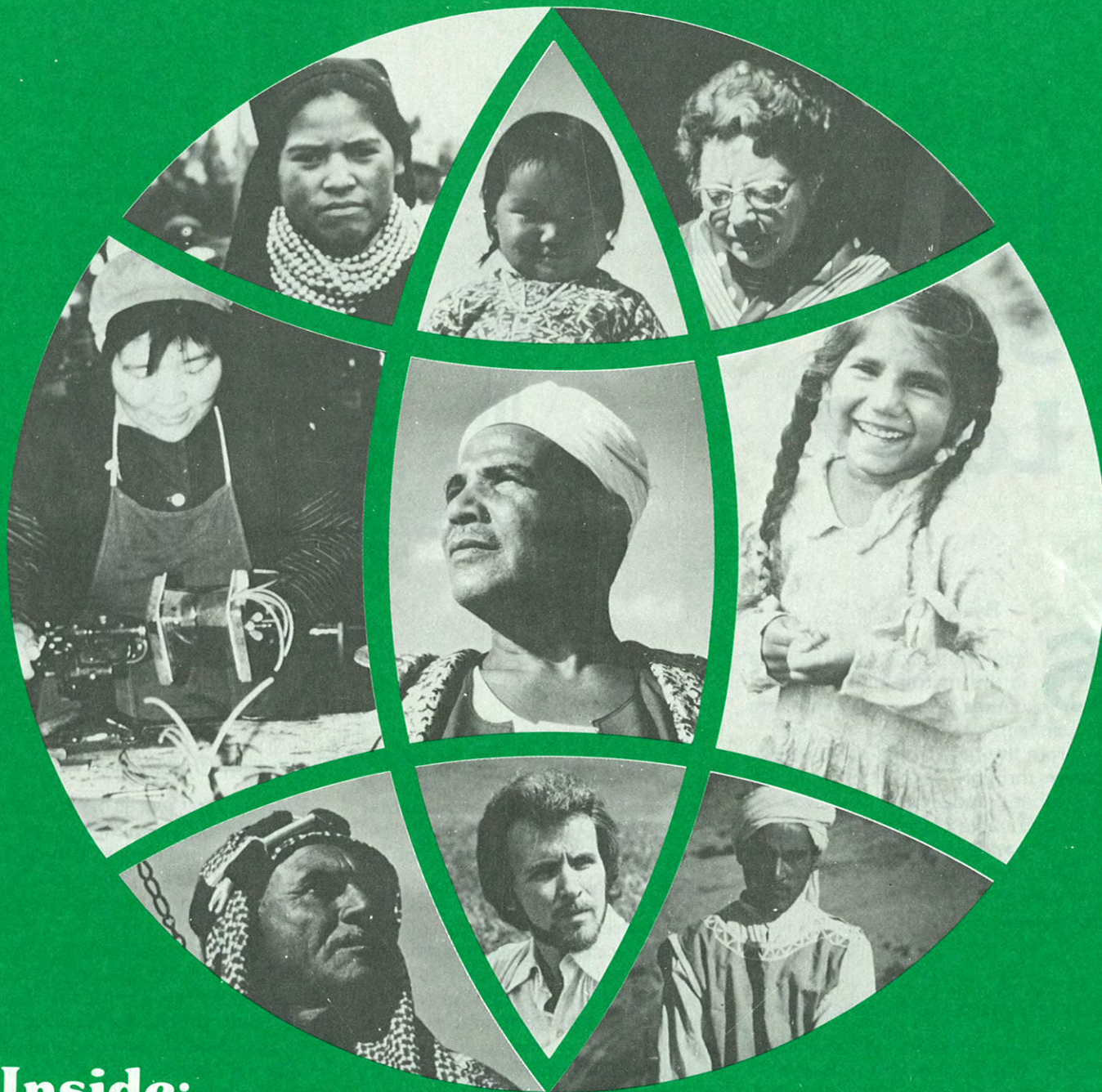


APRIL, 1982

Contact

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS



Inside:

- Are the Heathen Still Lost?
- Why the Cooperative Plan Works
- He is Risen!



Are The Heathen Still Lost?

By Jim Combs

Simply by wording the question in this matter implies that, of course, they once were. Were they in fact?

From the time of the early church fathers through the great 19th century missionary endeavors, this was an unquestionable certainty. Even those who harbor doubts today would hardly deny that it was thus understood and taught by the Christian church universally.

Modern Versus Historical View

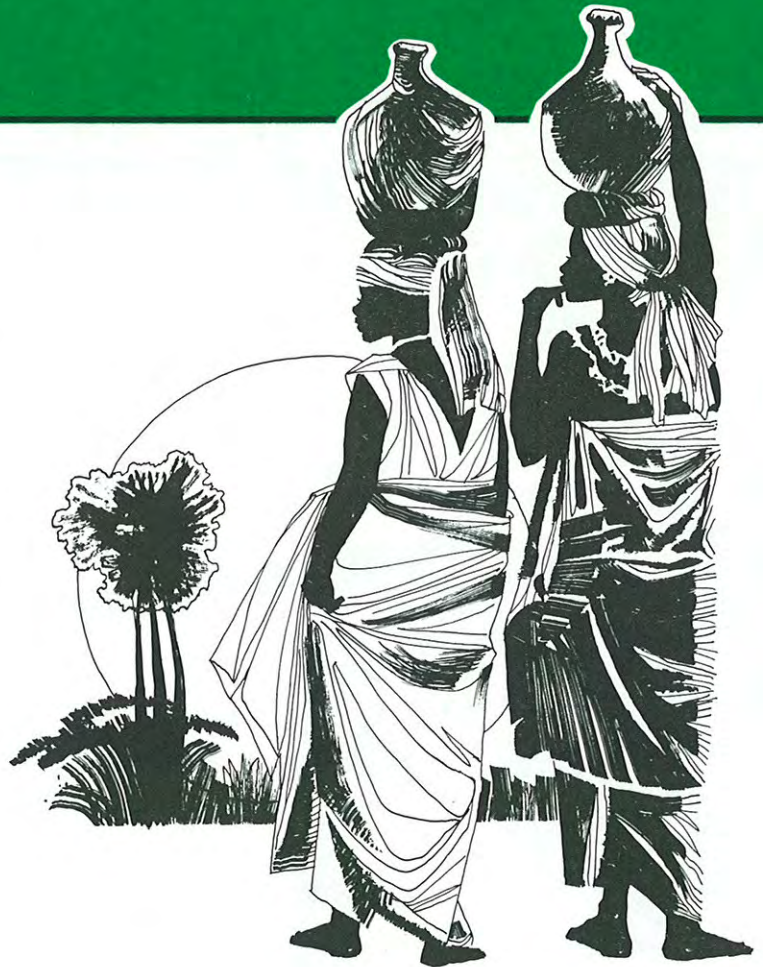
What then has changed in modern times? Is the church's mission to evangelize the world an antiquated, outmoded enterprise? Today's society has concluded by and large that all religions are about equally true.

Unfortunately, the church is not immune to adapting to and adopting society's standards and value system.

This article is an attempt to reaffirm a basic truth of biblical doctrine, a key element of the Church's mission, that all men everywhere who are not believers in Jesus Christ are lost, doomed for eternity to suffer in hell.

One is keenly aware that this doctrine is extremely unpopular in today's pluralistic society. Those who proclaim it are alternately looked upon as unenlightened by one segment of society, while held in utter contempt by another.

No matter what label may be the lot of those who espouse this view, it has its roots in antiquity and will not be easily chopped down and destroyed by those who deem it necessary to perform cosmetic surgery on what is seen as unattractive to would-be converts.



Definition Of Terms

Perhaps a few words of explanation are in order by way of defining terms. The biblical word for *heathen*, both in the Old and New Testaments, quite simply means the gentiles or the nations.

Specifically, it is understood to mean those who are not considered to be God's elect—Israel in the Old Testament, the Church in the New. As used in most present day occurrences, *heathen* is generally understood to mean those who have not had an adequate opportunity to hear the Gospel message of salvation.

It is this understanding of the term which is used in this article. Normally, one doesn't consider the United States to be a *heathen* nation, though much

of what goes on here can rightly be labeled "heathen practice."

What does *lost* mean? As herein used it means separation from God, damnation, eternal punishment and whatever other biblical descriptions are used with reference to the condition of those who are not saved in Jesus Christ.

Man will not be lost when he dies; he is lost already (John 3:36). He is without hope and without God in this world (Ephesians 2:12) in his natural state—dead in trespasses and in sin (Ephesians 2:1).

To be lost means to perish in hell (John 3:16). All have sinned (Romans 3:23) that the whole world might become guilty before God (Romans 3:19). Everyone, whoever or wherever he is, is lost forever unless by faith he has trusted in Jesus Christ and been made alive in Him (Romans 6:23).

But, one asks, has this not been modified somewhat in more recent years? Has not the church accompanied the evolutionary process of change? Can the leopard change his spots? Never!

Merely stating something a thousand or a million times will never make it so, however much one may desire that it be that way. This doctrine has not, can not and never will be other than it always has been. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," Jesus said, "but my words shall not pass away" (Luke 21:33).

Who was history's most adamant proponent of this doctrine? Jesus! Who painted the most awful pictures of hell? Jesus! Who said it would be better for man to lose life and limb rather than perish in hell? Jesus! Attempts to destroy His teaching will only result in the destruction of the adventurers.

Human Reason Versus Divine Revelation

The human mind finds it difficult to accept this doctrine, but that does not alter the truth. To believe that one who has never heard the Gospel can be judged guilty and lost forever flies in the face of human reason.

But, says God, "... so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). Human reasoning can never substitute for divine revelation. "Let

God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Other religions, however noble or lofty their principles and moral ethics, are not sufficient to save any human being. If they were, then Jesus need not have come.

Were not men everywhere lost, why would Jesus command us to, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Naturally, if after hearing they then rejected the message, they would be lost.

Why then carry a message of doom, of condemnation to the poor unsuspecting souls? Rather, the Gospel is a message of hope, of salvation for those who are already guilty of sin and lost eternally.

Is God Unjust?

Many advocate the idea that if those who have never had an opportunity to hear the Gospel are lost then God is unjust. This error finds its basis in the mistaken assumption that men deserve salvation. A noble thought, perhaps, but not scriptural.

The Bible is very clear on this matter that God owes man nothing and only through His mercy and grace is there hope for anyone (Ephesians 2:8, 9). Since all men are wicked and sinful, then all men deserve hell. God could send everyone to hell and still be just. But, God is love and is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9).

Still, many people of today's world do not know that. They have not heard. This responsibility is not God's; however, it lies at the Church's door. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:14, 15).

Factors Influencing Change

What factors have contributed to the 20th century church's change of heart relative to the condition of the heathen? This writer's opinion is that it can be attributed in part to present-day preaching.



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LOST? (From page 3)

It seems fair to say that most preachers, Free Will Baptists included, fail to expound the doctrines of God. Evangelistic sermons emphasize the human plight, responsibility, and response to salvation, to the virtual exclusion of God's part.

A good case could be made to show that most of these sermons (unintentionally perhaps) leave their hearers with a concept of a God who exists to meet their multiplicity of needs, whether spiritual, material or even financial. Man-centered evangelism, however apparently successful, will never substitute God-centered, whole-Gospel preaching.

Another influencing factor is perhaps a technological one. Advances in transportation and communication have resulted in a much smaller world. Cultural and religious differences once magnified by distance are now at one's doorstep (or in one's livingroom to be more exact).

Having to apply beliefs or ideas to real live faces, friends or neighbors, is not as simple as never having to actually face up to and answer difficult questions.

Someone recently asked for example, "What about Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, do you believe a man like him could be lost?" One hesitates to judge individual cases, but can only reiterate that Jesus said "I am the door."

Unless Sadat or whosoever accepts Jesus Christ, there is no other way to be saved.

The last factor to be considered in this article relative to a shift of the historic position of the Church regarding the plight of the heathen is that of tolerance.

Tolerance has become a virtue in today's society and in today's church. This writer has even advocated as much in areas of church practice.

The danger arises, however, if this tolerance carries over into the field of dogma or doctrine. This is where wisdom is essential to delineate be-

tween what is unchangeable and what can (and in some cases should) change in the church.

A sincere desire to be open minded has resulted in a diluted message to a misunderstood audience.

One needs to lay aside one's own conclusions unless they concur with God's revelation. Go back to the only source of truth and "search the scriptures." The heart of God's concern for the heathen can only be understood in this manner.

Missions makes no sense apart from renouncing man's reasoning and returning to God's revelation. Then and only then can one identify with Isaiah when he saw the Lord, saw himself, saw the lost, heard God's voice and responded "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8). ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jim Combs pastors Dibble Free Will Baptist Church, Dibble, Oklahoma. He is the son of West Virginia preacher, Reverend W. C. Combs. Jim has also served years as a foreign missionary to Brazil and taught at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Moore, Oklahoma.

God's Requirement Is Faithfulness

By Richard Lewis

Do you ever get tired of being mentally punched out? I sure do. I mean, every time we open a religious paper or magazine or attend a Fellowship meeting we get verbally assaulted for being less than the author or speaker thinks we ought to be.

Frankly, I'm getting weary of being psychologically sideswiped by these "how to" authorities and crushed by the part-time professional evaluators on why I'm not reaching my potential.

A case in point was the recent article in the TRIBUNE which was written on the basis that big is great and super huge is next to the heart of God. I was left with the feeling that I was in the zenith of my male menopause.

Though I would not classify myself as one of those despicable "plodders," I am also not listed as one of the "10 greatest missionaries of the Baptist

Bible Fellowship." My goals are well defined and real. They just happen to be different from the latest fad; but does that mean that I have fundamental leprosy?

What is annoying is the premise that these authorities are the ones we are to judge our lives by. What's so great about a Sunday School contest which reaps 800 for Sunday school when the evening service attendance is 250? What's so spiritual about reporting 5000 conversions over the year if your baptisms just reach 300?

Whether we report the first or second set of numbers makes little difference; it's all religious smoke. What makes it worse is that we always report the former, never the embarrassing latter, and then hold these numbers up as the example of success.

We joke about being "nary-piece-of-literature fundamentalists," but it's losing its humor. Not only do we not produce books, we don't even read them.

If we dare study and the brethren

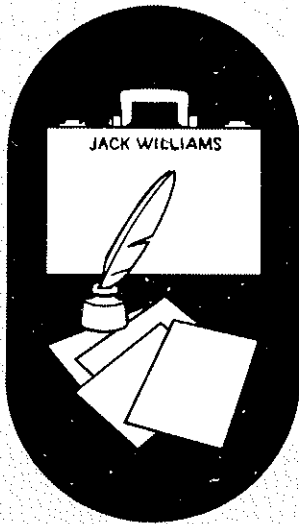
find us out we will disgracefully wear the title "deeper-lifers," whatever that means. I can't decide if I want to be a rejected "deep-lifer" or an accepted "shallow-lifer."

A word of defense needs to go out to the hapless "plodder." While he is scorned by the "achievers," it should be noted that the plodder seldom runs off with the church secretary, has a good credit rating in town, and usually is at his one not-so-super church for a lifetime. He is not seeking the next opening of a vacant pulpit that will thrust him to stardom.

The article said, "A pastor is expected to produce . . ." Gee, I didn't know that. I thought, ". . . It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Corinthians 4:2).

I guess that is what I get for sitting down to read instead of being out there "making things happen" for Christ. ▲

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Let's Unstack The Boards

I believe it's time the men who pay the bills in our denomination had a bigger voice in what happens. We need to restructure the standing boards, and perhaps the commissions, of the National Association in order to get broader representation.

The work of the National Association is basically carried out through six boards and two commissions, some of which are heavily weighted with members from one or two states. All the boards have nine members, the commissions five.

I propose that all boards and commissions have representation similar to the General Board, which is one member per state.

Let me spell out the problem specifically. There are 64 board and commission positions. Of the 64 positions, 16 are currently filled by members from one state, Tennessee. That's more than 30 percent of our national board members. I see no justification for such board crowding. And that's only one side of the problem.

Another side is that North Carolina has seven board members (which is not too many for a state reporting 28,000 members). But it gets inequitable in a hurry when three of their seven members are stacked on one board, the Free Will Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees.

By the way, Tennessee also has three members on the FWBBC Board of Trustees. But an even more alarming figure is that Tennessee has *four* members on the Foreign Missions Board.

I don't suppose there's a man serving on any board who doesn't deserve to be there. That's not the issue. The issue is, why should two states or three states dominate denominational boards when we have good men available in 40 states?

I think it is absurd for a state like Arkansas with 20,000 Free Will Baptists to not have one member on the Bible College Board, while Tennessee with 20,000 members has three. Why is not even one of the 22,000 Alabama or one of the 15,000 Kentucky Free Will Baptists on the Foreign Missions Board while Tennessee has *four*?

We seem to be less concerned with broad representation than we are with board control.

We are simply not harnessing our strength when 30 of 64 board members come from three states. If the National Association adopted a policy that no more than one person from a state could be elected to a board/commission, we would immediately stop two problems.

Negatively, the one-state, one-member policy would effectively curb board control by one area or state. Positively, it would create greater interest in states that have no national representation.

It is unreasonable to think that out of 15,000 Missouri Free Will Baptists, only *two* are qualified to serve on national boards, as is currently the case. Or that of 9,000 members in South Carolina just *one* is qualified to serve. Or that of 4,783 Floridians *no one* is qualified, or only *one* Texan in 6,839—well, you get the point.

I'm not so much unhappy with who is on the boards as who is *not* on them.

The question arises, how do we implement the one-state, one-vote concept? Of course, one way would be to declare all offices vacant at our Fort

Worth convention this July and elect one from each state per board until the positions were filled. Even though that might be the quickest way to equalize the boards, I'm not convinced it would be wisdom to do so.

A more realistic approach would be to let board members remain as they are until their terms expire and then elect members with the one-state, one-vote policy in mind. It would take a little longer to do it this way, but would result in less confusion and more board stability during the transition.

The equalization process could start in 1982 since three major boards have three members each up for election this year—FWBBC Board of Trustees, Foreign Missions Board, and the Sunday School and Church Training Board.

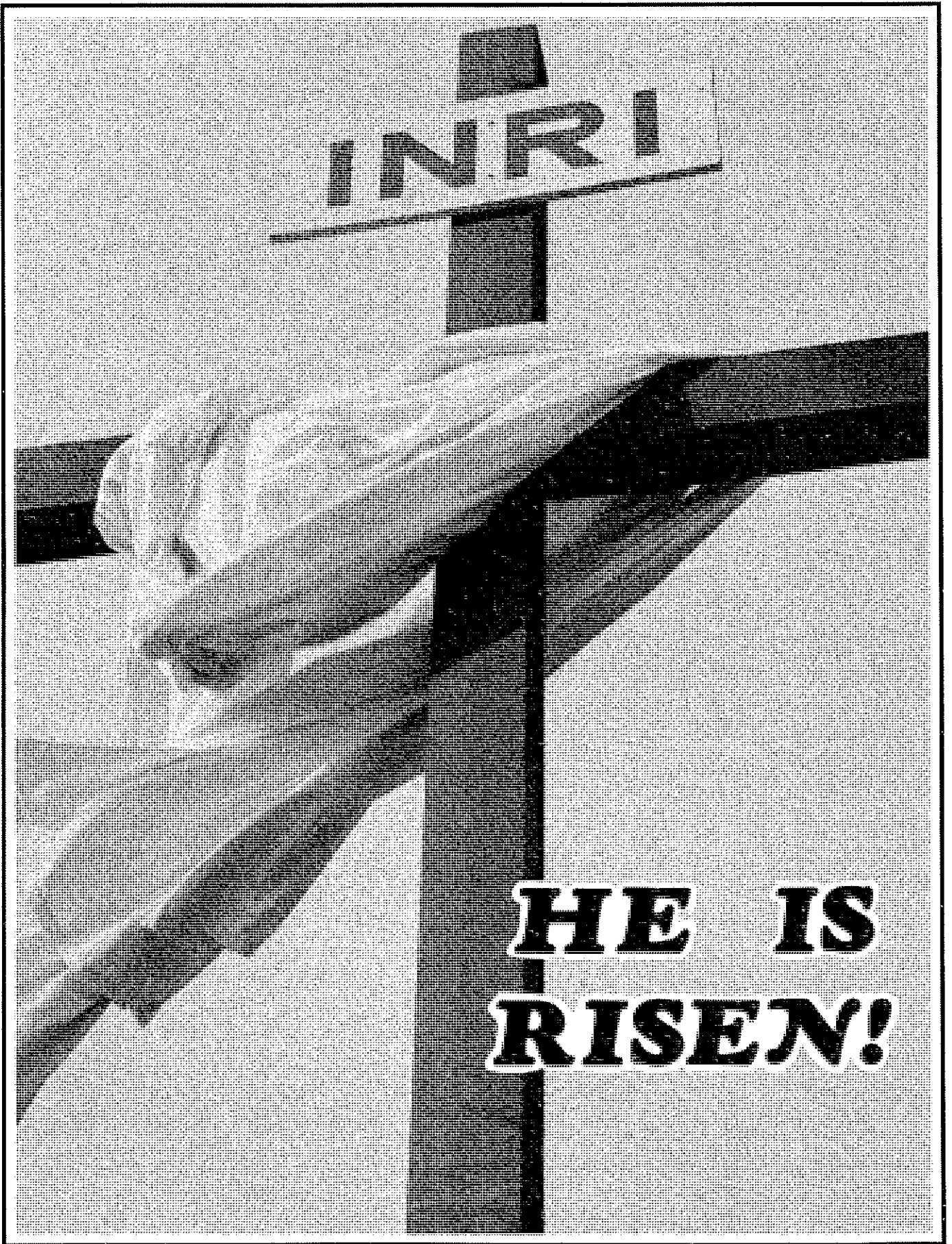
I realize that ministers do tend to move more frequently than laymen, so even if we equalize all the boards in July they'd likely be unequal by September if Board Member (Pastor) Jones relocates from Alabama to Illinois.

Perhaps it's time we considered electing more stable businessmen and educators to our boards. If they're sharp enough to beat inflation Monday through Friday and dedicated enough to bow before God on Sunday, they're smart enough to serve on our national boards.

Even blind statistics will tell us that there's bound to be more untapped talent in 230,000 laymen than in 2,400 overworked pastors.

Here I've spent all this time praising the one-state, one-vote idea. But I admit there is one thing I don't like about it.

If delegates endorse the policy, I'm sure to be booted off the Historical Commission, since my term expires in 1982 and I'm one of *three* Tennesseans on that five-member Commission! ▲



**HE IS
RISEN!**

By Jay R. Overman

Nearly 2,000 years ago, the footsteps of a Galilean carpenter blazed across the pages of history and forever changed the course of events in the world.

So certain were those footsteps and so true, that every place He visited and every person He came in contact with was affected in some way by His words, His life, or His miracles.

When Jesus stepped on a street, the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the deaf heard, the lame walked, the dead lived again, the lepers were cleansed, the demons were cast out, and sins were forgiven.

Twelve men turned their backs on everything they had and followed this unique individual who walked on water, commanded the elements, fed multitudes with virtually nothing, changed water into wine, and a host of other things which the Holy Spirit thought best not to record.

From before the moment of His birth, His fate was determined, His destiny sealed. When He was 33, after a short public ministry, He was betrayed, arrested, accused, abused, mocked, slandered, found guilty of a non-existent crime, and sentenced to die on a cross outside the walls of Jerusalem, the very city over which He grieved, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37).

His clothes were stripped from Him and He was nailed naked to a wooden cross where the entire city saw His shame and agony. He suffered that day, cruelly suspended between heaven and earth in the midst of two thieves, dying for a world that hated and rejected Him because He said He was the Son of God.

His body was laid in a borrowed tomb and a mighty stone placed in front of the opening for fear that His disciples might come by night to steal His body and carry it off to be buried in a secret place that they might start a rumor that this dead rebel lived again as He had said He would. The stone was sealed and a guard was posted to insure that the body would remain in the tomb.

Such a gloomy picture at this point, but fortunately, the story does not end in despair.

Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

Luke 24:1-5

What could it mean? What did it mean?

In a day when doom, despair, disappointment, and destruction displayed their dismal countenances on every hand, a message of hope, of healing, and of heaven burst forth to resound throughout the world and throughout the ages.

"He is risen"—three simple words spoken by an angel of God to frightened followers at an empty tomb. At first it appeared as some sick practical joke. Then reality leaped forth and this simple sentence filled the city.

The shock waves of truth are still felt today as the phrase passes from one believer to another, "He is risen. He is risen! He is risen!!"

Notice with me five interesting facts about the resurrection.

First, Matthew 27:60 records that a stone was placed in front of the opening of the tomb, and yet that stone could not prevent the resurrection as noted in chapter 28:2.

Second, according to Matthew 27:66, the stone was sealed with the imperial stamp of Caesar. Yet the angel regarded it not.

Third, chapter 27:66 also states that a watch was set, but even the soldiers could not secure the tomb from the angel of God (See 28:4).

Fourth, even the early morning darkness could not hide the truth of the empty tomb from the world, for when the sun was risen its light revealed that Christ was risen also.

Fifth, in spite of attempts by deceitful men to distort the truth and cast doubt upon the resurrection (Matthew 28:11-15), the message spread like wildfire.

It filled the city, filled the province, overflowed to other provinces and countries, and finally marched right up to the very doorstep of Caesar in Rome.

From there it continued to reach out, eventually making its way to the British Isles, where it boarded ships bound for the New World. It reached our own country and continues to spread throughout the states after more than 300 years, even to the present time. Because the message went forth in that day, you and I have received it in this day—"He is risen!"

I challenge God's message bearers that we might not relegate the resurrection message to a one-day-a-year occasion of remembrance, but that we make every day an occasion of rejoicing in the new life which we now live in Christ knowing that it is all because "He is risen!"

I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living, whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him He's always near.
He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Jay R. Overman is a member of Turlock Free Will Baptist Church, Turlock, California. He is a graduate of California Christian College.

Introducing—

The Cooperative Channel



A program to finance the Free Will Baptist Family

By Melvin Worthington
Executive Secretary

The National Association of Free Will Baptists was organized in Nashville, Tennessee on November 5, 1935. Nineteen years later, in 1954, the Cooperative Plan came into existence. So as you can see, the Cooperative Plan is almost as old as the National Association.

The National Association has grown in local, state and national outreach. With that growth has come the necessity to devise a program whereby the

entire Free Will Baptist Family can be equitably funded and financed. We call this program the Cooperative Plan or, as some prefer, the Cooperative Channel.

The Definition of COOP

The Cooperative Plan is a voluntary plan *to which* designated gifts and *through which* undesignated gifts can be given to underwrite the Free Will Baptist Family.

The Cooperative Plan was created by and is controlled by Free Will Baptists. Through it all denominational agencies receive systematic support.

This plan recognizes the relation-

ships within the Free Will Baptist denomination, the responsibilities to it, as well as its resources.

The Design of COOP

The Cooperative Plan provides a systematic method of equitable support for the Free Will Baptist Family. Through the Cooperative Plan, all ministries of the denomination beyond the local church are underwritten. When properly implemented this financial program provides systematic and sufficient funds for all areas of denominational life.

The Cooperative Plan focuses on the work of the denomination as a whole. Every agency is funded in light

of its needs. All agencies in the Free Will Baptist Family are worthy of fair and faithful support.

The Cooperative Plan funds the work of the denomination in a "no frills" economic fashion. Frankly, it costs less to raise funds through the Cooperative Plan than through any other method or program. Those who institute the Cooperative Plan discover that once they do, the only fund-raising expense involved is the cost of postage stamps.

The Cooperative Plan honors the wishes of those who give. Gifts can be given to the Cooperative Plan or gifts may be given *through* this plan. Each individual, local church, or state association may give designated or undesignated contributions to the Free Will Baptist Family utilizing the Cooperative Channel.

The Distribution of COOP

The Cooperative Plan functions quite simply. Participating local churches contribute a percentage of their offerings (generally starting with 10 percent) for cooperative distribution. These funds are sent to the local association or state association or National Association.

When cooperative receipts are sent to the local association, sometimes a certain percentage is retained while the balance is sent to the state office. The state office usually retains a certain percentage, and the remainder is sent to the Cooperative Plan in Nashville, Tennessee, to be disbursed.

When Cooperative Plan monies reach the National Offices, the funds are distributed according to a formula approved by the National Association of Free Will Baptists in annual session.

This formula is recommended by the Budget Committee which consists of the Executive Secretary and the directors of those departments which receive funds through the Cooperative Plan, and is based on the budgetary needs of each national department.

The Dividends of COOP

The individual Christian benefits as he contributes *to* and *through* the Cooperative Plan. It simplifies his giving. He is able to participate by one gift to the entire Free Will Baptist Family. It systematizes and solidifies giving.

Contributions to COOP are shared by the Foreign Missions Department, Home Missions Department, Free Will Baptist Bible College, Department of Retirement, Master's Men, Commission on Theological Liberalism and the Executive Office.

The present distribution of funds is so structured that the Executive Office income is fixed, while other denominational ministries may receive unlimited amounts according to a percentage scale. The Executive Office only receives monthly allocation of cooperative receipts until its budget is attained.

By using the Cooperative Channel, an individual gives to all denominational agencies. No longer must he struggle with what to support or not to support, because a gift through the Cooperative Channel undergirds the total work of the Free Will Baptist Family.

Love and loyalty will be developed for all denominational ministries by contributions *to* and *through* the Cooperative Channel. Those who participate in the Cooperative Plan have a vital part in carrying out the Great Commission, contributing to God's plan of the ages, and communicating the spirit of unselfishness which characterizes the Christian.

The local church benefits by giving *to* and *through* the Cooperative Plan. Just as the individual Christian supports the entire work of the local church when he gives tithes and offerings, so the local church supports the entire Free Will Baptist Family when it gives through the Cooperative Channel.

Supporting through the Cooperative Channel demonstrates a spirit of unity and trust among Free Will Baptists. We have the same purpose, program and privileges, and are concerned about one another's mutual well being.

Cooperative giving for a local church is intelligent giving in that we come to understand why we have various departments, and are able to appreciate the contribution each makes to denominational life. Cooperative giving develops an understanding of the Free Will Baptist Family and an unselfish spirit among the membership.

The local association benefits from participating in the Cooperative Plan. The Cooperative Channel produces strong, stable and supportive associa-

tions. Only as the local church and local association are strong can the state and national associations be strong.

The local association is a vital part of denominational work. It must be informed and involved in the total work of the Free Will Baptist Family. The Cooperative Channel provides the opportunity for that involvement.

The state association benefits from the Cooperative Plan. Participating in this program provides a means of support which enables state associations to develop those ministries which will educate, encourage and exhort the local association, local churches and individual Christians.

Weak state associations are the result of weak local associations, while weak local associations are the result of weak local churches. Weak local churches are the result of weak Christians. Weak Christians are usually the result of weak leadership. Strong state associations are but one dividend of participating in the Cooperative Plan.

The National Association benefits from the Cooperative Plan. This financial program unifies, undergirds and unselfishly provides for each National Department's needs. Every Free Will Baptist has an opportunity and an obligation to support fully, faithfully and fairly the entire work of the National Association.

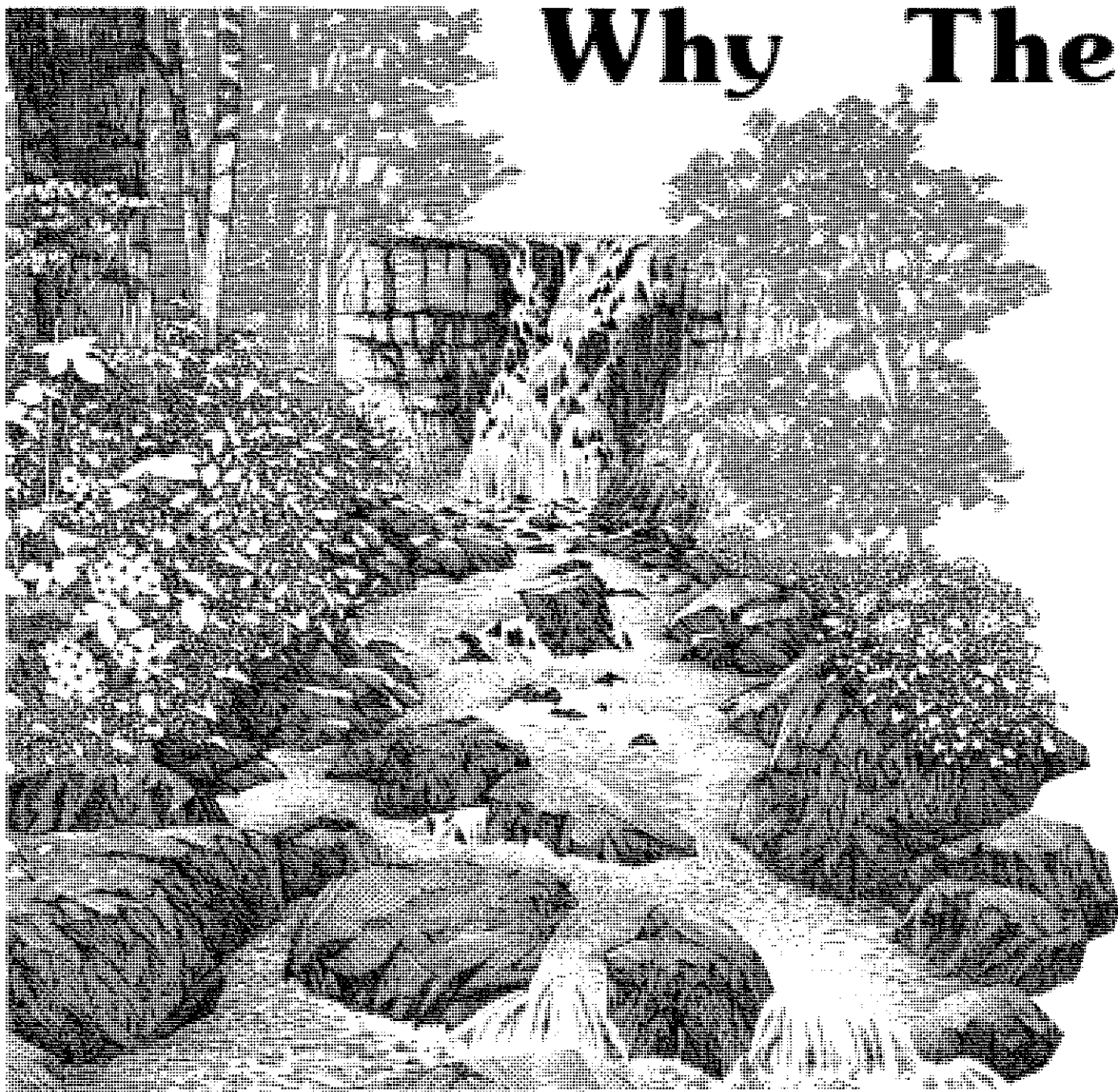
Cooperative giving eliminates competition for the denominational dollar. It develops a cooperative spirit which is demonstrated in works and words. It dignifies the contribution of each department to the denomination. It disarms criticisms. It displays consideration. It demands a complimentary spirit toward the entire Free Will Baptist Family.

The Pastor benefits by participating in the Cooperative Plan. He is cognizant of the work of the entire denomination. He contributes to a worldwide program through fulfilling the Great Commission. He challenges his congregation to view the world as the field.

Through cooperative giving, a pastor acknowledges that he is part of an organization which is more far reaching than his local church. Pastors who participate in the Cooperative Plan



Why The



CHANNEL (From page 9)

and lead their congregations to do so can be assured that they are worldwide witnesses.

The Distinctives of COOP

The Cooperative Plan is a systematic plan of support that produces regular and responsible giving. It is both a simple plan and a scriptural plan. It is planned stewardship. Coop-

erative giving is based on a theological conviction not enthusiastic or emotional appeals. It is a sufficient and satisfying plan of support.

The Cooperative Plan will work if we give it time. Some may voice opposition claiming it will not work. But the facts are otherwise. The Cooperative Plan has unlimited potential to fuel a worldwide Free Will Baptist program.

The Demand For COOP

The time has come for Free Will

Baptists to recognize the Cooperative Plan as not a sentiment but an economic necessity. It is a means to witness without waste. Economics demand that we implement the Cooperative Plan.

Education demands that we consider cooperative giving. Correct implementation of the Cooperative Plan begins with the local church, then the local association and state association. The Cooperative Plan is the best way to warn our people regarding the dangers of giving impulsively, ignorantly

Cooperative Plan Works

By Lonnie DaVout

The Cooperative Plan, like anything else, will not work by itself—it takes people's cooperation. The Cooperative Plan takes time to develop. It does not mature overnight.

It is too early in our denominational time table for the COOP to be the only means of support. However, given time and support, I am fully persuaded it can become the answer to our denominational financial needs.

Because so many have been and still are, opposed to the program, it really has not had a fair chance. Many are ready to point this out. However, those same people will not acknowledge that it is working in the states that are using it.

Why COOP Works

The Cooperative Plan works because those of us who support it believe in it. We believe it is a system of finance that is just as equitable as tithing.

God said, "The tithe is mine." This does not mean we can take our tithe and earmark it for the pastor's salary, the church bus, or anything else. God

said, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there be meat in mine house."

This means that God wants His total program supported, not just one part that someone likes. We believe one phase is just as important to the whole as any other.

Why COOP Works

The Cooperative Plan works because each part esteems the other more highly than itself. We have five departments in our state and there is not one bit of jealousy among them.

It has been common practice for one of our departments to voluntarily give up a percentage of their COOP receipts when they see another department in need. The Executive Department has given up seven percent in the last seven years. Hillsdale College gave one percent to the Missions Department when they were in need.

This year our Church Training and Sunday School Departments were willing to give up one percent each to the Executive Department when the Executive Department recommended building a new state office.

These are just examples of how we interact. The greatest benefit of the COOP Plan is not dollars and cents, but cooperating together. When we work together, the dollars and cents will take care of themselves.

Why COOP Works

One of the greatest joys is looking back over past records and seeing how God is blessing our efforts because we dwell together in unity (Psalm 133).

According to a report on giving by states at the 1981 Leadership Conference, Oklahoma was among the lowest contributors to the National Association in the decade of the 60's. During the decade of the 70's, Oklahoma increased four and one half times in its national giving.

I attribute this to educating and challenging our people to be total supporters. Our COOP has risen in the same proportionate way—from \$54,000 in 1971 to \$225,000 in 1981. During this decade our own state projects have also developed. We have



and impersonally. Systematic denominational stewardship will be but one result from full implementation of the Cooperative Plan throughout our churches.

Effectiveness demands that we implement the Cooperative Plan. Such a program enables every Free Will Baptist to promote the work of the total denomination. Concentrated efforts need to be made in this untapped area of our denomination.

Efficiency demands that we implement the Cooperative Plan. This is the

best program to efficiently and equitably harness denominational resources and enable Free Will Baptists to reach their full potential.

As a Christian steward, every individual must decide what part of his income is to be placed in the Lord's work through his local church and through that local church to the denominational rivers that water preaching points and mission fields and training programs around the world.

We bring our tithes and offerings to the church where we are members as

a part of weekly worship. The church collectively votes how our gifts will be divided. Part is used in the local church and part is placed in the channels of the denomination to go where we cannot go and do what we cannot do.

That's the Free Will Baptist Cooperative Plan—one program directed and controlled by the denomination, an efficient, sensible, economical program that works well.

We urge you to consider beginning today to give systematically to and through the Cooperative Channel. ▲

WORKS (From page 11)

a strong state office, bookstore, college, missions program, Sunday School and youth program.

Our local needs have not taken from our out-of-state giving. Out-of-state giving likewise increased in direct proportion to increased Cooperative Plan giving.

Why COOP Works

There has to be a strong foundation before anything can stand. So it is in giving.

Until a church is taught the stewardship of giving, it can never be a strong denominational church. The stewardship of giving must be based on systematic worship or it will become an emotional spasmodic act during a crisis.

I am convinced that this is what God intended when He accepted the tithe as an act of worship. Remember, it was an act of worship before it became a law! In tithing, a person could worship God every time he had a gain. In olden days it would be at harvest time.

Paul made it simple for us in today's society by saying to the Corinthians, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).



New Choir Recording Available From College

A new record was recently cut by the College Choir and may be ordered from the college. It is entitled "Well With My Soul," and is available for \$7.95, plus \$1 for postage/handling.

To order yours, write:
Free Will Baptist Bible College
3606 West End Avenue
P.O. Box 50117
Nashville, TN 37205

From this passage Paul says we are to give our tithes and offerings into the church every Sunday, so that when the need arises there will be goods (monies) in store. He even goes so far as to say that he does not want to have to take special offerings.

It will be wonderful when Free Will Baptists learn the joy of worship in giving of our tithes and offerings.

When we build our churches on a strong foundation of stewardship and then join together with other churches of like mind, we can build a strong local association.

As we develop the strong local association, we can join with other strong local associations to make a strong state association. By building a strong state association, we can build a strong national association. This and this alone will make COOP work.

Why COOP Works

Some have said, "Keep it simple," and we should. However, keeping it simple does not mean lack of organization. Simplicity does not come from lack of organization, but because of organization.

The problem comes when one part of the organization does not function in harmony with the whole. Some have said we ought to let every part do as it desires. But when we read Judges 21:25, they did what was right in their own eyes and went after strange gods.

A person, church, local, state, or national association left to itself will destroy itself. Therefore, we need to cooperate together in the whole not in part.

May we receive a lesson from Psalm 133, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more."

Why COOP Works

God has always promised blessings when his people were faithful in giving their tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:7-12). When God's people worked together, fought together and worshipped

together, God would always bless in proportion to their togetherness.

Can we expect anything less in this day of grace? The church has always been recognized as one body. If this be true, and it is, then we must learn how to cooperate.

We have thought of the COOP as finance. We need to start thinking of COOP as cooperating together in every area.

Why COOP Works

It does not take as much money, time, and effort to get the COOP dollar as it does in other means. After a pastor and church have been sold on the program, they will make it a part of their regular operation.

The COOP dollar will come through without having to make special drives, send out special people, and make emotional appeals. Then, workers are free to develop programs of service. More time and money will go into the program rather than having to raise finance.

Why COOP Works

It works because we work it. It will work as long as we cooperate. This is the secret. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Lonnie E. DaVout is Executive Secretary of the Oklahoma State Association of Free Will Baptists, an office he has held for the past 10 years. He has pastored churches in Oklahoma and Tennessee. He has served in numerous capacities both in local, state, and national associations. He graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1954 and from Oklahoma City University in 1962. He did graduate work at OCU.





46th Annual Session
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FREE WILL BAPTISTS

Theme: "Fundamentals of the Faith"



Bill Fulcher
Spanish Americans
Nashville, Tennessee



Ben Scott
Pastor
First FWB Church
North Little Rock,
Arkansas



Clarence Burton
Promotional Secretary
Missouri State Association
Lebanon, Missouri



Don Pegram
Evangelist and
Conference Speaker
Nashville, Tennessee

FORT WORTH,
TEXAS

Tarrant County
Convention Center

July 18-22, 1982

Preaching In The Classroom: A Misalliance



By Branson Woodard

Fifty Sunday School teachers, CTS leaders and other Christian workers listened to the speaker's introductory remarks. The food had been superb, and the group expected no less from the speaker.

Clearing his throat, the veteran of 15 Sunday School and CTS campaigns began, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2).

Many soulwinning churches sponsor banquets to encourage and challenge teachers. Most such efforts yield considerable results.

In fact, after each banquet I attended, I felt like charging into my classroom and preaching a sermon, telling my students "a thing or two" about Christian life. (I am a layman, by the way.)

This is how many of us perceive our role as teachers. In the classroom we see ourselves as suppliers of information which we present in the form of lectures or sermons. We assume that our talks are all the students need to learn.

Yet we who are also parents will quickly recall a common experience with our children: we tell them repeatedly not to touch the stove, but only after they burn their fingers are we assured that the children have learned their lesson.

Research confirms that teachers should not presume that talking to students results in learning. Lest we overlook the purpose of Christian education, our goal as teachers is to produce maturing saints, believers who put into practice the lessons they study in class.

In Christian education we depend upon the Holy Spirit to apply scripture to each student's needs and desires. We plant and water, "but God gives the increase" (I Corinthians 3:6). He rightfully gets the praise for any spiritual progress His people make.

Even so, we should never regard teaching methods as insignificant or nonessential to the learning process. Without a doubt, my inattention to teaching methods hindered my students from learning what God wanted them to learn.

I was one who generally disregarded various methods of instruction because it was simpler and easier to lecture. I had no record player, overhead projector, study questions, outlines for panel discussions or other equipment and materials to collect or prepare.

But how much more my students could have learned had I done so! Carefully prepared methods and materials help students learn, even if the teacher is absent. Somehow teachers believe that without their presence, the students cannot achieve maximum learning.

A delightful day in one person's teaching experience occurred Sunday, June 20, 1981. His Young Adult Sunday School students, learned much, as best as he could determine. They discussed and found biblical answers for 11 study questions (which he had written and distributed a week earlier) pertaining to John 21.

The questions required students to paraphrase principles expressed in the chapter and apply them to Christian life. The discussion was recorded on cassette so that he could hear it later. You see, during the discussion, the teacher was in another state 500 miles away!

This situation might not work with a class of younger students of course. But the point is that a teacher does not have to lecture or even to be present for substantial and significant learning to occur.

The teacher must, however, control the learning situation, and lecture-oriented preparation is not sufficient. For example, to study zealously the teacher's edition of the Sunday School or CTS quarterly, and the Bible of course, is good. But sometimes it's not enough.

Such a teacher usually lectures, telling students what he or she has read. Lecturing works well when we wish to review a previous lesson or expose students to names, dates and places pertinent to the lesson.

But lecturing in and of itself is not teaching and it *cannot* produce the results Christian teachers want, as a subsequent article, "The New Pharisees," will explain next month.

If in our preparation, however, we devote as much time to methods of instruction as we do to Bible study and the teacher's quarterly, we will provide lessons rather than give lectures or preach sermons.

Here are a few teaching strategies that work well for others:

- (1) A week in advance, prepare and distribute a brief list of study questions that identify main point(s) of the lesson and require students to apply the point(s) to their Christian experience.
- (2) Use the above method, but also ask five class members to serve on a panel, which would discuss the questions and respond to questions and comments raised by other students.
- (3) Ask each student to base his private devotions for the coming week upon

the passage of scripture to be studied next Sunday. During the next class, ask students to share insights gained from these devotions.

- (4) Ask students to find biblical support for or opposition to statements in newspaper articles and advertisements (For example, an arrested extortionist in Tennessee recently attempted to justify his crime by saying, "I thought it was all right, so I did it; it would not hurt anybody.") Ask students to evaluate this statement according to Proverbs 12:15a and 14:12).
- (5) Give five or ten-minute tests by which you determine if students have learned the lesson; the tests may be either oral or written.

The methods are not new, to be sure; but these in particular evoke discussion among students and between students and teachers. Such dialogue—which the lecture or sermon cannot provide—is, in my opinion, where learning really takes place.

This is certainly not to say that learning does not result from preaching in the regular worship services. We have all learned from sermons. But preaching belongs in the pulpit, not in the classroom.

The fifth method of instruction mentioned above may seem unspiritual to some who misunderstand the purpose of a test.

We should never give a quiz to distinguish smart students from less intelligent ones; the key to Christian maturity is obedience, not intelligence. Rather, we should use tests as teaching tools, as ways to know which students have learned the lesson.

Then we can determine ways to reteach the lesson to the others.

This kind of instruction is called goal-centered teaching. Using Bible lessons to accomplish spiritual goals, we test our students not to intimidate them but to ensure that they attain the goal.

That few, if any, of us ever reteach a lesson suggests two ludicrous assumptions: (1) that all our students learn the same lesson in equal time (one class period) and (2) that our students learn the lesson if we just *talk* to them about it.

These wrong assumptions not only hurt our students but also hinder other Christian workers.



CLASSROOM (From page 15)

For example, why must pastors devote much of their time to counseling church members about topics either explained or at least addressed in scripture? In Sunday School and CTS classrooms, we teachers often "cast our bread upon the waters" but make no effort to see that it is eaten, wholly or even partially.

We wrongly assume that teaching is merely "casting." Church members attend classes for years but never complete a brief oral or written test to show what they have learned. And teachers mistakenly assume that they have been "growing in the knowledge of . . . Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18)—that is, until these same church members need counseling from their pastor about matters plainly taught in scripture, such as how to confront a fellow Christian who has wronged them (Matthew 18:15-19).

Taking tests is generally unpleasant. Failing them is worse. But far sadder is failing the test of daily living, being unable to apply the scripture to life's problems.

Though some students lack the ability to learn quickly and others stubbornly refuse to learn, most pupils can learn. Even so, sitting passively in

classes week after week, these folks—teenagers, young couples, "Jolly Sixties," and all the rest—know they are not required to demonstrate what they learn from *their* (not just *our*) classes.

We give them no tests nor do we strive to measure what we have taught. Thus, they sense little individual accountability to learn the biblical truths we teach while we, privately and among ourselves, bemoan our students' passive behavior in class and casual attitude regarding Bible study.

I have yet to see one student learn a new biblical truth without showing, if given opportunity, some observable reaction, especially if he knew a test were imminent.

But if we lecture or preach in our classes, what student feels comfortable in displaying his reaction to the lesson? Further, most teachers prefer from students even a scornful response to none at all.

The most important point to consider is that without tests—used not as instruments of intimidation but as *tools of teaching*—we teachers cannot know if we have succeeded in our effort, and students feel much less accountable for learning what they are taught.

Committed Bible students come only from committed Bible teachers, men and women who not only present a lesson but also measure their suc-

cess or failure. And when they fail with some students, they find ways to re-teach the lesson.

Second Timothy 2:2 charges us to "commit" the scripture to our students, who then can "teach others also." We have not committed the Bible to our students until with God's guidance and anointing we do everything possible to help them learn, that is, understand and practice.

When as a boy I disobeyed my father's instructions, he ushered me into the back room mumbling, "My talk has not worked; now it's time to act." (He spoke softly but carried a big leather belt.) From those back room sessions I learned lessons of accountability, commitment, and obedience.

Obviously teachers cannot spank students for failing to learn a Bible lesson. And we can overuse tests, instilling in our students and ourselves that success wholly depends upon correctly answering test questions.

What should concern us most, though, is that ninety percent of us on a given Sunday do not know if during the class we succeed or fail. We are so busy talking that we do not find out if anyone is learning. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Branson Woodard is a member of Woodbine Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

F.W.BAPTIST



"Brother Charles, I've got to resign my junior boys class; the reason is Kenny Devilbliss."



"The first lesson I taught on Noah and the flood, he doused me with a water-balloon. When we got to Moses and the 10 plagues, he brought a box of frogs to class. Four stitches and three months ago, he shot me in the forehead with a slingshot during our David and Goliath lesson."



"I've got to resign before next week's lesson. It's on the three Hebrew children and the fiery furnace."

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

JULY 18-22, 1982

PLEASE USE THIS ADDRESSED FORM FOR YOUR HOUSING RESERVATIONS

INSTRUCTIONS:

THE FORT WORTH HOUSING BUREAU WILL HANDLE ALL HOUSING APPLICATIONS.

Applications must be submitted in writing on this official form.

No reservations will be taken over the telephone.

Confirmations will be mailed directly from the hotel to only one person. Please allow at least three weeks for confirmation.

CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS: All changes and cancellations must be made directly with the hotels.

If you share a room with others, please send in only one housing application listing the names of occupants.

Applications must be postmarked no later than June 20, 1982.

At least two choices of hotels/motels are desirable. Reservations will be filled in order of receipt.

HOTEL LOCATION	(1 person 1 bed)	(2 persons 1 bed)	2 Beds for 2 Persons	2 Beds for 3 Persons	2 Beds for 4 Persons	PARKING
HYATT REGENCY (350 Rooms) Headquarters 814 Commerce Children under 18 stay free with parents in existing beds	\$46.00	\$55.00	\$55.00	\$60.00	\$64.00	\$4.00
FORT WORTH HILTON (250 Rooms) WNAC Headquarters 1701 Commerce Children stay free with parents	\$47.00	\$59.00	\$59.00	\$63.00	\$68.00	Free
AMERICANA HOTEL (350 Rooms) NYC Headquarters 200 Main Children under 18 stay free with parents	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$3.50
METRO CENTER INN (100 Rooms) 600 Commerce Children under 12 stay free with parents	\$40.00	\$44.00	\$49.00	\$54.00	\$59.00	Free
PARK CENTRAL INN (100 Rooms) 1010 Houston St. Children under 12 stay free with parents	\$30.00	\$38.00	\$38.00	\$44.00	\$50.00	Free

HOTEL PREFERENCE: (From above list or specify other choice.)

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

ACCOMMODATIONS DESIRED:

- Room(s) for one person (one full size bed) Room(s) for () three or () four persons (two double beds)
 Room(s) for two persons (one full size bed) Room(s) with twin beds for two persons
 Room(s) for two persons (two double beds) Suite-Parlor and () one bedroom () two bedrooms

I will arrive July _____, 1982 at _____ (A.M./P.M.) and will depart July _____, 1982.

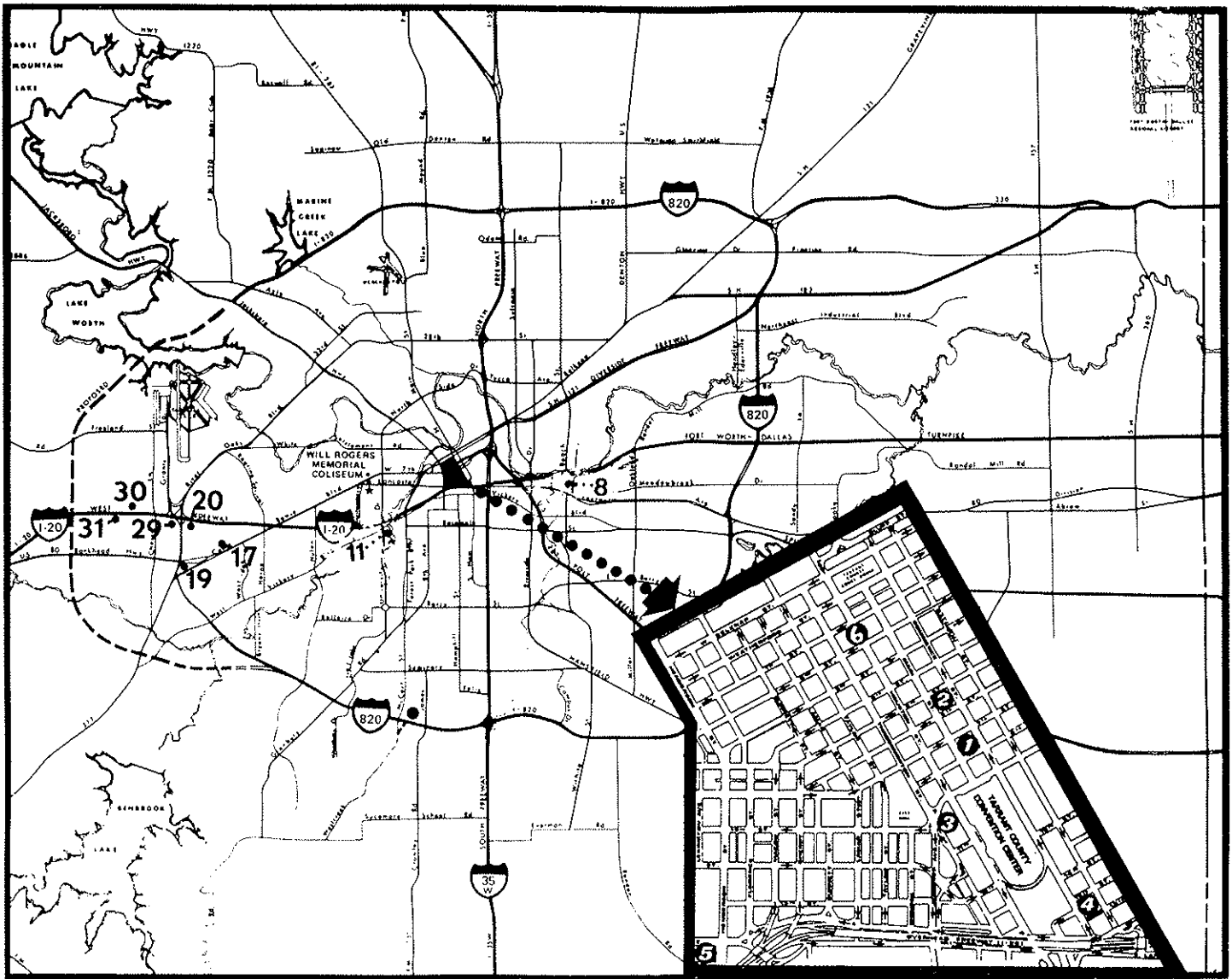
Name _____ Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Area Code _____ Telephone Number _____ This will be used only in case your form is not clear, in which case we will call collect.

Please list names of all additional persons included in this reservation. We cannot confirm unless rooms requested balance with number of persons listed. Please bracket names of those staying in same room.

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____



FROM:

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS
CENTRAL HOUSING COMMITTEE
700 THROCKMORTON ST.
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102

NO ENVELOPE NECESSARY FOLD THIS FLAP LAST FOLD—TAPE—MAIL



FREE WILL BAPTIST
newsfront

WORTHINGTON ASKS PASTORS FOR CONVENTION HELP

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington sent a one-page memo to 2,400 pastors and denominational leaders in January urging them to raise \$100 per church to erase the 1980 convention deficit and fund the 1981 convention.

Worthington told the ministers in his memo that all but \$4,000 of combined \$11,000 convention deficits had been raised by churches since the July, 1981 convention in Louisville, Kentucky. He cited a printing gift of \$6,100 from Randall House Publications, who printed 1981 Minutes at no

charge, thus saving the convention that added expense.

Pastors were asked to raise \$7,000—some \$4,000 of which would pay off existing convention deficits and \$3,000 to pre-pay certain 1982 convention expenses which must be settled before the Fort Worth Convention, scheduled July 18-22.

Dr. Worthington said, "I feel confident the Free Will Baptist pastors will respond. Many who have already given said to let them know if we needed more funds to get this problem solved. I have complete trust in those men."

NATIONAL CONVENTION MUSIC

You are invited—Mass Adult Choir—Men's Chorale—to share musical opportunities for all Free Will Baptists at the National Convention this July in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Mass Choir will be under the direction of Doug Little, minister of music at Southern Oaks Free Will

Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Dr. Vernon Whaley, music professor at Free Will Baptist Bible College will direct the Men's Chorale.

Watch for more information regarding convention music in the next issue of CONTACT.

CHILDREN SURVIVE LUNCH HOUR EXPLOSION

SPENCER, OK—Fifteen children from the Spencer Road Free Will Baptist Church day care center escaped an explosion at Star Elementary School on January 19 which killed five students and one teacher, according to Pastor Waldo Young.

A faulty hot water heater exploded in the crowded cafeteria of the one-story brick school. Police said 35 people were injured.

Young confirmed that in addition to the 15 youngsters from the church day care center, "We also had that many more from our Sunday School and our bus routes at the school. Our church is only three blocks away."

Pastor Young was informed of the accident by a mother whose son attended Star Elementary. "We immediately went to the school, gathered our children together, loaded them in the van and brought them to the church."

The pastor couldn't locate one little girl, but she was finally found in the local hospital where she was being treated for injuries. Young said that only two of his Sunday School and day care children were injured although many were emotionally upset.

"It was, and will continue to be, a bad experience. But God will be glorified through it yet," Young reflected.

**informed
prayer
is effective
prayer**

**MISSIONS
HOTLINE**

**(615)
361-5005**

FWBBC SETS RECORD ENROLLMENT

NASHVILLE, TN—Registrar Charles Hampton says a record 648 students enrolled at Free Will Baptist Bible College during the 1981-82 school year. Students from 35 states and six foreign countries filled classrooms for the Bible-centered training the college offers.

Spring semester registration, completed in early January, saw 49 new students join returnees to set the new record. Enrollment for the spring semester is 533.

The state with the largest number of students is North Carolina with 108. Other states represented well this year are Tennessee (96), Alabama (61), and Virginia (51).

Significantly, 40 percent of the 1981-82 student body are young people preparing for either ministerial or missionary service. Ministerial students number 175; the number preparing for the mission field total 86.

By classes, the college enrolled 243 freshmen, 172 sophomores, 105 juniors, 77 seniors, and 51 special students.

Students came from the following states:

Alabama	61
Arkansas	23
California	4
Colorado	1
Delaware	1
Florida	14
Georgia	24
Idaho	1
Illinois	35
Indiana	25
Iowa	1
Kansas	5
Kentucky	12
Louisiana	1
Maine	1
Maryland	2
Massachusetts	1
Michigan	24
Minnesota	1
Mississippi	19
Missouri	32
New Mexico	2
North Carolina	108
Ohio	27
Oklahoma	4
Oregon	1
Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	30
Tennessee	96
Texas	8
Vermont	1
Virginia	51
Washington	2
West Virginia	10
Wisconsin	1
Foreign	18

REQUESTS FOR TICKETS TO MEAL FUNCTIONS 1982 National Convention

Number	MEAL	Total
_____	Music Ministries Breakfast \$5.00 each Tuesday, July 20; 7:00 a.m. Fort Worth Hilton/Times Square East Speaker: Rodney Whaley	\$ _____
_____	WNAC Fellowship Dinner \$8.50 each Tuesday, July 20; 5:00 p.m. Fort Worth Hilton/Heritage Ballroom Speaker: Norma Gabler	\$ _____
_____	NYC Junior Adventurer Banquet \$5.00 each Tuesday, July 20; 5:00 p.m. Americana Hotel/Trinity Room	\$ _____
_____	NYC Youth Banquet \$9.50 each Tuesday, July 20; 9:00 p.m. Americana Hotel/Americana Ballroom	\$ _____
_____	Master's Men Breakfast \$5.00 each Wednesday, July 21; 7:00 a.m. Fort Worth Hilton/Heritage Ballroom Speaker: Alton Loveless	\$ _____
_____	FWBBC Alumni Luncheon \$6.50 each Wednesday, July 21; 12:00 noon Fort Worth Hilton/Heritage Ballroom Speaker: Charles Thigpen	\$ _____
_____	Pastor's Dinner \$9.00 each Wednesday, July 21; 5:00 p.m. Hyatt Regency/Grand Crystal Ballroom Speaker: Ralph Staten	\$ _____
Total Enclosed \$		_____

PLEASE PRINT:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Mail requests to TICKET SALES, P.O. Box 1088, Nashville, TN 37202. Please send check or money order. DO NOT send cash. All requests must be received by **June 30, 1982.**

NO TICKET REFUNDS AFTER JUNE 30, 1982

**First call to make your
National Convention hotel
reservations!**



Green Tree Bible Study



Robert E. Picirilli

I Thessalonians 4:1-12

The Walk That Pleases God

At chapter 4 the tone of I Thessalonians changes. Up to this point, Paul has reviewed events that led to writing the letter: the founding of the church (ch. 1), his ministry there (ch. 2), and Timothy's visit and report (ch. 3).

Now Paul turns to practical needs of the Thessalonians, as Timothy had discerned and reported them. The rest of the letter is instruction.

The general subject of 4:1-12 is introduced in verses 1, 2: "how ye ought to walk and to please God." The Christian's life is often called his "walk"—a picture of daily, steady progress.

In these first two verses, Paul emphasizes the authority behind his teaching: "We exhort you by the Lord Jesus," "commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." The gospel preacher does not stand on his own authority; he gives out the teachings of the Lord Jesus (cf. Matthew 28:20).

Paul speaks of three specific matters. The first is *sexual purity* (vv. 3-8), and he makes several points: this

is part of the sanctification (holiness of life) that God desires (v. 3); it requires self mastery (vv. 4, 5); it involves honest dealings with others (v. 6); it is based on obedience to a holy God (vv. 7, 8).

In verse 4, some think "vessel" is a metaphor for a wife (as in I Peter 3:7) and Paul is urging marriage instead of fornication (cf. I Corinthians 7:2-9). Others—including me—think "vessel" is a metaphor for one's own body (as in II Timothy 2:21) and Paul is teaching that self control is necessary to avoid sexual sin, the opposite of unrestrained lust (v. 5).

Verse 6 appears to mean that sexual sin always defrauds someone, like a husband of his wife, or a husband-to-be of the purity of his bride. And the women involved are just as cheated as the men. (Where the King James has "in any matter," the Greek has "in the matter:" that is, the matter under discussion.)

Don't overlook verses 7, 8. God is holy and has called us to a holy life. Then a rejection of this teaching is not a rejection of a man (like Paul) but of the God who has put His holy Spirit in us. Note the little "h" on "holy:" we get so used to the name that we forget that "holy" is an adjective describing the

kind of Spirit/God He is and the nature of His influence on us. Anything unholy in our lives is a practical denial of God's Spirit.

The second thing Paul deals with is *brotherly love* (vv. 9, 10). The briefness of the treatment may mean there was no great problem, but compare 3:12.

Paul acknowledges he need not say much, that God Himself teaches believers brotherly love (v. 9), and that they are already practicing it (v. 10). But he wants them to increase in this grace. Brotherly love is such a fundamental characteristic of true Christianity (cf. John 13:35) that we need frequent reminders and careful instruction about how to practice it.

Third, Paul speaks of *honest toil* (vv. 11, 12). There was a problem in the church; some were not working, sponging off others for their needs. (This is dealt with at greater length in II Thessalonians 3:6-15.)

This may have resulted from a wrong application of the doctrine of Christ's soon coming, but neither epistle says so. Perhaps these were just lazy, taking advantage of the good-heartedness of their fellow believers.

Either way, they were creating disruption, the opposite of the "quiet-

ness" (v. 11) that Paul exhorts them to seek. They should "tend to their own business," as we would put it, and work with their own hands.

And for two reasons: first, to insure a reputation for honesty in the eyes of sinners ("them that are without"); second, to provide their own basic needs

("have lack of nothing").

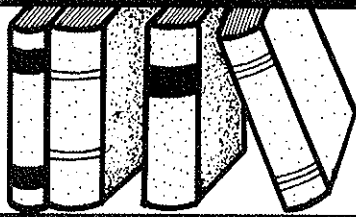
Their lazy walk was dishonest; these verses say much for not just the dignity but the Christianity of labor.

Certainly there is more to the Christian's walk than these verses tell; these were the specific needs at Thessalonica. But the three things discussed

tell us a lot about how to live in a way that pleases God. Sexual purity, love within the fellowship, and good, honest work are as live issues today as then.

In short, the walk that pleases God is the one in accord with His own character, thus manifesting the same character in us. ▲

Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



Why I Believe, by D. James Kennedy
(Word Books, 1980, 164 pp., hard cover,
\$6.95).

The Bible declares that Christians should be ready to give a reason for the hope which lies within us. This book is designed to help us do that and do it more effectively. The author is well-known pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, James Kennedy.

Kennedy explains that this book resulted from a call-in program he heard on the radio. The program featured an atheist expounding his views. Several Christians called and responded to the atheist's arguments, but they were unable to answer him effectively because they did not understand the evidences which can be cited for the Christian faith.

In the volume, Kennedy presents in clear and readable fashion a number of basic evidences for the Christian faith. In a sense, this volume becomes his personal testimony concerning his Christian belief.

Kennedy says he believes the Bible for two reasons. First, it contains many fulfilled prophecies, an element not found in the writings of the world's other major religions. Second, he be-

lieves the Bible because archaeological discoveries of the last century confirm many of the details of scripture.

Kennedy also tells why he believes in God. He argues that a God who is Creator is the only credible explanation for a universe which is as complex as ours is. It did not happen by accident or by evolution. He also affirms that a belief in God does not just appeal to the ignorant and unlearned. Many of the most brilliant men who ever lived believed in God.

Next, the author states that he believes in heaven and hell. There is within the teaching of almost every religion on earth an expectation of a future life. This is a universal desire placed in man's heart by God. The Christian teaching on heaven is the result of this God-given desire. Just as important is the Christian teaching concerning hell. Both the moral nature of man and the life and ministry of Jesus Christ necessitate a belief in hell as a place of punishment.

Jesus knew the difference between good and evil; man today knows the difference; God also knows it. Man understands that evil should be punished, so does God, so does Christ.

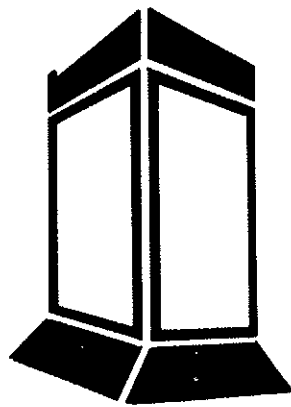
Kennedy believes in moral absolutes, because man-centered ethical

systems do not give a firm foundation upon which to build a meaningful life and have demonstrated their inability to meet the needs of mankind. The Christian belief in Jesus rests upon a solid foundation. Many of the wisest men in history have believed in Him. There is an abundance of evidence of His life both inside and outside the Bible.

In the concluding portions of his work, Kennedy presents reasons why he believes in Christianity, in the New Birth, and in the Second Coming of Christ. He argues that all of these are teachings which are reasonable and defensible.

Of course, many of the arguments which he gives will not convince a determined atheist or agnostic. It is doubtful that any amount of evidence will convince such a person. The arguments which he makes will, however, make a difference to the person who is really seeking truth with an open mind.

This book can be a great help to the Christian. While personal experience is extremely important, the Christian needs to realize that the Christian faith does not depend just upon an emotional experience. It is grounded in almost 2000 years of sound historical tradition. ▲



The Free Will Baptist Pulpit

Jack Cox, Pastor

Mt. Calvary Free Will Baptist Church, Hookerton, North Carolina

Glory In The Church

Scripture—Ephesians 3:21

Introduction

This “glory in the church” brings honor and praise to the Lord. David experienced this glory in Psalm 122:1, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

Missing many times in our local churches is this glory that results in “praise to the Lord” and “gladness to the Christian.” Going to church ought to be the highlight of the week for the Christian. To have this “glory in our church” we must understand:

I. Glory Comes In The Gathering Of Christians

A. This gathering must be one of fellowship (Acts 2:42).

B. This gathering must be one of unity (I Corinthians 1:10; John 17:20-22).

II. Glory Comes In The Gospel Being Preached

A. The Gospel is power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

B. The Gospel is the object of glory for the saved (Galatians 6:14).

III. Glory Comes In Giving God's Tithes And Our Offerings

A. Giving brings joy and blessings to the giver (Malachi 3:10).

B. Giving is God's way of meeting the needs of the church, and the needs of others (I Corinthians 16:2; Acts 11:29).

IV. Glory Comes In The Godly Living Of The Christians

A. The Christian's daily conversation (manner of life) ought to be as it “becometh the gospel of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:27).

B. The Christian walk is to be “in the light” (I John 1:6, 7).

V. Glory Comes In The Great Commission Being Obeyed

A. Bringing others to Jesus fulfills the purpose of His coming (John 10:10).

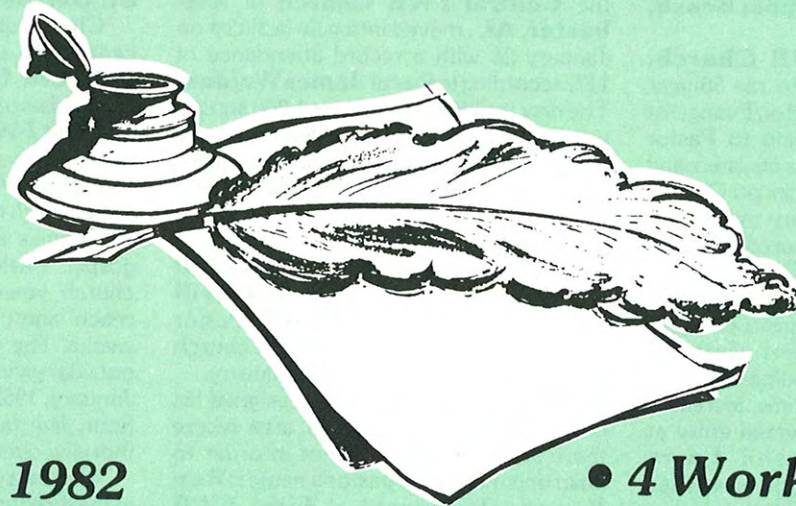
B. Going with the Gospel brings rejoicing to the Christian (Psalm 126:6).

Conclusion

Glory in the church brings praise and honor to the Lord. Glory in the church brings glory to the heart and life of Christians.

Absence of this glory could be the result of the lack of unity among the Christians, the lack of emphasis on the Cross, the lack of scriptural giving, the lack of consistency in the lives of Christians, or the failure of winning souls for Jesus Christ. ▲

**Second Annual
Free Will Baptist
Writers' Conference**



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Moody Press**

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Currently . . .

The **Gateway Bible Institute** opened in January with 43 students according to Pastor **Dale Burden** of the **Gateway FWB Church, Virginia Beach, VA**.

The **Cincinnati FWB Church, Tulsa, OK**, paid tribute to the 50-year ministry of Oklahoma Pastor/Evangelist **W. T. Roberts**, according to Pastor **Charles Flynn**. Numerous ministers and friends joined with the Cincinnati Church to underline the half century ministry of Reverend Roberts who pastored churches in Oklahoma, Kansas and California.

The **Hollywood FWB Church, Hollywood, FL**, began construction of a new addition to their chapel which will include a baptistry, a new pulpit and choir area, two multi-purpose rooms, increased seating capacity, and a covered entry as well as a vestibule. Pastor **Larry Montgomery** says the addition will add approximately 50 percent to the seating capacity of the Hollywood Church.

Pastor **George Lee** of **Victory FWB Church, Goldsboro, NC**, reported 8 baptisms and 13 new members on January 17.

The **California State Home Mission Board** is working to establish two

Spanish speaking FWB churches in the Southern California area and one Spanish speaking church in Modesto, CA.

After two years in a store-front building, the **Central FWB Church of Alabaster, AL**, moved into new facilities on January 24 with a record attendance of 117, according to Pastor **James Walden**. The new facilities encompass 4,200 square feet in a choice location between two busy highways. The Alabama State Home Mission Board financed the land and building purchase with the church repaying the Board.

CONTACT welcomes **The Terrill Road Torch**, publication of **Terrill FWB Church, Moberly, MO**. Pastor **David Kirby** says one goal of the church for 1982 is to establish a radio ministry.

One California pastor has resigned his church and relocated in an area where there are no FWB churches in order to build one there. The pastor's name is **Ron Young**. He resigned at **First FWB Church, Salinas**, and moved to the city of **Lancaster** where he expects to obtain a job and build a new FWB church.

Heritage FWB Church in Fredericksburg, VA, was organized on January 10 with 27 charter members. **David Reece** pastors.

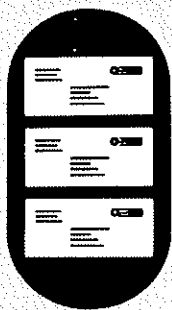
Members at **First FWB Church, Flat River, MO**, gave nearly \$1,200 in love gifts to purchase a van-lift gate to accommodate the wheelchair of **Wayne St. Gemne**. **Ron Edgil** pastors.

Church attendance increased 125 percent in 1981 at **Fairborn FWB Church, Fairborn, OH**, according to Pastor **Roy Hutchinson**.

First FWB Church, Toledo, OH, began an evangelistic outreach project in December. With 18 people working on the project each week, the group soon reached 800 homes in their effort to spread the gospel. Pastor **Fred Taylor** said the church voted to extend the project to reach another 4,000 homes within six weeks. The group also voted to increase outside giving by 100 percent effective January, 1982. The pastor conducts a two hour, live radio broadcast each Sunday morning over Station WIOT-FM.

Urbana FWB Church reports that in the three years Pastor **Roger Childers** has been with the church, the group recorded 159 conversions, 91 baptisms and 87 new members.

CONTACT welcomes **The Ambassador**, monthly newsletter of **Emmanuel FWB Church, Wabash, IN**. **Brian Atwood** pastors. ▲



OUR READERS COMMENT

Right On, Danny!

The article by Danny Dwyer in February CONTACT, "Christianity on Camera," expresses the way I feel about those programs, too, especially Ernest Angley, PTL, and 700 Club.

I wish the PTL would hurry and have to get off TV, as well as the 700 Club. And may the Lord give us some good programs.

Mildred Hall
Chester, South Carolina

Votes for Radio/TV Outreach

This is in reference to Larry Hampton's January article "Invitation to the 20th Century."

In my opinion, we have yet to tap our greatest resource in communicating the Good News, the media.

If we don't use the resources and talents which God has given, can we not lose them? Will we not be judged and accountable for that which we don't do as well as that we do?

Let us not delay in using the resources God has given this country. It is not impossible for Free Will Baptists to communicate the gospel through the media.

The conviction of my heart is that I respond as Jesus would have me to in order to communicate to the world in the 20th century.

Should Free Will Baptists sponsor a national television or radio program? I believe Christ gave us that answer in the Great Commission!

Carlos B. Kelsey
Junior Church Pastor
Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church
Nashville, Tennessee

Proud Reader Writes

I really like the new features in CONTACT. I especially enjoy the "Free Will Baptist Pulpit."

Garnett Reid's sermon in the February issue was very refreshing. The book reviews and Bible studies each month are good.

However, the first thing I read every month is not one of the new features, it's "Briefcase." I don't always agree, but I always enjoy.

Thanks for stimulating my thinking. I'm proud of CONTACT.

Keith Fletcher, Pastor
Maccipine Free Will Baptist Church
Macclesfield, North Carolina

DIRECTORY UPDATE

ARKANSAS

Floyd Wolfenbarger to First Church,
Russellville from Newark Church,
Newark, OH

Jim McKown to Calvary Church,
Springdale

OKLAHOMA

Lewis Cox to First Church, Wewoka
from First Church, Bowie, TX

Jim Combs to Dibble Church, Dibble
from Hillsdale FWB College, Moore

Keith Woody to Capitol Hill Church,
Oklahoma City from Lubbock Church,
Lubbock, TX

TENNESSEE

J. D. O'Donnell to First Church,
Murfreesboro from Bethel Bible Institute,
Paintsville, KY

TEXAS

Keith Phipps to Good Hope Church,
Henderson

David Medley to Easley Chapel
Church, Comanche

Fat Cat Scratches Back

I appreciated the February "Fat Cat"
Briefcase.

In the short time I've been in the
service of the Lord, I've come to realize
that most folk don't want to do anything
for the Lord, so to occupy their time
they're constantly criticizing, finding fault
with, and generally condemning every-
thing that everybody else does, especially
those lazy fat cats!

I've often wondered what could be
accomplished if those critics exerted
their energy in witnessing for the Lord. In
doing this I don't believe they would have
the time to notice what others are doing
with their time.

God bless the staff of CONTACT for
what you are doing for our denomination.
Yours may be a thankless task to some,
but on the mission field where there's
little contact with others of our denomina-
tion, CONTACT Magazine is very re-
freshing and enlightening to our family.

Reverend Virgil Nolen
Home Missionary
Merriam, Kansas

Thank You For Your Contributions...



COOPERATIVE Free Will Baptist
CHANNEL Plan

... Through the Cooperative Channel

January, 1982

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	Undesign.	Total	Jan. '81	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 222.00	\$ 1,704.62	\$ 1,926.62	\$ 366.97	\$ 1,926.62
Arkansas	.00	3,633.49	3,633.49	2,693.43	3,633.49
California	.00	1,391.33	1,391.33	1,265.78	1,391.33
Florida	.00	3,539.06	3,539.06	2,496.34	3,539.06
Georgia	6.84	886.20	893.04	793.88	893.04
Illinois	.00	1,351.97	1,351.97	1,057.52	1,351.97
Indiana	.00	50.00	50.00	.00	50.00
Kansas	124.86	294.70	419.56	245.05	419.56
Maryland	.00	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
Michigan	3,683.15	.00	3,683.15	1,581.00	3,683.15
Mississippi	763.12	103.85	866.97	103.12	866.97
Missouri	6,627.78	.00	6,627.78	5,333.95	6,627.78
North Carolina	76.50	525.86	602.36	375.70	602.36
Ohio	.00	1,149.60	1,149.60	544.44	1,149.60
Oklahoma	50.00	.00	50.00	7,892.11	50.00
Tennessee	126.16	824.39	950.55	639.37	950.55
Texas	1,532.90	216.04	1,748.94	60.00	1,748.94
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	162.00	.00
Virginia	.00	135.86	135.86	2,216.46	135.86
West Virginia	93.47	23.00	116.47	9.85	116.47
Totals	\$13,306.78	\$15,869.97	\$29,176.75	\$27,876.97	\$29,176.75

Disbursements:

Executive	\$ 1,308.71	\$ 9,246.13	\$10,554.84	\$ 9,197.88	\$10,554.84
Foreign Missions	7,361.94	1,689.06	9,051.00	6,006.38	9,051.00
Bible College	2,395.54	1,689.06	4,084.60	4,522.27	4,084.60
Home Missions	1,670.84	1,258.54	2,929.38	4,178.65	2,929.38
Retirement & Insurance	430.43	1,225.41	1,655.84	2,499.04	1,655.84
Master's Men	76.53	662.39	738.92	1,271.47	738.92
Comm. on Theological Liberalism	62.79	99.38	162.17	201.28	162.17
Totals	\$13,306.78	\$15,869.97	\$29,176.75	\$27,876.97	\$29,176.75



General Baptists In Virginia— Pre-Paul Palmer

By William F. Davidson

Some Free Will Baptists in Virginia question that the denomination's birth can be traced to the work of Paul Palmer and his General Baptist Church in eastern North Carolina in 1727. Virginians rightly argue that General Baptists were in that state before 1700 and that

by 1727 they had established at least two strong churches.

The first Baptist church in America contained a General Baptist element. This Rhode Island church, begun by Roger Williams about 1636, was eventually controlled by those teaching a general atonement and remained in that persuasion for more than 100 years. Finally, however, the church adopted a Calvinistic theology as most of New England and the Middle Colo-

nies rejected the General Baptist faith.

But Virginia is another story. If General Baptists were in this area before 1727, why not trace the present denomination back beyond Paul Palmer? Virginia's close proximity to Palmer's work and the identical theological structure infer that Free Will Baptists are older than was suspected.

Some suggest that Palmer ministered in Virginia before moving to North Carolina in 1727. Is there a case

for a more ancient heritage located in Virginia?

The First General Baptists in Virginia

The question of Paul Palmer's ministry in Virginia before 1727 is easily handled. North Carolina court records place Palmer in that state before he supposedly came from England to take over General Baptist work in Virginia. Other questions are not so easy to answer.

There is a good possibility that a few individual General Baptists arrived in Virginia by 1699. It is certain that a strong work had been established by 1714. This was 13 years before Palmer's first church in North Carolina.

The Church in Isle of Wight County

In 1714, the General Baptist church in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, wrote to the parent denomination in England asking that preachers be sent to establish churches for the scattered flock. The denomination sent Robert Norden and Thomas White.

White died enroute, but Norden continued to Virginia and began his ministry at Burley in autumn of 1714 across the James River from Jamestown. Apart from itinerant work to the north, Norden spent his entire ministry in America at Burley. He died there April 30, 1725.

The Church in Surry County

The church at Burley continued for two years without a pastor, but in 1727, the church welcomed two elders from England, Casper Mintz and Richard Jones, making Jones their pastor and sending Mintz to establish a new church in Surry County.

The Church in Prince George County

Though Isaac Backus, an 18th century contemporary of the Virginia General Baptists, spoke of a third church in Prince George County, his claim was questioned because other documents yielded so little information about the church.

Twentieth century research reveals

that Robert Norden, the first General Baptist pastor in Virginia, attained a license to preach in Prince George County on June 14, 1715. By July, 1715, two private homes in the county had been licensed as public meeting houses for the General Baptists. —

The Fate of the Virginia General Baptists

In spite of a good beginning, General Baptists in Virginia were not to prosper. Their history is brief and tragic.

The Prince George Church

The Prince George church evidently depended on Norden's infrequent visits for ministry and existed without a resident pastor for its entire lifetime. After Norden's death in 1725, the church simply ceased to appear in the records.

The Surry County Church

Except for brief details of its organization, history has left no record of the church in Surry County. The church had 30 members in 1729 and that probably was a high point in its history.

Like the church in Prince George County, the Surry church disappeared from the records. It is supposed that the congregation rejoined the mother church at Burley.

The Burley Church

The church at Burley moved in two directions after Richard Jones became pastor in 1727. A portion of the congregation responded to the 1742 plague by moving to Kehukee Creek in North Carolina under the ministry of William Sojourner.

From that time, this portion of the church would be included in statistics of North Carolina General Baptists. The remnant remained in Burley and continued a General Baptist ministry until 1756.

In that year, they gave up the long struggle and appealed for help to the Particular (Calvinistic) Baptists of the Philadelphia Baptist Association. The church adopted a Calvinistic statement of faith, and the voice of the General Baptists in Virginia was silenced.

Conclusion

North Carolina gained the privilege of giving birth to the Free Will Baptist denomination by default. As in New England and Virginia, General Baptists in North Carolina struggled for survival, but a remnant did survive and, in spite of proselyting invasions by Particular Baptists, a few preachers, churches, and individuals remained true.

It was from this remnant in eastern North Carolina that the new Free Will Baptist denomination would emerge. ▲

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Think About It . . .

Where Is God's Money Going?

By Sandy Adams

While reviewing our proposed 1982 church budget, I began to think about all the personal responsibility I felt as pastor in making certain that every cent of the Lord's money was appropriated properly.

After all, this is the Lord's money, and we need to be very careful how we spend it. As I thought about the different appropriations, I asked myself, where is God's money going?

My mind turned toward those whom I have known down through the years who have been faithful tithers. Their tithes had gone to support the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad.

I remembered how the Lord convinced me to tithe through His written Word and how He has always blessed us to be able to tithe.

Then I recalled how I felt before I began giving to the Lord's work. As I thought about all the needless things

I had spent God's money on, I began to wonder what other Christians were using God's money for.

The Bible teaches us in I Corinthians 16:2 that each one of us are to "lay by Him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

God has prospered this nation more than any other country in the world. Americans are said to live in more luxury than King Solomon, yet most find it impossible to give the mere ten percent God asks.

A few months ago we celebrated Christmas, Christ's birthday. If that is truly what we celebrated, then why did our offerings fall off 40 percent and why is it so hard to get people to invest in church bonds? Of course church bonds can't pay the high rate of interest that banks pay, but this is God's work and I feel that God's people ought to invest in God's work.

I used to be a Branch Manager of

a bank, and I sat on the Loan Committee. There I saw God's people invest their money in the bank's savings accounts only to have the bank loan their money to ungodly men to open bars, dance halls, and porno magazine stands.

My soul cried out, "Stop, don't put that money God has prospered you with in those ungodly investments. Put it into the work of the Lord where it's needed."

Many churches are having a difficult time paying the bills and trying to press forward with the good news, while many Christians relax in their carpeted living rooms watching their \$1,000 color television sets while their two new automobiles are parked in the driveway. Then they say, "I can't afford to tithe."

If God gives us money, He expects us not only to use it wisely, but to tithe in the local church, invest in church bonds, and help any other Christian project that we feel God leading in. We have a responsibility to use it as God gives opportunity.

We have foreign missionaries and home missionaries whose accounts are in the red and I wonder, "Where is God's money going?" It's going into new and fancier clothing, bigger and prettier houses, and of course all of the modern conveniences available today. Shall I say more about the boats we use a dozen times a year, campers we use a half dozen times a year, and other such non-essentials?

I asked myself, "Where is God's money going?" Now I ask you, "Where are you spending the money God has given you?"

One day the Lord will ask all of us about our stewardship. Will we be able to say, "Lord I invested Your money in Your work," or will we have to answer, "Lord, I invested in this world"?

We have a responsibility. We need to know that we have done all we could to see that God's work is not hindered. If you had to give an account today, how would it be?

Let's not be guilty of misappropriating the Lord's money.

Think about it! ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Sandy Adams is a National Home Missionary to Lexington, Kentucky.



THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

Found Faithful



Faithfulness is a virtue which characterizes those who serve the Lord. Faithfulness requires dedication, discernment, and determination as well as discipline. Fidelity in face of corrupt contemporary situations is not an easy task.

Charles Hodges was correct when he declared, "The great requisite for the discharge of the office of a steward is fidelity. As he is a servant he must be faithful to his Master. The application of this to the case of ministers is plain. Fidelity to Christ as servants; not currogating to themselves any other than ministerial power, or venturing to go beyond His commands. Fidelity to the people, not failing to dispense to them the truths which God has revealed, nor mixing these truths with their own speculations, much less substituting for those doctrines human knowledge or wisdom."

To be found faithful we must *Go*. Jonah was instructed to go to Ninevah and cry against that wicked city. Isaiah heard God's call to go and responded by saying "Here am I, send me." Obedient Christians have always been ready to go do the Master's bidding.

Those who would go must hear God's call, consent to obey that call and accept the commission of that call. Going is an intelligent, individual and indispensable requirement if we would be found faithful. No one may

go for us. Each must go for himself.

To be found faithful we must *Give*. Giving one's time, talent, tithe, and testimony is a natural dimension of the obedient servant. The spirit of giving rather than getting enables one to cheerfully implement the go element which God requires.

Time must be set aside for the Lord's work. Talent must be redirected. The tithe must be considered a minimum. All our treasures must be at God's disposal. A ready testimony accompanies those who look to give, not to get.

To be found faithful one must *Grow*. Growth is as much God's divine plan for His children as is going and giving. The development process is planned by God along with the diet to prompt it.

Dwarfed development contributes to Christian worker casualties. It is only avoided by a dogged grow or die determination. Growth in one's Christian experience is never an accident, but the result of careful attention to God's prescribed plan.

To be found faithful one must be on *Guard* lest he stray under the influence of false teachers. Peter exhorts that we "beware" lest we land in the error of the wicked and fall. John exhorts to "try the spirits." Paul warns Timothy of dangerous trends in last times when some will depart from the faith.

Believers are cautioned lest when we have preached and taught others we ourselves become castaways. Sound doctrine, saintly deportment and spiritual development only come

to those who take God seriously in the matter of guarding against personal error, those who offer no excuses for the sordid lives of others, but who at the same time reject anything less than their best for God.

To be found faithful requires that we *Glorify* our heavenly Father. Christians are not just to be faithful but "to be found" or discovered faithful. As cold as the judge and the critic may be, even they soon acknowledge when a child of God is the genuine article. And they do know the difference!

Joseph Parker said, "... the whole diary of the man's actions is regarded in its unity; and the result is that the man has been discovered to be faithful, found to be faithful, as the result of a prolonged, critical, unsparring scrutiny: then the printed testimonial may be burned, the testimony of friends is no longer required; the man has proved himself faithful."

There is only one thing that produces faithfulness on the order that God requires. Genius is not the building blocks of faithfulness, nor is gift or amiability. God only builds on character—pristine character and sterling integrity. ▲

The Secretary's Schedule

- April 4-9** First FWB Church
Dothan, AL
- April 16-17** New Mexico State Association,
Albuquerque FWB Church,
Albuquerque, NM
- April 19-25** Westwood Church
Ashland, KY
- April 30-May 2** Grace FWB Church
Oklahoma City, OK

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